



# The Groton Independent

Vol. 138 No. 31 ♦ Groton, South Dakota ♦ Wednesday, April 7, 2021 ♦ Established in 1889

## New library board to be developed

A new library board will need to be created as the library will be moved to the former Wells Fargo building where City Hall will be located. Karyn Babcock will be the council representative and the city will be looking for five more citizens. An active board is required to be with the state library board.

Four bids were submitted for the chip and seal project for this summer. Prices ranged from \$1.664 to \$2.31 per unit price. The council accepted the low bid from TopCoat for a total of \$144,768.

The council gave first reading of the cable franchises, good for 15 years, for both James Valley Telecommunications and Midco. Midco will start at mid year and will finish by the end of the year. Both ordinance will go into effect May 5.

On the bills, it was noted that the insurance for the new city hall (former Wells Fargo building) will increase by \$805.75 as the replacement cost of the building is listed as \$995,049.

The garbage pickup route will be done for one more week and then there is a good chance it will go back to town-wide curbside pickup again.

There was a question if there will be a drop cloth used when the tower is going to be painted. No drop cloth will be used as the paint is heavy enough so it should not drift.

Malt Beverage licenses were approved for Ken's Food Fair, Olde Bank 'n Cafe, MJ's Sinclair and Dollar General.

The Minnesota Twins Fields for Kids gave the city \$5,000 for dugouts. Finance Officer Hope Block said that the Minnesota Twins has given Groton \$15,000 in grants for the dugouts.

Overall, the tower project is seeing a decrease in the price. Originally, it was \$1.057 million and to date, it is \$1.043 million

After an executive session, the council hired the following: Wyatt Locke as assistant junior Legion coach, Bryson Wambach as gatekeeper, Bradin Althoff and Kaleb Hoover as peewee and midget coaches at \$750 each, Matt Locke and Set Erickson as peewee and midget coaches at \$500 each, and grounds keepers Cole Simon, Tate Larson, Steven Paulson and Allyssa Thayler.

The cemetery caretaker wage was set at \$14.50 an hour.



**2020-21 Groton Area Girls Basketball Letter Winners**  
Front row: Brooke Gengerke, Allyssa Locke, Alyssa Thaler, Jerica Locke, Kennedy Hansen, Jaedyn Penning.  
Back row: Anna Fjeldheim, Gracie Traphagen, Kenzie McInerney, Aspen Johnson, Sydney Leicht, Lydia Meier. Not pictured: Emma Schinkel. (Photo by Deb Gengerke)



**2020-21 Groton Area Girls Basketball Individual Winners**  
Left to right: Allyssa Locke, Defensive MVP; Brooke Gengerke, Tiger Award; Gracie Traphagen, Offensive MVP and Second-Team All Northeast Conference (NEC); Kenzie McInerney, Northeastern SD Senior All-Star Game; Aspen Johnson, Hustle & Heart Award; Alyssa Thaler, Coaches Award; Talli Wright, Most Improved. (Photo by Deb Gengerke)



## Groton PEEPS Winners

Groton Area Elementary would like to thank Mrs. Dunker for organizing the Easter Peeps Contest and all 2nd and 5th grade students who participated. Pictured from left to right are Addison Hoeft-5th grade 3rd place winner with Mad Hater, Makenna Krause-5th grade 1st place winner with Peep School, Easton Weber/Owen Sperry-5th grade 2nd place winners with Peep Wreck, Micah Theisen-2nd grade 2nd place winner with World of Dinosaurs, Hank Hill-2nd grade Grand Champion with Peeps National Park, Brynlee Dunker-2nd grade 1st place winner with Three Little Bunnies, and Kinley Sandness-2nd grade 3rd place winner with Peeps Igloo.

(Photo from grotonarea.com website)

## POPS Concert is Sunday - Note updated times

The Groton Area High School music department will present its annual POPS Concert on Sunday, April 11th, at 2:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. in the high school gym. Please note the afternoon show is a time change from previous years. Tickets are five dollars. Advance tickets are available at the High School Office.

The concert will feature performances from the award-winning groups Prismatic Sensations Show Choir as well as many talented soloists, and some smaller ensembles. They will all be performing old and new popular music that you are sure to enjoy! There will be no reserved seating, and seats do fill up quickly, so plan on arriving early to get a great view of the show! The doors will open one hour prior to show time. This concert is one of the highlights of the year for the music department, and you do not want to miss it!

Come on out, have some Coca-Cola and popcorn, and enjoy performances by many of our music department's students!

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Call 605-274-9549 for more information.



By Jordan Wright

We've covered plenty of Minnesota Vikings' free agency news, so this week I want to expand our coverage to encompass the NFC North. As always though, we start with any Vikings' news and notes that you may have missed this past week.

There wasn't much news coming out of Minnesota this past week. The good news is that the Vikings signed a free agent offensive lineman! The bad news? That player was in-house free agent Dakota Dozier, who was the worst starting offensive lineman in the NFL last season. We have to hope the Vikings simply brought him in for depth because if they plan to start him again this season, we're all in for a long season.

The Vikings haven't made many needle-moving changes this offseason, although with many players coming back from injury the team should still be better than they were last season. The first goal of any team is to win the division, which is why we will take a look at what moves the Chicago Bears, Detroit Lions, and Green Bay Packers have made since the end of last season.

### Chicago Bears

The biggest question mark surrounding the Chicago Bears is the quarterback position. After years of trying to get quality play out of Mitch Trubiski, the Bears finally decided to go in a different direction this offseason. While there were plenty of rumors swirling around about the Bears making a huge splash and trading for Russell Wilson, what actually happened was far less exciting. The Bears ended up signing Andy Dalton to a one-year deal, meaning there will be at least one more season of average-at-best quarterback play in the windy city.

Besides Dalton, the Bears elected to bring back defensive lineman Mario Edwards and offensive lineman Germain Ifedi. Both of those players are decent starters, yet neither will exactly strike fear into the hearts of opponents. When you factor in the team releasing Pro-Bowl cornerback Kyle Fuller, defensive lineman/wrecking ball Akeim Hicks wanting out, and rising superstar Allen Robinson refusing to sign his franchise tag, the Bears appear to have taken a step or two back this offseason.

### Detroit Lions

The Lions are in the middle of a rebuild. The team chose to honor Matthew Stafford's wishes and trade him to a contending team, sending him to the Rams in exchange for Jared Goff. The team also traded for Rams' defensive lineman Michael Brockers, who should help the Lions create pressure on the quarterback. Wanting to revamp the receiving corps, the Lions signed Tyrell Williams and Breshad Perriman.

Perhaps the most important signing Detroit made this offseason was betting on an in-house free agent. Defensive end Romeo Okwara started to show flashes last season, leading to Detroit signing him to a three-year, \$37 million deal. If Okwara continues to ascend, this move will give the Lions a formidable defensive line. If he regresses, the team could be paying for this gamble for the next three seasons.

