



New water tower is half full

The new water tower received its first water on Monday and Tuesday of this week. The city-wide no-water restrictions drastically helped the process. And even at that, the filling had to be stopped on Monday evening as the WEB water pressure had dropped. The tower is being filled directly from the WEB line. The tower is about half full at 60,000 gallons. It will sit for a week and engineers are monitoring the base of the tower to make sure all is good.

Then on Monday, another 30,000 gallons will be added to the tower and once again, it will set for a week with engineers monitoring the base.

Then the following week, the tower will be filled to overflowing and it will set for another week.

The city is taking water samples of the new tower and once the results come back from the Department of Health and the samples are good, then the switch can be made to the new tower as the old tower is decommissioned.

Groton awarded \$5,000 mosquito control grant

The City of Groton has been awarded a \$5,000 West Nile Grant. Other communities in the area receiving grants were Andover with \$500, Bristol \$863, Britton \$6,792, Brown County \$15,000, Aberdeen \$20,000, Claremont \$1,981, Columbia \$1,021, Conde \$1,000, Frederick \$1,662, Hecla \$1,982, Langford \$1,983, McPherson County \$3,444, Pierpont \$1,341, Redfield \$5,203, Roslyn \$1,000, Spink County \$6,000, Stratford \$1,821, Warner \$1,825, Webster \$3,759 and Westport \$2,141. The state awarded a total of \$500,423 in mosquito control grants.



Master gardner David McGannon gives his garden a drink of water.



The smoke in the sky creates for an eerie sunrise Saturday morning.

Father Tschakert is new local priest

by Dorene Nelson

On July 1, 2021, Father Greg Tschakert (pronounced "shock-ert") began serving as the priest for Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church, Groton, and St. Joseph Catholic Church, Turton.

"I'm originally from Florence, SD," Father Tschakert stated, "where I attended elementary school and high school. After graduating from high school, I enrolled in the education program at Northern State University. I graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Secondary Education with an English major."

"After graduating from college, I began my teaching career in Ipswich, SD, where I taught high school English and speech classes for the next four years," Tschakert explained.

"Although I enjoyed teaching, I felt a calling to serve my church and its people in a different capacity," he admitted. "Following that 'call,' I enrolled in the seminary in St. Paul, MN."

"Attending seminary was 'a wonderful thing!'" Tschakert exclaimed. "I was ordained in 1982 and have served in a variety of parishes, schools, and administrative positions for the past 39 years."

"Before I moved to Groton, I had been the pastor of St. Katharine Drexel Catholic Church in Sioux Falls for seven years," he said.

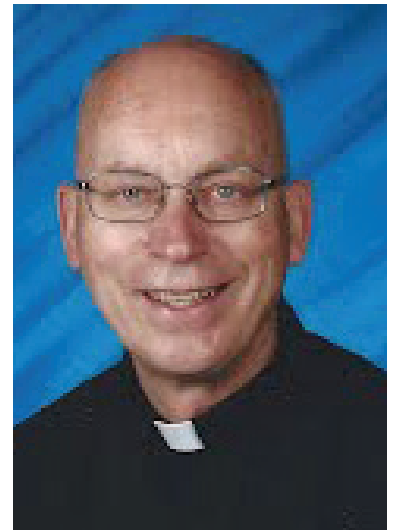
"While serving in various towns and cities in South Dakota, I was involved with the activities and religion education classes at Roncalli (Aberdeen), St. Mary (Dell Rapids), and O'Gorman (Sioux Falls)," Tschakert listed.

"Even though priests are regularly moved from one place to another every six or seven years, Father Tom, who served here before me, served in Groton for only two years," he explained.

The bishop assigns priests to the parishes they will be serving. Priests are eligible for retirement at 70 years of age. The decision to retire at that time is up to the individual priest.

"I really enjoy being a priest," Tschakert admitted. "I especially like celebrating the Sacraments, but I also love to teach religion education classes. These classes are the basis for the faith formation of young members of the congregation."

"I am very happy to be here and plan to stay here until I decide to retire," Father Tschakert smiled.



Fr. Greg Tschakert

Wage Library awarded \$15,000 grant

The city was awarded a \$15,000 grant from the American Rescue Plan Act for the Wage Memorial Library. The funds will be used for laptops, iPads and an automatic book systems. Councilman Brian Bahr suggested contacting the zoo in Watertown to see if they can bring animals for a day at the library.

The council gave second reading to an ordinance pushing the deadline back to December to submit its annual appropriation. Kristie Flihs said she had attended a budget meeting with about 75 people in attendance and said that only two municipalities have taken advantage of this opportunity. "Thanks Hope (Block) for jumping on this and getting it done," she said.

A first reading regarding the issuance of local medical cannabis establishment permits and/or licenses to prevent licenses from being issued. Cities are awaiting for guidance from the state in this area and more formal regulations need to be in place by October.

Finance Officer Hope Block presented an update on the mitigation plan for Groton. There are several options that the city can apply for grants.

A & B Contracting submitted a pay request for \$28,808.78 which was approved.

An easement on the east side of North Sixth Street, north of US 12, was approved. The easement will be used to expand the water main project to that part of town.

Hope Block and Paul Kosel were given authority to attend the South Dakota Rick and Safety Conference in Pierre November 3-4.

The council approved to hire Todd Gay Richard as the electric superintendent. He will be paid \$50 an hour, will receive two weeks vacation for 2021 and four weeks vacation for 2022. In addition the electric department will be paid \$200 a week for on-call pay with on-call being split equally.

The assistant finance officer, Kellie Locke, has gone through her sixth month of employment and will receive a \$1 an hour raise.



The elementary playground got a new layer of wood chips this week.

Schools seek ways to overcome COVID-19 learning loss

Andrew Rasmussen

South Dakota News Watch

South Dakota public school systems are trying to provide additional education to thousands of students who lost ground in learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, but educators and parents face major challenges in trying to keep students on track.

Almost half of South Dakota School districts, many in rural areas, do not have summer school programs aimed at keeping students on pace or helping them catch up in learning. Some districts that offer summer school programs are seeing heightened enrollment as students try to avoid falling behind after two school years of pandemic-related instructional interruptions and upheaval.

The need for continuity of education over the summer months is important in a normal set of circumstances, but with the pandemic the need has been expanded, especially for those in rural communities.

The typical summer learning loss, in which students lose educational progress over the summer months when most schools are not in session, was compounded during the pandemic, when many schools either shut down temporarily, shifted to online, remote learning, or had teachers working in challenging classroom conditions.

In South Dakota and across the country, educators are worried that it will be difficult or even impossible to ensure that students who lost significant learning time during the pandemic will be able to make up the lost instruction before moving to the next grade or toward graduation.

