



Groton Area Boys are State A Bound!



It was a sea of white as the Groton Area Tigers celebrate the SoDak 16 win over Mt. Vernon/Plankinton in the game played Tuesday in Redfield. (Photo from Alexa Schuring's Facebook Page)

It has been 21 years since the Groton boys' basketball team has earned a berth to the state tournament. Back in 2001, the Tigers placed sixth in the State A Tournament.

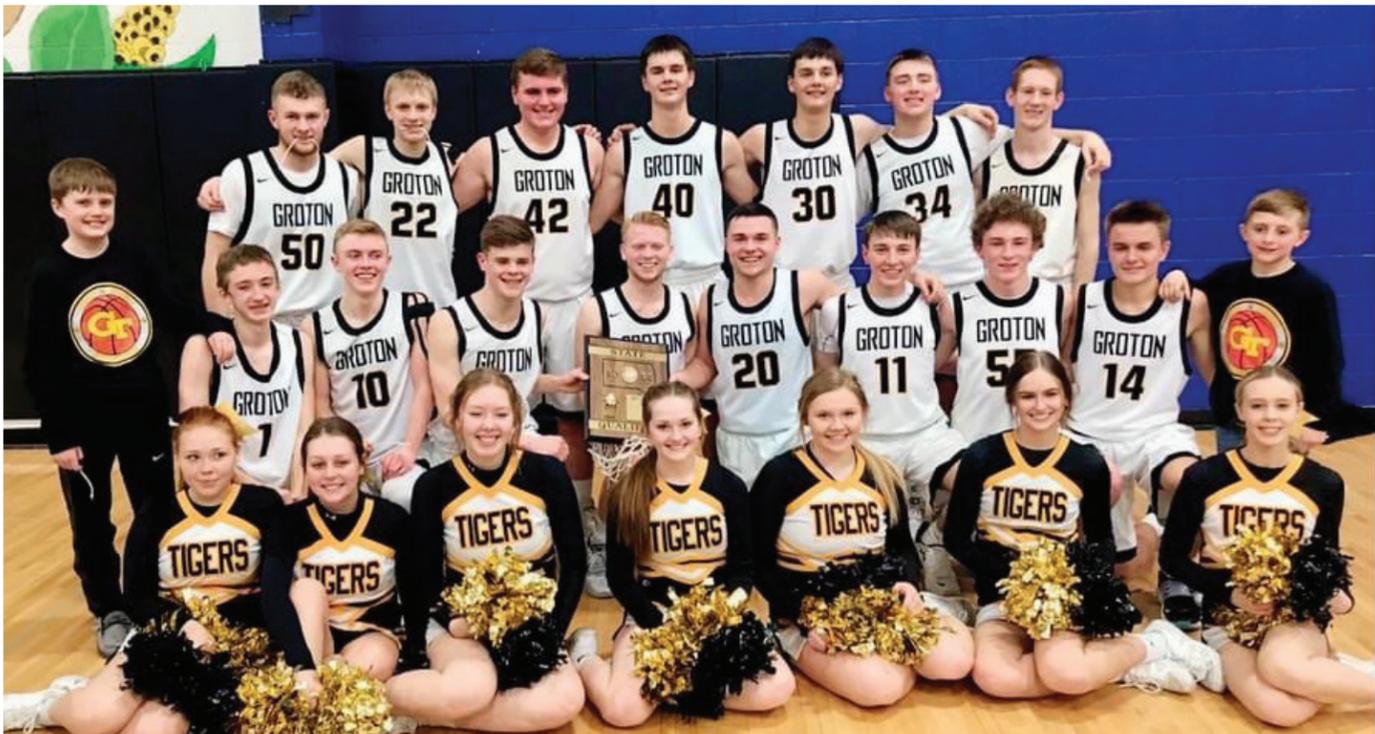
Third year head coach Brian Dolan has led the Tigers to back-to-back Northeast Conference champions (sharing this year) and now to a State A Tournament this year.

Groton Area advanced to the State Tournament with a Region 1A semifinal win over Milbank, 59-51, in a game played in Groton, and then defeated Mt. Vernon/Plankinton in the SoDak 16 game played in Redfield, 63-48.

The State A Tournament will be held March 17-19 at Summit Arena at The Monument in Rapid City.

First round games on Thursday have Dakota Valley playing Sioux Falls Christian at 1 p.m., Flandrea taking on Groton Area at 2:45 p.m., St. Thomas More playing Lakota Tech at 7 p.m. and Winner taking on Sioux Valley at 8:45 p.m. All times listed are central time.

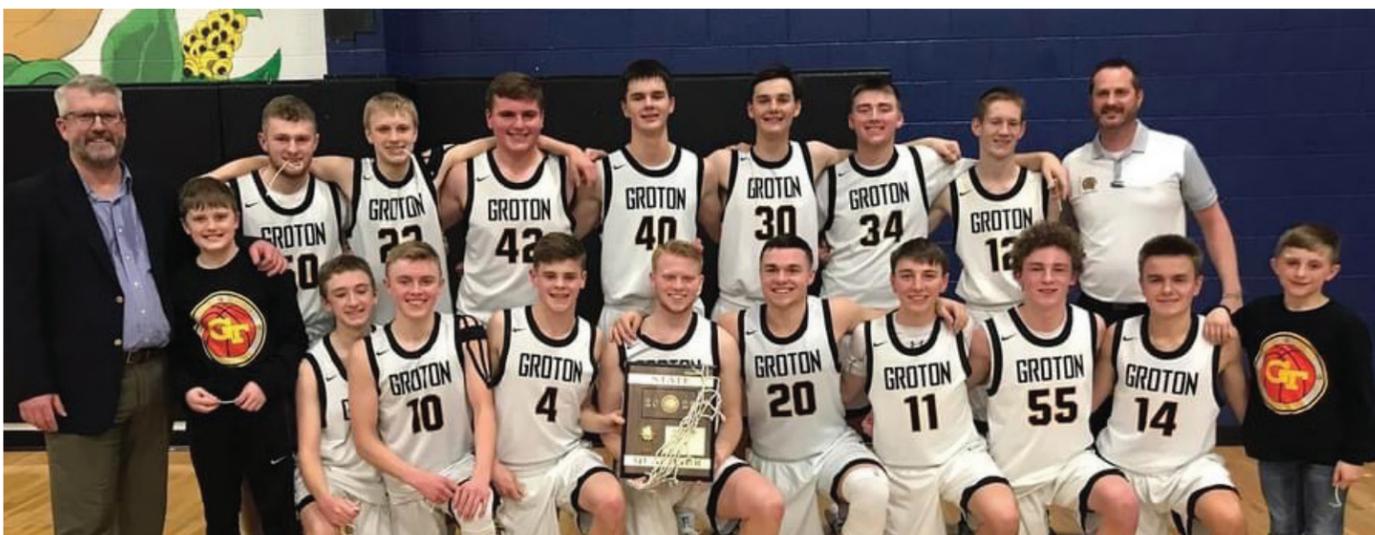
The dress-up days at the State A for Groton Area are St. Patrick's Day on Thursday, Formal/Dress Attire on Friday and Black and Gold day on Saturday.



(Photo from Diane Kurtz's Facebook Page)

Middle School Music Department to host Annual Talent Show

On Thursday March 10th, the Groton MS School Music Department will be hosting our Middle School Talent Show. Theme is "The Magic of Disney." The event will be held at the Groton High Old Gym at 7:00 pm. The talent show is a fundraiser for the MS Music Students to earn money for their future music trips. The show will consist of talent acts made up of middle school students and popcorn. For people that purchase tickets in advance there will be a drawing for special prizes at the end of the show. The general admission cost is \$5.00. Tickets will not be sold at the door, but a \$5.00 donation will be requested. The donations will be given to the Miller Music Department to help with supplies from their recent school explosion. The 6th Grade Band, JH Band, and JH Choir will also perform. You can get your tickets from any MS Music Student. Come enjoy a fun-filled night of talent and music. Thank you all for your support!



(Photo from Diane Kurtz's Facebook Page)

Tietz, Kurtz named to All-NEC Boys Basketball Team

Two Groton Area boys basketball players have been named to the All-Northeast Conference Team. Sophomore Lane Tietz was named to the first team while Senior Kaden Kurtz was named to the second team.

Other members of the first team are Tyler O'Neill, Clark/Willow Lake; Jaydon Keller, Webster; Cooper Schiernbeck, Deuel; and Bennett Schwenn, Milbank.

Other members to the second team are Tyson Stevenson and Easton Neuendorf, Hamlin; Ty Langager, Sisseton; and Aidan Fredrickson, Britton-Hecla.

Members of the third team are Noah Boykin and Naplan Felberg, Clark/Willow Lake; Peyton Osborn Redfield; Brennan Kessler, Hamlin; and Trey Maaland, Deuel.

Weekly Vikings Roundup

By Jack & Duane Kolsrud

NFL Combine

Over the past week, the best college football players from around the country took part in the annual NFL Combine. For many in NFL front offices, the Combine is simply a networking event that allows them to catch up with old friends and colleagues. For others, it is their first chance to look at many of these NFL draft prospects in person. For the Vikings' front office, there were a few prospects that they likely had their eye on more than others.

Ahmad "Sauce" Gardner—CB (Cincinnati)

Coming into the Combine week, many NFL draft experts claimed that it was a three-person race on who would be the first cornerback taken in the 2022 NFL Draft—Derek Stingley, Trent McDuffie, and Ahmad "Sauce" Gardner. However, that claim was quickly curtailed when many rumors started to swirl that most, if not all of the NFL front offices, believed that Ahmad "Sauce" Gardner was the clear-cut number one cornerback in this year's draft.