### Green Bay Packers

The Packers have been close to reaching a Super Bowl the last two seasons, and the front office is hoping the third time is a charm, and that the same roster will be able to get over the hump. The biggest storyline surrounding Green Bay is the quarterback position. Hall of Famer Aaron Rodgers has been a stalwart in Green Bay since replacing Brett Favre, but the team drafted his replacement last year. Rodgers had a significant roster bonus come due on March 19, and the team elected to simply pay it instead of restructuring his contract to

pay that bonus over the course of the next few seasons – leading many to believe the team will let Rodgers play out his contract before letting him go and rebuilding around Jordan Love next season.

The other move to note was the team deciding to bring back Aaron Jones to the tune of a four-year, \$48 million contract. While Jones is a good running back, the team just drafted A.J. Dillon in the second round of the draft last season to be his eventual replacement.

Did the Vikings do enough this offseason to challenge Green Bay for the NFC North crown in 2021? Reach out to me on Twitter (@JordanWrightNFL) and let me know. Skol!

## Claremont Town March 9, 2021 Meeting Minutes

### CLAREMONT TOWN

The Board of Trustees for the Town of Claremont met in regular session on 3-9-2021 at 7 p.m. in City Hall. President Shane called the meeting to order with Trustees Rasmussen and Spencer present.

On a motion by Rasmussen and seconded by Spencer the minutes of the February were approved.

On a motion by Spencer and seconded by Rasmussen the following warrants were approved:

General:

Full Circle Ag, propane, 809.50; Gellhaus & Gellhaus, SD Municipal Attorneys Assoc., 20.00; Claremont Township, 1/2 mowing cemetery, 1,650.00; NWE, city hall lights, 381.64; Dacotah Bank, city hall loan, 573.55; James Valley, telecommunications, 93.00; Charla Rye, wage, 350.00.

WSSW:

BDM, water purchased, 903.70; SD Public Health Lab, water testing, 15.00; B & B Contracting Inc., wastewater system, 40,409.96 grant; DPC, parts, repair, mileage, 2,191.83; Helms & Assoc., wastewater/grant, 1,260.00; NWE, water, 198.03; NWE, sewer, 68.56; Rural Development, RD-DENR, 576.00.

On a motion by Rasmussen and seconded by Spencer to approve contractors application for payment #2 was approved.

Board of Equalization will be held March 15 through the 19th.

On a motion by Spencer and seconded by Rasmussen to adjourn. Motion carried.

CRye, FO

Published once at the total approximate cost of \$15.57. 19959

## Claremont Town Sewer Rate Resolution

A resolution adjusting the town of Claremont sewer rates for residential and commercial customers, establishing \$4.70 surcharge and providing an effective date.

WHEREAS, the following sewer rates are hereby established to satisfy the obligations of the town of Claremont to meet the costs of construction, operation, and maintenance of the sewer system. All residential and commercial users shall be charged a fixed charge of \$14.15 for operation and maintenance of the sewer system. In addition to the fixed charge, the following surcharges are hereby established by the town of Claremont to pay for debt service. \$32.85 surcharge payable by each customer of its sewer system to finance the project financed by the CW01 loan with the borrower bond series 2019. The collection of the surcharge CW01 started April 2019. A surcharge of \$4.70 payable by each customer of its sewer system to finance the project financed by the CW02 loan with the borrower bond series 2021. The collection of the CW02 surcharge started July 2020. The surcharges shall remain in effect until such time as the borrower bond is paid in full, they shall be collected at the same time as other charges of the system, and establish a surcharge account to segregate the income from other system income for book keeping purposes to be pledged to the South Dakota Conservancy District. The surcharges shall be reviewed from year and modified in order to provide the required 110 percent coverage. Now therefore be it resolved by the city Council of the Town of Claremont, SD that the aforementioned adjustment to sewer rates be charged. Passed, approved and adopted this 6 day of 2021.

Shane Johnson

Town President

Attest

/s/ Charla Rye, F.O.

Charla Rye, Finance Officer

Published once at the total approximate cost of \$20.90. 19960

## Brown County Notice to Chemical Dealers

### NOTICE TO CHEMICAL DEALERS

Sealed bids will be received in the Chambers of the Brown County Board of Commissioners, Brown County Courthouse Annex at Aberdeen, South Dakota 57401 until 8:46 A.M. on April 13, 2021, at said time and place all bids will be publicly opened, read and considered for furnishing of chemical for the Brown County Weed and Pest Board for 2021. Proposal Guaranty: No deposit or bond will be required at time of bid opening. Contract: Brown County will give notice to the successful bidder that his proposal has been accepted, and said bidder shall within ten (10) days thereafter enter into a contract with Brown County in accordance with the bid as accepted. Successful bidder shall furnish proper certificates of insurance as required by Brown County. Contract for the chemicals shall be firm and will be in effect for a period of eight months from April 1 to November 30, 2021. Sealed envelopes containing bids shall be addressed to Brown County Auditor, 25 Market Street, Ste 1, Aberdeen, South Dakota and be marked "Chemical Bid for Brown County Weed and Pest Board" and to be opened at 8:46 A.M. on April 13, 2021. The Brown County Board of Commissioners reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids, and to accept the bid they deem to be in the best interest of Brown County. Brown County is exempt from Federal Excise Tax and State Sales Tax. Specifications are on file and may be obtained at no charge at the office of the Brown County Auditor and the Brown County Weed and Pest Office.

Cathy McNickle, Brown County Auditor

(0331.0407)

Published twice at the total approximate cost of \$34.67. 19879

## Groton City Election is Cancelled

### PUBLIC NOTICE OF MUNICIPAL ELECTION CANCELLATION

Due to an invalid submission of one candidate's nominating petition, the Municipal Election for Ward 1 scheduled for April 13, 2021 must be cancelled. The Groton Area School District School Board election will still be held as scheduled. Questions are directed to the Groton City Hall at 605-397-8422.