"The gaps that happen in a student's learning are one of the most detrimental things that can happen to the continual progress and growth," said Patrick Hales, a professor at South Dakota State University who coordinates the SDSU secondary teacher education program.

Nationwide, 53% of educators surveyed reported "significant loss of learning" and 44% saw "some loss of learning" over the past school year, according to a study conducted by Horace Mann Educators Corporation in February and March 2021. Additionally, 30% of educators assessed students as being 1-3 months behind in their education compared to previous years.

While most South Dakota students had in-person instruction for much of the year, the impacts of COVID-19 still slowed the learning process for many children.

The Rapid City Area Schools system, the state's second-largest district that serves about 14,000 students, recorded 6,169 student absences due to positive COVID-19 tests or quarantine protocols in the recent school year, equaling about 70,000 learning days missed, according to Superintendent Lori Simon.



Lori Simon

Educators also were hampered by the pandemic. In Rapid City, 828 of the district's roughly 1,800 staff members missed work due to COVID-19 during the last school year, a loss of the equivalent of 10,230 days of teaching or

administrative time.

In an attempt to make up for lost classroom time, the district has seen a nearly 400% increase in participation in high-school credit recovery summer courses offered in 2021 compared to 2019.

"When you think about half of our students out and missing that much school, it's going to have an impact on learning," said Simon. "When you think about staff, especially teachers not being in front of their classrooms and the lack of availability of substitute teachers, you put all of that together and certainly there are concerns about learning loss."

For the credit recovery program, which allows students to make up missed, incomplete or failed credits, Simon said the increase in participation is in response to concerned students, parents and teachers for on-time graduation. This summer, 450 students are enrolled in credit recovery in Rapid City, compared to 90 students two years ago.

Across the country, the U.S. Department of Education has estimated that summer school enrollment will rise in 2021 and very likely exceed the roughly 3.3 million students who attended summer school programming in 2019.

Learning loss an ongoing concern

Long before the COVID-19 pandemic, summer learning loss was an annual concern for schools and school districts, especially among students in rural areas who do not have access to summer programming or those from low-income or minority families, including Native Americans, who historically have struggled more than their peers.

"It's just a fact of the matter that the learning loss is going to happen, particularly for the students that need it not to happen the most," said Hales, of SDSU. "It puts students who are behind even further behind in terms of meeting learning goals."

About 46% of South Dakota public schools do not offer formal, in-person summer education programs, according to the South Dakota Department of Education, which did a COVID-impact survey of school systems in May 2021, said Mary Stadick-Smith, deputy secretary of the South Dakota Department of Education, said in an email to News Watch.

"At the state level, we recognize that extended opportunities for learning, including summer school, are a solid strategy for addressing challenges and accelerating a student's progress," said Stadick-Smith. "The choice of whether to operate a summer school is a local decision."

Summer school attendance cannot be required of students, and most districts do not charge fees for summer school unless the district offers speciality programming. In Sioux Falls, the district offers scholarships for families who want a student to attend summer programming but cannot afford it.

Some South Dakota communities are supported by local organizations, such as Boys and Girls Club, that provide informal summer educational programming. In rural communities with no summer school or community organizations to fill the gap, some students are at greater risk for falling further behind. The lack of summer school opportunities will make it harder for students to stay on track or catch up in the wake of the pandemic, experts said.

Hales said scholarly research is mixed on the effectiveness of summer programs due to the variables in how the programming is carried out. Several factors, such as the student's level of engagement with the instructors or materials, can affect the overall effectiveness



Students use computers to learn during a summer school program offered by the Rapid City school system in an attempt to stay on track or catch up on learning missed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Photo: Courtesy Rapid City Area Schools

of the programs.

Students without books and computers at home, or those whose parents are unsure how to teach or are unable to commit time to a child's summer learning program, are put at an even greater risk for learning loss.

South Dakota schools struggled to generate widespread student success even before the challenges of the pandemic arrived. Based on standardized test results in the 2019 Department of Education Report Card, just over half of students in grades three through eight and in 11th grade were deemed proficient in reading and writing, and only 47% of those students were proficient in math and 40% proficient in science for their grade level. Native American students fared worse, with 23% deemed proficient in reading and writing, 14% proficient in math and 13% proficient in science.

In recent years, about 30% of South Dakota high-school graduates who enrolled in a state university had to take remedial math or English courses because they did not perform sufficiently on entrance exams.

One rural school district in South Dakota used federal funding to create a new summer school program in 2021 to provide continuity of learning for students who fell behind during the pandemic.

The Sioux Valley School district in Volga started a general summer school program in their elementary school for the first time this year to help bridge the gaps in learning for students. The new program features 30-minute sessions of one-to-one instruction by six teachers in the areas in which the 27 enrolled students need support.

"We definitely wanted to make sure we closed any gaps that would have taken place during 2020," said Alanna Bezdichek, a teacher in Sioux Valley who specializes in Title I courses for disadvantaged students.

Creation of the the programs was enabled when federal funding was offered and the need for additional programming became evident. Although teachers put in extra work and support during the regular school year to catch up, some students still needed additional support.

Participating students were selected based on end of year assessments, teacher recommendations, and parent interest, according to Dawn Lucas, a kindergarten teacher for the district.

Summer programs vary across state

Across the state, summer school program-

Continues on next page



A Sioux Falls teacher works with her students during a summer school class at Garfield Elementary aimed at helping students stay focused on education during the summer break. Photo: Andrew Rasmussen, South Dakota News Watch

Continued from previous page

ming can vary in which students are targeted for summer school and for what reasons, ranging from remediation to acceleration of academic programming. Some districts saw increased summer enrollment while others saw greater increases in summer 2020 compared to this year or years prior.

In Tea, the school district saw an increase in credit recovery participation in 2020 with numbers normalizing this year, according to Jennifer Nebelsick Lowery, Tea Area Schools superintendent.

“Our credit recovery numbers were high last year when we ended the year virtual,” the district wrote to News Watch in an email. “The credit recovery numbers this year were the same as most other years. We do not run a formal program. We just provide the support to those needing extended time to earn credit.”

The Watertown School District allows for students to take summer school classes to recover credits in core course work, including reading and language arts, math and science. Summer school opportunities were broadened in Watertown with the criteria for qualifying and number of slots available expanded this year. Previously students in Watertown only had access to summer programming if they qualified but this year any student who wanted to participate was given the option to do so.



Jeff Danielsen

“Because we were in session and we were able to serve the majority of our population in person, I think we had a pretty good year,” said Jeff Danielsen, Watertown superintendent. “I think we caught up most of where we needed to be.”

The Sioux Falls School District offers a wide variety of summer school options for its students, ranging from Birth to 3 Programs through Grade 12 teaching, according to Teresa Boysen, assistant superintendent of academic success. In addition to core coursework, students have the opportunity to participate in English as a Second Language (ESL), career and technical education (CTE) and transitional programs for students entering middle or high school.