For a Vikings team whose cornerback room has been decimated in talent over the past couple of years, getting a guy like Gardner would be a huge boost to the team. At the Combine, Gardner measured in at 6'2", which means he is a whole 3" taller than the average height of NFL cornerbacks. Not only is Gardner tall, but he is very athletic. Gardner's 40-yard dash time of 4.41 seconds set the record for the fastest 40-yard dash time in the history of the NFL Combine for a cornerback of his height.

Sadly, Gardner's impressive performance at the NFL Combine might have boosted his draft stock so high that he might be picked well before the Vikings' draft pick at 12.

David Ojabo—DE (Michigan)

Under the Rick Spielman era, the Vikings never used a first-round pick on a defensive end. The reason for this was likely because the Vikings had such success finding such dynamic defensive ends later in the draft such as Everson Griffen (4th round pick) and Danielle Hunter (3rd round pick). However, with Rick Spielman being no longer with the Vikings, that philosophy might change.

Many NFL draft experts are claiming that the 2022 NFL Draft is rich with defensive end talent. Although the Vikings would like to get one of the top guys in Aidan Hutchinson or Kayvon Thibodeaux, the Vikings might have to settle on a guy from the second tier of the defensive end pool.

One name that sticks out that the Vikings might take is David Ojabo. Ojabo is an interesting prospect in that he did not start playing football until he was 17-years old. However, what Ojabo lacks in experience, he makes up for in insane athleticism. At the Combine this past week, Ojabo put on a show, posting ran a 40-yard dash time of 4.55. Ojabo's freakish athleticism might be enough to intrigue a team like the Vikings to draft a guy with so little experience but so much untapped potential.

Looking Forward

With the NFL Combine over, the NFL free agency is set to begin here next week. On March 14, NFL teams will be allowed to start talking to the various free agents on the market. On March 16, teams will then be able to officially sign whatever free agents they made deals with. And on top of that, the NFL trading period begins.

Unlike most NFL offseasons, this year's offseason could perhaps have a ton of movement of franchise-level quarterbacks. Aaron Rodgers might leave Green Bay, Russell Wilson might ask to be traded from Seattle, the Deshaun Watson fiasco has yet to be settled, and it appears the Colts want to move on from Carson Wentz.

For the Vikings, they have made it clear that they will not trade Kirk Cousins. However, if we remember, they said the same things for Percy Harvin and Stefon Diggs. The moral of the story is, if the Vikings get a trade offer they like, Kirk Cousins might be on the move.

Getting back with the Beatles

I have this song stuck in my head:

Two of us riding nowhere
Spending someone's hard-earned pay
You and me Sunday driving
Not arriving on our way back home
—Two of Us, Lennon, McCartney

I was oblivious, just 10, when the Beatles were stumbling toward a finish line all their own, miles ahead of the pack. The album was "Let it Be," and I just (finally) watched Peter Jackson's reworking of documentary footage of the making of the album. It's called "Get Back."

"Let it Be," was officially the last album released (in 1970) after its bits and pieces had been assembled by Phil Spector. "Abbey Road," in 1969, was the last time they worked together. Then, the breakup. I remember that. It was as if the world had changed, and it had. The Beatles had changed it.

"Let it Be" has been described as a bit of a crash landing because it fell short of ambitions—to record 14 new songs without the studio tricks and fixes that had become de rigueur for the band that had years ago abandoned touring. But how can any effort that produced "Let it Be," "The Long and Winding Road," "Across the Universe," and "Get Back" be considered a failure?

They've got less than a month to become a band again in the truest sense because Ringo is set to star in a movie at the end of the month. Some of the songs in progress eventually land on "Abbey Road."

Although the eight hours of footage show the lads, all in their late 20's, exhausted and headed in different directions, the connection between them, especially between Lennon and McCartney, is often joyful.

By this time Lennon, Yoko at his side, has passively ceded leadership to McCartney who struggles to bring George along. He's dour. He's got a catalog of songs but remains limited to two cuts on this album. Ringo, is, well, Ringo. He's the quiet Beatle, it seems, but when George quits the band during the sessions, and they must contemplate the end, there are tears in his eyes.

Over a private lunch, John grabs the reins for a moment, admonishing Paul for his treatment of George, showing empathy that comes through in so much of his music. After a couple of tries, they woo George back and the beat goes on. George even laughs and smiles. They're still brothers, sure, but brothers growing up and apart.

It takes fate in the guise of Billy Preston to energize the sessions. An impromptu visit leads to his recruitment and magic, enough so that the Beatles contemplate making him a fifth Beatle. But Paul notes that there are enough problems with four.

They're adrift and ill-suited for the business their music has become. In charge of their own affairs for the first time because Brian Epstein, their manager, had committed suicide in 1967. "Mr. Epstein," they call him respectfully. It's especially poignant when you remember that these were tough young men from a tough port city. I interviewed Bobby Vee once and he reminisced about a bus tour across England with the Beatles who were just about to break out. "John and Paul had fistfights on the bus!"

Somehow, the fates conspired, "Mr. Epstein" heard and saw something special in them, and they became bigger than any musical group before or after. Transformational. But they're tired.

Still, there's a sweetness between them. Paul defends John's new direction and Yoko's presence. John exhibits extraordinary patience as Paul searches for a sound he just can't find. And when they sing together, they're kindred spirits. A partnership for the ages.

It culminates with the concert on the roof of Apple Studios. They rise to the occasion as a crowd mills beneath them and bobbies are dispatched to shut them down for disturbing the peace. God, it's glorious. Even elderly passersby approve. The last song they ever play together live is "Get Back," with police authorities hovering.

Get back to where you once belonged.

John turns back to his microphone. "I'd like to say thank you on behalf of the group and ourselves, and I hope we've passed the audition." Oh, my, yes.

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That's Life

by Tony Bender

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Groton Area Boys are State A Bound!

The boys basketball season continues for the Groton Area Tigers as the team posted a 63-48 SoDak 16 win over Mt. Vernon/Plankinton. The game was played in Redfield.

The Tiger defense proved to be too much for the Titans to overcome. Even offensively, Tate Larson, at 6-3, was not intimidated by 6-7 Jordan Stoltz under the basket and even when he was outmatched, it opened up Jacob Zak who was seven of nine in two-pointers. The Titans had 17 turnovers, 13 of which were steals by the Tigers with Larson having four steals. Mt. Vernon/Plankinton threw a box and one defense on the the Tigers, chasing down Lane Tietz. Coach Dolan pulled Tietz back to midcourt and basically just had him standing there, pulling his defender with him while it was four-on-four offensively for most of the first half. Dolan said it worked fairly well, but then the Tigers started to stand around offensively so he pulled that idea late in the second quarter.

The Tigers had to overcome a first half challenge from Mt. Vernon/Plankinton. The game was tied seven times and there were six lead changes in the first half before the Tigers scored eight straight points to take a 25-20 lead at half time. Groton Area continued to pull away in the second half, taking a 41-28 lead into the fourth quarter.

Tate Larson led the Tigers in scoring with 17 points while Jacob Zak had 14, Lane Tietz 12, Kaden Kurtz and Wyatt Hearnen each had seven, Jayden Zak had four and Cole Simon added two points.

Reed Run led the Titans with 17 points while Jordan Stoltz had 10, Zach Baker and eight, Mason Hetland six, Blaine Bohr five and Ryan Chapman added two points.

Jayden Zak - 4 points, 3 rebounds, 2 assists, 2 steals, 4 fouls.

Lane Tietz - 12 points, 1 rebound, 2 assists, 2 steals.

Jacob Zak - 14 points, 1 rebound, 2 assists, 2 steals, 4 fouls, 1 block.

Tate Larson - 17 points, 3 rebounds, 3 assists, 4 steals.

Kaden Kurtz - 7 points, 3 rebounds, 1 assist, 3 steals, 5 fouls.

Cole Simon - 2 points.

Wyatt Hearnen - 7 points, 2 rebounds, 2 fouls.



Tate Larson holds up the plaque as the Tigers celebrate the SoDak 16 win over Mt. Vernon/Plankinton. (Photo by Bruce Babcock)

Also playing were Colby Dunker, Logan Ringgenberg, Cade Larson and Teylor Diegel.

Groton Area made 17 of 29 in two-point field goals for 59 percent, six of 15 in three-pointers for 45 percent, made 11 of 15 free throws, had 13 rebounds, 8 turnovers, 10 assists, 13 steals, 15 fouls and one block.

Mt. Vernon/Plankinton made 20 of 36 total field goals for 56 percent, made seven of 11 free throws, had 15 team fouls and 17 turnovers.

Groton Area, now 20-3, will play Flandreau on March 17 at 1:45 p.m. MT at the State A Tournament in Rapid City.

The game was broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, with a record viewership of over 1,100 viewers. The game sponsors were Allied Climate Professionals, Bahr Spray Foam, Bary Keith at Harr Motors, Bierman Farm Service, BK Custom T's & More, Blocker Construction, Dacotah Bank, Doug Abeln Seed Company, Groton American Legion, Groton Dairy Queen, Groton Ford, John Sieh Agency, Locke Electric, Lori's Pharmacy, Matt's Tree Service, Mike-N-Jo's Body-N-Glass, Milbrandt Enterprises Inc., MJ's Sinclair, S & S Lumber, ThunderSeed with John Wheeting, Weismantel Agency of Columbia

- Paul Kosel

UpComing Events

Thursday, March 10

End of Third Quarter Middle School Talent Show, 7 p.m., GHS Gym

Saturday, March 12

Show Choir at Aberdeen Competition

Sunday, March 13

Daylight Savings Time - turn clocks forward 1 hour

Monday, March 14

School Board Meeting, 7 p.m.

Tuesday, March 15

City Council Meeting, 7 p.m.

Thursday, March 17

State A Tournament in Rapid City: Groton Area vs. Flandreau at 1:45 p.m. MT (2:45 CT).