(0331.0407)

Published twice at the total approximate cost of \$11.16. 19883

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**Brown County  
March 30, 2021  
Meeting Minutes**

MARCH 30, 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 Fjeldheim led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** Moved by Wiese, seconded by Feickert 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 23, 2021. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**CLAIMS/PAYROLL:** Moved by Kippley, seconded by Wiese to approve the following claims and payroll:

**PAYROLL:** Commission \$4,327.95; Auditor \$8,956.22; Treasurer \$13,667.48; SA \$23,092.62; SVAWA \$1,730.76; Maintenance \$8,702.97; Assessor \$14,636.39; Register of Deeds \$9,124.94; VSO \$4,444.90; GIS \$2,411.38; IT \$7,586.78; HR \$2,423.08; Sheriff \$41,574.14; Jail \$51,182.56; Coroner \$3,000.00; Court Security \$7,343.55; JDC \$22,315.81; Welfare \$2,982.62; Museum \$8,200.52; Parks/Fairgrounds \$4,019.10; Fair Board \$2,327.13; 4-H \$667.13; Weed \$884.14; Planning & Zoning \$5,431.93; Highway \$38,273.19; Dispatch \$27,631.34; Emergency \$4,160.96; Teen Court \$495.88; JDAI \$1,786.92; 24/7 Sobriety \$1,201.20; Landfill \$14,548.79; FICA \$20,142.28; Medicare \$4,710.81; HSA \$325; Health Insurance \$119,669.38; Dental Insurance \$7,166.25; Life Insurance \$1,062.16; SDRS Retirement \$41,378.48 **CLAIMS:** Other: Aberdeen Kirby \$320.00; City of Hecla \$800.00; Emma Burnham Public Library \$1,000.00; Groton Township \$1,000.00; City of Aberdeen \$12,000.00; Warner Library \$1,000.00. Professional Fees: City of Aberdeen \$498.91; Avera St. Luke's \$54.18; Avera McKennan Hospital \$74.71; Av-

era St. Luke's \$1,268.19; BCT \$21.20; Drew Becker \$200.00; Birmingham & Cwach Law Office \$476.85; CGI \$1,164.52; Cogley Law Office \$7,656.25; Dohrer Law Office \$7,656.25; Christopher Haar \$7,116.71; Houston Engineering \$6,411.40; Mark Katterhagen \$27.00; Kuck Law \$7,070.31; Lucy Lewno \$290.00; Darcy Lockwood \$27.00; Matthew Bender \$68.08; Jerald McNeary \$7,070.31; NE Mental Health Center \$1,586.00; Sanford Health \$4,431.13; SD Dept. of Health \$1,215.00; State of South Dakota \$16,671.85; Christy Griffin-Serr Law \$7,070.31; Tammy Stolle Court Reporting \$36.50; Taliaferro Law Firm \$7,656.25; Tyler Technologies \$520.00; University of North Dakota \$300.00; West Publishing \$350.10. Publishing: Groton Independent \$107.55. Repairs & Maintenance: Aberdeen Clean-All \$325.00; Dakota Doors \$3,383.77; Lang's Audio TV & Appliance \$246.00; Nardini Fire Equipment \$190.50; Pro-Windmill \$345.00; Pierson-Ford \$79.18; Ringgenberg Electric \$2,433.90; Sherwin Williams \$81.01; Kirby Kiesz \$142.80; Western States Fire \$3,789.42. Supplies: American Business Forms \$100.00; Aramark \$77.43; Cole Papers \$354.60; Farnams Genuine Parts \$279.98; Fastenal \$51.13; GovConnection \$544.36; L.G. Everist \$6,559.03; Larry Becker \$802.47; Leidholdt Tool Sales \$89.02; Lucy Lewno \$8.76; Marco \$19.33; McKesson Medical \$239.39; Menards \$313.02; Midstates Printing \$828.00; Performance Rentals \$100.00; Runnings \$61.14; Kirby Kiesz \$171.54. Travel & Conference: Agency Midwest Ventures \$606.00. Utilities: AT & T Mobility \$197.42; Qwest Corporation \$60.62; Montana Dakota Utilities \$44.11; Northwestern Energy \$2,552.39. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**HR REPORT:** Moved by Sutton, seconded by Wiese to approve the HR Office Report, which includes the following: Acknowledge resignation of Jessica Geditz, full-time Brown County Correctional Officer effective March 22, 2021. Request to fill. Acknowledge resignation of Nancy Clark-North, part-time Brown County Planning and Zoning Administrative Assistant ef-

fective March 22, 2021. Request to fill with full-time employee. Acknowledge retirement of Kathy Neitzel, full-time Brown County Sherriff's Office Manager effective April 29, 2021. Request to fill. Transferring of Sandy Woytassek from Brown County Sheriff's Secretary to Office Manager effective April 5, 2021. Request to fill. Acknowledge correction to end-date from HR Report 2-2-2021: Resignation of Mary Baird, part-time Brown County Dacotah Prairie Museum Curatorial Assistant effective March 6, 2021. Request to fill. Approve hiring of Morgan Bingham as full-time Brown County Communications Dispatcher effective April 5, 2021; starting wage @ \$20.54/hour. Approve hiring of Ashley Mohr as full-time Brown County Communications Dispatcher effective April 12, 2021; starting wage @ \$20.54/hour. Approve hiring of Jennifer Hopkins as part-time Brown County Dacotah Prairie Museum Curatorial Assistant for Exhibits effective April 13, 2021; starting wage @ 14/ hour. Approve hiring of Bonnie Dix as Brown County Jail/JDC Nurse, PRN; effective April 5, 2021. Approve hiring of Aaron Johnson as part-time Brown County Landfill Maintenance; starting wage @ \$16.07/hour; tentatively effective April 12, 2021. Approve hiring of Jordan Staab as Brown County Sheriff's Department Transport Driver, as needed, effective April 5, 2021.

All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**NOTICE TO CONTROL NOXIOUS WEED AND PESTS:** Moved by Wiese seconded by Feickert to authorize advertising the Noxious Weed and Declared Pest Notice for 2020. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**LEASES:** Moved by Sutton, seconded by Feickert to approve the following lease agreement: Jeff Sheel for lease of Clubhouse on May 22, 2021, with alcohol use permission form. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**TRAVEL REQUEST:** Moved by Feickert, seconded by Sutton to approve travel request from Sheriff's Department for out of state training. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**2021 SPRING RESIDENTIAL CLEAN-UP:** Moved by Wiese, seconded by Sutton to approve waiving fees on all material types from Residential Users only during the Spring Residential Cleanup at the Brown County Landfill, to be held from April 23 thru May 8, 2021. Tire disposal is limited to four (4) car or pickup tires per customer. No large demo projects (houses, tree belts etc.) will be allowed for free. No free waste will be accepted from commercial contractors or businesses (including mobile homes). In the event circumstances beyond the control of Brown County (flood, tornado, fire, other) would occur during the FREE Cleanup period the Brown County Commission reserves the right to end the free cleanup period at such time and implement the regular fee structure. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**LIEN RELEASE REQUEST:** Commissioner Feickert offered the following Resolution:

**RESOLUTION 18 - 21**  
WHEREAS, Brown County has filed a Relief Lien in total amount of \$23,031.34 (\$11,303.04 individual 1 and \$11,728.30 individual 2), and

WHEREAS, Brown County has determined it to be in the best interest of the taxpayers to release certain property from the effect of said lien, on condition the lien balance remain filed against the individuals.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the following real property, described as follows: Lot 22 Block 10 Niccollet Park Addition, Aberdeen City, Brown County, South Dakota (419 Dakota St S) is hereby released from the effect and force of said lien, on condition that the lien balances remain filed against the individuals.

