



## Dolan presents activities report to school board

Athletic Director Brian Dolan talked about several things that are in the works in the Northeast Conference at the school board meeting held Monday night.

Florence-Henry had submitted a request to join the Northeast Conference; however, they have now been moved to Region 2 so that request was withdrawn for now. Waubay-Summit is also considering going the conference. Dolan said it would help secure Class A games without having to travel. Aberdeen Roncalli is also going back to Class A.

Another thing in the works is more double headers. Dolan said he was not thrilled this past year with only six C games for the boys and four or five for the girls. "We need more games." He is anticipating that the C division may have play their own schedule with more double headers in the works.

There will be a meeting Thursday to decide if there is enough interest in fielding a boys varsity soccer team. He said right now, it's right on the borderline.

Board member Marty Weismantel also mentioned that the Huron athletic director has expressed an interest in forming a junior varsity football schedule for this part of the state. Dolan said he was also aware of that and will follow up. On the varsity level, homecoming has been set for September 23 with Sisseton.

Dolan said it's a hard balance with girls soccer and volleyball since so many of the girls play both. Soccer takes its toll on the girls legs and then they have to play volleyball. He said that you can tell the difference in volleyball in October after soccer is over.

Reports were also given by the health curriculum and the music department. Desiree Yeigh reported that the high school band numbers are "scary low." She said it may be questionable if there will be a pep band or marching band next year. An idea being floated around is to include eighth graders in the high school band to help bolster numbers. She said that the sixth grade band numbers are the highest they have been since she has been in Groton. It was suggested to bring in a lesson teacher from NSU to help in the department.

Janene Harry gave a tour of the art department.

Superintendent Joe Schwan reported on the State A Tournament. He said that he was very impressed with the fans and players at the state tournament. "Our community was represented well at the State A. It was very impressive and our kids were fantastic."

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State A. It was impressive. Our kids were fantastic.

Elementary track and field day is set for May 13th at 12:30 p.m. Elementary numbers are up one in each kindergarten and fifth grade.

The work comp fee is about \$2,000 lower than last year. There is a 4% increase in the health insurance premium.

The board accepted the resignation of Becky Erickson as a special educa-

tion teacher, JH VB coach and JH GBB coach at the end of the school year. She has accepted the director position of the North Central Special Education Cooperation.

The board accepted the resignation of Ray Adams as high school math teacher.

There are 11 openings in the Groton School. - Paul Kosel

### POPS Concert set for April 3rd

The Groton Area High School music department will present its annual POPS Concert on Sunday, April 3, at 2:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. in the high school gym. Tickets will not be sold in advance. Admission is \$5.00 at the door.

The concert will feature performances from the award-winning Prismatic Sensations Show Choir and High School Flex Band, as well as many talented soloists. There will be no reserved seating, and seats do fill up quickly, so plan on arriving early to get a great view of the show! The doors will open one hour prior to show time. This concert is one of the highlights of the year for the music department, and you do not want to miss it!

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

If you have card tables that the music department may borrow for the day, please label them with your name and drop them off at the high school or e-mail Mrs. Yeigh at [desiree.yeigh@k12.sd.us](mailto:desiree.yeigh@k12.sd.us) to arrange a pick up.

Both POPS Concert performances will be broadcast live on [GDILIVE.COM](http://GDILIVE.COM).

### February Students of the Month



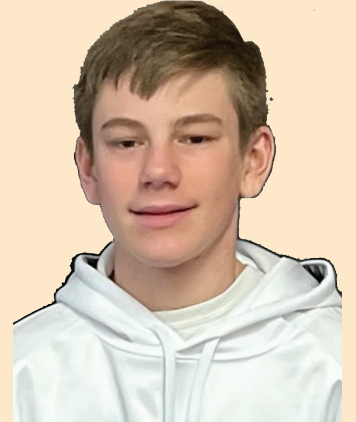
**Pierce Kettering**  
Senior



**Elliana Weismantel**  
Junior



**Dillon Abeln**  
Sophomore



**Blake Pauli**  
Freshman



**London Bahr**  
Eighth Grade



**Halee Harder**  
Seventh Grade



**Sydney Locke**  
Sixth Grade

These students have been named the February Students of the Month.