Spring Break - No School

Friday, March 18

State A Tournament in Rapid City

Spring Break - No School

Saturday, March 19

State A Tournament in Rapid City

Mitchell Show Choir Competition

Classifieds and Card of Thanks

The following rates are for Classifieds published in both the Groton Daily Independent and the Groton Independent. Cut rate in half if you just want it in the GDI or just the weekly.

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VENDER FAIR

A vendor fair has been organized in Groton for March 26, 2022, at the Groton Community Center, from 10 am. – 3 p.m. A variety of crafters and vendors will be available. Proceeds from an auction table will be donated to Make-a-Wish Foundation.

Groton City Street Seal Coat Bid Notice

INVITATION TO BID NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT The Groton City Council of the City of Groton, South Dakota, will open bids for the 2022 resurfacing of City Streets April 5, 2022 at 7:00pm (local time) at City Hall, 120 N Main Street, Groton, SD. Received sealed bids will be publicly opened and read aloud.

The work on this project includes the following:

• Approximately 75,000 square yards of bituminous seal coat.

All work areas are located within the City limits of Groton, SD.

The CONTRACT DOCUMENTS may be examined at the following locations:

City Hall, 120 N Main Street, Groton, SD 57445

The approximate quantities mentioned above are subject to increase or decrease. Questions or requests for further information should be directed to the City Finance Office, 605-397-8422, PO Box 587, Groton, SD 57445.

The City reserves the right to refuse any or all bids, to waive any informalities in the bidding and to award the contract in the best interests of the City of Groton, SD.

(0302.0309)

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Groton City Garbage Pickup Bid Notice

INVITATION TO BID NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Groton City Council of the City of Groton, South Dakota, will open bids on the solid waste hauling of residential garbage on

April 5, 2022 at 7:00pm (local time) at City Hall, 120 N Main Street, SD 57445. Received sealed bids will be opened publicly and read aloud.

Please mail sealed bids to PO Box 587, Groton, SD 57445 or drop them off at 120 N Main Street before 5:00pm April

5, 2022. Bid specifications are available for all interested parties by contacting the Groton City Finance Office at 605-397-8422.

Any questions concerning specifications or other information may be directed to the City Finance Office. Any deviations from the specifications must be

clearly marked on the bid. The City reserves the right to refuse any and all bids, to waive any informalities in the bidding and to award the contract in the best interests of the City of Groton, South Dakota.

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News Items: news@grotonsd.net

Deadline to submit items: Noon Monday
Yearly Subscription Rates are listed below.
The Groton Independent (USPS# 230-440) is published weekly with its periodicals postage paid at Groton, SD.

Postmaster: Send address changes to Groton Independent, PO Box 34, Groton, SD 57445

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I survived the update

One of the biggest challenges that I face in the computer era are the updates to the computer. More importantly, the major ones. I always fear that when it gets done, either the computer will fail to work or some of the programs will cease to function.

Monday was one of those days. I had created a file at my home computer. The file went to the cloud. Which is nice because I was able to download it to my laptop to print it off at the office. I downloaded the file and then tried to open it. Apparently, the program I used at home was a newer version because it said it could not open up a newer file. I had a 2022 version of Indesign at home while the laptop had the 2021 version. I was left with two options - either convert the file from a 2022 file to a 2021 file or update the program from 2021 to 2022. I opted to do the update.

I clicked on the update file. I got a message stating that my operating system was too old and that it needed to be updated before we could update the updated program. So checked my software update and sure enough, there was one that needed to be done. I proceeded to try and do the operating system update.

Then I got another message stating that I needed an additional 16 gigs of free space on the computer in order to do the update. Oh, good grief. So I started moving files to my external hard drive and deleting some files. After about 45 minutes of doing that, I finally got it freed up. It was good to go. It would now take an hour to download the file. So I went back to work figuring I would tackle the install process when I got off work.

Well, I got off work and came down to the office to finish the process. I was pretty excited that everything was going well. I clicked on the icon to do the update, agreed to its terms of agreement, and then I got another message. I needed to free up an ADDITIONAL 30 gig of hard drive space. WHAT?! I only have a 121 gig hard drive to begin with and you want me free up MORE space?! I was not impressed.

Well, I had to proceed - not sure how I was going get that done. The first thing I did was transfer the install file for the update to the external hard drive. That was 12 gigs in itself. Then it was time to move and delete files. After about another hour of frustrating decisions of which files to transfer and delete, I finally got the space freed up.

It would take about another hour to get the update done- this was a major operating system update.

At the end, I discovered that I only lost one program that will no longer work. It's my transfer program from transferring the files from the GDILIVE.COM camera to the hard drive. If a file is too big, it automatically puts it together into one file. I searched the Canon support website. Guess what? Support for that program ceased in 2019. Really?! That means now I will have to stop recording at half time and start a new recording - making two files to upload instead of one.

After all of that, I had to re-install the programs I had to delete to make room on the hard drive. So far, it appears all is going well now. I use the Indesign program to create the daily as well as the weekly and most of the production files.

So now, I am up to date with MacOS Monterey. I survived the update, for the most part! Now I have to get used to some minor changes. They revamped the email program so instead of a certain button being over here, it's over there. Good grief!

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Groton Prairie Mixed

Team Standings: Jackelopes 12, Coyotes 12, Chipmunks 7, Foxes 7, Shih Tzus 6, Cheetahs 4
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Women's High Games: Vicki Walter 187, 185, 169, Sue Stanley 174, Nancy Radke 168
Men's High Series: Mike Siegler 548, Brad Waage 521, Lance Frohling 494
Women's High Series: Vicki Walter 541, Sue Stanley 465, Nancy Radke 443



Coach Brian Dolan gets ready to throw up the SoDak16 ball to the his team. The regional semifinal winners all receive a ball with the SoDak16 stamped on it. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



The Groton Area cheerleaders step in unison, leading the crown in a cheer to start the fourth quarter. (Photo lifted by GDILIVE.COM video)

Groton Area boys advance to the SoDak16



Kaden Kurtz had to battle between two Milbank players to try and put up this shot under the basket. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

Groton Area seniors were on the front lines of a Milbank defensive attack and fans at the Groton Area arena watched as the Tigers pulled out a 59-51 Region 1A semifinal game win.

The Bulldogs were firing on all cylinders to start the game and Tigers soon realized they had their hands full. Milbank made six of 11 shots in the first quarter for 55 percent while Groton Area made three of nine for 33 percent as Milbank took a 14-8 lead at the first break. Milbank had an eight-point lead in the first quarter, 14-6.

It was the seniors last opportunity to shine in front of the home crowd, and that they did. Seniors Jayden Zak and Wyatt Hearnen sparked the Tiger offense in the second quarter as Groton Area tied the game at 17 and took its first lead of the game at 18-17 with 4:23 left in the first half as Senior Kaden Kurtz made two free throws. Groton Area opened up a five-point lead, 22-17, midway in the second quarter, but the Bulldogs battled back and tied the game at half time at 25. In the second quarter, Groton Area made six of 12 field goals for 50 percent while Milbank was four of 11 for 36 percent.

Milbank put the Tigers on the defensive in the third quarter as Milbank took a 32-25 lead. Groton Area Coach Brian Dolan called a full time-out with 5:20 left in the third quarter.

Right after the time-out, Kurtz sank a three-pointer. Milbank missed the next shot and Jacob Zak got the rebound as the Tigers quickly came-up court. Kurtz missed a three-pointer but Hearnen got the rebound and then Jayden Zak sank a three-pointer to make it 32-31, Milbank. After Milbank made a basket, Tietz would sink a three-pointer to tie the game at 34. Then Tietz intercepted a pass and went down for the layup and the Tigers had reclaimed the lead, 36-34. Now Milbank would call a time-out.

The remainder of the third quarter went back and forth and the game was tied at 41 going into the fourth quarter. In the third quarter, Groton Area made six of 13 field goals for 46 percent while Milbank was seven of 10 for 70 percent.

Through the game, the elementary students were up in the corner of the bleachers, but a couple of high school students went over and asked the elementary students to join them. Now joining forces for the Tigers school spirit, it was time for the momentum to permanently change to the Tiger side. Jayden Zak would hit a three-pointer and



Jayden Zak looks to hand the ball off to Wyatt Hearnen. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



Cole Simon gets ready to pass the ball to a teammate as the Tigers run the offense. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

then would hit another three-pointer, but this time he was fouled and converted a rare four-point play as the Tigers took 48-42 lead. Milbank would cost to within two, 50-48, but the hoop closed up on the Bulldogs and Groton Area would pull away for the win. In the fourth quarter, Groton Area made six of 10 field goals for 60 percent while Milbank was two of 13 for 15 percent.

Jayden Zak was five of seven in three-pointers and had a season high 16 points to lead the Tigers. Lane Tietz also added 16 points while Kaden Kurtz had 11 and Jacob Zak and Wyatt Hearnen each had eight points.

Bennett Schwenn led Milbank with 19 points, scoring 16 of those in the first half. Wylie Mursu was held to two points in the first half but ended the game with 10 points. Kellen Hoeke also had 10 points while Garrett Mertens had eight and Justus Osborn four.

In three-point shots, Groton Area was nine of 21 for 43 percent and in two-point shots, Groton Area was 12 of 23 for 52 percent. The Bulldogs made 43 percent of its shots, making 19 of 44. Milbank had the edge in rebounds, 27-23, with Jacob Zak having seven for Groton and Schwenn having eight for Milbank.

Groton Area had seven turnovers with all seven being steals by Milbank. Milbank had 13 turnovers with six of them being steals with Tietz having three. Groton Area had 12 assists, 14 team fouls and two blocks - one each by Jacob Zak and Cole Simon. Milbank had eight assists and 17 team fouls with Hoeke fouling out with 18 seconds left in the game.