“I believe a lot of families want their students in for that consistency programming,” Boysen said. “It gives them that opportunity to get ahead so they can get other options during the school year.”

In total, the Sioux Falls School district offers 16 summer school options, according to a January school board report.

Summer credit recovery gives students the chance to work through courses they fell behind in at their own pace with more individualized instruction and a lower teacher-to-student ratio than a traditional school year class.

“I do think they can catch up and I think it’s really helpful for them to have a more casual

setting where they can come and just focus on one class at a time rather than go through a whole schedule where they have six classes in a day,” said Joel Sage, a language arts teacher at Sioux Falls Roosevelt High School. “I think they are a lot less overwhelmed when they have just that one class to focus on.”

Elementary summer programming was expanded from three buildings to 10 this year in Sioux Falls due to an increase in the number of students served from 187 to 600. High school summer programming saw a decrease of 39 students from 2020 to 345 students this summer.

“The Sioux Falls School District will provide rigorous, effective and engaging curriculum and instruction for all students to emphasize growth and reduce the achievement gap” according to the school board report. “Summer 2021 programming will include opportunities for students to fill academic gaps, credit recovery, and course acceleration.”

ABOUT ANDREW RASMUSSEN
 Andrew Rasmussen, a native of Brookings, S.D., is a journalism student at South Dakota State University who is the recipient of the 2021 Jeffrey B. Nelson Investigative Journalism Endowed Internship sponsored by SDSU and South Dakota News Watch.

For now, masks and vaccines optional in South Dakota back-to-school plans

Bart Pfankuch

South Dakota News Watch

Back-to-school plans for this fall are taking shape in South Dakota and — so far, at least — it looks like most teaching will take place in person and masks and COVID-19 vaccinations will be optional for students, teachers and staff.

But safety protocols could change quickly as public school officials keep a close eye on whether the highly contagious COVID-19 delta variant takes hold in South Dakota, a state with low vaccination rates among children and young adults.

In schools across the state, COVID-19 safety measures will be similar to the 2020-21 school year in that social distancing will be implemented when possible, health monitoring will be enhanced, and cleaning and sanitizing of buildings and buses will be more frequent than normal.

As of mid-July, Sioux Falls district leaders were still considering plans for returning to school, but officials in Rapid City and several other districts contacted by News Watch have approved in-person learning and guidelines that recommend but do not require masks or vaccinations.

“We will be recommending but not requiring masks for staff and students; visitors will be required to mask,” Katy Urban, spokeswoman for Rapid City schools, said in an email to News Watch. “We will not be requiring proof of vaccination. The Governor’s Office signed an executive order prohibiting schools or any state government entity from asking for proof of the COVID-19 vaccination.”

Recent messaging from health groups at the national level has been uneven regarding use of masks in schools this fall, and the discussion has taken on greater urgency as the COVID-19 delta variant has spread quickly across the country and caused some vaccinated people

to test positive for the illness.

The most recent statement by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said that fully vaccinated people can generally go without masks in indoor settings. But the CDC is also pushing more people to get vaccinated, noting that more than 97% of recent hospitalizations due to COVID-19 were among the unvaccinated. Vaccines are not available to those under 12, and vaccine hesitancy has been highest among children and young adults, according to federal data.

On July 19, the American Academy for Pediatrics announced its position that mask usage should be mandatory for everyone in public schools across the country this fall.

“AAP recommends universal masking because a significant portion of the student population is not yet eligible for vaccines, and masking is proven to reduce transmission of the virus and to protect those who are not vaccinated,” the organization said in a statement, which also supported a return to in-person teaching. “Many schools will not have a system to monitor vaccine status of students, teachers and staff, and some communities overall have low vaccination uptake where the virus may be circulating more prominently.”

As of July 1 in South Dakota, about 14% of children ages 12-17 were vaccinated against COVID-19 and about 32% of adults ages 18-24 were vaccinated, according to the health department. Overall, about 51% of state residents eligible for the vaccines were at least partially vaccinated and 46% were fully vaccinated. The vaccination rate in South Dakota rose quickly when vaccines were made available, especially among older and more vulnerable adults, but the rate has virtually stagnated in recent months.

Before starting school at any age in South Dakota, all K-12 students must present proof of being vaccinated or in the process of being vaccinated against polio, diphtheria, pertussis, measles, rubella, mumps, tetanus, meningitis and chickenpox, according to state law. Religious exemptions can be considered by school districts.

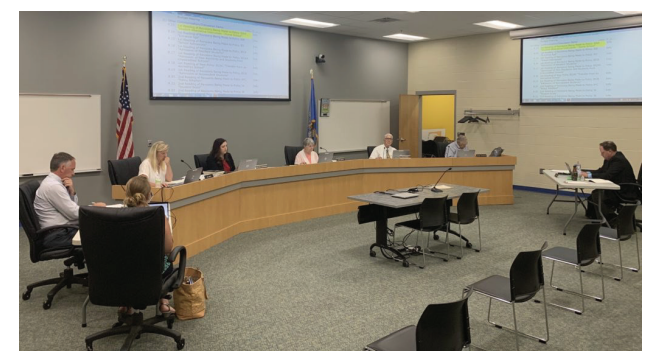
The COVID-19 vaccines for schoolchildren 12 and older are on a list of recommended vaccines on the state Department of Health website. But in keeping with the broader approach to COVID-19 vaccines by state government, the health department will not mandate that students be vaccinated for COVID-19 before attending school, said department spokesman Daniel Bucheli.

“There will be no COVID-19 vaccination mandates in South Dakota—this is no different for schools,” Bucheli wrote in an email to News Watch. “As we have since the beginning of the pandemic, DOH will continue to provide parents and families updated COVID-19 information as it becomes available, permitting them to make the best health decisions for themselves and their children.”

Bucheli did not respond to a follow-up question on why COVID-19 vaccines would not be required at a time when the state requires students to be vaccinated for several other harmful viruses.

According to the state, about 15,800 COVID-19 cases were reported among students

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The Brookings School Board recently adopted a back-to-school plan that makes masks optional for students, teachers and staff in fall 2021. Photo: Andrew Rasmussen, South Dakota News Watch

Continued from previous page

and staff in public K-12 schools from August 2020 through May 2021, with 15,755 of those patients considered recovered. Roughly 11,860 students contracted the virus and 3,935 teachers or staff were positive for COVID-19 during the past school year, the state said. In all, about 20,200 people age 19 and under in South Dakota have been diagnosed with COVID-19 so far; none of those cases led to deaths, but 133 people in the 19-and-under age group were hospitalized, the state said.

