



# The Groton Independent

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## Groton's Music Department remains in tact

A very large crowd was on hand Monday night at the Board of Education meeting to show support for the music department.

President Steve Smith said the recommendation to have a reduction in force for the instrumental music was not brought up by the administration, but rather by school board members. Smith talked first and he said this is not the time to make a change. Board Member Marty Weismantel echoed the same thoughts and said this was bad timing to make this type of a decision.

It was board members Deb Gengerke and Kara Pharis that spoke in favor of the RIF; however, both were very uncomfortable talking about it. Gengerke said, "It just feels icky, but we still need to have this discussion. This is nothing personal." Currently, the general fund is being supplemented from the Capital Outlay Fund by the tune of \$500,000, primarily because the district does not qualify for state aid.

Many members of the audience spoke in favor of keeping the music department in tact as the community and students rallied behind their music department. At the end, Superintendent Joe Schwan talked how there was discussion for reducing the music department. "In all of the cuts that have been made, the music department has remained untouched and that has to say something about the program," he said. All three music instructors spoke and said when they hired, the board was looking for people for the long haul. The board, just last year, filled the third position as a full time instructor and Schwan asked and just a year later, you want to cut it. "I don't like that," he said.

The board took not action in the RIF proposal so the music department will remain in tact, for now.

### Spotlight on Groton Area Staff

**Name:** Kristen Gonsoir

**Occupation:** High School Science Instructor

**Length of Employment:** 1992-Present

Kristen Gonsoir graduated from Northern State University with a master's degree in Education, with majors in Chemistry and Education and minors in Political Science and Biology. Before teaching at Groton, Mrs. Gonsoir was a substitute teacher at Aberdeen Central High School.

Mrs. Gonsoir teaches General Chemistry, Organic Chemistry, and Physics for students ranging from Freshmen to Seniors. She enjoys provoking thought in her students through hands on activities and discussions. Along with her skill for relaying knowledge to students, Kristen Gonsoir is a learned individual who loves reading about the advances of modern science.

In her classroom, Mrs. Gonsoir has expectations of respect and common decency from her students. This ideal is exemplified by the poster on the wall depicting John Wooden's "Two Sets of 3's" which includes the principles of "Never lie, cheat, or steal," and "Don't whine, complain, or make excuses."

In Groton, teachers are often supervisors or coaches for various extracurricular activities along with being traditional instructors. In addition to teaching various Science classes, Mrs. Gonsoir is also the coach for Groton's Oral Interpretation and Debate clubs. In this club, she coaches students on how to properly construct debates and form counterpoints. Outside of extracurriculars, Kristen Gonsoir is a prominent member and certified judge for the American Quarter Horse Association, a group dedicated to the appreciation and registration of American Quarter Horses.

**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.**



### Groton Area ranks second in the state

The state of South Dakota has plenty of fantastic school systems within its borders. But which ones are the cream of the crop?

Recently, an in-depth study by Neighborhood Scout was done to determine the Mount Rushmore State's 10 best school systems. The main factors in deciding which areas stand above the rest were Reading/English Language Arts Tests, Math Tests, Enrollment, and Class Size.

Here is a look at the list of the top 10 best school systems in South Dakota from Neighborhood Scout:

- |                   |                |
|-------------------|----------------|
| 1. Brandon        | 6. Selby       |
| 2. Groton         | 7. Platte      |
| 3. Gettysburg     | 8. Dell Rapids |
| 4. Ipswich        | 9. Elk Point   |
| 5. Valley Springs | 10. Hill City  |

As you can see, the city of Brandon stands above the rest. According to the criteria Neighborhood Scout used in this study, Brandon scored higher than any other city in the entire state.

Groton Area was ranked number two while Gettysburg was third, Ipswich fourth and Selby sixth.

On another interesting note, 9 of the towns listed were East River towns, whereas only one town (Hill City) is a West River town. Although a number of West River towns came close (Buffalo, Keystone, Summerset, Murdo) to cracking the top 10.

Groton is a very small city located in the state of South Dakota. With a population of 1,475 people and just one neighborhood, Groton is the 46th largest community in South Dakota. Groton has seen a significant amount of newer housing growth in recent years. Quite often, new home construction is the result of new residents moving in who are middle class or wealthier, attracted by jobs, a healthy local economy, or other amenities as they leave nearby or far away areas for greener pastures. This seems to be the case in Groton, where the median household income is \$64,091.00.

Groton is a good choice for families with children because of several factors. Many other families with children live here, making it a place where both parents and children are more likely to develop social ties with other families. The city's good public school district and large population of college-educated adults provide an environment conducive to academic success. Many people own their own single-family homes, providing areas for children to play and stability in the community. Finally, Groton's overall crime rate ranks among the lowest in the country, making it one of the safest places to raise a family.

Story Source: Neighborhood Scout



**Brown County  
March 16, 2021  
Meeting Minutes**

MARCH 16, 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, Sutton, Wiese and Kippley. Commissioner Wiese led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** Moved by Kippley, seconded by Sutton 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 9, 2021. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

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

**PAYROLL:** Commission \$4,327.95; Auditor \$8,946.98; Treasurer \$13,735.78; SA \$23,246.67; SVAWA \$1,730.76; Maintenance \$8,470.29; Assessor \$14,636.40; Register of Deeds \$9,124.94; VSO \$4,519.96; GIS \$2,411.38; IT \$7,689.29; HR \$2,423.08; Sheriff \$41,558.68; Jail \$50,365.25; Court Security \$6,027.14; JDC \$22,792.59; Welfare \$2,982.62; Museum \$8,190.61; Parks/Fairgrounds \$4,009.88; Fair Board \$2,254.10; 4-H \$631.60; Weed \$884.14; Planning & Zoning

\$4,554.14; Highway \$40,121.40; Dispatch \$25,144.49; Emergency \$4,160.97; Teen Court \$500.31; JDAI \$1,786.92; 24/7 Sobriety \$1,273.81; Landfill \$14,601.14; FICA \$19,787.18; Medicare \$4,627.68; HSA \$325.00. **CLAIMS:** Other: McLeod's Printing \$125.30; SD Department of Revenue & Regulation \$759,763.81. Professional Fees: City of Aberdeen \$250.00; Avera St. Luke's \$373.00; Brick's TV & Appliance \$1,222.50; Certified Language International \$1,145.10; Day County \$420.00; Elections Systems & Software \$94.80; ESRI \$16,500.00; Faulk County Sheriff's Office \$5,670.00; GBR Interpreting & Translation \$60.00; Christopher Haar \$19.00; Mark Katterhagen \$27.00; Kuck Law Office \$25.20; Language Line Services Inc. \$850.02; Lewis & Clark BHS \$552.00; Lucy Lewno \$310.00; Lexisnexis \$150.00; Darcy Lockwood \$27.00; Lutheran Social Services \$4,573.25; Sanford Health \$138.00; Sanford Laboratories \$19.33; SD Department of Health \$180.00; SD Department of Revenue & Regulation \$1,392.44; State of South Dakota \$600.00; Jodi Sudweeks \$26.60; Yankton County Sheriff \$100.00; Yankton County Treasurer \$375.00. Rentals: Praxair Distribution \$45.87. Repairs & Maintenance: Lien Transportation \$450.00; North Plain Electric \$550.00; Poms Tire Service \$3,433.88; Service Signs & Sales \$817.14; Steven Lust Automotive \$54.46; Titan Machinery \$179.06. Supplies: Praxair

Distribution \$107.80; Agtegra Cooperative \$11,904.73; Dakota Supply Group \$1,215.62; Aberdeen Medical Center \$588.55; GovConnection \$609.24; Kessler's \$152.81; Leidholdt Tool Sales \$144.05; Lucy Lewno \$13.02; Terry Lout \$59.99; McLeod's Printing \$9.23; Pharmchem \$1,496.50; Pomp's Tire Service \$5.00; Sander's Sew-N-Vac \$63.98; Sherwin Williams \$186.60; Titan Machinery \$1,398.69; West Publishing \$1,785.86. Travel & Conference: Aberdeen Area Chamber of Commerce \$70.00; Duane Jark \$86.95; Troy Knecht \$178.60; Dennis Wiedeubush \$78.96. Utilities: City of Aberdeen \$1,676.08; Qwest Corporation \$71.86; City of Hecla \$221.51; Economy Propane \$2,030.88; State of South Dakota \$102.31; Northern Electric \$86.00; Northwestern Energy \$8,209.10; Northern Valley Communication \$300.00; Verizon Wireless \$200.05. 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: Approve hiring of Jessica Johnson as full-time Brown County Human Resources Assistant; starting wage @ \$19/hour; tentative effective date March 29, 2021. Acknowledge the following personal miles driven at \$0.56 per mile for the month of January: Kendell Titze 90 @ \$50.40, John Florey 102 @ \$57.12, Dirk Rogers 532 @ \$297.92, Mike Scott 110 @ \$61.60. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**FAIR CONTRACTS:** Moved by Feickert, seconded by Wiese to approve and authorize the Chair to sign an addendum to Brown County Fair Agreement with the NSU Women's Swim Team, changes on dates from Aug 10-16, 2020 to Aug 16-22, 2021. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**TEMPORARY MALT BEVERAGE LICENSE:** Moved by Sutton, seconded by Wiese to approve temporary malt beverage license to Boys and Girls Club at the Holum Expo Building on April 9-10, 2021. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**CLAIM ASSIGNMENTS:** Moved by Kippley, seconded by Wiese to assign claim against individuals to Credit Collection Bureau for the purpose of collecting liens. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**ABATEMENTS:** Moved by Sutton, seconded by Wiese to approve the following abatements: Claremont City (tax exempt) @ \$1,657.28; Northern State University (bare lot solid waste removal) @ \$2.70. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**WEED AND PEST GRANTS:** Moved by Sutton, seconded by Wiese to authorize the Chair to sign letter of agreement with the South Dakota Weed & Pest Commission. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**WEED BOARD APPOINTMENTS:** Moved by Sutton, seconded by Wiese to approve the following weed board appointments for three year terms (2021-2024): Dennis Wiedeubush and Duane Jark. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**ORDINANCE 189 FAIR BOARD EXPENSE AUTHORITY REVISION - FIRST READING:** Moved by Feickert, seconded by Sutton to approve first reading of ordinance 189, amending Second Revision Brown County Ordinances, Title 16 Brown County Fair, by amending Chapter 16.02.05 Specific Responsibilities. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**ORDINANCE 190 MINI-AG REZONE - FIRST READING:** Moved by Sutton, seconded by Feickert to approve first reading of ordinance 190: Applicant Dave Schumaker requesting to rezone the following property from Chapter 4.14 Highway Commercial District (HC) to Chapter 4.07 Mini-Ag District (M-AG) Lot 1, "Dave Schumaker Addition" in the NW ¼ of section 22T123N-R63W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota (1220 392nd Ave S). All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**SOUTH ABERDEEN CONTAINER SITE:** Mike Scott, Landfill Manager and Leif Redinger from Helms & Associates met with the commission to discuss about a possible dumpsite location in the corner of Melgaard Rd and E of Highway 281. Other possible relocation options were also being discussed. No actions taken.