Coach Brian Dolan said, "The seniors did a great job." He said the Tigers still had some lapses that will need to be taken care to prepare for the SoDak16 with Mt. Vernon/Plankinton. Groton Area is now 18-3 on the season and will advance to the SoDak16. Milbank finishes its season with a 10-12 record.

INDIVIDUAL STATS

Jayden Zak - 16 points, 2 rebounds, 3 assists.

Lane Tietz - 16 points, 3 assists, 3 steals, 2 fouls.

Kaden Kurtz - 11 points, 6 rebounds, 3 assists, 2 steals, 2 fouls.

Jacob Zak - 8 points, 7 rebounds, 3 assists, 4 fouls, 1 block.

Wyatt Hearnen - 8 points, 5 rebounds, 1 steal, 4 fouls.

Cole Simon - 1 rebound, 1 steal, 1 block.

Tate Larson - 2 rebounds, 1 foul.

The game was broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by Allied Climate Professionals, Bahr Spray Foam, Bary Keith at Harr Motors, Bierman Farm Service, BK Custom T's & More, Blocker Construction, Dacotah Bank, Doug Abeln Seed Company, Groton American Legion, Groton Dairy Queen, Groton Ford, John Sieh Agency, Locke Electric, Lori's Pharmacy, Matt's Tree Service, Mike-N-Jo's Body-N-Glass, Milbrandt Enterprises Inc., MJ's Sinclair, S & S Lumber, ThunderSeed with John Wheeting, Weismantel Agency of Columbia

- Paul Kosel



Lane Tietz launches one of this three-point shots. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



The Groton Area cheering sections put on a display of team spirit during the Milbank game. (Photo by Britt Andera Frost)

Brown County March 1, 2022

Meeting Minutes

MARCH 01, 2022 – GENERAL MEETING Meeting called to order by Vice Chair Wiese at 8:45 A.M. in the Commission Chambers, Courthouse Annex, Brown County, SD. Present were Commissioners Feickert, Fjeldheim, and Gage. Commission Chair Sutton was absent. Commissioner Feickert led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

APPLICATION FOR OCCUPANCY: Moved by Fjeldheim, seconded by Gage to approve the following applications for occupancy: Applications made by Northern Valley Communications to bore under roads for telecommunications in the following locations: Brown County Highway 18, section 1/12/13/24/7, township 121, range 62/61; Brown County Highway 23/18, section 3/2/1/6/5/4/3/2/1, township 121, range 62-61; Brown County Highway 16B, section 21, township 122, range 62; Brown County Highway 16C, Section 8, Township 121, Range 62; Brown County Highway 16, section 19/18/7/8, township 121, range 62; Brown County Highway 25/16, section 19/30/29, township 121, range 62, Brown County, South Dakota. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT UPDATE: Highway superintendent Dirk Rogers gave an update on staffing levels being adequate and upcoming projects.

MINUTES: Moved by Feickert, seconded by Gage to approve the general meeting minutes of February 22, 2022. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

CLAIMS/PAYROLL: Moved by Gage, seconded by Wiese to approve the following claims/payroll: Payroll: Commission \$4,503.96; Auditor \$9,591.19; Treasurer \$12,755.33; SA \$26,250.77; SVAWA \$0.00; Maintenance \$7,829.20; Assessor \$15,242.96; Register of Deeds \$8,028.80; VSO \$4,143.28; GIS \$2,483.72; IT \$7,366.31; HR \$4,061.37; Sheriff \$42,571.95; Jail \$51,697.54; Coroner (Voucher) \$0.00; Court Security \$6,990.62; JDC \$25,732.04; Welfare \$2,161.43; Museum \$8,702.12; Parks/Fairgrounds \$4,095.74; Fair Board \$4,720.00; 4-H \$620.00; Weed \$3,548.86; Planning & Zoning \$5,728.35; Highway \$38,965.83; Dispatch \$37,131.24; Emergency \$4,285.81; Teen Court \$684.00; JDAI \$1,846.15; 24/7 Sobriety \$1,416.63; Landfill \$14,810.04; Matching benefits: Wellmark Blue Cross Blue Shield \$21,332.54, Delta Dental \$7,685.80, Dearborn \$1,064.54, SDRS Retirement \$44,973.16, FICA \$21,332.54, Medicare \$4,989.03, Discovery HSA \$864.96. CLAIMS: Professional Fees: AVERA ST. LUKE'S \$30.00; CHRISTY GRIFFIN-SERR LAW OFFICE \$8,541.67; COGLEY LAW

OFFICE, PROF LLC \$8,541.67; DAKOTA COUNSELING GROUP, LLC \$2,100.00; DOHRER LAW OFFICE \$8,541.67; ELECTIONS SYSTEMS & SOFTWARE LLC \$6,700.00; JERALD M. MCNEARY \$8,541.67; KRISTI SPITZER \$600.00; KUCK LAW OFFICE \$8,541.67; LINCOLN COUNTY TREASURER \$254.46; LUMEN \$201.31; TAMMY STOLLE COURT REPORTING \$25.55; YANKTON COUNTY SHERIFF OFFICE \$50.00; YANKTON COUNTY TREASURER \$125.00 Publishing: ARGUS LEADER \$45.41; GateHouse Media South Dakota Holdings, Inc. \$25.16 Repairs & Maintenance: LIEN TRANSPORTATION COMPANY \$525.00; MARK NELSON \$887.00; STEVEN LUST AUTOMOTIVE \$168.83; TIMOTHY C. GARDNER \$615.03 Supplies: COLE PAPERS \$2,034.68; DAKOTA SUPPLY GROUP \$383.81; GREAT WESTERN STATES SUPPLY CO. \$1,015.14; LARRY BECKER \$381.75; MARCO INC \$22.82; MENARDS \$540.50; MIDSTATES PRINTING \$308.00; PAUER SOUND & MUSIC INC \$344.00; RUNNINGS \$201.97; SHERWIN WILLIAMS \$134.16; TITAN MACHINERY - ABERDEEN NH \$159.03 Travel & Conference: CHRIS HEMEN \$66.00; DEAN ZUMBAUM \$48.00; Heartland CISM \$350.00; JERRY LEHRKAMP \$66.00; JOHN FLOREY \$48.00; Joshua Ulmer \$348.00; MICHAEL WIESE \$154.16; MIKE ROHRBACH \$66.00 Utilities: MONTANA DAKOTA UTILITIES CO \$43.09; NORTHWESTERN ENERGY & COMMUNICATIONS \$3,356.16; QWEST CORPORATION \$1,188.29 Others: BROWN COUNTY TREASURER \$1,648.55; DIESEL MACHINERY \$174,430.00; SD ASSOC OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS \$4,014.00; SD DEPT OF AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES \$3,799.70. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

HR REPORT: Moved by Gage, seconded by Feickert to approve the following Human Resource Report: Acknowledge resignation of Jonathan Sorensen, Brown County Communications Dispatcher, full-time; effective March 10, 2022 and approve request to fill vacancy. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

UNCOLLECTABLE TAX LIST: Moved by Feickert, seconded by Gage to acknowledge uncollectible tax list as submitted by Patty VanMeter, Brown County Treasurer. All members present voting aye. Motion Carried.

AUDITOR REPORT OF ACCOUNTS: Moved by Fjeldheim, seconded by Gage to approve the following Auditor Report of Accounts: September 2021: Total Cash and Checks on Hand 7700 Total Checking Account Balances: 17346953.71 Total Savings Account Balances: 4825447.42 Total Certificates of Deposit: 3976798.16 Grand Total Cash and Balances: 26156899.29 General Fund Cash and Investment Balances by Funds: General Fund 8781703.5 Road & Bridge Fund 3626202.35 Road & Bridge Fund - restricted 423243.27 911 Service 1283587.68 Emergency & Disaster 198680.32 Domestic Abuse 3154.33 Teen

Court 12807.72 Grant 32.11 JDAI -17661.73 Richmond Youth 21916.96 24/7 Sobriety 56477.48 ROD M&P 111073.48 American Rescue Plan Federal Grant 3772010 Rural Access Infrastructure 97293.66 Tif Debt Service 6849.56 Landfill + cash change 2731966.68 Landfill - restricted 1400479.44 Trust and Agency Funds 3647082.48 GRAND TOTAL GENERAL FUND CASH AND INVESTMENTS 26156899.29; December 2021: Total Cash and Checks on Hand 7700 Total Checking Account Balances: 15552224.84 Total Savings Account Balances: 6025447.42 Total Certificates of Deposit: 3978174.09 Grand Total Cash and Balances: 25563546.35 General Fund Cash and Investment Balances by Funds: General Fund 12080728.51 Road & Bridge Fund 2550079.05 Road & Bridge Fund - restricted 423243.27 911 Service 1032529.59 Emergency & Disaster 170574.19 Domestic Abuse 1547.4 Teen Court 4141.26 Grant 32.11 JDAI -3018.89 Richmond Youth 21916.96 24/7 Sobriety 50188.58 ROD M&P 109779.64 American Rescue Plan Federal Grant 3772057.66 Rural Access Infrastructure 95415.63 Tif Debt Service 1081.68 Landfill + cash change 2819735.59 Landfill - restricted 1421179.03 Trust and Agency Funds 1012335.09 GRAND TOTAL GENERAL FUND CASH AND INVESTMENTS 25563546.35. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

LEASES: Moved by Feickert, seconded by Gage to approve the following lease agreements: Brown County Jail for lease of Richmond Lake Youth Camp June 3-5th, 2022; Aberdeen Home Builders Association for lease of Holm Expo Building March 4-6th, 2022. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Commissioner Feickert gave an update on SB 198 to revise provision related to juvenile offenders.