Research remains limited on how COVID-19 affects children, though hospitalizations and deaths remain extremely rare. About 4 million American children had been diagnosed with COVID-19 as of July 2021, though infection rates have risen sharply in recent months. As of July 15, South Dakota had the sixth-highest child COVID-19 infection rate in the country (North Dakota had the second-highest rate), according to the pediatric association.

Serious symptoms have been most common in children with underlying immune deficiencies or other pre-existing illnesses. But researchers are concerned that COVID-19 exposure has been tied to multi-system inflammatory syndrome in children, a condition in which different body parts can become inflamed, including the heart, lungs, kidneys,

brain, skin, eyes or gastrointestinal organs. Infected children can also spread COVID-19 and its variants to other children and adults, which is one concern for school districts heading into the fall and beyond.

The South Dakota Department of Education released its "Strong Schools 2021-22" back-to-school guidelines for public schools in mid-July, and recommendations include primarily in-person learning with options for virtual teaching where needed, continuous monitoring of local COVID-19 conditions and adapting as needed, and keeping the public well informed of any changes or new protocols.

A significant focus of the 2021-22 guidelines is to assess and overcome the high levels of learning loss that occurred for some students during the pandemic, in which normal teaching methods were disrupted, some children and staff missed school due to COVID-19, and virtual learning posed a challenge for many students.

In the Rapid City schools, for example, students lost about 70,000 days of learning, and teachers and staff lost about 10,000 working days due to COVID-19 illness or quarantining.

"We expect schools will continue to provide primarily in-person instruction and efforts begun in 2020-21 to assess and address learning loss and to re-engage students who may have disconnected from their learning during the pandemic," department spokeswoman Ruth Raveling wrote to News Watch in an email. "While some COVID-19 mitigation efforts will continue, our focus is shifting largely to emerging from the impacts of the COVID year as a stronger education system."

In Beresford, south of Sioux Falls, district officials are planning for "normal learning" in the fall, according to Superintendent Dustin Degen.

According to its tentative plan, learning will be in-person and masks will be optional for all, Degen said. Encouraged practices will include close monitoring of COVID-19 symptoms, regular hand washing for elementary students, and limited sharing of educational materials.

The Brookings School Board heard the first draft of its plan for the 2021-22 school year during a July 19 school board meeting. Face-to-face learning will be the primary delivery mode for instruction at the beginning of the school year, with the potential for hybrid or virtual learning if circumstances related to the pandemic change.

inated against COVID-19.

"Maybe we need to consider the masks for those lower levels, K-5, until the vaccine is available," Lanning said.



Steven Willard

In the Belle Fourche School District in Butte County, the typical school day in fall 2021 will look very similar to how schools operated in 2020, Superintendent Steven Willard said.

According to a back-to-school plan approved by the school board in July, the district will operate under a three-tier COVID-19 plan that starts with entirely in-person teaching and moves more classes and activities virtual if COVID-19 cases increase.

To start the year, teaching will be done face-to-face, masks will be "strongly encouraged" but not required, and vaccination is "recommended" but not required for students, faculty or staff. Willard said the district is not planning any targeted efforts to encourage greater vaccination among students, faculty and staff.

"It's a personal choice issue; at this point, it's not a mandate of our legislature," Willard said. "We got through last year without anybody vaccinated, so I think we'll get through this year in pretty good shape if we have any kind of vaccination in the district."

The district, with about 200 teachers and staff that serves roughly 1,400 students, did not suffer any major outbreaks of COVID-19 in the last school year and is hopeful that track record can be repeated, Willard said.

District officials, he said, will keep an eye on recommendations from the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to guide any protocol changes as the school year progresses. They will also be watching to see if the COVID-19 delta variant begins to spread widely in their region or schools, and will keep an eye on any potential coronavirus outbreaks resulting from the nearby Sturgis motorcycle rally in August, Willard said.

Social distancing will be implemented when possible; buses will be sanitized daily, and hand sanitizer will be placed at each entrance and in every classroom; group activities will be virtual when possible; and water fountains will be used only to fill bottles. The Belle Fourche district also installed new air-purification systems in two schools that recently had air-conditioning upgrades, Willard said.

"Nothing is perfect but I think we're prepared for anything that comes our way," he said. "It's fluid. If you get a big increase of cases, we'll have to revisit things, but we're hoping we'll be as close to normal as we can."

— South Dakota News Watch reporter Andrew Rasmussen contributed to this report.



Klint Willert

"Those would have to be pretty severe circumstances in which we would find ourselves implementing either a hybrid or remote learning model; however, I want to be very clear we have not taken any of those options off the table," Superintendent Klint Willert said. "We don't know what we don't know."

The plan leaves room for changes in the district's response depending on potential variants, including the reimplementation of a mask mandate.

"They [masks] are optional, recognizing that some individuals may not be vaccinated, understanding we have some individuals that will choose to wear a mask," Willert said.

Individual requests for virtual learning options will be handled on a case-by-case basis. During the meeting, the board heard from one member of the public who expressed concerns about the proposed mask rules.

"Making it optional I can understand for those students who've had the opportunity to get vaccinated," said Tony Lanning, a Title 1 teacher.

Lanning said it is important to note that teachers and staff will be working alongside many students who are unlikely to be vac-

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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.



Marty Weismantel
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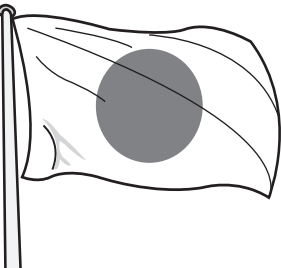


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Kids: color stuff in!



In summer 2021, Japan is welcoming athletes from all over the world to the **2020 Summer Olympic Games**. The Games are being held one year late due to the global pandemic.

Japan Welcomes World Athletes

Twenty-seven of the 42 event venues, where the games are held, are in or very close to Japan's capital city, **Tokyo**.

Japan ('s)

- is a collection of 6,852 mountainous _____
- capital
- official language is _____, but children take classes in English too
- national _____ has a white field with a bright red circle at the center, which represents the "Land of the Rising Sun," – this is a translation of the name by which the Japanese people call their country, **Nihon**
- government is similar to the U.S. government in that they have three, government branches – the Executive, Legislative and Judicial; but, they also have a Prime Minister and an _____
- shares a _____ with these countries: North Korea, South Korea, Russia, and China
- is surrounded by the Sea of Japan, the Sea of Okhotsk, the East China Sea, the Philippine Sea and the _____ Ocean
- in the "Ring of Fire,"; often hit by _____, volcanic eruptions, and tsunamis
- highest point is _____ – it is a holy place to many Japanese people; It is an active volcano
- key exports: cars, computer _____, electronics, machinery, ships

Read the clues to fill in the puzzle about Japan.