Groton Area School works to ensure that all levels of academic instruction also include the necessary life skills teaching, practicing, and modeling that encourages essential personal life habits that are universally understood to facilitate helping our students become good human beings and citizens.

It is learning with our heads, hearts, and hands to be caring and civil, to make healthy decisions, to effectively problem solve, to be respectful and responsible, to be good citizens, and to be empathetic and ethical individuals.

Students are selected based on individual student growth in the areas of: positive behavior, citizenship, good attendance, a thirst for knowledge, and high academic standards.

# Weekly Vikings Recap

By Jack & Duane Kolsrud

## Breaking down the Za'Darius Smith signing

The Vikings made headlines this week with the signing of former Green Bay Packer, Za'Darius Smith. Smith was a dominant edge rusher in 2019 and 2020, amassing a total of 26 sacks in those two years. However, last year Smith struggled with injuries early and did not achieve one single sack until the Packers' playoff loss to San Francisco in January. To many Vikings' fans, Smith's injury history might be a major concern. However, if you break down Smith's contract with the Vikings, there is little to no risk for the Vikings with this signing.

On the surface, Smith's contract with the Vikings reads as a 3-year, \$42,000,000 deal, with \$11,500,000 guaranteed. That might seem like a lot for a 30-year-old edge rusher coming off a season where he played only 2 games. Yet, if you look at the details of the contract, this contract does not affect the Vikings salary cap in any significant way.

For starters, Smith's cap hit for the 2022 season will only be \$3,343,137. To put that into perspective, the salary cap for every NFL team this year will be \$208.2 million. Thus, Smith will only take up 1.6% of the Vikings' entire salary cap this year. For an edge rusher with the potential to have twelve or more sacks this year, that is an enormous bargain for the Vikings.

However, it does appear that Smith's contract will become significantly more expensive for the Vikings in 2023. For the 2023 season, Smith will carry a \$14,166,666 cap hit for the Vikings. Not only would this make Smith's contract take around 6.3% of the entire Vikings' salary cap, but it would also give Smith the second highest cap hit for the Vikings behind Kirk Cousins. For the 2024 season, Smith's cap hit would increase even further to \$21,666,668, an astronomical amount for a 32-year-old edge rusher.

Given that the two final years of Smith's three-year contract would be too much for the Vikings to pay, the Vikings created an easy way out of Smith's contract after the 2022 season with low dead cap numbers. To clarify, dead cap is salary cap space that is taken up by a player no longer on a team. This usually stems from guaranteed money paid to a player who has been released or traded. If the Vikings cut Smith after the 2022 season, they would only have a dead cap of \$3,333,334 on their salary cap. If they cut him after the 2023 season, they would only have a dead cap of \$1,666,668 on their salary cap. Both these dead cap amounts would be very manageable for the Vikings team.

Thus, looking at all the details of the Za'Darius Smith signing, I think he only plays one year with the Vikings. Not only does Smith come with injury concern, but he is also on the wrong side of the 30. Could Smith perform extremely well alongside Hunter, and force the Vikings to keep him? Sure. However, I don't think the Vikings would play out Smith's contract as the money just gets too steep. Therefore, all I can say is enjoy this year with Za'Darius Smith as it likely will be his only season with the Vikings.

Looking Ahead

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The Vikings will begin their offseason workout programs on April 4. It will be the first time that Vikings' head coach, Kevin O'Connell, will be able to get his hands on the Vikings players. It will be interesting to see if O'Connell's coaching philosophy when it comes to practice is vastly different than former Vikings' head coach, Mike Zimmer.

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# That's Life by Tony Bender

## Spring quiz

Hello again, friends. Before you start putting away your snow shovels and go galavanting off to the beach, it's time to take stock of recent and current events. Stop groaning. I just don't want you going out there unprepared and under-informed like some kind of voter. However, should you choose to do so, there's probably an opening at Fox News.



## That's Life

by Tony Bender

### 1. The hills are alive with the sound of:

- a. It depends. Is this a Wes Craven picture?
- b. Music
- c. Artillery
- d. The strangled cries of Lawyers in Love

### 2. President Biden said that Vladimir Putin should not remain in power, but the White House later walked it back saying there was no policy of regime change. (Except where we think we can get away with it.) What would the White House like to see changed?