**DISCUSSION OF HAULING ORDINANCE:** The commission discussed about a potential

hauling ordinance and agreed to put-up a committee that will do further research and inquiries. No actions taken.

**DECLARE PATROLS SURPLUS (HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT):** Move by Feickert, seconded by Sutton to approve surplus request from Highway Department and authorize for sale at auction for the following items: 2011 Volvo Motor Grader G946 Model (Asset 621); 2008 Komatsu GD655-3 EO (Asset 574). Bids can be placed on purplewave.com. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**APPLICATION FOR OCCUPANCY:** Moved by Sutton, seconded by Feickert to approve the application for occupancy submitted by Kyle Suelzt for occupancy of Brown County Highway Number 21, in section 10, Township 122, Range 62, Brown County, South Dakota for irrigation. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**APPLICATION FOR OCCUPANCY:** Moved by Sutton, seconded by Kippley to approve the following application for occupancy submitted by Northern Valley Communications for boring to provide telecommunication services: occupancy of Brown County Highway Number 25, in section 22, 23, Township 121, Range 63, Brown County, South Dakota; occupancy of Brown County Highway Number 10, in section 11, 14, 13, Township 121, Range 64, Brown County, South Dakota; occupancy of Brown County Highway Number 23, in section 6, 5, 4, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, Township 121, 122, Range 63, Brown County, South Dakota; occupancy of Brown County Highway Number 21, in section 14, 13, 18, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 18, Township 122, Range 64, 63, 62, Brown County, South Dakota; occupancy of Brown County Highway Number 14W, 14E, in section 35, 26, 25, 36, 31.30.32/28/34/35.26.22, Township 123, Range 64, 63, Brown County, South Dakota; occupancy of Brown County Highway Number 14, in section 28, 33, 4, 9, 10, 28, 27, 4, 3, 21, 22, 28, 27 Township 123, 122, 121, Range 63, Brown County, South Dakota. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**DISCUSS LOAD LIMIT:** Dirk Rogers, Highway Superintendent, met to discuss with the commission load limits currently being implemented in Brown County. A citizen in the county shared his concern on one of the county roads where a current load limit is being implemented. No actions taken.

**BRIDGE INSPECTION RESOLUTION:** Commissioner Feickert offered the following resolution:

**RESOLUTION 14-21 BRIDGE REINSPECTION PROGRAM RESOLUTION FOR USE WITH SDDOT RETAINER CONTRACTS WHEREAS, 23 CFR 650 Subpart C, requires initial inspection of all bridges and reinspection at intervals not to exceed two years with the exception of reinforced concrete box culverts that meet specific criteria. These culverts are reinspected at intervals not to exceed four years.**

**THEREFORE, Brown County is desirous of participating in the Bridge Inspection Program using Bridge Replacement funds. The county requests SDDOT to hire IMEG (Consulting Engineers) for the inspection work. SDDOT will secure federal approvals, make payments to the Consulting Engineer for inspection services rendered, and bill the county for 20% of the cost. The county will be responsible for the required 20% matching funds. Dated this 16th day of March, 2021 at Aberdeen, South Dakota.**

Seconded by Commissioner Wiese. Roll call vote: Commissioner Feickert – aye, Sutton – aye, Wiese – aye, Kippley – aye, Fjeldheim – aye. Resolution adopted.

**SURFACE TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM FUNDS:** Dirk Rogers, Highway Superintendent, opens up with the Commission regarding STP funds received. No actions taken.

**E-911 SOFTWARE:** Kent Jones, Communications Director, and Scott Madsen, GIS Coordinator, discussed about developments on Spillman software installation, a mapping software to be used by 911 dispatchers. No actions taken.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Moved by Sutton, seconded by Wiese to adjourn the Brown County Commission at 10:25a.m. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

Jeannette McClain, Brown County Deputy Auditor

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By Jordan Wright

**By**I want to preface this article by saying I don't know nearly as much as Mike Zimmer or Rick Spielman. I have faith that they know what is best for this team. With that said, after the first wave of free agency, I simply do not understand some of the moves they have made.

Starting free agency above the salary cap was not an enviable position to be in, even though most teams around the NFL were in similar situations. To get under the cap with enough room to sign some free agents, the Minnesota Vikings released veteran players like Kyle Rudolph and Riley Reiff, while also restructuring some contracts like Anthony Barr's and Adam Thielen's. Once those moves were completed, the team had a little bit of money to spend – and although the team had many holes to fill, both starting positions and depth, the Vikings elected to spend most of their remaining cap space on two players.

Going into free agency, the Vikings needed help at defensive tackle, defensive end, linebacker, safety, and most importantly offensive line. The first signing the team did was defensive tackle Dalvin Tomlinson, which on paper sounds like a sound investment. However, when you did deeper, some questions arise. The Vikings play in a 4-3 defensive base, which means there are four defensive linemen (two defensive tackles, two defensive ends), and three linebackers in their base sets. The two defensive tackles have different responsibilities. The nose tackle is responsible for taking up two blockers and stopping the run, which is what last year's big free-agent signing, Michael Pierce (6', 340 pounds), is perfect for. The other defensive tackle is responsible for creating penetration in the middle, which can give opposing quarterbacks trouble since they can't step up into the pocket and throw the ball. I say all of that to make one point: Dalvin Tomlinson (6'3", 320 pounds) is better suited for the nose tackle position. The Vikings are clearly making a concerted effort to stop the run in 2021, but in today's pass-happy NFL, I'm not sure that's a great strategy.

The other big free agent the Vikings brought in is someone who most football fans have heard of... cornerback Patrick Peterson. Since entering the league in 2011, Peterson has made the Pro Bowl eight times and has been named a First-Team All-Pro three times. There is no doubt he is a special talent. However, Peterson's best attribute has been his athleticism, which has started to wane over the last two seasons. Head coach Mike Zimmer's specialty is defensive backs, and he has been known to take older cornerbacks and revive their careers (most recently Terence Newman). The Vikings have invested many draft picks in recent years to overhaul their cornerbacks, which has led to the team having many young CBs on the roster who have plenty of potential. Peterson will bring to Minnesota a wealth of knowledge he can pass along to the younger players, which will be an added benefit. I'm just not sold that this was the best way for the team to spend what little salary cap space they had left.

So while there are a lot of reasons why bringing in Tomlinson (2 years, \$21 million) and Peterson (1 year, \$8 million) could be good moves, what concerns me is the Vikings don't have much more money to use in free agency, and there are still plenty of holes to fill. According to Spotrac.com., the Vikings only have \$3.3 million left, so unless they can convince good players to come to Minnesota for very little money, this could be a rough season. But then again, as Vikings fans, we're used to that by now. Skol!

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## Frederick School March 11, 2021 Meeting Minutes

UNOFFICIAL BOARD PROCEEDINGS  
FREDERICK AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT #6-2  
MARCH 11, 2021

The meeting was called to order on March 11, 2021, at 6:00 p.m. by President Rich Schlosser. Members present were Dan Nickelson, Jon Ellwein, Richard Achen and Alex Hart. Others present were Superintendent/9-12 Principal/Athletic Director Jeff Kosters, K-8 Principal Jessica Ringgenberg, Business Manager Janel Wagner, FACS/Art teacher Crystal Arthurs and Learn-X representative Tamie Nickelson.

The meeting began with all present reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members of the public are allowed three minutes to address the board on any topic of their choice. With no public members wishing to speak, the board moved on with their remaining agenda items.

Action 20-094 Motion by Achen, second by Ellwein to approve the agenda as presented. All aye, carried.

Action 20-095 Motion by Ellwein, second by Hart to approve consent agenda which included the following items as presented: minutes of meetings held February 8, 2021; February 2021 financial report, district bills and February 2021 payroll. All aye, carried.

Ending February 28, 2021	General Fund	Capital Outlay Fund	Special Education Fund	Food Service Fund	Drivers Ed Fund	Governmental & Enterprise Fund Act. Totals	Custodial Fund
Beginning checking Balance	\$207,422.99	\$289,726.73	\$183,076.47	\$463.10	\$912.92	\$681,602.21	\$1,923.85
Revenue:							
Taxes	\$22,180.65	\$14,321.00	\$6,697.22				
Local Sources	\$4,457.74			\$4,623.00	\$1,200.00		\$2,970.52
Intermediate Sources	\$511.92						
Interest	\$40.35						\$0.17
Federal & State	\$90,300.07			\$2,723.46			
Total Revenue	\$117,490.73	\$14,321.00	\$6,697.22	\$7,346.46	\$1,200.00	\$147,055.41	\$2,970.69
Disbursements							
Bills	\$29,721.09	\$1,877.35	\$2,557.01	\$3,745.73			\$528.20
Payroll	\$142,639.17		\$17,987.24	\$4,570.35			
Total Disbursements	\$172,360.26	\$1,877.35	\$20,544.25	\$8,316.08	\$0.00	\$203,097.94	\$528.20
Total checking balance	\$152,553.46	\$302,170.38	\$169,229.44	(\$506.52)	\$2,112.92	\$625,559.68	\$4,366.34
Beginning investment balance	\$515,945.42	\$1,933,634.20	\$1,446,175.05			\$3,895,754.67	
Interest	\$8.96						
Total investment balance	\$515,954.38	\$1,933,634.20	\$1,446,175.05			\$3,895,763.63	
Ending Balance	\$668,507.84	\$2,235,804.58	\$1,615,404.49	(\$506.52)	\$2,112.92	\$4,521,323.31	

Claims approved: February 2021 Payroll - General Fund salaries 86,015.26; Special Education salaries 12,521.05, Food Service 2,945.52. EFTPS, federal income tax/Social Security/Medicare 26,906.45; AFLAC, supplemental insurance 1,105.29; American Funds, retirement 1,460.26; Delta Dental, insurance 1,693.50; The Standard, life insurance 269.79; Security Benefits, retirement 1,100.26; Optilegra, vision insurance 391.38; Wellmark, health insurance 15,686.00; SD Retirement 14,636.74; SD Re-

irement Supplemental, 465.26. General Fund: 2080 Media Inc, Pixellot software license 1,500.00; Agtegra, gasoline/diesel/heating fuel 4,286.61; Amazon Capital Services, supplies 29.98; Arneson, Chloe, basketball game worker 15.00; Associated School Boards of South Dakota, training 25.00; Auto Value Aberdeen, repairs 5.49; Bledsoe Chiropractic, DOT physical 80.00; Blumhardt Chevrolet Inc, repairs 881.67; Brown County Treasurer, sewer tax 33.00; Bunke, Luke, basketball game worker 430.00; Cash-Wa Distributing Co of Fargo, LLC, FFVP/concessions supplies 1,229.61; Cash-Wa Distributing of Kearney Inc, concessions supplies 73.86; Cole Papers Inc, supplies 798.51; Crawford Trucks & Equipment Inc, repairs 4,996.43; Custodial Account-FASD, Imprest reimbursement 528.20; Division of Criminal Investigation, background check 43.25; Dumire, James, repairs 435.00; Farnam's Genuine Parts Inc, repairs 956.36; GDI News, publishing 136.47; Hoffman, Andrew, basketball game worker 405.00; Innovative Office Solutions LLC, supplies 39.52; Institutional Compliance Solutions, Title IX training 245.00; James Valley Telecommunications, telephone 242.67; JHC Services LLC, repairs 381.41; JM Electric Inc, repairs 460.58; Johnson Controls Inc, service agreement 12,074.25; Jostens Inc, yearbook/diplomas 980.78; JW Pepper & Son Inc, music 65.99; Kessler's, supplies 70.10; Ketterling Photography, photos 110.25;