Dated this 30th day of March 2021.

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

**BURN BAN EXTENDED:** Moved by Kippley, seconded by Sutton to extend the burn ban, Resolution 13-21, effective through April 20, 2021.- All members present voting aye. Motion

Carried.  
**SOUTH DUMPSITE RELOCATION:** Commissioner Feickert gave an updates of a possible dumpsite location. No actions taken.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Moved by Feickert, seconded by Sutton to adjourn the Brown County Commission at 9:07a.m. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

Jeannette McClain, Brown County Deputy Auditor

Published once at the total approximate cost of \$83.75. 19958

**Groton School  
Notice of  
Election**

**NOTICE OF SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION**  
GROTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 06-6

A School District Election will be held on April 13, 2021, in all the voting precincts in Groton Area School District No. 06-6. If the polls cannot be opened because of bad weather, the election may be postponed one week.

The election polls will be open from seven a.m. to seven p.m. central standard time on the day of the election.

At the election, the following offices will be voted upon:

Two, 3-year terms for school board member between:

Anna Schwan  
Martin D. Weismantel  
Ryan Tracy  
Kara M. Pharis

The polling place in each precinct of this district is as follows: Andover Area Precinct #1, (which includes Andover Town, Andover Township and Farm-

ington Township) – Andover Other Place.

Bristol Area Precinct #2, (which includes Bristol Town, Butler Town, Lily Town, Bristol Township, Butler Township, Kidder Township, Lynn Township, Oak Gulch Township, Scotland Township, Troy Township, Union Township, Valley Township and York Township as well as Clark County residents in Warren Township) – Bristol Community Center.

Columbia Area Precinct #3, (which includes the City of Columbia, Brainard Township #7, Shelby Township #8, Cambria Township #15, and Garland Township #46,) – Columbia Legion.

Groton Area Precinct #4, (which includes the City of Groton, Wards 1, 2, & 3, and Claremont Township #10, Riverside Township #16, Groton Township #17, Henry Township #18, Bath Township #19, Gem Township #24, East Hanson Township #25, Garden Prairie Township #26 East Rondell Township #27, Bates Township #44, Putney Township #48, and West Hanson Township #49 as well as Spink County residents in Beotia Township, Conde Township and Olean Township) – Groton Community Center.

Voters with disabilities may contact the business official for information and special assistance in absentee voting or polling place accessibility.

Michael J. Weber, Business Official

Groton Area School District  
Published twice at the total approximate cost of \$47.61. 19882

(2t. March 29 & April 5, 2021)

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**SAMPLE BALLOT**

GROTON AREA SCHOOL DIST. #06-6  
Groton, South Dakota  
**Tuesday, April 13, 2021**

**INSTRUCTIONS TO VOTERS:**

**I. TO MARK THE BALLOT**

To vote use a cross (X) or check mark (✓) in the square in front of the name.

DO NOT make any marks other than a cross (X) or check mark (✓).

DO NOT erase anything on your ballot.

DO NOT rip your ballot or make holes in it.

DO NOT write in a name.

**II. IF YOU MAKE A MISTAKE**

If you make a mistake on your ballot or change your mind, give it back and get a new one.

**III. TO RETURN THE BALLOT(S) AFTER VOTING**

Fold each ballot so the ballot stamp shows and take it to the ballot box.

**School Board Member, 3-year term,  
you may vote for up to 2 or leave it blank.**

Anna Schwan

Martin D. Weismantel

Ryan Tracy

Kara M. Pharis

# United Methodist Church

Groton and Conde

Sunday, April 11, 2021

Conde Worship 9:00 AM  
 Sunday School 10:00 AM  
 Groton Worship 11:00 AM

# Emmanuel Lutheran Church

Groton

Thursday, April 8

2 p.m.: Nigeria Circle

Sunday, April 11

9 a.m.: Worship  
 Milestones: Kindergarten  
 Jr Kindergarten

# St. Elizabeth Ann Seton & St. Joseph Catholic

Groton and Turton

Weekend Mass Schedule

Saturday 4:30pm Groton  
 Sunday 8:30am Groton & 11:00am Turton

Weekday

Tues 5:00pm Turton, W-F 8:30am Groton  
 Sat 10am Newman Center

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament  
 Each morning before Weekday Mass at 7:15am  
 Tues 3:45pm Turton

Confessions:

Sat. 3:45-4:15pm & Sun. 7:45am to 8:15am (G)  
 Sun. 10:30-10:45am (T)

# St. John's Lutheran Church

Groton

Sunday, April 11, 2021

Bible Study, 8 a.m.  
 St. John's Worship, 9 a.m.

# Heaven Bound Ministries Pierpont

# Buffalo Lake Lutheran

Rural Eden

Sunday, April 4: Worship at Buffalo Lake 10:30 a.m.

Saturday, April 10: Worship at Pierpont, 5:30 p.m.

Sunday, April 11: Worship at Buffalo Lake 10:30 a.m.

Zion Lutheran Worship 11 a.m.  
 Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.

WEDNESDAYS | 8AM - 8PM

# CAST IRON giveaway

EARN 100 POINTS WITH YOUR ROYAL REWARDS CARD & RECEIVE A PIECE OF A CAST IRON.

APRIL 7 CHEFS COUNTER 9.5" SKILLET	APRIL 14 CHEFS COUNTER 14" ROASTING DISH	APRIL 21 CHEFS COUNTER SQUARE GRILL PAN	APRIL 28 CHEFS COUNTER DOUBLE BURNER GRIDDLE
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# The Window to Your Health

Eyes are often called the "window to the soul", but they can also be the "window to your health". Most people know that it is essential to visit your primary physician for an annual check-up, but an annual eye exam is an important part of staying healthy as well.



By Jill Kruse, DO ~ Prairie Doc® Perspectives

The eye is the only area of the body where doctors can see small blood vessels with such clarity. So, during your annual physical exam, your physician will examine your eyes briefly with a handheld tool called an ophthalmoscope. This device gives your physician a great view of those blood vessels located on the back wall of your eye.

However, for a much more thorough understanding of your eye health, you need a dedicated eye exam by an optometrist or ophthalmologist. These health care providers have an arsenal of tools and techniques at their disposal for examining the eye and screening for eye disease.

For example, when your optometrist or ophthalmologist looks at the back wall of your eye, they lower the lights in the room and use drops to dilate your eyes. This enhanced exam is more effective in detecting changes in or damage to those blood vessels which can be caused by high blood pressure or diabetes. As a result, eye doctors frequently refer patients to their primary care physicians in the early stages of these diseases.