Japan ('s)

15. _____ unit is called a Kazoku: mother, father, children and the grandparents

16. commuter _____ is the fastest in the world – using magnets to travel over 370 miles per hour

11. custom is to bow instead of shaking hands – the lower the bow, the more _____ is being shown

12. popular sports include baseball, soccer, _____, wrestling, golf, and tennis

13. ancient culture had a class of warriors known as "Bushii" – high-level warrior nobles, known as _____; similar to Knights in Europe

14. produces more animated media than any other country- the unique art style of " _____" uses hand-drawn cartoons with bright, wide-eyed characters, enjoyed by all

Who Am I?

S _ _ I _ _ A
_ _ N _ _

Who can identify this favorite pet in Japan? **You** can!
Follow the color key:

B = Blue O = Orange
G = Green P = Pink
K = Black W = White

Flora and Fauna of Japan

Japan is home to many unique plants and animals. Akita and shiba inu dogs are favorite pets. Japanese plants show off vibrant colors like the bright reds of tiger lilies. **Find and circle these plants and animals:**

iris	camellia	amami rabbit	giant stag beetle
wisteria	akita	shiba inu	star magnolia
tiger lily	dugong	sika deer	creeping lettuce
			Japanese snowbell
			Japanese macaque
			Japanese snake gourd

ANDROGIANTSTAGBEETLE
CDQAYUSLAMAMIRABBITSS
AMURKDONISQEBWNOGINIIW
SHIBAINUAWQJGUVNCFREKI
LFSNMKTJBKNAFUOLAIBAAS
OSPFMACAQUEHXGMTMPYJDT
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STARMAGNOLIANKQDAOEFPC

Favorite Dishes of Japan

Below are some popular dishes in Japan. Can you **match the first phrase to the second part that finishes it?**

- sushi** is raw fish served in
 - soba** is a thin noodle dish made from buckwheat flour
 - bento boxes** are a packaged collection of rice, cooked vegetables, meat or fish, tightly packed together
 - sukiyaki** is a combination of beef, green onions, tofu, mushrooms and egg.
 - yakitori** is chicken cut into small pieces and placed onto a
- the name for the box is from a word meaning "convenient"
 - rice and wrapped in seaweed
 - cooked and served in an iron skillet and soaked in a special sauce
 - and dipped in a cold broth
 - bamboo skewer with vegetables and lightly seasoned



Going to School

The school year in Japan runs from April through March. Their summer break is in July. **Match up phrases below** to compare students going to school in Japan and the U.S.

- | In Japan – | In U.S. – |
|--|--|
| 1. students wear uniforms | A. school 6 hours a day (ex. 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.) |
| 2. lunch around 12:30 p.m. (rice, meat, fish, boiled veggies) | B. most do not wear uniforms |
| 3. school day is 7 hours (8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.) | C. students must complete grade 12 |
| 4. only have to complete up to grade 9 (but 98% of students go on to finish high school) | D. lunch at about 11:00 a.m. (chicken nuggets, mashed potatoes, peas, apple, cake) |



Groton U-12 Boys team at the SD State VFW U-12 Tournament

Back row coaches..Pat Kroll, Ryan Schelle, Matt Groelinghoff, Pat Krause. (Joe Schwan not pictured)

Middle row players...Ethan Kroll, Nicholas Groeblichhoff, Jayden Schwan, Tristin McGannon, Gavin Kroll, Braeden Flihs, Ryder Schelle

Front row players...Easton Weber, Lincoln Krause, Kason Oswald, Karson Zak, Shaydon Wood (Jonah Theisen not pictured)

Friday's game Groton vs Selby, Groton won 1-0
Saturday's games Groton vs Mobridge, Groton won 16-7
Groton vs Parkston, Groton loss 0-10

Tournament final Parkston vs Mt. Vernon/Plankinton (Parkston won 4-3)

Groton Area valuation drops \$40 million

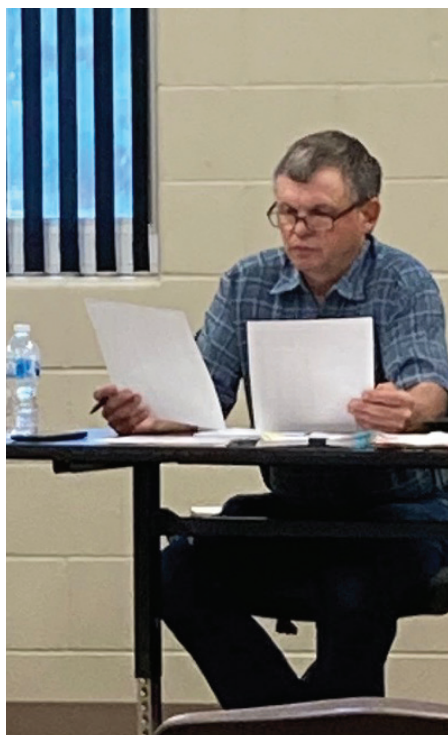
The Groton Area School may have to raise its tax levy due to the reduction in \$40 million in property valuation in the past year - most of it being in ag land. However, on the positive side, the district received over \$300,000 in COVID-19 relief funds. The board will continue to grapple with the facts before making a final determination.

A change in the procedure of home-schooling is in the works. Those who are home-schooled will be able to fill out an on-line application which will be sent to the state and the district. In addition, it no longer needs to be an annual application, only when they make the transition from elementary to middle school and middle school to high school.

President Steve Smith announced that he would like to have his name removed from being nominated as president. "It's time for a new face in this position," he said. As a result, Deb Gengerke was voted as the new board president with Marty Weismantel voted as vice-president.

There were a number of lane changes approved with Scott Thorson going from BS+15 to BS+45, and Melissa Smith and Alexia Schuring both going from BS to BS+15.

There were no changes made to the admission fees, breakfast and lunch funds and OST services. The student lunch fund is a mute point right now as everyone is entitled to free lunches at the school for the upcoming school year.



Steve Smith announced at the beginning of the school board meeting Thursday night that he wants to be removed from consideration for being the board president. He has served many years in the position and said it was time for a new face in that position. As a result, the smiley face on the right is the new board president, Deb Gengerke. (Photos by Paul Kosel)

(Photos by Paul Kosel)



Annual Salad Buffet

The Groton American Legion Auxiliary held its annual Salad Buffet on Wednesday. According to Bonnie Cooper, the event started in 2012 and has been held every year except 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Pictured are in back, left to right, Wendy Cooper, Mindi Jones, Mary Sippel, Sam Oswald, and Sippel; and in front, left to right, are Bonnie Cooper, Anna Oswald, Grace Oswald, Tami Zimney and Debra McKiver. (Photo by Bruce Babcock)

(Photo by Bruce Babcock)

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Weekly Vikings Roundup

By Dominique Clare

We are less than two weeks away from the start of Vikings training camp. Camp starts July 28th this year and will feature 14 practices that fans can watch. The Vikings will have two joint practices with the Denver Broncos during camp. That will give the guys a great chance to compete and show the coaches what they can do against other NFL talent prior to pre-season. One of the best matchups to watch during those joint practices are the defensive backs vs the receivers.