Sumption, Laura, basketball game worker 60.00; Town of Frederick, utilities 595.26; Weisser, Valerie, basketball game worker 60.00 Total 44,726.69. Imprest checks: Brown County Sheriff, fingerprinting 20.00; Dickey County Sheriff, fingerprinting 5.00; Division of Criminal Investigation, background check 86.50; Gottlob, Shayne, basketball game worker 120.00; Holt, Adam, basketball game worker 120.00; Roth, Brendan, basketball game worker 176.70 Total 528.20. Capital Outlay Fund: A&B Business Solutions, managed print contract 670.70; Amazon Capital Services, color printer/toner 321.97; American Time, clock 155.12; Cole Papers Inc, vacuum 498.25 Total 1,646.04. Special Education Fund: Avera St Luke's, occupational/physical therapy 2,644.19; North Central Special Education Cooperative, cost share 8,666.52 Total 11,310.71. Food Service Fund: Cash-Wa Distributing Co of Fargo, LLC, food/supplies 3,465.06; Cash-Wa Distributing of Kearney Inc, food 79.73; Child & Adult Nutrition, food 526.89; School Nutrition Association, membership 46.50 Total 4,118.18.

Mrs. Crystal Arthurs presented information to the Board regarding the creation of a Frederick Area chapter of the Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) beginning Fall 2021.

Mrs. Tamie Nickelson presented information to the Board regarding the LearnX program and how it impacts the Frederick

Dan Nickelson presented information to the Board regarding the costs and sample syllabus for a STEM program at the school.

Action 20-096 Motion by Ellwein, second by Nickelson to approve the 2021-2022 School District calendar as presented. All aye, carried.

Action 20-097 Motion by Hart, second by Achen to set meeting time at 7:00 p.m. beginning at the April, 2021, regular meeting. All aye, carried.

Action 20-098 Motion by Nickelson, second by Hart to open negotiations for Fiscal Year 2021-2022 negotiations. All aye, carried.

Action 20-099 Motion by Nickelson, second by Achen to approve Open Enrollment application #22-1 and #22-2 for the 2021-2022 school year. All aye, carried.

Action 20-100 Motion by Ellwein, second by Nickelson to approve coaching contract for Lincoln Flakus, 2021 Assistant Track Coach at \$3,355.87. All aye, carried.

Action 20-101 Motion by Nickelson, second by Hart to approve the following 2020-2021 certified contracts: Taylor Achterberg, teacher \$20,010.00, and Morgan Hoffman, teacher at \$23,603.00. All aye, carried.

Action 20-102 Motion by Achen, second by Ellwein to approve 2021 track season volunteer Dakota King. All aye, carried.

Action 20-103 Motion by Hart, second by Nickelson to accept resignation from Jeff Kosters as Junior High Football coach. All

aye, carried.

The school board thanks the North Brown County Community Foundation for the grant awarded to the school for the banner project.

Action 20-104 Motion by Nickelson, second by Achen to adjourn at 7:38 p.m. All aye, carried.

Rich Schlosser, President  
Janel Wagner, Business Manager  
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aye, carried.

Mr. Kosters reported to the Board an update on 2021 SD legislation regarding education. He also presented information regarding opt-outs and the timelines involved.

Mrs. Ringgenberg reported that the spring standardized testing window will be open soon and presented upcoming changes to the Science portion of the SD standardized testing.

Mr. Kosters reported that beginning March 15, 2021, staff would cease daily temperature checks for students.

Spencer Locke and Aaron Severson, Concessions Rebecca Padfield. All members voted aye.

Moved by Blackmun and seconded by Wells to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 pm. All members voted aye.

Scott Hanlon, Mayor  
Hope Block, Finance Officer  
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Moved by Flihs and seconded by Kappes to adjourn into executive session for personnel and legal items 1-25-2 (1) & (3) at 7:12pm. All members voted aye. Council reconvened into regular session at 8:19pm.

Moved by Blackmun and seconded by Cutler to accept Daniel Sunne's written resignation.

The job offer for an Electric Utility Supervisor was tabled on a motion by Blackmun and seconded by Flihs. All members voted aye.

Moved by Flihs and seconded by Wells to hire the following seasonal employees:

Brian Gravatt Cemetery Maintenance, 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, Marlee Tollifson, Gracie Traphagen, Grace Wambach. Lifeguard/Aerobics instructor Kelli Hanson, Lifeguard/Swim Lesson Instructor Alexis Hanten, Jasmine Schinkel. Manager/WSI Tricia Keith, Manager Kami Lipp, Karla Pasteur. Lifeguard/WSI Tanae Lipp, Cody Swanson. Public Works Aaron Severson, Asst Legion Coach Seth Erickson, U12 Softball Coach Susan Feldheim, Softball Coach Alyssa Thaler, Gate keeper Elizabeth Flihs, Jr Legion Coach Dalton Locke, BB/SB Coordinator/ Legion Coach Matt Locke, Jr Teener Coaches

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

## Frederick School March 22, 2021 Meeting Minutes

OFFICIAL BOARD PROCEEDINGS  
FREDERICK AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT #6-2  
MARCH 22, 2021

The Joint School Board Meeting was called to order on March 22, 2021, at 6:00 p.m. by President Rich Schlosser. Frederick Area school board members present were Dan Nickelson, Jon Ellwein, Alex Hart and Rich Achen. Leola school board members present were ReEtta Sieh, Richard Westphal, Trevor Zantow and Kristi Spitzer. Others present were Business Managers Janel Wagner and Kayla Casey, Superintendent/9-12 Principal/Athletic Director Jeff Kosters and Leola Superintendent Bev Myer.

The meeting began with all present reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Action 20-105 Motion by Nickelson, second by Ellwein to approve the agenda as presented. All aye, carried.

Members of the public were allowed three minutes to address the board on any topic of their choice. With no public members wishing to speak, the board moved on with their remaining agenda items.

No action was taken on 2021-22 Coaching Recommendations.

No action was taken on Handbook Revisions; will be addressed at joint meeting in June 2021.

No action was taken on 2021-22 Raises; will be addressed at joint meeting in June 2021.

Mr. Kosters presented projected participant numbers per sport for the 2021-2022 school year. No action taken.

Discussion was held regarding internal auditing procedures for fundraiser accounts. Ms. Wag-

ner and Ms. Casey will create a procedure for the co-op.

Ms. Sieh shared information about an upcoming basketball camp she has personally set up for July. No action taken.

Ms. Myer shared that two local individuals will be helping with summer workout programs for the co-op athletes. No action taken.

Action 20-106 Motion by Hart, second by Nickelson to enter Executive Session per SDCL 1-25-2 (1) for employee matters at 7:05 p.m. All aye, carried.

President Schlosser declared Board out of Executive Session at 8:48 p.m.

Action 20-107 Motion by Hart, second by Achen to adjourn at 8:48 p.m. All aye, carried.

Rich Schlosser, President  
Janel Wagner, Business Manager

Published once at the total approximate cost of \$23.80. 19858

## 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)

Published twice at the total approximate cost of \$15.28. 19850

## Groton City March 16, 2021 Meeting Minutes

March 16, 2021

The Groton City Council met on the above date at 7:00 pm at the Community Center for their second monthly meeting with the following members present: Kappes, Wells, Flihs, Babcock, Blackmun, Cutler and Hanlon presiding. Also present were: Attorney Drew Johnson, Paul Kosel, and Finance Officer Hope Block.

A Special Event Retail on Sale Liquor License for the Groton Firemen was approved for their event on April 24, 2021 on a motion by Wells and seconded by Flihs. All members present voted aye.

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

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

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

Payroll, \$21,984.58, Employee salaries; Administrative, \$3,787.54; Public Safety, \$8,685.72; Public Works, \$8,980.47; Culture & Recreation, \$530.85; First State Bank, \$7,180.47, SS and WH; First State Bank, \$495.82, HSA contributions; Dakotaland FCU, \$650.00, Employee savings; City of Groton, \$250.00, Utility deposit refund; Web Water, \$12,447.47, Water Services; Aramark, \$48.03, Rug Cleaning Service; US Department of Energy, \$22,742.35, Energy Services; Branden Abeln, \$14.00, Employee Reimbursement; Landon Johnson, \$14.00, Em-

ployee Reimbursement; Heartland Consumers Power District, \$70,291.73, Power Services; A&B Business Solutions, \$310.61, Printer Lease; National Assoc. of State Agencies For Surplus Property, \$39.00, Membership Application Fee; Smile Solutions, \$290.50, Paul Kosel - MedFlex; Mid-States Organized Crime Info Center, \$100.00, Annual Membership Fee; Ken's Food Fair/ Shell Express, \$505.48, Gasoline, Paper Products; MJ Sinclair, Inc., \$1,504.53, Fuel Purchases; USPS, \$245.00, Mailing Permit; SD Federal Property Agency, \$326.25, Shop Vac, Case, Bit, Misc. Shop Supplies; Colonial Research, \$3,446.42, Shop, Weed Control and Pool Supplies; Auto Zone, \$197.66, Duralast Seal, Air Filter, Bearing, Misc. Shop Supplies; April Abeln, \$32.96, Dependent Flex; Metering & Technology, \$1,252.02, Shop Supplies; 25' Twist Tight Wirem Torx Screws; James Valley Telecommunications, \$567.57, Telephone and Internet Services; Runnings, \$13.92, Anchors for Tiger Slide

The February finance report was approved on a motion by Cutler and seconded by Babcock. All members voted aye.

Permission was given to the Finance Officer to apply for a Heartland Consumer Power Economic Development Grant for the library expansion project on a motion by Babcock and seconded by Flihs. All members voted aye.

Thanks was given to the Groton American Legion Post for raising the funds to add a flag to the new water tower.