When diabetes is diagnosed, medical doctors and eye specialists work hand in hand monitoring patients for complications from the disease. One such complication, diabetic retinopathy, damages the blood vessels of the retina and is the most common cause of blindness in American adults. This too can be detected during a dilated eye exam.

An eye specialist can also screen for glaucoma, a condition where fluid builds up in the eye causing increased pressure that can damage the optic nerve. If left untreated, it can lead to blindness.

Macular degeneration is another disease that your optometrist or ophthalmologist is trained to detect. This is an eye disorder associated with aging and results in damage to the central vision which at its worst can result in the permanent impairment of vision needed for reading and close-up sight.

It takes a team of providers to monitor and maintain your health. When scheduling your annual exams, do not ignore your eyes, as they can be the "window" we need to see what is going on in the rest of your body.

Jill Kruse, D.O. is part of The Prairie Doc® team of physicians and currently practices family medicine in Brookings, South Dakota. For free and easy access to the entire Prairie Doc® library, visit [www.prairiedoc.org](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.

# Groton Lions Club hosts Easter Egg Hunt



Police Chief Stacy Mayou poses with the Easter bunny at the Easter Egg Hunt held last Saturday at the Groton City Park.



Photos by Bruce Babcock

*Dale Kurth is turning 80!*

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# Medical marijuana in Oklahoma: 'A mess' or a potential model for South Dakota?

**Bart Pfankuch**

**South Dakota News Watch**

As South Dakota moves forward on creating a regulatory system for medical marijuana by the end of 2021, some people have looked to Oklahoma for guidance on how — or how not to — develop a functioning framework.

Oklahoma voters approved the legal sale, possession and use of medical marijuana on a statewide ballot measure in June 2018. The measure required rapid implementation of a regulatory framework, providing only about 10 weeks to prepare for legal sales compared with an average of more than a year in most states.

Since then, the state has taken a free-market approach to certification of marijuana-related businesses and has one of the least restrictive physician-certification processes for patients who want to obtain medical pot.

At a press conference in mid-March, South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem said Oklahoma was the only state to put a medical marijuana program in place faster than required by South Dakota Initiated Measure 26, which takes effect July 1 and has deadlines for creation of a regulatory framework by the Department of Health by Oct. 29, 2021, and issuance of medical marijuana cards to patients by Nov. 18, 2021.

Noem, who opposes legal marijuana in any form, said the resulting program in Oklahoma is "a mess." Noem pushed for a one-year delay in implementation of the South Dakota medical program but was rebuffed by the state Legislature.

Noem spokesman Ian Fury responded to an email from South Dakota News Watch seeking clarification of the governor's views by providing only a link to a June 2020 news report by Oklahoma Watch, a nonprofit news organization. That article begins, "Welcome to the Wild West of weed," and goes on to examine how fast Oklahoma started and has since expanded its medical marijuana program. Asked for further specifics of Noem's concerns about Oklahoma's program, Fury failed to respond.

Some experts in Oklahoma say the program there has been a great success because it has embraced the wishes of voters by making medical marijuana widely available to those who need it and obtain a physician's approval to get it.

"The main goal was to legalize access for



**Traci Wolfe, right, owner of Classen Apothecare in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma talks to customer Mary McAninch about which strains are better suited to treat anxiety. McAninch uses medical marijuana to treat chronic pain from a nerve condition, arthritis and anxiety.** Photo: Courtesy of Oklahoma Watch

medical marijuana patients and provide them an abundant source of medicine, and 1,000 percent that has been a success," said Chip Paul, a business owner who played a lead role in writing the state's regulatory framework for medical pot.

Most states that have approved medical marijuana, including South Dakota, North Dakota, Minnesota and Montana, have a list of medical conditions that a patient must be diagnosed with before becoming certified to obtain medical marijuana. One significant area where Oklahoma stands apart in the U.S. is that patients do not have to suffer from any specific illness or condition; they must only get a doctor's certification that the marijuana will help them in some way.

Oklahoma has also seen the rise of a cottage industry of physicians who make themselves readily available to approve medical marijuana cards for patients, including through virtual visits that can be arranged online. For a time, doctors were diagnosing patients from the same buildings as marijuana dispensaries, though that practice has been banned.

Recent data from the Oklahoma program reveal that the raw number and per-capita rates of certified patients and number of dispensaries dwarf the patient-and-dispensary totals from other Great Plains states where medical marijuana is legal.

As of March 5, 2021, Oklahoma had more than 381,000 patients or caregivers who are legally able to obtain and use medical marijuana, making up about 9.5% of the state's overall population of 4 million people. The state had about 2,150 medical marijuana dispensaries on that date.

North Dakota has eight dispensaries and about 5,000 certified patients in its medical marijuana program, and Minnesota has 13 dispensaries and about 45,000 patients. Both states have certified less than 1% of their populations to obtain medical marijuana; Montana has 355 dispensaries and about 42,000 certified patients, a patient rate of about 4% of its overall population.

Paul, who led the Oklahomans for Health group that authored and promoted the medical marijuana initiative in Oklahoma, acknowledged there have been some bumps in the road to creating a sensible regulatory framework in the state. But Paul said that overall, the pro-

gram has been effective in providing medical marijuana to those who want or need it to reduce pain or anxiety, ease suffering from illness or reduce symptoms of psychiatric conditions such as PTSD.

Paul noted that 57% of voters approved medical marijuana in 2018 but that subsequent surveys have shown that 70% of Oklahomans support legalization (69.92% of South Dakota voters in November 2020 approved IM 26).

Paul said he disagrees with criticism that Oklahoma's medical marijuana is so loosely regulated as to become a de facto recreational program.

"It might look recreational, but it is for people who have a medical need and who are motivated enough to get on the radar of a medical doctor," said Paul, president of the firm GnuPharma. "It's not like you can go in a dispensary, show your ID and get marijuana; you still have to have

a medical card."

He added that states that require patients to have certain qualifying medical conditions before obtaining medical marijuana are blocking many patients who really need it.

"Those limited conditions restrict your medical program to a very small percentage of your population, whereas Oklahoma's medical program is open to 100% of the population," he said.

Paul said he was not surprised by opposition to medical marijuana from elected officials. "It's interesting that the legal-marijuana issue is one of the biggest disconnects between the people who really want it and how the people who lead us interpret that," he said.

South Dakota state Rep. Mike Derby, a leader of the legislative Cannabis Caucus, said he appreciates that Oklahoma has provided a level of "social equity" to its program by creating business opportunities for entrepreneurs and small-business owners across the state.

"The sales and licensing and distribution are not controlled by just a few big companies; instead they provide entrepreneurs a chance to participate in this industry," said Derby, R-Rapid City. However, Derby added that South Dakota should not use too much of Oklahoma's medical marijuana program as a model for its own.