With that being said, this week, we continue our roster breakdown with the cornerbacks.

Last season the Vikings cornerback room was very inexperienced. It was that way because the Vikings lost Xavier Rhodes and Trae Waynes to the Colts and Bengals in free agency. They Vikings started young guys at every corner position. While statistically it wasn't a great year, they young guys showed a lot of poise and promise.

Cam Dantzler – This is one of those young guys the Vikings started last season. Dantzler was the Vikings main cornerback as a rookie. The Vikings selected Dantzler in the 3rd round but he played like a first round draft pick all season. There were 11 cornerbacks taken in front of Dantzler in the 2020 NFL draft. Despite that, he finished his first season with the #1 PFF grade of all rookie cornerbacks.

Dantzler is CB 1. He is the cornerback of the future for the Vikings. The only thing he currently lacks is experience. That is why the Vikings brought in the next guy on the list.

Patrick Peterson – Patrick Peterson comes to the Vikings as 31 years of age, full of wisdom and experience. He feels he still has a lot left in the tank and can help the Vikings after a down year with the Arizona Cardinals.

Mike Zimmer might be just the coach to turn around Patrick Peterson's career. In 2015 the Vikings signed 37-year-old Terence Newman. Zimmer put him in positions where he could rely on his experience over his athleticism and Newman was very effective. He played 3 seasons for the Vikings up until he was 40 years old.

Now remember, Patrick Peterson is only 31.

Bashaud Breeland – The Vikings and Super Bowl usually don't go hand in hand. Bashaud Breeland brings just that to the Vikings locker room. Breeland was an important part of the Kansas City Chiefs defense when they won the Super Bowl during the 2019 season. Breeland is an unsung hero type player and is a very underrated signing from this offseason.

He will compete for a starting job with Peterson and make this one of the deepest units in the NFL.

Mackensie Alexander – Last season the Vikings lost Mackensie Alexander to free agency. He is now back and slated to start at the nickel position. Alexander is an average cornerback but he is an amazing nickel corner. In today's NFL the nickel position is a starting position and very important. Having a guy who knows that position and plays it well is going to give the Vikings defense an edge and fill what it was missing last season.

Jeff Gladney – In all of this we can't forget about Jeff Gladney. The Vikings drafted him

early last season and he looked pretty good for a rookie. He is a hard-hitting corner who showed the ability to be a starter in the NFL.

The only problem is that he has ongoing legal battles for a domestic abuse allegation that came out earlier this offseason. He is not ruled out of playing this season as the case is still ongoing.

The Rest – After those 5 players the Vikings have Kris Boyd, Harrison Hand, Tye Smith and some camp bodies. They add quality depth to a very strong unit. Especially if Gladney is able to play. Boyd and Hand got a lot of experience last season with the Vikings being so shorthanded at the position.

Your local government works

I've covered hundreds of school board, city council, and county commission meetings over the years, and I'll tell you something you'd probably hear from any newspaper person who's done the same; by and large, your local government works.

I can't count the number of times I've had a breathless citizen, Joe Coffeeshop, tell me what wacky thing the county commission is plotting, and yet, when you sit through a meeting, you find good, thoughtful decisions being made. Do they sometimes get it wrong? Sure, with hindsight being 20-20, but I'd be hard-pressed to remember the last time I disagreed with their decisions once I knew the facts.

One of my best experiences was covering the Adams County Commission in Hettinger. At first, I was lost, but Commissioner Lennie Jacobs, who later became a legislator, kindly leaned back in his chair during the meeting and explained the broader picture and history of each issue and did so each meeting until he deemed this fledgling able to fly. A thoughtful, good man.

I learned a lot from a competitor who later became a good friend, too. I'd been taught the old school way. Sit. Shut up. Report. Except Al McIntyre, the owner of KNDC radio, kept quizzing them during meetings and sometimes volunteering insight. Sacrilege! But I soon appreciated the wisdom of the approach, realizing that Al saw himself both as reporter and patron, and if he knew something they didn't or caused them to see a better solution, it moved the community forward.

As a young publisher, however, the first club out of my bag was the driver. When I got to Hettinger, I discovered that the city council



That's Life

by Tony Bender

had used a brief legislative loophole to avoid publishing the minutes, and I asked them to resume, but they shot the snot-nosed new kid down. So I spent the next month mercilessly pounding them, doing such things as publishing blank spaces the size of the last minutes, noting that the total cost was a paltry \$38. Then, just empty space. What were they hiding? (Scary music.)

In an editorial, I urged citizens to contribute a dime to the destitute city, their share of publishing the minutes. Soon people began stopping council members on the street, handing them loose change. One county commissioner even gave the mayor a quarter. I'll never forget the motion from Councilwoman Bette Sanger at the next meeting: "I suppose it's time to grease the squeaky wheel."

I adored her.

I eventually realized that a conversation with Sanger, who wore hats, blood-red lipstick, and was a battle ax in the best sense of the word, would have gotten the same result with no embarrassment to the council.

I still have the driver in my bag, but I rely on my short game most of the time. At some level, though, the relationship between reporters and elected officials can get adversarial, and sometimes I've screwed up and had it coming. I don't think that was the case when McIntosh County Commissioner Ron J. Meidinger took umbrage at my coverage of a hot-button issue and threatened during a meeting to make sure my rural road was never plowed again. I don't remember much of what I said but I said it with my index finger three inches from his nose. I still like Ron. In fact, I think I liked him better afterward. I can respect a good street brawler.

One thing is certain, these government bodies are directionless without a good business manager, in the case of schools, or an auditor, in the case of cities and counties. Adams County had a great one. Betty Svihovec wasn't an auditor as much as she was the queen and a savvy political tactician who always gave the commission ample facts with which to make decisions. Did she steer things? Sure, but she was elected to serve the public good, too. Checks and balances. She didn't always get her way, but she offered immense value to county citizens.

I work with some excellent auditors and business managers in McIntosh County, too. I don't call after a meeting and ask specifically, "What the hell just happened," but sometimes not far from it. Again, you've got sharp people with institutional knowledge that isn't easily replaced, and the really good ones can simply the explanation so even a reporter can understand it.

It's fashionable these days to criticize and conjure up conspiracies about government, but on a local level, anyway, I'll assure you that once elected, your neighbor doesn't take a blood oath to put the screws to you at every turn. They're just like you. They want to make your community better.