Anita Lowary, Julie Hinds, Connie Stauch, Rebecca Hunter, and Melanie Sombke were appointed as the Election Board for the April 13th Election that

will be combined with the school election on a motion by Babcock and seconded by Cutler. All members voted aye.

The second reading of the Ordinance Amending Liquor Revenues #743 was approved on a motion by Blackmun and seconded by Wells. All members voted aye.

Moved by Flihs and seconded by Kappes to adjourn into executive session for personnel and legal items 1-25-2 (1) & (3) at 7:12pm. All members voted aye. Council reconvened into regular session at 8:19pm.

Moved by Blackmun and seconded by Cutler to accept Daniel Sunne's written resignation.

The job offer for an Electric Utility Supervisor was tabled on a motion by Blackmun and seconded by Flihs. All members voted aye.

Moved by Flihs and seconded by Wells to hire the following seasonal employees:


Brian Gravatt Cemetery Maintenance, 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, Marlee Tollifson, Gracie Traphagen, Grace Wambach. Lifeguard/Aerobics instructor Kelli Hanson, Lifeguard/Swim Lesson Instructor Alexis Hanten, Jasmine Schinkel. Manager/WSI Tricia Keith, Manager Kami Lipp, Karla Pasteur. Lifeguard/WSI Tanae Lipp, Cody Swanson. Public Works Aaron Severson, Asst Legion Coach Seth Erickson, U12 Softball Coach Susan Feldheim, Softball Coach Alyssa Thaler, Gate keeper Elizabeth Flihs, Jr Legion Coach Dalton Locke, BB/SB Coordinator/ Legion Coach Matt Locke, Jr Teener Coaches

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## Dakota Outdoors



**Erik Dean**  
402 N Main St  
Aberdeen, SD 57401  
605.229.0123

dakoutdoors@midconetwork.com



**Frederick Town  
March 10, 2021  
Meeting Minutes**

Town of Frederick  
March 10, 2021 Minutes  
Frederick's town board meeting was held Wednesday, February 10, 2021 in the Frederick Community Center beginning at 7:00 PM. Attending the meeting were Chairman R. Scott Campbell, Board members Troy Millard and Jeff Kosters, Finance Officer and Assistant Finance Officer Diane Bruns and Mariah Heine, Utility Manager Rich Bakeberg, and citizen Tami Nickelson.

Chairman Campbell opened the meeting and led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The minutes of the February meeting were read and approved with a motion by Kosters/Millard; motion carried. The minutes of the February 17th special meeting were read and approved with a motion by Millard/Kosters; motion carried. The financial statements were reviewed and accepted with a motion by Millard/Campbell; motion carried. The March accounts payable was approved with a motion by Millard/Kosters; motion carried. The interim loan for the wastewater project will be paid off this month when the city received the permanent loan. The March wastewater accounts payable to pay back the interim loan was approved with a motion by Millard/Kosters; motion carried.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE  
MDU electric BP/Wtr/Mun Bldg/SP/Sts/Swr/EBL \$1,186.06; Badger Meter meter fees Wtr

\$121.93; Century Bus Products lease & copies Gen'l \$99.27; Community Store supplies Mun Bldg \$25.16; D. Bruns CC \$73.88; D. Bruns wage FO \$1,487.23; Dak Pump & Control Wtr \$454.08; EFPTS taxes Gen'l/FO/CC/EBL/Sts/Wtr/Swr/Cmt \$950.11; FDC Econ Dev \$1,200; Frohling Law Office WWP \$675.58; FU Oil propane EBL \$1,102.47; GDI minutes Gen'l \$78.75; J. Kosters wage Gen'l \$184.70; JM Electric Inc pump repair Wtr \$1,188.15; JVT phone/svc FO/EBL/Wtr/Gen'l \$348.40; M. Cox wage EBL \$551.13; M. Heine wage FO \$1,085.20; Meierhenry Sargent LLC loan/bond WWP \$14,200; R. Bakeberg wage St/Wtr/Swr \$351.70; R. Bakeberg veh. Allow St/Wtr/Swr \$75; R.S. Campbell wage Gen'l \$301.55; SD Dept of Rev lab tests Wtr \$15; SD Dept of Rev sales tax Grbg \$71.06; T. Millard wage Gen'l \$138.52; USDA-RD loan Wtr \$475; WEB Water Wtr \$3,065.23.

WASTEWATER PROJECT  
First National Bank of Frederick Wstwr \$1,446,969.86.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Rich Bakeberg provided a utility report. Tami Nickelson brought up the possibility of the city having virtual meetings, but the board had concerns about liability. Nickelson also discussed projects going on in the town including some community classes, steps being taken to provide recycling, and looking into adding crosswalks in town. There will be a community meeting on April 1 to talk about other upcoming community projects.

**NEW BUSINESS**

One petition for the open board seat was turned in by Troy Millard, so there will be no board election. The Wayside Cemetery fund generated \$4,744.64 this year which they will spend by designating the funds to the library. The Wayside Cemetery Fund was created through a generous donation. The town acts as a conduit for the investment earnings to go through to Alpha Circle who then decides where the money will be spent. The Frederick Equalization Board meets at 7PM on Monday, Mar. 15 and Friday Mar. 19, 2021. The board read and accepted the first reading of the annual report with a motion by Kosters/Millard; motion carried. The second reading will be at the next regular meeting. The city's insurance policy will be renewed on April 1, the cost increased by about \$600 from the prior year. Motion to approve the insurance policy for the coming year made by Millard/Kosters; motion carried. A citizen had sewer issues, and Bakeberg brought the bill to ask about the city's possible responsibility, but it was determined it was at the expense of the citizen as it was closer to the residence than the tie in.

Motion to enter executive session made by Kosters/Millard at 8:01; Campbell declared the board out of executive session at 8:31.

Motion to adjourn made by Kosters/Millard at 8:32, motion carried.

M. Heine  
Assistant Finance Officer  
Published once at the total approximate cost of \$42.02. 19860.

**Fr. Hartman leaving  
Groton-Turton Parish  
Posted by Father Hartman on Facebook**

**BE FRUITFUL AND MULTIPLY**

Some of you may have heard the news that the Bishop has appointed me the Pastor of St. Michael's Parish in Sioux Falls, SD. This not only took discernment on his part to appoint me, but it also took discernment on my part to agree to this new assignment. According to Canon Law, I was given a pastorate of 6 years here at SEAS and St. Joseph, so I had the right to refusal. So how did I discern that God was calling me to this new assignment?

As I reflected on my last two years here, I really experienced what I call the perfect size family. Everything about it was like the parents who desire to have 1 boy and 1 girl and to live the reality in the peacefulness of this quaint reality. If I stayed 6 years and had been able to continue to develop as a pastor in this peaceful reality, I'm sure we would've continued to grow together.

The problem was that I've encountered families who were living in the tension of the call of God to "Be Fruitful and Multiply". Where instead of molding a family to their ideal, they choose to cooperate with God's plan. This often means larger families, more chaos, more stress, and an obvious requirement to learn to be less selfish.

Here was my tension. If I stayed, I would be perfectly happy, but God's call was to be fruitful and multiply. I didn't want to practice in a sense a spiritual type of birth control, but to live by the church's teaching of cooperating with God's plan. My SEAS and St. Joseph Parish Family, will always be like my first two children, but God has called me to be a Father to a much bigger family. Please pray for me as I will be living in that tension, pray that I will be less selfish, but know I am eternally grateful to have been called your Father.

In light of that change, Fr. Gregory Tschakert will be the pastor here beginning on July 1st, 2021. Fr. Tschakert has served multiple roles in our diocese, including the Tribunal and Vicar of Clergy and is currently at St. Katherine Drexel Parish in Sioux Falls. He grew up in Florence and has family in this Northeast corner. Fr. Tschakert will bring such a wealth of knowledge, strong leadership, and love as a pastor. Enjoy the blessing of having him as your spiritual father.

God bless you all, and know I'm still looking forward to being with you till July. You are and have been such a blessing.

Fr. Tom Hartman

**Other School Board Decision**

Hired Joie Spier as middle school language arts/social studies, JH Volleyball coach

Hired Kyle Gerlach as PE/Health Teacher and Assistant Boys Basketball Coach

Hired Jordyn Bortnem as MS/HS Special Education Teacher.

Hired Emily Van Gerpen as K-12 counselor

The district received \$410,000 in federal funding through the COVID-19 Relief Act in stage 2 and more will be coming in stage 3.

Health Insurance Premiums will increase by 1 percent. First increase in several years.

The Granary will be permanently closing and there are two life-size statues that will need to be moved. Don Donley is looking into options to bring them to Groton.

**Columbia City  
March 17  
Equalization**

City of Columbia Equalization Meeting – Wednesday, March 17, 2021

7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Present – Corey Mitchell, Cole Kampa, Ellen Harr, Cara Dennert, Emily Eichler, Trevor Meints

Mayor Corey Mitchell called the meeting to order. There were no phone calls made to set hearing times for the meeting. No residents of the city attended the meeting to discuss the 2021 assessments.

The meeting was moved to adjourn by Emily Eichler– 2nd by Ellen Harr. All in favor – motion carried.

Submitted by Cara Dennert, Finance Officer

Published once at the total approximate cost of \$7.35. 19862.

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**Groton City  
Mark Up Fees  
Ordinance**

An Ordinance entitled: "An Ordinance Amending Section 1-3-4 Mark up Fees of Chapter 1-3 Financial Regulations".

Be it ordained by the City of Groton that the following ordinance be amended to read as follows:

1-3-4 Markup Fees. All lessees under operation in the city for the sale of alcohol shall purchase all liquor according to the South Dakota Codified Laws Title 35 pertaining to Alcoholic Beverages. The city shall charge such lessee or licensee a markup fee of five percent above the cost for liquor and malt beverage. All markup fees established by the city shall be charged uniformly to all lessees and licensees.

Passed first reading: March 2, 2021

Passed second reading: March 16, 2021

Published: March 22, 2021  
Effective Date: April 11, 2021  
Scott Hanlon, Mayor

ATTEST:  
Hope Block, Finance Officer  
Published once at the total approximate cost of \$38.53. 19861.

**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

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## Dreams For Sale

Dreams for sale. Those are my dreams for sale today, mister.

You know, when I called the auctioneer, this day seemed so far away. I stalled for days before I called.

It's hard selling your dreams.

I remember so well the day we bought this place. I remember like a proud papa the day we bought that Versatile. It's all been years ago, but inside I still feel like that young man who built this farm.

But when I look in the mirror, I see the years.

I didn't sleep much last night. I worried that the weather would be bad, that things wouldn't sell well. And I was half afraid that things would sell at all.

But there's no turning back.

The neighbors are here and so are relatives from far and wide. It's like a funeral except brown Key coveralls and six buckle overshoes are uniform of the day. But nobody died. And 300 strangers won't come to my funeral.

Move along, folks.

Nothing to see here.

Man's just selling his dreams.