ADJOURNMENT: Moved by Feickert, seconded by Fjeldheim to adjourn the Brown County Commission at 9:20 a.m. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

Cathy McNickle, Brown County Auditor
Published once at the total approximate cost of \$70.09. 20961

Brown County Roofing Contractors

NOTICE TO ROOFING CONTRACTORS

Notice is hereby given that sealed bids will be received in the Chambers of the Brown County Board of Commissioners at the Brown County Courthouse Annex, 25 Market Street Suite 1, Aberdeen, South Dakota; until the hour of 8:46 A.M on March 15, 2022, at said time and place all bids will be publicly opened, read and considered by the Brown County Board of Commissioners for Project – Remove existing fully adhered and rock ballasted rubber roof system and replace upper roof with a fully adhered roofing system, and the remaining two (2) sections with a rock ballasted roofing system on the Brown County Annex Build-

ing, 25 Market Street, Aberdeen, South Dakota.

Envelopes containing bids shall be addressed to the Brown County Auditor, 25 Market Street Suite 1, Aberdeen, South Dakota 57401 and be marked on the envelope.

"Brown County Annex Building Roof" to be opened on March 15, 2022.

PROPOSAL GUARANTY: No proposal will be considered unless accompanied by a certified check, a cashier's check or bank draft, for 5% of the amount of the bid, such check to be issued by either a state or a national bank and payable to Brown County, or in lieu thereof a bid bond for 10% of the amount of the bid, such bond to be issued by a surety company authorized to do business in South Dakota and payable to Brown County.

PERFORMANCE BOND: Brown County will give notice to the successful bidder that the proposal has been accepted, and said bidder shall within ten (10) days thereafter enter into a contract with Brown County and furnish a performance bond in an amount equal to the contract price.

The Brown County Board of Commissioners reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids that they deem to be in the best interest of Brown County, and to waive any informalities or irregularities therein. Brown County is exempt from all Federal Excise and State Sales Tax.

Copies of the specifications are on file at the Brown County Maintenance, 25 Market Street Suite 1, Aberdeen, South Dakota 57401 and obtained at no charge. Phone: 605-626-7124.

ATTEST: Cathy McNickle, Brown County Auditor (0302.0309)

Published twice at the total approximate cost of \$45.25. 20939

Equalization Notices

West Hanson

WEST HANSON TOWNSHIP EQUALIZATION MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the West Hanson Township Board, acting as the West Hanson Township Board of Equalization, will meet on Monday, March 21 at 7:00pm at the home of Charles Dirks, 40305 138th St., Groton, SD. Persons wishing to appear regarding their assessment should notify the clerk by Thursday, March 11, 2021.

Jennifer L. Dirks
Clerk, West Hanson Township
40305 138th St.
Groton, SD 57445
605-397-7867 605-397-2762
This notice published once at the cost of \$6.86.

Town of Frederick

Equalization Meeting Notice PUBLIC NOTICE TO FREDERICK PROPERTY OWNERS

Notice is hereby given that the Frederick Town Board, sitting as the Local Board of Equalization, will meet at the Frederick Community Center for the purpose of reviewing, correcting and equalizing the assessment of property on March 21, 2022 at 7:00 PM.

Appeals must be submitted in writing with supporting documentation by 5:00 PM Friday, March 18, at the Frederick Community Center or mail appeals to the Frederick Finance Officer, PO Box 546, Frederick, SD, 57441.

Those appealing will be notified of their scheduled time to meet with the board. Contact Finance Officer at 605-329-2242 with any questions.

Diane Bruns, Frederick Finance Officer (0309.0316)

Published twice at the total approximate cost of \$16.56. 20963

Groton City

PUBLIC NOTICE TO GROTON PROPERTY OWNERS

Notice is hereby given that City Council, sitting as the Local Board of Equalization, will meet at City Hall, 120 N Main Street, Groton, SD, for the purpose of reviewing, correcting and equalizing the assessment of property on March 21, 2022 at 6:00 pm.

Appeals must be submitted in writing with supporting documentation by 5:00pm Thursday, March 17th at City Hall or mail appeals to the Finance Officer, PO Box 587 Groton, South Dakota. Those appealing will be notified of their scheduled time to meet with the Board. Contact City Hall for more information at 605-397-8422.

Douglas J. Heinrich, Groton City Finance Officer (0309.0316)

Published twice at the total approximate cost of \$15.45. 20964

Bates Township

The Bates Township Board of Equalization will meet at the Clerk's home on Tuesday, March 22nd, 2022 at 6:30 pm.

All persons disputing their assessments are requested to notify the clerk prior to the meeting.

Betty Geist
Bates Township Clerk
14523 409th Ave
Conde, SD 57434
(0309.0316)

Published twice at the total approximate cost of \$9.38. 20965

Putney Township

Putney Township Equalization Meeting Notice:

The Putney Township Board of Equalization will meet at Mark Thompson's Shop on Monday, March 21st, 2022 at 5:00 pm.

All persons disputing their assessments are requested to notify the clerk prior to the meeting.

Mark Thompson
Putney Township Clerk
(0309.0316)

Published twice at the total approximate cost of \$9.99. 20966

Groton City Voter Registration Notice

NOTICE OF DEADLINE FOR VOTER REGISTRATION CITY OF GROTON, SOUTH DAKOTA

Voter registration for the City of Groton, South Dakota Election to be held on April 12, 2022 will close on March 28, 2022. Failure to register by this date will cause forfeiture of voting rights for this election. If you are in doubt about whether you are registered check the Voter Information Portal at www.sdsos.gov or call the Brown County Auditor at (605) 626-7110, the Clark County Auditor at (605) 532-5921, Day County Auditor at (605) 345-9500, Marshall County Auditor at (605) 448-2401, or Spink County Auditor at (605) 472-4580.

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

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

Douglas J. Heinrich, Groton City Finance Officer (0309.0316)

Published twice at the total approximate cost of \$28.15. 20967

Brown County Rezoning Property

NOTICE

Application has been made by Brown County Planning and Zoning Office to the Brown County Board of Commissioners for a change of zoning. Hearing to be held in the Commissioner's Chambers, Courthouse Annex, Brown County, South Dakota on March 15 at 8:45 A.M. for the purpose of rezoning the following property from Chapter 4.06 Agriculture Preservation District (AG-P) to Chapter 4.14 Highway Commercial District (HC):

Proposed Outlot 1 and Outlot 2, "B and B Outlots" in the NE ¼ of Section 23-T123N-R63W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota. (39265 & 39285 133rd St)

The public is invited to attend the hearing and to present comments and testimony regarding the amendment to Second Revision Brown County Ordinances pertaining to rezoning the described property. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Brown County Commission may adopt first reading of Ordinance No. 213.

ATTEST: Cathy McNickle, Brown County Auditor (0302.0309)

Published twice at the total approximate cost of \$22.63. 20942

Brown County Hay Cutting Fair Grounds

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS HAY CUTTING ON COUNTY LAND EAST OF BROWN COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS

Notice is hereby given that sealed proposals will be opened for consideration at 8:50 a.m. on March 15, 2022 in the Brown County Commissioner's Chambers, Courthouse Annex, Brown County, SD for hay cutting on County land – approximately 22 acres at East of Brown County Fairgrounds-Lot 1-1st Replat of Dahme Northview Addn-SE ¼ Sec 1-T123N-R64W; approximately 16 acres at SW ¼ SE ¼ Sec 1-T123-R64W with a minimum bid of \$60.00 per acre. Two additional one-year options (2023, 2024) may be exercised at the discretion of Brown County Commission, provided notification in writing is received in the Brown County Auditor's Office by November 1st of the year preceding the option.

All hay bales are to be removed no later than the two weeks preceding the Brown County Fair, which start date change yearly.

Envelopes containing proposals shall be addressed to the Brown County Auditor, 25 Market Street, Suite 1, Aberdeen, SD 57401, and are to be clearly marked on the outside of the envelope "Proposal for Hay Cutting East of Brown County Fairgrounds."

ATTEST: Cathy McNickle, Brown County Auditor (0302.0309)

Published twice at the total approximate cost of \$27.59. 20940

Brown County Hay Cutting Richmond Camp

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS HAY CUTTING ON COUNTY LAND

RICHMOND YOUTH CAMP
Notice is hereby given that sealed proposals will be opened for consideration at 8:50 a.m. on March 15, 2022 in the Brown County Commissioner's Chambers, Courthouse Annex, Brown County, SD for hay cutting on County land – approximately 21 acres at Richmond Youth Camp – Sec 24-T124N-R65W; with a minimum bid of \$30.00 per acre. Two additional one-year options (2023, 2024) may be exercised, provided the Brown County Commission is notified in writing by November 1 of the year preceding the option.

Envelopes containing proposals shall be addressed to the Brown County Auditor, 25 Market Street, Aberdeen, SD 57401, and are to be clearly marked on the outside of the envelope "Proposal for Hay Cutting at Richmond Youth Camp."

ATTEST: Cathy McNickle, Brown County Auditor (0302.0309)

Published twice at the total approximate cost of \$20.42. 20941

3M

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- Electrical Systems Technicians
- Manufacturing Process Engineers
- Summer Student Temp-Production & Maintenance

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Glimpses From Greenfield 2022–Week 8

Last week was full of budgetary discussions and saw a number of spending bills considered on the floor of the House and Senate. With all the federal funds that have been made available to the state, we have focused on utilizing the dollars for long-term investments that will set us up for a better future. We did not want to spend foolishly on short-term projects that did not benefit the broader cross-section of South Dakotans. Many of the federal funds associated with the American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) come with certain guidelines attached. That said, I will discuss a number of the bills that have passed the House and/or the Senate.