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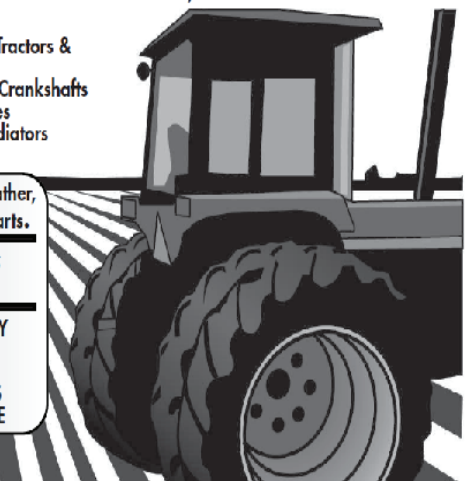
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By Debra Johnston, M.D ~ Prairie Doc® Perspectives

Science or Magic?

Examples of accelerating scientific progress abound in human history. Mendel's experiments with plants demonstrated inheritance in the mid-1800s. Over the next 100 years, researchers across the world built upon each other's discoveries, until Watson, Crick, and Franklin finally identified the structure of DNA. The human genome project was launched nearly 40 years later, and within 15 years, the entire human genome had been mapped.

Da Vinci famously conceptualized human flight during the Renaissance, but it took 400 years of research and experimentation before the Wright brothers flew at Kitty Hawk. Only 54 years later, the Russians launched Sputnik 1, and 12 years after that, Armstrong and Aldrin walked on the moon.

In 1846, ether was used for surgery for the first time. Surgeons could operate on patients without inflicting excruciating pain from the knife. Advances in the understanding of antisepsis taught surgeons to wash their hands and their instruments, and survival rates after surgery steadily rose. The first appendectomy happened in 1880. The first kidney transplant was in 1953. Today, surgeons can repair heart valves without opening the chest, and address spina bifida while an infant is still in the womb. Death as a result of surgery is uncommon in all but the direst of circumstances.

Hundreds of years ago, the Chinese blew pulverized smallpox scabs into the noses of susceptible individuals, and eventually variolation, the deliberate, controlled exposure of an individual to smallpox was practiced throughout the world. Smallpox contracted naturally carried a death rate of about 30 percent. Variolation improved the odds significantly: only one to two percent of people died. In 1796, Jenner started inoculating children with cow pox, thus conferring immunity to smallpox, and the modern vaccine era began.

Since the late 1800s, vaccines against many once terrible diseases have been developed. As technology has advanced, it has been easier to identify the organism that causes a disease. It took almost 15 years to determine that polio was caused by a virus rather than bacteria, and another 40 years to learn that there were in fact three different strains of the polio virus. It took only two years to identify HIV.

Science accelerates, and science rises to new challenges. Basic science advancements are translated into new or improved technologies faster than ever before. Researchers across the world can collaborate, replicate, build upon, or as importantly refute, each other's findings.

We have tools today that even da Vinci could not have imagined, and they enable us to do things that would have seemed like magic to previous generations. Science fiction author Arthur C. Clark once wrote, "any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic." Thankfully, understanding how these technologies developed helps us appreciate the difference.

Debra Johnston, M.D. is part of The Prairie Doc® team of physicians and currently practices family medicine in Brookings, South Dakota. For

free and easy access to the entire Prairie Doc® library, visit www.prairiedoc.org and follow Prairie Doc® on Facebook featuring On Call with the Prairie Doc® a medical Q&A show streaming on Facebook and broadcast on SDPB most Thursdays at 7 p.m. central.

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Redfield Jr. Legion Runs Away With Early Lead In Victory

Groton Jr Legion watched the game slip away early and couldn't recover in a 16-12 loss to Redfield on Saturday. Redfield scored on a single by P O in the first inning and a single by Rolfs in the second inning.

Groton Jr Legion collected 19 hits and Redfield had 14 in the high-scoring affair.

Redfield got things started in the first inning when P singled on a 1-0 count, scoring one run.

Groton Jr Legion put up five runs in the fourth inning. Groton Jr Legion batters contributing to the big inning included Colby D, Tate L, and Cade L, all driving in runs in the frame.

Redfield scored ten runs in the fourth inning. Salmon, S S, E M, K H, O O, and N G each drove in runs during the inning.

P pitched Redfield to victory. P surrendered six runs on ten hits over three and a third innings, striking out two. O and Rolfs entered the game out of the bullpen and helped to close out the game in relief.

Bradin A took the loss for Groton Jr Legion. The pitcher allowed three hits and three runs over one inning, striking out one.

Groton Jr Legion tallied 19 hits in the game. Andrew M, Colby, Jordan B, Dillon A, Ryan G, Kaleb H, and Tate each managed multiple hits for Groton Jr Legion. Andrew led Groton Jr Legion with four hits in five at bats. Groton Jr Legion was sure-handed and didn't commit a single error. Cade made the most plays with five.

Redfield totaled 14 hits in the game. N and P each collected multiple hits for Redfield. Redfield didn't commit a single error in the field. P had the most chances in the field with seven.

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Groton Jr Legion Claims Blow Out Win Over Belle Fourche Thanks To Sixth Inning Boost

Seven runs in the sixth inning led Groton Jr Legion past Belle Fourche 12-2 on Sunday. The offensive firepower by Groton Jr Legion was led by Kaleb H, Colby D, Tate L, Ryan G, Cade L, and Dillon A, all knocking in runs in the inning.

Belle Fourche fired up the offense in the first inning. Wahlfeldt singled on a 2-2 count, scoring one run.

Groton Jr Legion pulled away for good with two runs in the second inning. In the second Ryan laid down a sacrifice bunt, scoring one run and Dillon singled on a 1-0 count, scoring one run.

Groton Jr Legion scored seven runs in the sixth inning. Kaleb, Colby, Tate, Ryan, Cade, and Dillon all moved runners across the plate with RBIs in the inning.

Kaleb pitched Groton Jr Legion to victory. Kaleb lasted five and a third innings, allowing five hits and two runs while striking out five. Dillon threw two-thirds of an inning in relief out of the bullpen.

Pesicka took the loss for Belle Fourche. The pitcher went two innings, allowing five runs on one hit and striking out one.

Davis started the game for Belle Fourche. The bulldog went three innings, allowing three runs on five hits, striking out one and walking one.

Groton Jr Legion tallied ten hits. Tate, Dillon, Jordan B, and Ryan each had multiple hits for Groton Jr Legion. Tate went 3-for-4 at the plate to lead Groton Jr Legion in hits. Groton Jr Legion was sure-handed and didn't commit a single error. Cade made the most plays with six.

S Waldfeldt led Belle Fourche with two hits in three at bats.