We didn't miss the dairy herd when we sold it a year ago. They kept us from a thousand functions and now there is more time for kids and grandkids. Man, they grow up fast.

But the finality of selling those tractors and all that haying equipment is starting to sink in. Of course, no one can tell except my wife. She's the one who wears her heart on her sleeve today. Her eyes are red and her voice hoarse. Says she's got a cold. But I think she's going to miss that old grain truck. Sure, it smokes to beat the band, and the passenger side door flies open on left turns like a wounded duck trying to soar, but that truck is like a homely sister. You love her just the same.

But don't judge the quality of my equipment by that truck, mister. I took care of my machines. They were shedded and serviced regularly. I didn't take care of myself nearly as well.

I know it might sound a little weird, but I feel like I'm sending puppies to strangers. I want my machines to have a good home.

It's gotten to the point of embarrassment the way the auctioneer keeps bragging up my equipment. He calls me a proud man. A man who took pride in keeping up his equipment. But it's the God's-honest truth. I even hauled that Versatile in to the shop last week just to make sure it was 100 percent perfect; even though, I knew it was. I don't want anyone to feel cheated.

Man's reputation is something sacred.

The auctioneer was optimistic the day we signed the contract. Said it should be a barn-burner of a sale. But today he backed off of his prediction a little. But we'll just have to see what happens.

Besides, when a guy's selling his dreams...Well...ain't no price you can put on that.

As I watch the men slog through the mud today, I know I'm doing the right thing. The time is right. Weather's been uncooperative the last couple years. Too wet. Cattle price is iffy. And milk prices? Don't even want to talk about it.

It's not like it used to be. It's not automatic. Sons don't take over the farm much anymore. The dream business has changed.

But when I see young farmers in spirited bidding for my equipment, it makes me feel good. They're counting the hours saved if they can put two seed drills in the field come snow melt. That swather is a bargain and Junior ought to be able to handle it by June.

That's the way I was. Seemed like I had a year-round sunburn on my neck. Gosh, those were the days. We were quite a team, me and the wife. We had rhythm that was a beautiful thing at harvest. She'd haul one truck to the elevator, and I'd be topping off another when she pulled back into the field. Pert'near always in step. Like Fred and Ginger of the spring wheat.

Now, the dance belongs to the bidders. They look at each other across the crowd, a cross between gunslingers and bashful beaus at their first dance. As the bid escalates, the auctioneer points at them both.

Wanna dance?

Heads nod imperceptibly. Fingers twitch. Eventually, one of them looks at his shoes and wanders away. Guess the old corn head will do for another year.

The auctioneer is glib. When he pitches those five feed bunks, everyone knows two have seen better days. But he gamely marches on, his cadence rat-a-tat-tatting like Gene Krupa. "C'mon boys, them cows don't know the difference between a good one and a broke one. Go ahead and buy 'em. Fool them cows!" The last two go for \$30. They'll make a fine bonfire some day.

After the sale, the auctioneer is beaming. It's been a good sale. He was right all along-the first time. The church ladies have had a big day as well, selling \$2 hot dogs and \$3 burgers and potato salad advertised on every sign with Dan Quayle's extra e. Lotta Republicans here today, but I suppose their money's as good as the next guy's.

Well, nice talkin to you, mister. But I gotta go now. The guy who bought the 2+2, wants me to pull it into the shed for the night. Lotta room in there today.



**That's Life**  
by Tony Bender

I know my wife will be watching from the kitchen as I drive it for the last time. Tonight, when we're finally alone, that's when we'll talk, and we'll assure each other that selling our dreams today was the right thing to do.

Now, I ain't no poet. But any farmer worth a damn stops once in a while to watch the sun rise and see the poetry around him. I'll try to express what's on my mind to her tonight. I guess I want her to know that while we sold our dreams today, we're keeping the memories.

## Groton Area School District Third Quarter Honor Roll

### Seniors

**4.0 GPA:** Isaac Smith, Sage Mortenson, Brooklyn Gilbert, Alexis Hanten, Alexa Herr, Tanae Lipp, Hailey Monson, Erin Unzen, Samantha Pappas, Tessa Erdmann, Trey Gengerke, Regan Leicht, Grace Wambach, Grace Wiedrick

**3.99-3.50:** Eh Tha You Say, Jasmine Gengerke, Alex Morris, Kaden Carda, Alyssa Fordham, Kale Pharis, Lucas Simon, Chloe Daly, Chandler Larson, Connor Lehman, Tucker Carda, Dylan Krueger, Braden Freeman, Steven Paulson, Austin Anderson

**3.49-3.00:** Dragr Monson, Tiara DeHoet, Jaimen Farrell, Hunter Kassube, Douglas Heminger, Taryn Taylor

### Juniors

**4.0 GPA:** Allyssa Locke, Travis Townsend, Madeline Fliehs, Trista Keith, Alyssa Thaler, Seth Johnson, Jordan Bjerke

**3.99-3.50:** Madisen Bjerke, Stella Meier, Pierce Kettering, Lane Krueger, Hannah Gustafson, Julianna Kosel, Kaden Kurtz, Megan Fliehs, Kansas Kroll

**3.49-3.00:** Kennedy Anderson, Jackson Cogley, Jace Kroll, Ryder Daly, Favian Sanchez-Gonzalez, Brayden Hansen, Landon Kokales, Jayden Zak

### Sophomores

**4.0 GPA:** Ethan Clark, Jackson Dinger, Jacob Lewandowski, Elliana Weismantel

**3.99-3.50:** Kaleb Antonsen, Caleb Hanten, Andrew Marzahn, Cole Bisbee, Cole Simon, Brooke Gengerke, Aspen Johnson, Gracie Traphagen, Sheylee Peterson, Cadence Tullis, Shallyn Foertsch, Tate Larson

**3.49-3.00:** Cade Larson, Carter Barse, Sierra Ehresmann, KayLynn Overacker, Porter Johnson

### Freshmen

**4.0 GPA:** Claire Heinrich, Lydia Meier, Hannah Monson

**3.99-3.50:** Emily Clark, Holden Sippel, Camryn Kurtz, Jaycie Lier, Anna Fjeldheim, Shea Jandel, Ashlyn Sperry, Kyleigh Englund, Abigail Jensen, Dillon Abeln, Sara Menzia, Lexi Osterman, Emma Schinkel, Anna Bisbee, Sydney Leicht, Faith Fliehs, Bradin Althoff, Cadence Feist

**3.49-3.00:** Jackson Garstecki, Lane Tietz, Colby Dunker, Jacob Zak, Karsyn Jangula, Logan Ringgenberg, Ava Wienk, Bryson Wambach, Elijah Lich

### Eighth Graders

**4.0 GPA:** Gretchen Dinger

**3.99-3.50:** Payton Mitchell, Axel Warrington, Elizabeth Fliehs, Faith Traphagen, Jeslyn Kosel, Blake Dennert, Blake Pauli, Aiden Heathcote, Karrah-Jo Johnson, Corbin Weismantel

**3.49-3.00:** Ashlyn Feser, Emma Kutter, Kellen Antonsen, Laila Roberts, Easten Ekern, Kaden Kampa, Kayla Lehr, Rebecca Poor, Carter Simon, Brevin Fliehs, Kennedy Hansen, Ashley Johnson, Turner Thompson

### Seventh Graders

**4.0 GPA:** Carly Gilbert, Jerica Locke, Jaedyn Penning, Talli Wright

**3.99-3.50:** Lucas Carda, Nathan Unzen, Natalia Warrington, Logan Warrington, Benjamin Hoelt, Gage Sippel, Mia Crank, Ryder Johnson, De Eh Tha Say, London Bahr, Karter Moody

**3.49-3.00:** Keegen Tracy, Raelee Lilly, Cali Tollifson, Olivia Stiegelmeier, Keegan Harry, Garrett Schultz, Jayden Schwan, Rylee Dunker, Paisley Mitchell, Karsten Fliehs, Hannah Sandness, Breslyn Jeschke, Noah Teisen, Lincoln Krause, Nicholas Groeblichhoff

### Sixth Graders

**4.0 GPA:** Teegan Hanten, Carlee Johnson, Ashlynn Warrington

**3.99-3.50:** Brody Lord, Colt Williamson, Liby Althoff, Emerlee Jones, Kira Clocksene

**3.49-3.00:** Halee Harder, Blake Lord, Aiden Strom, Claire Schuelke, Avery Crank, Addison Hoffman Wipf, Zander Harry, Brenna Imrie, Gavin Kroll, McKenna Tietz, Walker Zoellner, Hailey Pauli, Taryn Traphagen

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# 2021-2022 Groton Area School District

Adopted 3/22/2021

August 2021						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

August	
23 - Faculty Inservice	
24 - Faculty Inservice	
25 - 1st Day of School	

January 2022						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

January	
4 - School Resumes	
14 - NCSEC Faculty Inservice - NO SCHOOL	

September 2021						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

September	
3 - NO SCHOOL	
6 - Labor Day - NO SCHOOL	
17 - Homecoming	

February 2022						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28					

February	
17 - Parent/Teacher Conferences (4:00-8:00)	
18 - Conferences (8:00-12:00)/Faculty Inservice	
21 - President's Day - NO SCHOOL	

October 2021						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

October	
7 - Parent/Teacher Conferences (4:00-8:00)	
8 - Conferences (8:00-12:00)/Faculty Inservice	
8 - Lake Region Marching Festival	
11 - Native American Day - NO SCHOOL	
22 - End of 1st Quarter (39)	

March 2022						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

March	
10 - End of 3rd Quarter (45)	
17-18 - Spring Break - NO SCHOOL	

November 2021						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

November	
11 - Veterans Day Program	
24-26 - Thanksgiving - NO SCHOOL	

April 2022						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

April	
3 - Pops Concert (2:00 & 5:00)	
15 - Good Friday - NO SCHOOL	
18 - Easter Monday - NO SCHOOL	
23 - PROM	
28 - Middle School Spring Concert (7:00)	

December 2021						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

December	
9 - MS/HS Christmas Concert (7:00)	
22 - Elementary Christmas Concert (1:00)	
22 - Early Dismissal (2:00)	
22 - End of 1st Semester (40/79)	
23-31 Christmas Break - NO SCHOOL	

May 2022						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

May	
3 - Elementary Spring Concert (7:00)	
5 - HS Concert/Awards Night (7:00)	
15 - Graduation (2:00)	
18 - End of 2nd Semester (45/90)	
19 - Faculty Inservice	

Make Up Days will be made up at the end of the year.

The Groton Area Board of Education voted 5-1 with Tigh Flihs voting no to adopt the normal 5-day school calendar for the 2021-22 school year. The only exception from the above calendar is that there will be school on December 22 with all events scheduled for December 21 being moved back to December 22. The reason is that there was a miscalculation in the number of student contact days in October as Native American Day was considered an in-session day, despite it being red on the calendar. That day will continue to be a no-school day. Flihs had opted for a modified four-day week.