Oklahoma has almost 11,000 businesses licensed to operate in the medical pot market, and the industry generated a total of \$831 million in sales in 2020, up from \$345 million in 2019. With a 7% excise tax and sales tax of 5%, medical marijuana sales generated \$127.8 million in combined taxes in 2020, an increase of 133% over the \$54.8 million generated in 2019.

States tax medical marijuana differently, with most charging only sales taxes; South Dakota's medical marijuana sales as proposed would not be subject to sales or excise taxes.

Terri Watkins, spokeswoman for the Oklahoma Medical Marijuana Authority within the state Department of Health, said the state was forced to rush to implement its medical marijuana program but has done its best to accommodate the needs of medical patients and businesses and individuals in the industry. OMMA was created as a separate division of the health department solely to manage the



**Medical marijuana in Oklahoma is relatively affordable, even with a sales and excise tax added to each purchase.** Photo: Courtesy Oklahoma Watch

**Continues on next page**

state medical marijuana program.

"I would certainly not say we're a mess," Watkins said, noting that the state recently created a seed-to-sale tracking program and has a lab-testing program to monitor potency and safety of medical marijuana. "We had some challenges implementing a program in about two months, and that made it difficult, but now there are a lot of things coming into play two and half years later that we're looking to improve on."

Dr. Jean Hausheer, an ophthalmologist in Lawton, Okla., was president of the Oklahoma Medical Association when medical marijuana passed and has remained active in the association's effort to improve the medical marijuana program in the state.

Hausheer called the Oklahoma program a "free-for-all" that has made it too easy for patients to get medical marijuana and has in many ways become essentially a recreational adult-use marijuana program.

Hausheer said she had concerns about several negative health aspects of overprescribing of medical marijuana, including the propensity for motorists to drive while high; the potential for harm to unborn children of marijuana users; and a lack of safety regulations on the production, packaging and sale of marijuana products.

he said the medical community successfully lobbied for a 60-day license that allows for temporary medical marijuana use; initially all licenses held by patients were valid for two years.



Jean Hausheer

Oklahoma physicians are also now able to request a license revocation if necessary; safety labeling on products is more clear and better prevents child misuse; and smokable products are now subject to the same public-use laws as tobacco products. The association also tried to require that a pharmacist be on site when marijuana is dispensed and to increase training requirements of employees who dispense marijuana.

Hausheer, who helped form a statewide group called "Keep the Medical in Medical Marijuana," says she is troubled by how quickly



Medical marijuana dispensaries have opened across the state of Oklahoma, including at this storefront location in Oklahoma City. Photo: Courtesy Oklahoma Watch

and widely medical marijuana has been made available in the state, including across rural Oklahoma.

"Your worst fear is that it's going to show up in every inch of your state, and it has really, it has overtaken things," she said.

Hausheer and others in the medical association continue to push for greater influence in the regulation of medical marijuana in Oklahoma.

"I'm not an anti-pot person ... for the right circumstance or situation, I get it," Hausheer said. "But I don't like how this was one size fits all, free-for-all. People have just gone to this because they don't know what else to do, rather than seeking help for medical conditions where good therapeutic or medical approaches haven't been tried or they don't know they exist."

Dr. Benjamin Krasne said patients are generally aware of how marijuana can help them. Krasne is the founder and owner of DigiDrs.com, an online physician-referral service that aids potential medical marijuana patients in finding a doctor to diagnose them in Oklahoma and three other states. The site offers a service in which virtual consultations are free and patients pay a \$109 fee only if a medical marijuana card is issued.

Krasne said he looks at the heavy regulation of medical marijuana as being similar to Prohibition, a mostly failed experiment to stop Americans from drinking alcohol. He said people who are suffering should be given a simple way to access any medication that they and a doctor feel can help them, including marijuana.

"I don't see how you can stand in its way," Krasne said. "People want this for relief."

South Dakota's proposed medical marijuana legislation allows an adult 21 or over, or a younger person with parental permission, to qualify for a medical marijuana card if a doctor diagnoses them with a "debilitating medical condition, a chronic or debilitating disease or medical condition or its treatment." Those conditions must produce one or more of the following: cachexia or wasting syndrome; severe, debilitating pain; severe nausea; seizures; or severe and persistent muscle spasms, including those characteristic of multiple sclerosis; or any other medical condition or its treatment added by the [health] department."

South Dakota voters approved a constitutional amendment in November that would have legalized recreational marijuana use by adults starting July 1, 2021, but that measure was overturned by a circuit judge and is now likely to be decided by the state Supreme Court.

ABOUT BART PFANKUCH



Bart Pfankuch, Rapid City, S.D., is the content director for South Dakota News Watch. A Wisconsin native, he is a former editor of the Rapid City Journal and also worked at newspapers in Florida. Bart has spent more than 30 years as a reporter, editor and writing coach.

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# The Travels of Kittie the Stagecoach

Kittie was welcomed warmly when she returned to South Dakota.

She's the stagecoach now displayed in the museum of the South Dakota State Historical Society at the Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre.

"The Governor (George S. Mickelson) unveiled the stagecoach in January at his third annual reception for the South Dakota Legislature, and she was very well received. The stage now is on display in the exhibition wing," wrote J.R. Fishburne, then the director of the South Dakota State Historical Society, in a 1991 letter.

Kittie was one of four stagecoaches used by the Medora Stage & Forwarding Company to transport passengers and freight between Medora and Deadwood, Dakota Territory. The company was organized by the Marquis de Mores, a wealthy Frenchman who had come to what is now the North Dakota badlands in 1883 and founded the town of Medora, named after his wife. The gold fields in the Black Hills were already connected with stage lines from the east, south and west. The Medora Stage & Forwarding Company would connect Deadwood to Medora, which was connected to the Northern Pacific Railroad, on the north.

Four used Concord stagecoaches and harnesses were purchased from Gilmer, Salisbury and Company, a freight and stage transportation firm. The stagecoaches were named Kittie, Medora, Dakota and Deadwood, and the name of each stagecoach was painted on it. De Mores hoped that the company would be awarded a contract to carry mail, and the letters "U S M" for United States Mail were also painted on each coach in anticipation of being awarded the contract. The company established 13 stations over the 215-mile stretch between Medora and Deadwood and purchased 150 well-bred western stage horses. Each station had a tender, who cared for the horses and served the passengers when necessary. In South Dakota, the route passed near Buffalo and through Belle Fourche and Spearfish before reaching Deadwood.

The first stagecoach to roll into Deadwood from Medora arrived about noon on Sunday, Oct. 5, 1884.

"It created a great deal of enthusiasm as it passed up Main street, drawn by six horses," stated The Black Hills Daily Pioneer in Deadwood.

Three cheers were heartily given as the stagecoach halted in front of the ticket office.