SB 44 sought to secure \$29.5 million of ARPA monies for the demolition and reconstruction of an academic building at Northern State University. Lincoln Hall had originally been a dormitory building but it was renovated to serve as office space for a number of faculty members. It also had a couple classroom spaces that were less-than-ideal because of load-bearing columns that had to be maneuvered around. This may sound like a minor concern, but having toured the building while classes were actually being conducted, we could see the challenges posed as it related to viewing instructional materials on boards and screens within the classrooms. Also, when considering whether to renovate or demolish Lincoln and the adjacent Briscoe Halls and resurrect an entirely new building, it was important to note that the current facility was basically impossible to retrofit to ensure ADA compliance in the 115-year-old Lincoln facility. The bill had passed the Senate, 33-2, a couple weeks ago, and it met with a favorable 62-8 vote in the House. Going forward, the new building will serve as classroom space for both the business school, as well as expansion of a nursing program offered through outreach from SDSU. As we continue to encounter shortages in the medical field, this will be a very important new offering on the Aberdeen campus. Moreover, with all the improvements in recent years at NSU made possible through local fundraising efforts, this will complement the strides made to modernize the campus and enhance the students' educational experience.

SB 58 called for over \$69.6 million to renovate and construct additional space at the state health lab. A number of legislators took the opportunity to tour the existing structure, which bore out that the current space was woefully inadequate for the myriad of functions carried out there. Also, there were health and safety concerns for the employees who serve there as they deal with hazardous and infectious materials that require a higher level of biohazard safety equipment and air handling devices than are currently available. The bill passed the Senate, 35-0, and the House, 62-5.

SB 196 has passed three hurdles and awaits final consideration on the House floor. This bill was brought forth as a joint effort by Senator Hunhoff and me. Back in 2019, the Appropriations committee toured a facility called Teen Challenge outside Brookings. It was my first exposure to this facility. The name Teen Challenge is a misnomer, as it serves the adult population. People utilizing this residential chemical dependency treatment facility are basically there as an option of last-resort before being incarcerated for their prior addiction-related crimes. As we toured, we were able to hear from individuals who had profound stories of transformation as they set goals and set out on new paths in their lives. Teen Challenge is a faith-based program that has a remarkable success rate in that its graduates have a much lower recidivism rate than people who are put in prison for their transgressions. The facility in Brookings serves an all-male population, but we came to learn that there wasn't a similar facility for women. Given that a majority of females in the SD prison system are serving sentences for drug- and alcohol-related crimes, we are attempting to give them a similar diversion program that will put them on a more successful road-to-recovery. In addition to empirical evidence that the program works long-term and equips people to avoid reoffending, passage of this bill will also save on the costs associated with incarceration. Moreover, it helps to give them job skills that will allow them smooth transitions into more prosperous futures.

The budget process hasn't been all rainbows and butterflies, in spite of many positive outcomes. Late last week and over the weekend, it appeared we were on a collision course with disaster as there were fundamental disagreements over how to deal with other federal funds that were being woven into the ongoing budget. As I write this, I am fresh off eleven hours of discussions and negotiations with other legislators to try to piece together an agreement that will prevent the House and Senate Appropriations Committees from passing competing general appropriations acts that would ultimately be considered by bitterly divided members of a conference committee. It wasn't easy, and there are still no guarantees that the wheels won't come off, but as of this moment, we have charted a path forward that seems to work for everybody.

On the topic of the budget in general, we continue to move forward with our focus on fully-funding all the priorities set forth in the Governor's recommended budget, including the 6% COLA for education, facilities that care for those who cannot care for themselves and state employees. Because the bill that contemplated reducing the sales tax rate from 4.5% back to 4%, as it was in 2016, prior to the Wayfair decision, we are anticipating having at least an additional \$90 million in still-unobligated general funds. One of the biggest arguments for not providing the tax relief contemplated in SB 1327 was the fear of the unknown, especially as it related to the ballot measure you will be voting on in November that contemplates Medicaid expansion. Although some argue that MexEx will be a windfall benefit to South Dakotans, studies of the actual price tag associated with expansion of the program to sweep in more able-bodied individuals who are currently served by private health insurers bares out that it hits states' general fund obligations MUCH harder than is ever projected. My word of caution to you is to proceed with caution as you consider your vote on that measure. The outcome of that measure could well be the

difference between a return to the lower tax rate and the exponential growth of Medicaid expenses.

Please continue to pray the Lord will grant us wisdom and discernment and that His will be done as we work to bring this session to a close.

Brock

Lana's Annals- a report from Pierre

Greetings! It was a very busy week at the capitol as we move into our final days of regular session.

The House Education Committee discussed SB139, which would provide for the creation and funding of charter schools called Oceti Sakowin. The sponsor pointed out that academic achievement on the reservations is very poor and suicide rates are high. The bill asked to set up 2 Native charter schools, which would have a sponsoring public school and would be funded with taxpayer and private funding. The public school would give the charters the state funded per student allocation according to how many students enroll in that school. Once established, the schools would operate under their own boards. If the schools acted "in good faith" in all circumstances, the sponsoring public school would face no liability. Many questions were asked. One that I asked and particularly wanted clarified was what one day at the school would look like structurally. The explanation by 2 testifiers was this: the students would be greeted upon arrival and begin their day with "smudging." The rest of the day would depend on the season of the year as to what cultural activities would take place. One of those testifiers added that "education is a compulsory imposition." At that point I understood that the school would be culture and language teachings in nature, and this bill would do nothing to improve achievement test scores. We also discussed that we should not start allocating money over to private charter schools or it will set a precedent to fund other schools with private school boards. In addition, I did not hear about who would provide food or bus services, etc. It was pointed out by the sponsor that Rapid City operates a charter school independently through organizations and philanthropic donations. A Task Force is offering guidance on this one. At that point, we felt that charter schools without taxpayer funding and sponsoring school's liability could independently be put into place. Therefore, after two hours of testimony and discussion, we defeated the bill and sent it to the 41st day.

The House floor engaged in vigorous debate on SB 53 and 65, the workforce housing and funding bills. I was a definite no on these bills at first. The original bill called for 50 per cent of the funding to go to towns that had a population of 50,000 or above. The other 50 per cent would go to towns below 50,000. In essence then, most of the money for building would be sent to Sioux Falls and Rapid City. Meanwhile the rest of over 300 towns could grapple for the remainder. An amendment, which called for a 30/70 split, seemed far more fair. Therefore, after the amendment passed, I was able to vote in favor. SB53 then passed, but not 65, the actual funding part. We, thus far, have spent 5 hours on these bills with more to come. Those who are opposing it have not yet come forth with an idea as to how we could spend the 150,000,000 in the bill. I can see both sides as to, perhaps, underlying causes for opposition. An earlier proposal to drop the half penny sales tax was passed and sent over to the Senate State Affairs for testimony and discussion. As I sat there as observer only, I felt that there was no respect or courtesy extended to the testifiers or to the bill. After testimony closed, there were no committee questions nor discussion...just one member giving a loud, rude call to kill the bill by sending it to the 41st day. Everyone, except for one lone member, voted aye. We say that every bill deserves a fair hearing. When no questions are even asked, was it?

I was overjoyed that both chamber passed SB44, which allows Northern University to build a new business / nursing building where Lincoln Hall currently sits. Aberdeen folks, through the years, have pitched together and funded many campus buildings and projects on their own. It was 1985 when they asked for money to build the Barnett Center and nothing else until now. I was very happy to speak favorably and help with the passage of this bill!!

This week will be stressful. Tempers are going to flare; arm twisting will ensue. Each of us members have our passions for certain projects and bills. My passion is to create a wholesome, positive environment for our current and future generations.

With that, I will sign off. Have a very good week.

Rep. Lana Greenfield

Lana.greenfield@sdlegislature.gov

Brown County Spanier Rezoning Notice

NOTICE

Application has been made by Roger Spanier to the Brown County Board of Commissioners for a change of zoning. Hearing to be held in the Commissioner's Chambers, Courthouse Annex, Brown County, South Dakota on March 15 at 8:45 A.M. for the purpose of rezoning the following property from Chapter 4.06 Agriculture Preservation District (AG-P) to Chapter 4.07 Mini Ag District (M-AG):

"Spanier Outlot A" in the NW1/4 of Section 25-T123N-R60W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota. (41125 134th st)

The public is invited to attend the hearing and to present comments and testimony regarding the amendment to Second Revision Brown County Ordinances pertaining to rezoning the described property. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Brown County Commission may adopt first reading of Ordinance

No. 214.
ATTEST:
Cathy McNickle, Brown County Auditor
(0302.0309)
Published twice at the total approximate cost of \$22.07.
20943

Bates Township Right-of-Way Notice

Bates Township Board of Supervisors reminds all landowners and tenants that the road right-of-way extends 33 feet from the

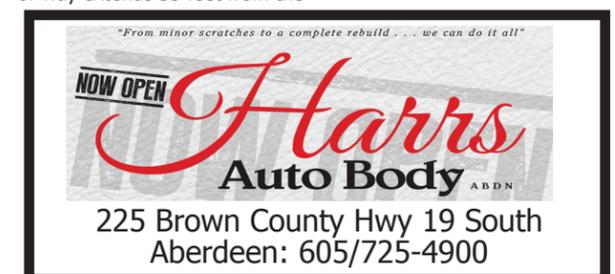
center of the township road. This ditch is to be maintained and mowed. Any crops planted in the road right-of-way will be mowed and expenses charged to the landowner.

Landowner is responsible for spraying all noxious weeds.

Bates Township Board of Supervisors

Betty Geist
Township Clerk
(0309.0316)

Published twice at the total approximate cost of \$12.69.
20968



School personnel incidents expose loophole excluding public comment

Stu Whitney

South Dakota News Watch

Two seemingly harmless words added to a state open meetings law in 2019 have sparked a debate over the rights of citizens to publicly comment at official government meetings in South Dakota, with several school boards at the center of the conflict.

The state open meetings law, enacted in 1965, was amended in 2018 by House Bill 1172, which required every official meeting to offer a period for public comment under the discretion of the chair. One year later came Senate Bill 91, which clarified language and put public comment at the discretion of the entire body rather than just the chair.