With the adopted calendar, school hours will return to normal and the first day of school will be August 25 with the last day, if there are no school days, will be May 18th with 169 days of student contact days. There were a few parents that spoke on this subject with all of them wanting the return to a five-day week.

## Sometimes a Diagnosis is Skin Deep

Recently I saw a patient who had experienced two consecutive days of pain in his right upper abdomen. I questioned him, looking for clues of gallstones, liver mass, or maybe an ulcer in the small bowel, but his answers did not fit my expectations.

The pain was located under his right ribs and radiated into his back, just as I would expect of gallbladder disease; but it was not triggered by eating, and the way the patient described the pain did not fit the profile of an abdominal disorder. Then, a lightbulb went off; I needed to look at his skin.

I examined his right back, and sure enough there it was: a cluster of red, blistering, lesions that the patient had not yet noticed. This was not gallbladder or liver disease; it was shingles.

Shingles is a skin eruption caused by a reactivation of the varicella zoster (or chicken pox) virus. In people who have had chicken pox earlier in life, the virus goes dormant in a spinal nerve. For most of us, it never again causes a problem, but in some people the reactivated virus can spread to areas of the body following the distribution of that spinal nerve, causing a painful blistered rash which looks like chicken pox.

The pain caused by shingles often occurs prior to the visible skin outbreaks making it easy to misdiagnose. In my few years of practice I have discovered shingles in patients complaining of ear pain, abdominal pain, and low back pain.

When administered early, antiviral medication can limit the duration of shingles and reduce the risk of post-herpetic neuralgia, a pain in the affected nerve distribution which lasts long after the rash resolves. At its worst, post-herpetic neuralgia can be a debilitating and life-long condition.

Fortunately, we have a highly effective vaccine that greatly reduces the risk of having shingles. The current shingles vaccine is FDA approved for people 50 and older and is much more effective than the previous version of the vaccine.

Thankfully, widespread childhood chicken pox vaccinations started in the late 1990s so decades from now, shingles may be a rare relic of the past in the United States. Until then, I will always remember to look skin deep when investigating a patient's new pain.

Kelly Evans-Hullinger, M.D. is part of The Prairie Doc® team of physicians and currently practices internal medicine in Brookings, South Dakota. For free and easy access to the entire Prairie Doc® library, visit [www.prairiedoc.org](http://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.




By Dr. Kelly Evans-Hullinger ~ Prairie Doc® Perspectives



[www.harmotors.com](http://www.harmotors.com)

### 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.

*A subscription to the Groton Independent makes a great birthday gift!*





**Groton Prismatic Sensations competed in Mitchell on Saturday.** (Photos from Mitchell High Friend de Coup Facebook Page)



### Traphagen on All NEC GBB Team

The All-Conference Northeast Conference girls basketball teams have been announced. On the first team are Addison Rozell, senior, Redfield; Madelyn Bragg, Roncalli, junior; Kylee Wadsworth, senior, and Kami Wadsworth, sophomore, both from Hamlin; and Chloe Langager, freshman, Sisseton. Second team members are Morgan Fiedler, junior, and Olivia Hanson, junior, both from Roncalli; Gracie Traphagen, sophomore, Groton Area; Maurina Street, sophomore, Milbank; Cara Shoemaker, senior, Webster Area; and Jada Burke, sophomore, Clark/Willow Lake. Third team members are Charity Kabwe, senior, Clark/Willow Lake; McKenna Prouty, senior, Hamlin; Alivia Baumgarn, junior, Webster Area; Elissa Hammrich, senior, Roncalli; and Hailey Nelson, junior, Sisseton.

## South Dakota Students Get Chance to Send Art to Washington

Washington, D.C. – Today, U.S. Representative Dusty Johnson (R-S.D.) announced the 2021 Congressional Art Competition, which puts the artwork of South Dakota students in the nation’s Capitol building. The South Dakota Arts Council (SDAC) is now accepting entries on behalf of Rep. Johnson’s office.

The contest is open to all South Dakota high school students, and the first-place winning entry will be displayed in the Cannon Tunnel of the United States Capitol for one year. The second-place winning entry will be displayed in Johnson’s Washington, D.C., office. “Year after year, it’s awesome to see the talent of our high school students and have the chance to show our appreciation and support of their artwork,” said Johnson. “As I walk by the artwork of so many talented students each day, I’m reminded of home every time I pass South Dakota’s unique creation. Please reach out to the South Dakota Arts Council if you need any help, and get your artwork submitted by the deadline.”

The Arts Council will accept only digital submissions on behalf of Rep. Johnson. Students should send one email including a high-resolution JPEG image, along with a completed, typed PDF of the student release form to [rebecca.cruse@state.sd.us](mailto:rebecca.cruse@state.sd.us). Submissions must be received by Tuesday, April 27. Winners will be notified by Thursday, April 29, and will be responsible for shipping their artwork and student release forms to the SDAC offices. The South Dakota Arts Council will have the artwork framed and will ship it to Washington, D.C., for the student.

Please review the artwork specifications and guidelines before submitting and download the student release form at <https://artscouncil.sd.gov/CAC/index.aspx>.

The Congressional Art Competition is sponsored by the U.S. House of Representatives. It’s an opportunity to recognize and encourage the artistic talent in the nation, as well as in each congressional district. The South Dakota Arts Council partners with Johnson’s office to carry out this initiative.



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EarthTalk®  
From the Editors of E - The Environmental Magazine



**Wind power provides a small fraction of electricity in Texas; frozen natural gas lines caused the state's power grid to go down recently.** Credit: Athena, pexels.

Dear EarthTalk: Were frozen wind turbines the reason for Texas' historic power outages recently? If so, how can we make renewables more reliable moving forward?

-- G. S., Hartford, CT

As Winter Storm Uri wreaked havoc on the American Midwest this past February with bitter cold snow, entire power grids shut down and states like Texas faced a crisis like never before. Conservative politicians put the blame on renewable energy, particularly wind and solar. "Our wind and our solar got shut down, and they were collectively more than 10 percent of our power grid, and that thrust Texas into a situation where it was lacking power on a statewide basis," Governor Greg Abbot told Fox News.

Contrary to this argument, the Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) reports that renewable energy is responsible for less than a fraction of the state's power supply—with wind power making up a mere seven percent of energy losses. While issues such as frozen wind turbines did contribute to the widespread power grid failures, wind turbines tend to generate less power in the winter anyway, leaving the chief culprit of the statewide power shortages to natural gas.

Natural gas provides more than a third of Texas's power and heats over 40 percent of homes. The ERCOT reported that over 80 percent of the state's total winter capacity is generated by natural gas, coal and nuclear power. Natural gas power plants don't usually store fuel on site, and a lack of cold insulation because of the rarity of severe cold in Texas left most pipelines frozen and unable to maintain a continuous transferring of gas.

The ample evidence of fossil fuel energy failures behind Texas' electricity crisis points to the broader issue of climate change denial and its devastating consequences. "It is an extreme weather problem, not a clean power problem. If anything, it shows why we need to be investing in building out more renewable energy sources with better transmission and storage to replace outdated systems," says Heather Zichal, CEO of the American Clean Power Association.

Regardless, everyone is in favor of making renewable energy more reliable as well. One short-term solution is to modify wind turbines with anti-icing methods to withstand extreme temperatures, which Texas grid operators have yet to invest in. In the long run, however, the nation needs to drastically decrease its reliance on fossil fuels in order to make renewable energy more reliable. In the case of wind energy, the inconsistent demand of wind power makes wind power output fluctuate and thus less reliable. As more wind power is added to a localized grid, wind energy output is more easily predicted, decreasing wind variability and increasing the efficiency, flexibility and reliability of the grid.

In the end, the disastrous level of under-preparation resulting in a cascade of failures in Texas highlights the nation's dependence on fossil fuels and failure to build resilience by investing in a sustainable infrastructure. Though developing clean energy may come at a high cost, climate-linked disasters will only intensify and cause dangerous fallout. Let's hope that Winter Storm Uri can serve as the final wake-up call for our nation to begin a firm transition to renewable energy and fight for a habitable future.

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](mailto:question@earthtalk.org).

## Answers to last week's Fun Page

**April Fool's Day Surprises**

1. COURT  
2. TRICKS  
3. BEHAVE  
4. DISGUISES  
5. FORTUNE  
6. GESTURES  
7. JOKES  
8. WOMAN  
9. RIDDLES  
10. HOAX  
11. WISECRACKS  
12. PUNS

Did you match each word to its definition?  
A. a puzzling question or problem: the answer is hard to figure out  
B. a "fresh" or "smart" remark  
C. a false story told in such a way as to make people think it is real  
D. something done for fun; a jest  
E. clever use of a word to have more than one meaning

1. joke  
2. riddle  
3. hoax  
4. wisecrack  
5. pun

by Annimills LLC © 2021

## BIDS

**NOTICE OF BIDS:** Notice is hereby given that the Lyman County Board of Commissioners will call for bids for crushing 50,000 ton of gravel; to be stockpiled at the site known as the Burtz Pit. For information please contact the Lyman County Highway Office at 605-869-2261.

## EMPLOYMENT

**MJ's Sinclair of Groton is looking for someone to work weekends and nights. Stop out and see Jeff for an application. (0324.0414)**

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**GREAT PAYING JOBS!** Statewide construction jobs, \$17.00 - \$23.00 hourly + benefits. Summer or permanent. No experience necessary, great career opportunities. Apply Online [www.sdwork.org](http://www.sdwork.org).

**HILLS TRUCKING** is looking for a class A CDL driver. Located in Kennebec, SD. Looking for a self motivated individual. Call Tom 605-208-0070.

**THE CITY OF FAITH** is accepting applications for Full Time Police Officer. Contact us at 605-967-2261 or [faith@faithsd.com](mailto:faith@faithsd.com) for applications. Base Salary \$36,000 or DOE. Experience preferred but willing to train.

**FARM EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY** Accepting applications for farm employee. Employee will operate and maintain farm machinery. Duties may include planting, fertilizer application, and harvesting. Semi-truck driving experience is preferred. Kjerstad Farm Partnership Quinn, SD Call: 605-685-5852.

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**Groton Citywide 2021 Spring Cleanup**  
**April 23-30**  
**ALL ITEMS NEED TO BE DROPPED OFF BEFORE 10AM ON 4/30/21!!**

**Bring anything you wish to dispose of to the City Shop**  
**10 E Railroad Ave starting April 23rd.**

Please place items in the appropriate pile.

**RESIDENTIAL ONLY!!**  
Keep Metal, Tires, Paint, Batteries & Chemicals Separate

Pickup can be arranged for **Monday, April 26th to 10 a.m., Friday, April 30th** by calling City Hall 397-8422.

**Cheer someone up! Send a balloon for just \$6!** (includes delivery in Groton & Tax)  
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**Call/Text Tina at 397-7285 or Paul at 397-7460**  
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# Congratulations!