The stage headed back to Medora the next day.

The trip between Medora and Deadwood took about 36 hours and cost passengers \$21.50 or 10 cents a mile. Stages departed from both Medora and Deadwood on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings and arrived at their destination the evening of the following day.

The business venture quickly folded, however, as Mores failed to get the mail contract he had hoped for as well as the freight business needed in order for the venture to financially survive.

The May 28, 1885, issue of the Turner County Herald carried the news that "The Medora Stage Line to the Black Hills has been abandoned." Other sources state that the Medora Stage & Transport Company ceased to exist in the winter of 1885-1886.

De Mores' other business ventures in Dakota Territory also failed, and the de Mores family moved back to France. The Marquis was murdered in 1896 while in Africa.

Kittie's history did not end with the Medora to Deadwood stage.

In 1896, Andrew Olson of Pelan, Minn., purchased the coaches Kittie and Medora from the estate of the Marquis, according to Paul Englund. He wrote the South Dakota State



Historical Society that his great-grandparents were probably the last people to have a route using Kittie when they ran a stagecoach route in approximately 1909 between Karlstad and Greenbush, in northwestern Minnesota. Before that, his great-grandparents had a way-station along the stage route between Stephen and Roseau, also in northwestern Minnesota. Kittie ran between Stephen and the half-way point of Pelan and the Medora ran between Pelan and Roseau, according to Englund.

Eventually, Harry Miller of Jamestown, N.D., went to Roseau, Minn., and returned to Jamestown with Kittie.

Kittie appeared in all the city's parades, according to a letter to the South Dakota State Historical Society from Mary F. Young of Jamestown. A photograph taken in 1936 shows South Dakota Gov. Tom Berry in a parade in

## SOUTH DAKOTA HISTORY & HERITAGE

Jamestown, riding on a stagecoach that was identified as Kittie.

Miller eventually moved to California and left Kittie and another stagecoach in Jamestown. In a letter written from California in 1949, Miller stated that a man in Jamestown was looking after the stagecoaches. "They have been standing in the open more or less since I came out here during the war," he wrote.

By 1969, according to an article in the Minot, N.D. Daily News, the stagecoaches Kitty and Medora were owned by Osborne (Ozzie) Klavestad of Shakopee, Minn. He owned a tourist attraction in the form of a pioneer village. A bill of sale indicates that Klavestad sold two stagecoaches in 1980.

In 1990, the South Dakota State Historical Society obtained Kittie from a private collector.

The stagecoach's presence in the museum is a reminder of this historic and once invaluable form of transportation.

This moment in South Dakota history is provided by the South Dakota Historical Society Foundation, the nonprofit fundraising partner of the South Dakota State Historical Society at the Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre. Find us on the web at [www.sdhsf.org](http://www.sdhsf.org). Contact us at [info@sdhsf.org](mailto:info@sdhsf.org) to submit a story idea.

-30-

From the Editors of  
E - The Environmental  
Magazine

## EARTHTALK

Dear EarthTalk:

What are the environmental pros and cons of so many of us relying on GPS apps (Waze, Google Maps, etc.) to get around these days?

-- B. Rogers,

Newark, NJ

It's hard to measure whether having GPS apps on our smartphones is positive or negative for the planet, but some environmentalists are skeptical. Indeed, the rise of Waze, Google Maps, Inrix and other apps that respond to live traffic data to reroute drivers accordingly—not to mention the concomitant proliferation of app-following Uber and Lyft drivers—has turned millions of formerly main-route-following drivers into sneaky shortcut seekers. Formerly quiet peaceful neighborhoods may never be the same again.

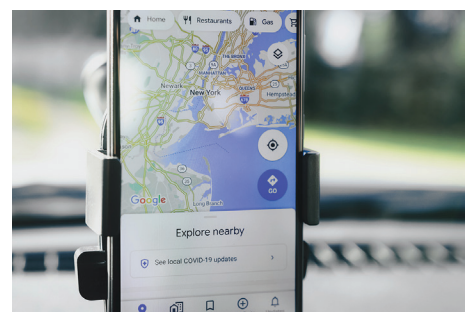
On the plus side, the widespread use of these apps saves individual drivers some time and may slightly reduce the amount of time we all spend burning extra fuel by idling in congested traffic. But the data on this is mixed and warrants further research.

While you may have gotten to work three minutes faster this morning, what was the cost? Neighborhoods everywhere are miffed at the proliferation of cars racing through formerly quiet back streets to circumvent the latest highway logjam. The problem has been especially noticeable in already car-crazed Los Angeles, where neighborhood streets filled up with traffic once Waze hit the market in 2011 and started alerting Angelinos of the fastest, least congested routes to and fro. As more and more drivers followed Waze's directions, the app sent them deeper and deeper into formerly forlorn byways. With Google Maps, Inrix and others following Waze's lead, the problem has only gotten worse in recent years.

Research out of the University of California's Institute of Transportation Studies (ITS) concludes that while GPS apps are helping individuals get from point A to B faster, they are also making congestion worse overall. ITS's traffic simulations show how freeway flow changes in response to an accident when no drivers use GPS apps versus when 20 percent of drivers have them activated. With more app-using drivers, congestion builds up at off-ramps and traffic on the highway slows. "The situation then gets much worse because hundreds of people just like you want to go on the side streets, which were never designed to handle the traffic," says ITS director Alexandre Bayen. "So, now, in addition to congesting the freeway, you've also congested the side streets and the intersections."

Critics of these apps blame the software designers—not us consumers just trying to get to and from work or the grocery store—for the negative effects on traffic flows and neighborhood peace. If the apps are so smart, why can't they disperse drivers onto different routes and away from back streets and quiet neighborhoods to smartly reduce congestion overall? To wit, later this year Google Maps will start routing drivers to the most fuel-efficient route—not necessarily the fastest—to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and save drivers money in fuel costs. If the greener route is significantly slower than another way, the app will give users the option to choose for themselves, but at least this move is a nod to how much greenhouse gas busting power a little bit of code on your phone can have to help save the planet.

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).