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Region VFW Baseball Tournament Bats Blistered As Groton Jr. Teeners Falls To Clark In High-Scoring Game

SDVFW 14U Groton's bats were strong against SDVFW 14U Clark on Thursday, but it wasn't enough as SDVFW 14U Groton fell 21-7.

The SDVFW 14U Groton struggled to contain the high-powered offense of SDVFW 14U Clark, giving up 21 runs.

SDVFW 14U Clark fired up the offense in the first inning, when Jack Helkenn doubled on a 0-1 count, scoring one run.

SDVFW 14U Clark took the lead for good with five runs in the fourth inning. In the fourth an error scored one run for SDVFW 14U Clark, an error scored one run for SDVFW 14U Clark, and Emmerson Larson singled on a 1-2 count, scoring two runs.

SDVFW 14U Groton put up four runs in the third inning. Braxton Imrie, Korbin Kucker, and Nicholas Morris each had RBIs in the big inning.

SDVFW 14U Clark scored 11 runs in the seventh inning. SDVFW 14U Clark batters contributing to the big inning included Larson, Collin Gaikowski, Waylon Olson, Cooper Pommer, Josh Kannegieter, and Ky Vandersnick, all driving in runs in the frame.

Conner Mudgett got the win for SDVFW 14U Clark. The ace surrendered five runs on six hits over five and two-thirds innings, striking out three. Pommer threw one and one-third innings in relief out of the bullpen.

Kucker took the loss for SDVFW 14U Groton. The hurler surrendered seven runs on four hits over four innings, striking out four.

Taylor Diegel went 2-for-3 at the plate to lead SDVFW 14U Groton in hits. SDVFW 14U Groton stole ten bases during the game as two players stole more than one. Imrie led the way with five.

SDVFW 14U Clark collected 13 hits. Gaikowski, Helkenn, Pommer, Larson, and Tyson Huber all managed multiple hits for SDVFW 14U Clark. Huber led SDVFW 14U Clark with three stolen bases, as they ran wild on the base paths with 12 stolen bases.

Clark Takes Victory Over Groton Jr. Teeners In Pitcher's Duel

Both teams were strong on the mound Thursday, but SDVFW 14U Clark defeated SDVFW 14U Groton 3-2. Max Bratland allowed just four hits to SDVFW 14U Groton.

Bratland was credited with the victory for SDVFW 14U Clark. Bratland went seven innings, allowing two runs on four hits, striking out one and walking one.

Nicholas Morris took the loss for SDVFW 14U Groton. The pitcher surrendered three runs on four hits over five innings, striking out four and walking zero.

Josh Kannegieter led SDVFW 14U Clark with two hits in three at bats. Waylon Olson led SDVFW 14U Clark with two stolen bases, as they ran wild on the base paths with six stolen bases.

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Region 6B

Redfield Post Early Lead Over Groton Sets Stage For Victory

Redfield Post 92 jumped out to an early lead over Groton Post 39 and took home a 10-6 victory on Wednesday. Redfield Post 92 scored on an error, a double by Cooper Hainy, a single by Camden Osborn, a fielder's choice by Seth Siebrecht, and a walk by Owen Osborn in the first inning.

Bats blistered as Redfield Post 92 collected nine hits and Groton Post 39 tallied 13 in the high-scoring game.

Peyton Osborn led the Redfield Post 92 to victory on the pitcher's mound. The ace lasted seven innings, allowing 13 hits and six runs while striking out five.

Chandler Larson took the loss for Groton Post 39. The hurler surrendered nine runs on seven hits over five innings.

Redfield Post 92 totaled nine hits in the game. Osborn, Hainy, and Christian DeYoung each collected multiple hits for Redfield Post 92. DeYoung, Hainy, and Osborn each managed two hits to lead Redfield Post 92. Redfield Post 92 didn't commit a single error in the field. Siebrecht had the most chances in the field with six.

Groton Post 39 tallied 13 hits. Jonathan Doeden, Larson, Peyton Johnson, and Tate Larson all managed multiple hits for Groton Post 39. Doeden went 3-for-3 at the plate to lead Groton Post 39 in hits.

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From the Editors of E - The Environmental Magazine

Dear EarthTalk: I've heard that U.S. national parks are disproportionately affected by climate change. Is this true, and if so, why?
 --- Joseph Pearl, Longmont, CO



Yellowstone National Park, home of the Old Faithful geyser pictured here at sunset, is one of the nation's hardest hit when it comes to negative impacts from climate change.

Credit: Roddy Scheer

The effects of climate change can be felt all over the globe in various ways, but America's national parks seem to be suffering more than U.S. overall land mass. A 2020 study by researchers from UC Berkeley and the University of Wisconsin found that "human-caused climate change has exposed the U.S. national park area to more severe increases in heat and aridity than the country as a whole and caused widespread impacts on ecosystems and resources." Since 1895, annual average temperature of the area of the 419 national parks has increased at a rate of 1.8°F per century, double that of the U.S. as a whole. Precipitation declined significantly on 12 percent of national park area, compared with just three percent nationally.

What's driving this exaggerated response? One theory holds that national parks are feeling the heat more because they tend to be located in extreme environments to begin with. Their rarer ecosystems are in some cases fragile and less resilient to change than the average backyard or suburban park.

Some of the specific ways national parks are affected disproportionately include twice as much wildfire decimation and tree mortality from infestations and disease as non-parks lands, the melting of glaciers in northern parks in the continental U.S. as well as Alaska, a loss of bird species and biodiversity in southerly parks, and sea level rise at coastal sites everywhere.

According to Patrick Gonzalez, the study's lead author and a UC Berkeley climate scientist, climate change could increase temperatures in some U.S. national parks by as much as 16°F by 2100. "This could melt all glaciers from Glacier National Park, raise sea level enough to inundate half of Everglades National Park, dissolve coral reefs in Virgin Islands National Park through ocean acidification, and damage many other natural and cultural resources."

Some individual parks are taking matters into their own hands and channeling some of their maintenance budgets to bolster ecosystem resilience to the climate-induced changes already underway. Biologists in Joshua Tree National Park, for example, are cordoning off sections of the park to reduce the trampling of sensitive plants in particularly biodiverse areas. And Florida's Biscayne National Park is raising heat-resistant local corals they hope can play a role in stemming the tide of underwater biodiversity loss.

While these efforts are laudable and are no doubt helping address a dire situation, the only way to really turn things around across the board is to reduce overall greenhouse gas emissions. Gonzalez underscores the importance of energy conservation and efficiency improvements, renewable energy, public transit and other actions to reduce global warming. Like at no other time in history, the future is in our hands today. Whether or not our grandkids will get to see glaciers at Glacier National Park may well depend on actions we undertake today.

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 Paul Irvin Kosel, Publisher paperpaul@grotonsd.net ~ 605-397-7460
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