## Samantha Pappas

**State Debate Domestic Extemp Champion**

**Two time National Speech and Debate National Contest qualifier**

**Academic All American**



**Congratulations Samantha for representing Groton Area in debate, oral interp and Student Congress over the years from the following businesses and individuals.**

In the previous two years she got 3rd overall in domestic extemp, last year national Qualifier in Student Congress, and over the years she earned several superiors in interp, qualified for state interp 3 times, and 3rd overall in Lincoln-Douglas debate in her 7th grade year. Samantha, a GHS senior, is the daughter of Kelly and Valerie Pappas, Groton.

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Lori's Pharmacy  
Lori & Ron Westby  
Groton Daily Independent**



# After tough 2020, S.D. tourism industry hopes for big bounce back in 2021

**Bart Pfankuch**

**South Dakota News watch**

South Dakota tourism officials and operators are happy to see a tough 2020 in the rearview mirror, and even happier to look forward to what could be a banner year for visitors and spending in 2021.



**James Hagen**

Aside from some pockets of unexpected prosperity in 2020 — in tourist activities focused on the outdoors and at accommodations located in wide-open or wilderness settings — the South Dakota tourism industry suffered significant reductions in visitors and revenues last year.

*“2021 is shaping up to be a strong year when it comes to travel and tourism ... there’s no question that there is a ton of pent up demand and people are ready to travel.”*

**-- James Hagen, South Dakota Secretary of Tourism**

The state saw about 12.6 million visitors to the state in 2020, a decrease of 13% over 2019, and spending by tourists is estimated at \$3.4 billion in 2020, a drop of 18% or about \$700 million over the prior year.

Early in the pandemic, the tourism industry shed about 15,000 jobs due to a decline in tourist visits, said South Dakota Secretary of Tourism James Hagen. Arrivals at airports in Sioux Falls and Rapid City fell by 48% to only 408,000 in 2020, he said.

Yet tourism officials and operators in South Dakota and elsewhere are almost certain the worst is behind them.

Recent surveys appear to indicate that losses suffered in the pandemic-plagued 2020 tourism season will be offset by a spike in the number of new and returning visitors in 2021 and a sizable increase in the amount of money they will spend in South Dakota.

A rise in vaccinations against coronavirus, a falling number of COVID-19 cases and a simmering desire among tourists to travel after a year many stayed home are expected to converge and result in a potentially record-setting year for tourism in South Dakota.

“From every indicator we’re looking at, every survey that’s been done, 2021 is shaping up to be a strong year when it comes to travel and tourism,” said Hagen. “There’s no question that there is a ton of pent up demand and people are ready to travel.”

South Dakota ranked third best in domestic bookings in 2020 and fared better than most of the nation, which saw tourism spending fall by 45% during the year.

A state-sponsored questionnaire posed to residents in neighboring states shows that July 2021 will be a particularly busy month for tourism in South Dakota, and much of the travel will be done by families, Hagen said.

Recent national surveys have shown that 84% of Americans say they plan to travel within the next six months, that 39% are planning a vacation of a week or more, and that the top six destinations will be large metro areas, small towns or rural areas, beaches, state or regional parks, national parks and mountain settings.

“Of the top six, South Dakota checks four of those boxes, which is outstanding for us,”

Hagen said.

One key indicator of visitor interest in the state, visits to the website [travelsouthdakota.com](http://travelsouthdakota.com), has shown a 45% jump in site traffic in 2021 compared with 2020, and a similar rise in visits compared with 2019.

Hagen said the state tourism industry shed more than 15,000 jobs, or about 35% of its workforce, during the early stages of the pandemic in the spring of 2020. But after Memorial Day, tourism picked back up and most of those lost jobs returned, he said.

Still, “there’s no question some businesses were lost for good,” he said.

Hagen said people in the tourism industry learned several lessons from the pandemic, which he hopes will remain top of mind moving forward.

Businesses must remain vigilant and plan ahead in case another pandemic or other major industry interruption occurs by making sure financials are in order, he said. In addition, he said the pandemic revealed the importance for businesses and employees to focus on maintaining high standards of cleanliness and hygiene to make guests feel comfortable and safe.

“Visitors are going to expect a certain level of safety from here on out, and I don’t think that’s a bad thing,” he said.

Despite the dips in visits and spending, industry officials say 2020 could have been much worse, and note that South Dakota did much better in tourism than most other U.S. states.

Hagen and others credit the strong showing in part to the decision by Gov. Kristi Noem not to enact a statewide mask mandate or require business closures during the pandemic, and a coordinated “open for business” advertising campaign to attract visitors from other states to South Dakota.

Hagen said he does not believe that the efforts to encourage tourists to visit South Dakota during the pandemic caused or exacerbated spikes in COVID-19 cases in the state, which at times led the nation in per-capita infections and deaths in 2020.

“I don’t necessarily agree that it was visitors spreading Covid,” Hagen said. “The whole Midwest was having a wave of cases at times, and different parts of the country were hitting that wave at different points.”

Hagen said the industry’s approach was to welcome visitors but then ensure they felt safe once they arrived.

“We said, ‘We’re open,’ so now we have the responsibility of taking care of these visitors and making sure we have those health and hygiene protocols in place,” he said.

## One state, two different outcomes

The potential loss in tourism dollars was undoubtedly offset largely by the nature of South Dakota itself, with its spread-out population, its myriad outdoorsy recreational activities and strong stock of accommodations that allowed for easy social distancing.

As a result, a significant disparity in number of visitors and tourism spending in 2020 showed up in data from the eastern half of the state compared with the west.

The shift to outdoor activities amid the pandemic led 2 million people to visit Custer State Park in 2020, setting a new attendance record. Visits to state parks overall jumped by 31% over 2019 to about 8 million visitors in 2020.

But with a tourism economy based more on conventions, hotel stays and large music and entertainment events that did not allow for social distancing, the Sioux Falls tourism industry saw a 40% decline in spending in the local market in 2020 over 2019, compared with only a 10% decline in spending in the Black Hills & Badlands region.

Teri Schmidt, executive director of Experience Sioux Falls, the city’s tourism-promotion agency, said she did not yet have final figures for 2020 but noted that at one point early in the pandemic the city saw a drop in tourism revenues of 46% over the prior year.

Many big events were canceled outright in 2020, she said.

“It was millions and millions of dollars in economic loss, we do know that,” she said.

Schmidt said her group, funded by a tax on nightly hotel stays, had to cut \$900,000 from its budget in 2020, leading to one position cut, elimination of some marketing programs and other spending reductions that included dropping office janitorial services. The agency did receive some funding assistance from the state and city to offset losses, Schmidt said.

Sioux Falls businesses did see an unexpected bump in tourism spending during 2020 after families and groups of friends came to the city to escape strict mask mandates in neighboring Minnesota, Schmidt said.

The city also received a boost when a few groups that typically held events in states that were locked down due to the pandemic moved events to eastern South Dakota, including from New York, Michigan and Arizona, Schmidt said. She thinks it is unlikely those will become permanent additions to the Sioux Falls market, however.

## DATA POINTS: THE HURTFUL AND THE HOPEFUL

South Dakota fared better than most other states for tourism visits and spending in 2020, but the COVID-19 pandemic still took a major toll on the industry in the state. Looking ahead, many signs point to a rebound.

A tough year in the rearview mirror...

- 13%, the decline in visitors to South Dakota in 2020 compared to 2019 (12.6 million visitors in 2020)

- 18%, the decline in visitor spending in 2020 (\$3.4 billion spent in 2020)

- 35%, the decline in tourism jobs in South Dakota at one point during 2020 (about 15,000 jobs lost)

- 48%, the decline in airport arrivals in Sioux Falls and Rapid City (about 408,000 arrivals)

A recipe for a rebound...

- 84% of Americans say they plan to travel in the next six months

- 58% of American tourists believe it will be safe to travel over the next six months

- 44% of American travelers plan to travel more in 2021 compared to 2020

- 57% increase in online searches related to South Dakota tourism in first three months of 2021

- 14% rise in tourists requesting materials about visiting South Dakota so far in 2021 compared to 2020

- “Excited” is the word most Americans use when considering travel in 2021

Source: South Dakota Department of Tourism





**Teri Schmidt**

Yet Schmidt has seen signs of optimism, including the planned return of many local festivals and new arrivals such as a youth wrestling tournament that relocated from Minnesota and will bring nearly 5,000 new visitors to Sioux Falls in April.

"We really want to be excited and we are excited, but we're cautious because it's been such a tough year," Schmidt said. "All indications are that we know people are shopping and planning; now we've just got to see them come."

Schmidt said tourism officials across the state remain cautious that the pandemic or some other interruption could again upset their industry.

"If a variant would take over, then what?" she said. "We're trying to be very realistic about what could yet happen, while at the same time, we're really excited."

Michelle Thomson, president and CEO of the Black Hills & Badlands Tourism Association, also expresses great optimism that 2021 will be a bounce-back year.

Thomson said the tourism industry in West River fared better than much of the state and most of the nation in 2020.

Anchored by outdoor activities that allowed for social distancing, estimated visitor spending in the group's footprint that includes much of West River and part of eastern Wyoming in 2020 was down about 10%, from \$1.48 billion in 2019 to \$1.33 billion last year. Taxable sales in the tourism industry in the region fell to about \$400 million in 2020, a 10% decrease from 2019.

Hotel occupancy took a bigger hit, falling 16.4% in the group's coverage area.

Like other tourism officials in South Dakota, Thomson said the drop-off could have been more severe.

"Overall we were very happy we were not down nearly as much as other areas of the country," Thomson said. "We had sectors of the tourism industry that did really, really well because we have so many outdoor activities and wide-open spaces, and those were the sort of things people were really looking for in 2020."

Thomson also credited the national media coverage about South Dakota being open for business and not having a mask mandate with attracting interest and visits by tourists from other states, including atypical sources such as New York, New Jersey and California. She hopes the momentum created among that new set of visitors will carry over into the upcoming



**Joe and Heidi Perdue, owners of Black Hills Cabin Rentals in Lead, South Dakota, had a surprisingly strong year for business in 2020 and are expecting even better results in 2021.** Photo: Courtesy Heidi Perdue

season. "From the very start of the pandemic, we started getting calls from visitors wanting to come and experience South Dakota because of the freedom we were able to have here," Thomson said. "We had people looking at South Dakota who maybe would have never looked at us before."

## Attracted to the outdoors

Many hotels and restaurants across South Dakota suffered big losses in 2020 as tourists avoided indoor spaces where COVID-19 can spread.

In all, about 725 businesses that self-identify as accommodations or food service applied for federal COVID-19 relief grants issued by the state, receiving a combined \$45.6 million, according to the South Dakota Bureau of Finance and Management.