**GPS nav apps may be good for individual drivers' commute times but may be slowing traffic overall and ruining neighborhood vibes across the nation.**



## EMPLOYMENT

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## Track Schedule

Tuesday, Apr 6, 2021 Varsity Meet	12:30PM	at Ipswich High School
Tuesday, Apr 13, 2021 Varsity Invitational	11:30AM	Groton Rob Luecke Invite
Thursday, Apr 15, 2021 7th/8th Invitational	3:45PM	at Milbank High School
Friday, Apr 16, 2021 Varsity Meet	3:00PM	at Milbank High School
Tuesday, Apr 20, 2021 Varsity Meet	3:00PM	at Deuel High School
Thursday, Apr 22, 2021 7th/8th Invitational	3:30PM	Groton Area High School
Monday, Apr 26, 2021 7th/8th Invitational	2:00PM	at Redfield Jr-Sr High School
Tuesday, Apr 27, 2021 Varsity Invitational	11:30AM	Groton Invitational Track
Friday, Apr 30, 2021 Varsity Meet	2:00PM	at Webster Area High
Monday, May 3, 2021 7th/8th Invitational	4:00PM	at Webster Area High
Tuesday, May 4, 2021 Varsity Invitational	1:00PM	at Milbank High School
Friday, May 7, 2021 Varsity Meet	3:00PM	at Sisseton High School
Monday, May 10, 2021 7th/8th Invitational	4:00PM	at Aberdeen Central High
Thursday, May 13, 2021 Varsity Northeast Conf.	11:00AM	at Groton Area High
Monday, May 17, 2021 7th/8th Northeast Conf.	10:00PM	at Aberdeen Central High
Thursday, May 20, 2021 Varsity Region 1A	12:00PM	at Sisseton High School
Friday, May 28, 2021 Varsity State		Lyle Hare Stadium on the campus of Black Hills State Univ. in Spearfish
Saturday, May 29, 2021 Varsity State		Lyle Hare Stadium on the campus of Black Hills State Univ. in Spearfish

## Girls Golf Schedule

Monday, Apr 19, 2021 Meet	10:00AM	at Whetstone Creek GC in Milbank
Thursday, Apr 29, 2021 Meet	10:00AM	at Redfield Golf Course
Monday, May 10, 2021 Meet	10:00AM	Groton Invite at Olive Grove Golf Course
Monday, May 17, 2021 Northeast Conference	10:00AM	at Moccasin Creek Country Club, Aberdeen

## He Fixed Things

Every town has one. One old man to fix the broken toys. One old man to tell the stories. One old man to bring us joy.

In Ashley, ND, where I was born, it was Mr. Miller. He made wooden moons with petite shelves for knick-knacks to hang on Mom's walls. His garage was loaded with them. They were scattered among the sawdust, and each one was unique. He made glorious birdhouses, and I remember erecting his creations in the yards of my youth. A pale green home for sparrows stood proudly in our yard, and a huge red birdhouse survives to this very day. It could house overweight ostriches.

In Frederick, SD, where I grew up, the place I call my hometown, there was another man. Cut from the same cloth. Same Union. God or Fate or Luck deposited my family next door. We rented his house while he lived in the faded green trailer to the west. Somehow it didn't seem fair that Glenn and Ethel should live in a closet while we lived in a castle. It seemed that way to me then. There were wooden pillars that separated the living and dining rooms, fancy hanging light fixtures and two bathrooms. The house had two porches and the front screens soon became bowed from the force of whiffle balls missed by inept batsmen. This, of course, didn't please Ethel, but Glenn never said a word and once in awhile he replaced the screens. And then we had a fresh backstop Glenn would fix our bikes and assemble new toys. His stored paint in our basement became community property, and my two-wheeler soon was a horrid maroon.

He'd drag home wrecked cars to dismantle, though he never found the time. Seems he could never let anything go to waste. That old Ford soon became a permanent third base.

When Glenn was finally retired from his job at the Ford Garage, it hurt us almost as much as it hurt him. He still had a lot of years left to give. We knew that. They got lost in the numbers. But it all turned out for the best. He had more time to fix our dented screens and our wobbly bikes, and he had more time to go fishing. He loved to fish. We ate the extras, and his mangy cats got the rest.

Fishing wasn't enough to keep him occupied, and soon every odd job that needed doing was being done by Glenn. He could do anything...or at least he thought he could and most everyone believed him.

I remember Glenn and "Shorty" coming over to fix an electrical malady that had plagued the family. In classic Abbott and Costello style, they argued over who would have to torture aged knees to test the socket near the floor. Glenn finally decreed that it should be Shorty since he was built closer to the floor. I don't remember if they ever solved the problem or what the final charge was, but in entertainment value it was a bargain.

After Ethel had passed on, Mom and Dad would invite Glenn over for supper, and he'd tell the same old stories over again. A wicked mimic, Mom would go, "To make a short story realllly long..." in perfect imitation of Glenn. But it was done in fun, and we loved hearing those old stories as much as he loved telling them.

It was Mom who called to tell me that Glenn had died. She never calls unless it's really important. I hate it when she calls.

At the funeral I sat beside little brother, Mike. He cried as we sat in the pew nearest the coffin. I wanted to comfort him, but I didn't know how, I was crying too.

Now, at the Community Store, where everyone meets for 8 am for coffee, one chair is still vacant. No one dares sit there. It's Glenn's chair.



## That's Life by Tony Bender

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# FEMA to Help Pay Funeral Costs for COVID-19-related Deaths

In early April, FEMA will begin providing financial assistance for funeral expenses incurred after Jan. 20, 2020 for deaths related to coronavirus (COVID-19) to help ease some of the financial stress and burden caused by the pandemic. The policy was finalized today, and FEMA is now moving rapidly to implement this funeral assistance program nationwide.

To be eligible for COVID-19 funeral assistance, the policy states:

- The applicant must be a U.S. citizen, non-citizen national, or qualified alien who incurred funeral expenses after Jan. 20, 2020 for a death attributed to COVID-19.
- If multiple individuals contributed toward funeral expenses, they should apply under a single application as applicant and co-applicant. FEMA will also consider documentation from other individuals not listed as the applicant and co-applicant who may have incurred funeral expenses as part of the registration for the deceased individual.
- An applicant may apply for multiple deceased individuals.
- The COVID-19-related death must have occurred in the United States, including the U.S. territories and the District of Columbia.
- This assistance is limited to a maximum financial amount of \$9,000 per funeral and a maximum of \$35,500 per application.
- Funeral assistance is intended to assist with expenses for funeral services and interment or cremation.

In the coming weeks, a dedicated 800 number will be established to help individuals who apply. In the meantime, potential applicants are encouraged to start gathering the following documentation:

- An official death certificate that attributes the death to COVID-19 and shows that the death occurred in the U. S. The death certificate must indicate the death "may have been caused

by" or "was likely the result of" COVID-19 or COVID-19 like symptoms. Similar phrases that indicate a high likelihood of COVID-19 are considered sufficient attribution.

- Funeral expense documents (receipts, funeral home contract, etc.) that include the applicant's name, the deceased individual's name, the amount of funeral expenses, and the dates the funeral expenses were incurred.

- Proof of funds received from other sources specifically for use toward funeral costs. Funeral assistance may not duplicate benefits received from burial or funeral insurance, financial assistance received from voluntary agencies, federal/state/local/tribal/territorial government programs or agencies, or other sources.

More information regarding this assistance can be found at COVID-19 Funeral Assistance | FEMA.gov

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