- a. A lightbulb. A bipartisan committee will look into it.
- b. Biden's shorts
- c. That stupid extra innings rule
- d. An Oval Office with right angles to keep the president from going in circles

### 3. There's a plan to sequester CO2 underground in North Dakota because:

- a. Landowner demand for carbonated wells
- b. Landfills are a growth industry.
- c. Big Energy hasn't done nearly enough damage.
- d. We were almost out of bad ideas.

### 4. Virginia Thomas, wife of Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, sent Trump's Chief of Staff Mark Meadows 29 messages...

- a. Urging him to overturn the election results
- b. Professing her red hot monkey love
- c. Containing twerking videos
- d. Pretending to be a Nigerian prince

### 5. Billings, Montana airport personnel's response to Ted Cruz's tantrum, "Do you know who I am?!"

- a. Yes, but we're willing to help you, anyway.
- b. Aidy Bryant?
- c. Sorry, the beard had everyone fooled.
- d. No, but we recognize your sheep.

### 6. There have been reports of a distilled water shortage in North Dakota because:

- a. It was a slow news day.
- b. Diverted to Williston for fracking
- c. Biden rejected new permits on public land
- d. Is this even America anymore?

### 7. Ketanji Brown Jackson made the news last week for:

- a. Scoring 60 against the Celtics
- b. Refusing to say whether or not she likes beer during Supreme Court conformation hearings
- c. Freeing all the pedophiles and releasing the Kraken
- d. Bringing the Republic to its knees

### 8. The Cleveland Browns signed quarterback Deshaun Watson because:

- a. Mistook the number of sexual assault cases against him for touchdown passes
- b. Well, you forgot about Ben Rothlisberger's assaults, didn't you?
- c. Everyone deserves a 22nd chance
- d. To upgrade the character in the quarterback room

### 9. According to today's horoscope, if you are an Aries you:

- a. Are 100% a serial killer.
- b. Drive 55 in the passing lane.
- c. Double dip your chips
- d. Shot a man in Reno just to watch him die

### 10. Gas prices are so gosh-darn high because:

- a. It's a complex global market with many producers, refiners, and suppliers.
- b. It's a fluster cuck.
- c. Biden's fault.
- d. The important thing is windmills are killing all the birds.

### Bonus: According to a new study, a fourth vaccine...

- a. Reduces COVID deaths by 78%
- b. Has a better tracking device
- c. Turns you into Spiderman
- d. Makes you swim faster

Answers: 1. C; 2. D; 3. A. 4. D; 5. D; 6. C; 7. B; 8. A; 9. A; 10. D; Bonus: D. Grading: 11-9 correct: We're on the same wavelength. You should get that checked. 6-8 correct: Another disappointing playoff performance. 3-5 correct: If this were baseball, those would be Hall of Fame numbers. 0-2 correct: Well, the lobotomy took.

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# Fliehs Earns Top State Honors in National Corn Yield Contest

ST. LOUIS (March 23, 2022) – A commitment to continuous improvement in environmental and economic sustainability. A contribution to the body of agronomic research that pushes the needle forward on efficiency. An innate call to be one's personal best.

These are the hallmarks of the American farmer. It is this steadfast spirit that the National Corn Growers Association tips its hat to every year as we salute farmers from across the country for their efforts and exceptional results in the National Corn Yield Contest. Through their efforts, NCGA members contributed valuable data that will help all growers overcome incredible obstacles as they continue to drive efficient and sustainable agricultural production. We are proud of the dedicated families and individuals who make up our rural communities and we earnestly salute this year's winners.

Jeffery Flieds of Groton, SD, placed Third in the state A:Conventional Non-Irrigated Class with a yield of 262.2127 bushels per acre. The hybrid used in the winning field was Hefty Seed H4933. The winning field was located in SD.

Jeffery Flieds was one of 530 state winners nationwide. The 2021 contest participation included 7,213 entries from 47 states. Of the state winners, 27 growers – three from each of nine classes – were named national winners, representing 14 states.

The average yield among national winners was more than 376.7593 bushels per acre – more than double the projected 2021 U.S. average of 177 bushels per acre. While there is no overall contest winner, yields from first, second and third place farmers' overall production categories topped out at 269.4164 bushels per acre.