As part of that process, the words "regularly scheduled" were added in front of "official meetings," which bore little scrutiny at the time but has launched a legal tug-of-war between public officials and advocates of community input. Some government bodies have used the language to create a legal loophole in which they have denied the public the right to speak at official meetings.

Different interpretations of the wording stirred controversy last month in the case of a Garretson High School principal and football coach, whose contract was terminated by the school board after more than five hours of closed-door deliberations. Some community members felt stifled by an inability to address the board.

Across the state, an unsuccessful lawsuit against the Rapid City Area Schools Board of Education over the infringement of public comment has been appealed to the South Dakota Supreme Court, fueled by a group of parents who claim they were denied a voice as the board weighed disciplinary action last year against a high school wrestling coach and his staff.

House Bill 1255 was introduced in the 2022 South Dakota legislative session to clarify the principle that public comment must be permitted at all official meetings of public boards. The bill was killed in committee, though opponents acknowledged that clarification in the language of the existing statute is needed to avoid open meetings violations.

"In the municipal world that I operate in, I would be very hesitant to not allow public comment at an official meeting," Sam Nelson, a lawyer and lobbyist for the South Dakota Municipal League, said at a House hearing on the proposed bill. "I think it's almost a blanket statement that I would never recommend that."

Critics of the existing law say that public bodies such as school boards, city councils and county commissions are being allowed to exclude public input because of a semantic loophole cited as justification for doing public business without taxpayer input, and it comes down to those two words.

Garretson schools Superintendent Guy Johnson, in an interview with South Dakota News Watch, cited the "regularly scheduled" wording when asked why supporters of principal and football coach Chris Long were not allowed to address the board at a special meeting held Feb. 23 to determine Long's fate.

"I would refer people to the law, which deals with public comment at regularly scheduled official meetings," said Johnson. "This was a special meeting for a specific purpose, and the language does matter. People in the community are going to be upset either way, because they believe they're entitled to know all the details in these types of situations, and that's simply not the case."

Rapid City case heads to high court

The lawsuit in Rapid City stems from a group of parents upset over the termination of Rapid



Garretson school district Business Manager Jacob Schweitzer sits outside the school library during an executive session of the school board Feb. 23. Photo: Stu Whitney, South Dakota News Watch

City Central High School wrestling coach Lance Pearson over alleged violations of COVID-19 protocols involving an assistant coach, though Pearson was later reinstated. Joined by South Dakota Citizens for Liberty, a nonprofit group, the parents claimed that the school board stopped allowing for public comment at all meetings beyond the twice-monthly sessions that were "regularly scheduled" each year in July.

"This is a hill I'm willing to die on," said Tonchi Weaver, a lobbyist and organizer for South Dakota Citizens for Liberty. "The public is reduced to being mere spectators if all they can do is come and listen to the body deliberate. We should allow citizens to have the opportunity to address the people they elect to office."

Kenneth "Chuck" Jasper, a Rapid City attorney representing the group, will ask the state Supreme Court to consider whether school boards should be able to use study sessions, work groups, retreats, and other types of meetings to avoid public dialogue on critical matters.

"If we don't force public bodies to follow the law, they're not going to do it," said Jasper, who helped craft the 2022 bill that attempted to resolve the issue. "Why hide your light under a bushel? Public business should be conducted out in the open."

Opponents claimed that this year's bill, sponsored by Rep. Steve Haugaard, R-Sioux Falls, was marred by an amendment that sought to restrict comment to "only taxpayers or residents of a political subdivision or a parent." Several legislators commented that simply striking the words "regularly scheduled" from the existing statute might have been all that was needed.

Rapid City School Board President Kate Thomas, speaking in a personal capacity, testified in favor of the bill, confirming that the board's stance on public comment changed once its legal counsel noted the new wording in the 2019 measure. The board has maintained that its policy follows the letter of the law.

Most agree that the compact between school board and community can be colored by conflict, especially when hot-button issues arise. There were reports nationally of school officials or board members being threatened by community members during COVID-19 mask discussions, prompting U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland to issue a memo saying such incidents "run counter to our nation's core values."

Wade Pogany, executive director of the Associated School Boards of South Dakota, said that open dialogue can help defuse the tension on controversial topics. He noted that the Mitchell School Board held meetings at the Corn Palace last August to accommodate

those who wanted to address the district's proposed mask mandate. Testimony was heated, sometimes even hostile, but the input was heard before a vote took place.

"Every community has topics that are emotional," said Pogany. "But it's wise for a school board to have those open discussions so that the frustrations and emotions have an outlet and don't manifest themselves in some other way."

Matters of public trust in Garretson

At around 5:40 p.m. on Feb. 23, a freight train rolled slowly along the outer edges of Garretson, about 20 miles northeast of Sioux Falls, and came to a stop, causing a backlog of vehicles at the crossing that leads into town.

It was an ominous sign for those seeking access to a 6 p.m. school board meeting focused on potential action against Long, the high school and middle school principal and head football coach, who had stopped showing up for work due to suspension in early January.

His absence was not officially acknowledged by the school district for nearly a month, when an article by Garrick Moritz, editor and owner of the Garretson Gazette, entitled "Why has Chris Long not been on the job?" triggered a Feb. 3 text message from Superintendent Johnson to parents. The message confirmed that Long was "absent from his duties" but that the administration was prevented from saying more because of federal and state statutes and "basic human decency."

Asked by South Dakota News Watch if a cursory announcement several weeks earlier saying Long had been suspended pending further review could have reduced tensions, Johnson defended his policy. "In my opinion," he said, "the time when there's a need for notification is when any students are in danger, and that wasn't the case."

For Moritz, it was reminiscent of a situation involving former Garretson boys basketball coach Nate Beckman, who disappeared from his duties during the 2018-19 season without public acknowledgement from the administration. At the time, Johnson refused to answer questions from the local newspaper.

The day after Moritz approached Johnson for comment, notice of a special school board meeting was posted, where community members showed up ready to speak, though they were denied that opportunity. "We've got a lot to get through tonight, and I think we know why everybody is here," School Board President Shannon Nordstrom said, adding that comments on the sign-in form would stand as public commentary.

The board went into executive session but never issued a ruling, and Beckman was back coaching the team the next day. He left the school district after the school year along with his wife, Stacey, who served as head volleyball coach.

If the episode with Beckman caused ripples of concern in the community, Long's suspension rocked its core. The Wessington Springs native, a former standout high school and college athlete, arrived at Garretson in 2008 and soon became entrenched in the school community, with a son and daughter involved in varsity athletics.

As frustration with his absence mounted, students wore T-shirts with pro-Long slogans to basketball games and used social media to criticize the administration's actions. A small group of students also staged a "sit-in" protest during school hours and were punished with weekend detention.

Tensions carried over into a Feb. 14 "regularly scheduled" school board meeting, with attendees filling the school library. Nordstrom noted the unusually large gathering but explained

Continues on next page



Tonchi Weaver of South Dakota Citizens for Liberty stands outside the Pennington County administration building in March 2018. She has advocated for public comment at all official meetings.

Photo: Courtesy Rapid City Journal

that it was a “board meeting in public...not a public meeting, where people would be invited to speak.” The board allowed Tana Clark, who spearheaded a petition that gathered more than 100 signatures in support of Long, to read a statement, and then went ahead with board business not concerning Long without further public input.

By the time the scene played out again for the Feb. 23 special meeting, the board had appointed Huron attorney Rodney Freeman as hearing officer and legal counsel, while Long was represented by Sioux Falls lawyer David Kroon. Johnson sat with Sam Kerr, the school district’s attorney, who assisted with the administration’s internal review.

The focus of Long’s suspension was on the aftermath of an altercation, and ultimately an assault, between Garretson student-athletes while attending a track meet in Baltic the previous spring.

The boys were throwing an apple back and forth when one of the students hit then-senior Dominic Abraham with an apple in the face. According to an arrest affidavit filed by the Minnehaha County Sheriff’s Department last July, Abraham (the only student who was 18) and three other boys chased the eventual victim, who was knocked to the ground. The victim claimed that Abraham then took a stick and stuck it into the victim’s rectum while he was still wearing sweatpants, later claiming that “he could not move at all during the assault due to the amount of force used by the boys holding him down,” according to the affidavit.

The detective recommended charges of simple assault and second-degree rape with an object, but Abraham was charged with simple assault and pleaded guilty to the misdemeanor in early January. He graduated from high school last spring. Other students involved in the incident were minors and returned to school in the fall. Their names are redacted in the affidavit.

Johnson didn’t find out about the incident until late August, and a legal review scrutinized the actions of those who knew about it earlier. Under Title IX and state law, school officials are mandatory reporters required to report to proper authorities “instances where they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child under the age of 18 has been abused or neglected.” Students other than Dominic Abraham ended up disciplined by the school for their actions.

“There was a lack of communication between a lot of people,” said Tom Long, Chris’ father, a longtime educator and coach who served as volunteer football coach at Garretson the past six years. He joined his wife and other family members and supporters the night of Feb. 23, waiting five and half hours in the school commons as the board reviewed evidence and heard testimony, with black construction paper taped up to cover the library’s glass doors.

“I’m not stomping my feet about the whole thing,” Tom Long added that night. “There are things that could have been done differently, but Chris is a kind-hearted guy. He thought he was letting the legal system run its course.”

Chris Long and his attorney were gone by the time the doors opened around 11:20 p.m. and Nordstrom called a somber board back to

order. There was a motion to terminate Long’s contract based upon “a clear failure to follow, and violation of, the district’s policies and procedures,” and it passed unanimously. The fate of his teaching certificate rests with the South Dakota Department of Education, which has not yet announced any action.