However, accommodations offered in stand-alone cabins or rental homes showed strong outcomes across the state in 2020, with more than 880,000 bookings for Airbnb or Home-away properties, a 22% jump over the prior year, state officials said.

And as vaccinations increase and coronavirus cases fall, that trend is expected to continue in 2021.

The strong sense of wanderlust among some tourists has resulted in more early bookings in 2021 for cabins in the northern Black Hills, according to Heidi Perdue, co-owner of the Black Hills Cabin Rentals booking firm.

Visitors who arrange accommodations for large gatherings, such as family reunions or wedding parties, typically book cabin rentals months in advance, Perdue said. But this year, the firm is seeing many smaller cabins being booked far earlier than usual, she said.

"Instead of waiting until May to book for a June rental, they're booking for the summer as early as January or February, so we're filling up a lot faster than normal," Perdue said. "People are excited about the idea of future travel when they didn't get to last year, or they're planning on being vaccinated, so they're just making sure it's lined up."

The rental service, based in Lead, manages bookings for about 60 privately owned properties. Prices vary widely, depending on cabin size and amenities. A cabin near Terry Peak, known as "Sleepin' Bear" and now promoted on the firm's website, has three bedrooms and two bathrooms and rents for \$175 a night.

After suffering many cancellations in March and April 2020, the firm rebounded in the summer and enjoyed a particularly strong fall rental season to close out the year ahead of prior years, said Perdue, who runs the business with her husband Joe.

The fall uptick was due in part, she said, to families who wanted to travel and were able to either educate their children remotely or work remotely from a cabin that has internet access. In general, cabin rentals were seen as a safer destination for travelers during the pandemic, Perdue said.

"When you rent out a property, you have the entire property to yourself, and unlike a hotel, you don't have to be around anyone if you don't want to," she said. "There's also a lot of outdoor recreation, and a lot of things you can do if you want to avoid bigger crowds."

Other businesses dependent on the tourism trade, including hotels and restaurants where direct human interaction is unavoidable, did not fare as well.

Outdoor recreation became a go-to activity for many South Dakotans and for visitors to the state, said Les Wulf, owner of The Outpost Lodge, a fishing resort with a hotel and



**Many events that attract local residents and visitors were cancelled in South Dakota in 2020, including the Fall River County Fair in Edgemont, shown here in a non-pandemic year.**

Photo: News Watch file

restaurant located on the shores of Lake Oahe about 17 miles north of Pierre.

"We just had a ton of people who wanted to go fishing," Wulf said. "What better way is there to distance yourself than in your own boat on 240 miles of open water?"

Early in the pandemic, Wulf saw numerous cancellations of reservations, including annual outings by large groups representing law enforcement officers, rural electric and water providers and highway superintendents. Wulf said early signs point to those groups returning for summer 2021.

Wulf also noted that the cancellations in the spring of 2020 were offset by an unexpected population of guests he welcomed in summer 2020 and which he expects will again dominate resort bookings in 2021: American anglers who typically travel to Canada to fish but were blocked by closed border crossings between the two countries.

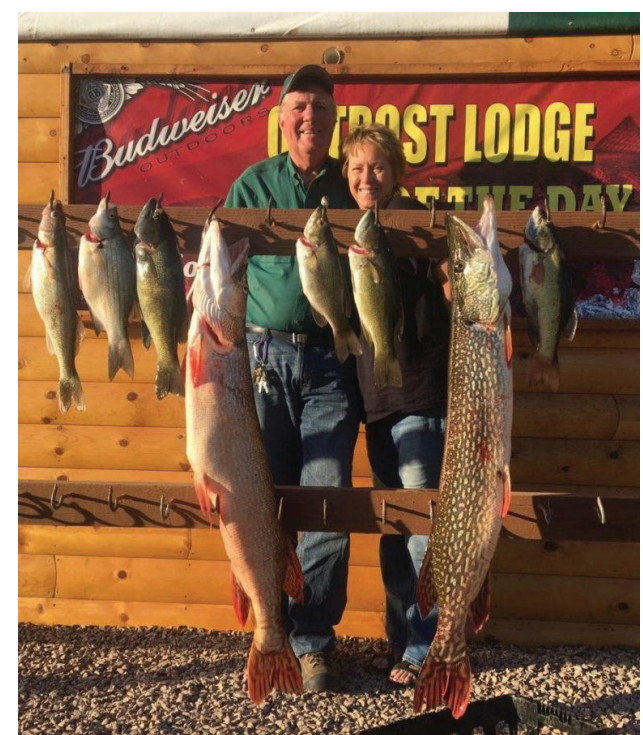
"They're used to going up there for five, six or seven days, and they couldn't go last year and they couldn't go this year," Wulf said. "We were and are still seeing a lot of reservations from people who would have gone to Canada."

Lake Oahe serves those new guests well, Wulf said, with a strong population of walleye, northern pike, smallmouth bass and catfish.

The new guests helped ease a poor showing during the annual fall pheasant hunt, and Wulf said his 2020 revenues ultimately exceeded those from 2019.

Now, with vaccinations rising and COVID-19 cases falling, he is already seeing major bookings for late spring and summer 2021. Many of his annual customers are returning after staying home in 2020, he said.

"We're just about totally booked up in June already, and for July, we're starting to get booked up," Wulf said. "We're turning people away right now ... I'm helping my competitors out by referring these people to other resorts."



**Les Wulf, owner of The Outpost Lodge near Pierre, and his fiancée Barb Leesman, celebrate a successful outing on Lake Oahe. Wulf is seeing strong early bookings at his lakeside resort for 2021.**

Photo: Courtesy Les Wulf



# The Life of Harlan Jacob Heupel

Memorial Services for Harlan Heupel, 81, of Groton, SD will be at 2pm on Thursday, March 25th at Spitzer-Miller Funeral Home in Aberdeen with Pastor Bill Duncan officiating. Visitation will be held from 12:30pm to 2pm. Inurnment will be at Groton Union Cemetery at a later date. Harlan died on Tuesday, March 9th at Sanford Aberdeen Medical Center. Services will be live streamed, and you can watch by following the link under Harlan's picture on the online obituary at [www.spitzerfuneralhome.com](http://www.spitzerfuneralhome.com). Arrangements are in care of Spitzer-Miller Funeral Home, 1111 S. Main St., Aberdeen.



Harlan Jacob Heupel was born September 8, 1939 to Julius and Ida (Rohrbach) Heupel in Leola, SD. He grew up and attended school in the Hosmer area.

Harlan was united in marriage to Jarlene "Jerry" Sorenson on June 26, 1960 in Aberdeen. Over the years, they lived in Aberdeen, Rapid City and Pierpont. Then then moved to Groton, SD where they lived for 44 years.

Harlan was recognized by his peers at the Aberdeen Rural Firefighters for years of service as the Public Relations Officer from 1972-1977.

Harlan drove truck for 53 years, working for various companies until 1980, when he bought his own truck and started Heupel and Son Trucking Company. Harlan contracted with JB Hunt and Schneider Corporation during this time. He earned a 1-Million Mile Accident-Free Driving Award from Schneider Corporation. After selling his truck, Harlan continued to drive for New Deal Tire, Pro-Ag and Schmidt Construction before retiring.

Harlan loved playing cards with family and friends. He also enjoyed camping, listening to old time music and dancing. One of his favorite pastimes was playing games with his Grandchildren.

Grateful for having shared Harlan's life are his son, Robert 'Bob' (Lynn) Heupel, Aberdeen and daughter, Darlene (Russell) Sass, Groton. He is also survived by seven grandchildren: Jeremy Heupel (Taylor Jorgensen), Josh (Josie) Heupel, Spencer Heupel, Zachary Heupel, Kyra Heupel, Jacob Sass and Ethan (Sarah) Sass and two great-grandchildren Brooklyn and Shane Sass. Also, his sister Betty (Ed) Krueger, Hartford and brother Theodore 'Ted' (Marj) Heupel, Aberdeen.

Preceding Harlan in death are his parents, Julius and Ida Heupel; his wife, Jarlene 'Jerry' Heupel and his sister, Kathy and her husband, Richard Lappgard.

## STOP TALKING ABOUT YOUR PROBLEMS!



**DAKOTA RESOURCES**

**Paula Jensen**  
Vice President of  
Program Development

I recently had a big discovery – the main thing holding back our vision of thriving rural communities is the extinction of collaborative leadership. Yes, it's true. Truly collaborative leaders are rare in our communities.

If rediscovered, collaborative leadership could aid our rural communities in creating an ecosystem that seeks out diverse opinions and empowers residents to engage in the process of implementing new ideas. Other spillover effects could be the release of innovation to build new systems and cultivating a culture of both trust and inclusivity among residents. Doesn't this sound wonderful? (Keep reading and you will discover, it's possible!)

I am just finishing an online course from the University of North Alabama titled, Building an Agile Economy. I learned that Agile Economies are continuously seeking new opportunities through collaborative leadership. To create those new opportunities, they are consistently focused on thinking differently about their ecosystem and having regular strategic conversations with stakeholders.

In many of our rural communities, we tend to think in terms of problems, for example, have you ever heard any of these questions: How do we fill the vacant shops on Main Street? How do we stop brain drain? How do we fill that spec building in the industrial park? Why can't we get anyone else to see what a wonderful community we have? All of these are problem-centric conversations. They do not lead us anywhere. They drain our energy. They turn into arguments. They keep us stuck.

Rather than focus on the problems, collaborative leaders in agile economies learn to flip problems into opportunities. Instead of thinking about how to save our small businesses, they focus on questions like: "Imagine if everyone supported our local businesses. What would that look like?" or "How might we strengthen our small business networks?"

Here's the turning point: In developing an agile economy we need to leave behind the old problem-centric mindsets and develop new collaborative behaviors focused on opportunities.

I know what you're thinking after reading that last sentence, "But, Paula, you don't know my community! Shifting mindsets and behaviors is an impossible task." I know it's not easy, but it is possible. So, I'll break it down for you. If you want to shift your community's mindsets and behaviors toward collaborative leadership, then focus on changing the conversations. Put problems aside. Focus on opportunities. Ask these two questions in every strategic conversation: "Where are we going?" and "How will we get there?"

Start by building your habit of being a collaborative leader. Conduct regular strategic conversations through the practice of flipping problems into opportunities with a powerful question. Your actions will lead your community toward the spontaneous recovery of collaborative leadership, rather than toward extinction.

The Community Coach. Having a passion for community leadership and development is what drives Paula Jensen's personal and professional life. Paula resides in her hometown of Langford, South Dakota, population 318+. She serves as a Strategic Doing practitioner, grant writer and community coach with Dakota Resources based in Renner, South Dakota. Dakota Resources is a mission-driven 501c3 Community Development Financial Institution working to connect capital and capacity to empower rural communities. Contact her at [paula@dakotare-sources.org](mailto:paula@dakotare-sources.org).

Put our experienced team to work for you!



## The Groton Independent

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