The remaining supporters shuffled silently out of the library and into the school foyer, some of them weeping. Tom Long and his wife embraced Chris’ son, a junior at the school, as students in “Long Strong” T-shirts walked to the exits. Nordstrom refused to speak to the media that night, instead releasing a statement the next day.

Johnson was asked a week later about ill feelings in the community, including suggestions among Long’s supporters that families might opt to leave the district because of the way the situation was handled.

“Our goal is to have a safe and positive learning environment for all of our kids, and we’re going to move forward with that mission,” said Johnson, who came to Garretson in 2014 from West Central, where he served as middle school principal. “It’s up to individuals who make up the community whether they want to continue with that or not. There are always some who hold onto (grievances) or get angry, but for the most part people come to the realization that we’re all working toward the same goals.”

From a media perspective, where transparency is critical, Moritz sees things differently. Recent brushes with school officials in Garretson have convinced him that things need to change in order for the community to truly thrive.

“As a reporter, you want to trust the process, you want to trust the people involved,” said the Augustana University journalism graduate, who has owned the Garretson paper for seven years. “If we want to move forward as a community, we have to have clear and precise transparency. That’s the same thing the superintendent and board have said numerous times at meetings I’ve attended, but you’ve got to walk the walk.”

South Dakota laws limit openness

State law allows public bodies to hold closed meetings in executive session when discussing personnel matters – “discussing the qualifications, competence, performance, character of any public officer or employee” – as well as consulting with legal counsel, contract negotiations, marketing or pricing strategies and certain deliberations involving high school students.

But not all nearby states treat personnel issues as a complete blackout of information from public and media. In Minnesota, closed meetings are permitted for “preliminary consideration of allegations or charges against



Chris Long (right), former middle and high school principal of Garretson High School and head football coach, walks between the administrative office at the Garretson school and the library with his attorney, David Kroon, on Feb. 23, 2022.

Photo: Courtesy Morgan Matzen, Sioux Falls Argus Leader

an individual subject to its authority.” But if members determine that discipline might be warranted, “further meetings or hearings relating to the charges must be open.” Most states require that closed meetings be electronically recorded in case a legal challenge arises, but South Dakota’s statute has no such provision.

Too often, according to David Bordewyk of the South Dakota Newspaper Association, officials use the privacy provision reserved for personnel as an excuse to shield themselves from public scrutiny.

“That’s a weakness in the law,” said Bordewyk, who lobbies for free speech issues in Pierre. “Schools are quick to clam up and say nothing if it involves personnel, which frustrates not just the press but the public. They sit there for hours on end waiting for smoke to come out of the chimney or doors to open to find out what the hell is going on.”

Cynthia Mickelson, president of the Sioux Falls public school board, points out that there are other avenues of accountability that run concurrent to district deliberations, such as criminal or civil proceedings, that need to be respected.

The Department of Education started a database last year that lists teachers whose teaching certificates have been revoked and the reasons behind the action, adding a level of transparency on the back end of personnel deliberations.

Complaints about transparency involving public bodies can also be forwarded by a state’s attorney to the state’s Open Meetings Commission, comprised of five state’s attorneys, which examines whether a violation occurred and provides a written report.

The Sioux Falls School Board allows public comment at its twice-monthly meetings and at work sessions, with comments at work sessions restricted to the topic at hand. Mickelson notes that board members also field “hundreds of emails and phone calls” from constituents, adding that the intensity of that correspondence heightened considerably during the district’s deliberations on masks and other COVID-19 protocols.

“Since we’re the most local level board, none of us are serving for the glory of it, and people are going to feel comfortable expressing how they feel in a very unvarnished manner,” Mickelson said. “We thought the district boundary process would be the most heated topic we’d face, but that paled in comparison to what we encountered during (the pandemic). Luckily, as a board, we were unified and believed what we were doing was right.”

Allowing for dissenting voices and the free flow of information – even when a public body in unified in opposition – is the spirit of the state’s open meetings law. Tailoring the exact wording to meet that objective is a challenge that will likely resume next year in Pierre, with even more stakeholders involved.

“Any time you want to amend open meetings law, it brings everyone to the table,” said Bordewyk. “School districts, city, county, state – they all sort of get nervous when you start talking about amending the law, particularly as it pertains to executive sessions. The truth is that many of them like things just the way they are.”



Sioux Falls School Board President Cynthia Mickelson attends a work session on Nov. 3, 2021 at the Sioux Falls School District Instructional Planning Center. Photo: Courtesy of Erin Woodiel, Argus Leader

ABOUT STU WHITNEY

Stu Whitney is an investigative reporter for South Dakota News Watch. A resident of Sioux Falls, Whitney is an award-winning reporter, editor and novelist with more than 30 years of experience in journalism.

Dear EarthTalk: How are the world's coral reefs doing these days? I haven't heard much about them lately despite all the recent talk about climate change's ill effects. — Jo. S., Bowie, MD

Coral reefs are being hit by climate change in just about every way possible. Wildfire, drought and other land-based climate disasters have captured global headlines, but coral reefs have been bleaching at record levels, and as such their future is uncertain. The science of climate change's impact on coral reefs is simple. As humans pump greenhouse gasses into the atmosphere, the ocean acts as a carbon sink, absorbing carbon dioxide (CO2) and dissolving it into acid. As a result, ocean acidity has increased by about 25 percent since the early 19th century, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). That acidity is incredibly harmful to coral reefs. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA), ocean acidification "decreases growth rates and structural integrity" of coral skeletons, damaging their ability to support the diversity of life that makes up a

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reef ecosystem.

One of the most immediate threats to coral is ocean temperature increases. Coral reefs exist only in narrow bands of water that stay within a moderate temperature range, not too hot or cold. Even moderate temperature increases can cause thermal stress that contributes to coral bleaching and infectious disease. The ocean has warmed 1.3 degrees (F) since the Industrial Revolution, meaning many reefs are stuck in dangerously hot water. The stress on reef creatures has been immense. When coral polyps—small, anemone-like animals that form the living base of reefs—get stressed, they expel the symbiotic algae that grows on them and provides them with nutrients. This is what's called coral bleaching. With no algae to feed coral and give it its color, the abandoned coral turns white. That doesn't necessarily mean it's dead, but with no nutrient supply its ability to grow and fight off diseases is significantly hampered.

Warming water also causes stronger and bigger storms, which can destroy entire reef systems as they pass. Hurricane Dorian hit the Bahamas in 2019 and destroyed 30 percent of the islands' coral reefs. In 2005, Hurricane Rita caused extensive damage to coral reefs in the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary off the coast of Texas. Research suggests some storms may at times be beneficial for coral reefs by lowering water temperature. The influx of cool water can reduce heat stress on polyps, according to the Reef Resilience Network. But that temporary relief isn't enough to make up for long-term warming.

As surface temperatures increase, scientists hope that coral reefs might be able to slowly move themselves into cooler water—or that deep-water reefs already exist undiscovered. Researchers in Tahiti announced in February 2022 that they had found a nearly two-mile-long healthy coral reef in uncharacteristically deep water, leading to speculation that more deep-water reefs might exist in unexplored areas.

Still, the rate of human-caused warming far outpaces the speed at which coral reefs can move. Several start-ups and labs around the world are developing small, human-made coral systems, which could eventually be deposited in the ocean and grow into full reefs. But that technology is still a long way away. Until then, cutting emissions by driving less, using energy-efficient appliances and divesting from fossil fuel companies is the best way individuals can look out for the future of coral reefs.

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.



It's going to get harder and harder to find Nemo and other clown fish as the world's living coral reefs become more and more scarce. Credit: George Becker, Pexels.

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Time Heals All Wounds

The saying goes "time heals all wounds", but what happens when a wound does not heal? Wounds go through many stages while healing and complications at any step can prolong the process.

The first step is stopping the bleeding. For people who are taking blood thinners like aspirin or warfarin, it may take longer for the bleeding to stop or clot.

The next step after the blood starts to clot is forming a scab. This happens when blood vessels around the wound narrow and platelets in the blood clump together to create the scab. A protein called fibrin helps hold the clot in place. After someone has had a stroke or heart attack caused by a clot, they may be placed on medications to make the platelets more slippery and less likely to clump together. Medications like Plavix and Aggrenox make platelets slide past each other rather than clumping to make a clot which can delay the scabbing process.

At this point, the body cleans the wound. Blood vessels will dilate and increase blood flow to the area. White blood cells called macrophages arrive on the scene to clear out infection and release chemicals called growth factors and cytokines that help tell the body to form new skin cells. If the infection is not cleared by the body, the wound will not heal properly.

The body also creates new blood cells to bring in nutrients and supplies to help heal the wound. Conditions like diabetes, atherosclerosis, known as hardening of the arteries, and high blood pressure, cause poor blood flow and can slow down wound healing. Smoking slows healing in many ways. Nicotine causes blood vessels to narrow and reduces the number of macrophages and fibrin in circulation. Carbon monoxide in cigarette smoke decreases the oxygen transport needed to help repair and rebuild the skin cells.

The final step of wound healing is strengthening or maturation. At this stage the wound looks closed and repaired, but the tissues below are still being strengthened. The wound may feel itchy or tight and the skin may look slightly pink and stretched. After about three months the wound should be about 80 percent healed. It can take up to two years for the scar to remodel and achieve its final appearance.

Yes, it takes time to heal all wounds, but if you have concerns don't bide your time. Talk to your doctor to learn about options that can assist you through the healing process. We want to help your wound heal, all in good time.

Jill Kruse, D.O. is part of The Prairie Doc® team of physicians and currently practices as a hospitalist in Brookings, South Dakota. Follow The Prairie Doc® at www.prairiedoc.org and on Facebook featuring On Call with the Prairie Doc®, a medical Q&A show celebrating its twentieth season of truthful, tested, and timely medical information, broadcast on SDPB and streaming live on Facebook most Thursdays at 7 p.m. central.



By Jill Kruse, D.O.