"The National Corn Yield Contest provides a special two-fold opportunity — contribute to the knowledge that will help corn farmers thrive in the future while enjoying good-natured competition and comradery with their peers today," said Lowell Neitzel, chair of NCGA's Member and Consumer Engagement Action Team. "At its core, NCGA shapes dynamic, change-driven farmers, from the grassroots activists speaking up on policy issues to the dedicated farmer leaders who lead our organization."

"As farmers, we always strive to do more with less. We innovate using data, technology, and hard-won expertise. We work tirelessly to leave our farms better for the next generation, with gratitude to those who cared for it before us. Challenge yourself to be a part of building our tomorrow! I invite new and old faces alike to enter the contest in 2022. I urge you to learn how to start making that positive change today by going to [ncga.com](http://ncga.com)."

Farmers are encouraged through the contest to utilize new, efficient production techniques. Agronomic data gleaned from the contest revealed the following:

- Average planting population for the national winners was 38,111 seeds per acre, compared to 34,751 for all entrants.
- National winners applied an average of 276.1851 pounds of nitrogen, 82.5925 pounds of phosphorus and 134.0740 pounds of potassium per acre.
- Average commercial nitrogen use per bushel of yield was 0.88 pounds for the national winners and 0.89 pounds for all entrants.
- 40 percent of the national winners applied trace minerals, compared to 41 percent of all entrants.
- 45 percent of national winners applied manure, compared to 18.35 percent of all entrants.

The National Corn Yield Contest began in 1965 with 20 entries from 3 states. At that time, the highest overall yield was 218.9 bushels per acre, while the national yield average was in the mid-60 bushel-per-acre range.

All 2021 contest winners were invited to attend the 2022 Commodity Classic held March 10-12, 2022, in New Orleans, LA. For a complete list of winners and for more information about NCYC, visit the NCGA website at [www.ncga.com](http://www.ncga.com).



## Vendor Fair Held Saturday

The Vendor Fair was held Saturday at the Groton Community Center. A good crowd came and went throughout the day and there were a lot of vendors on hand. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

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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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**The boys basketball awards banquet was held Sunday evening at the Olive Grove Golf Course. The varsity players receiving awards are Wyatt Hearnen, Best Effort Award and Most Improved Award; Jacob Zak, Defensive Player of the Year; Cade Larson, Best Attitude Award; Lane Tietz, Best Effort, Offensive Player of the Year and Most Valuable Player; Ryder Johnson, Andrew Periboom Award: (Scout Player of the Year); and Kaden Kurtz, Best Teammate and Most Valuable Player of the Year. Tietz was also named to the NEC All-Conference first team and was the second highest vote getter. Kaden Kurtz was named to the second team of the All-Conference Team.** (Photo by Paul Kosel)



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**The C team awards were presented which finished 3-3 on the season. Coach Brian Dolan said they may be a switch in the conference to have more double header games which may mean that the C team may have to have its own schedule. Those winning awards were Gage Sippel, Defensive Player Award; Keagan Tracy, Best Effort; Ryder Johnson, Offensive Player of the Year; and Blake Pauli, Best Attitude and Best Teammate; not pictured is Carter Simon, Teammate of the Year.** (Photo by Paul Kosel)



**Cade Larson was named junior varsity Best Attitude and Best Teammate. Not pictured is Cole Simon who won Best Effort, Offensive MVP and Defensive MVP awards. The awards are voted on by the teammates. The JV team finished 13-4 on the season.** (Photo by Paul Kosel)

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## What Do You Think About?

By Bryan Golden

“Change your thoughts and you change your world.” -- Norman Vincent Peale

Your mind is constantly filled with thoughts. Are you aware of what you are thinking about? Are your thoughts random or are they directed by you? Do you think about what you can do or what you can't do? Are your thoughts positive or negative?

The only thing you have total control over is what you think about. Successful people think about their goals and how to accomplish them. When faced with problems, they think about solutions. Their minds are constantly thinking about where they are going and how to get there.

Your mind works 24 hours a day processing your thoughts. Although your mind doesn't care whether your thoughts are positive or negative, the resulting impact on your life is striking. Your mind is a magnet that attracts whatever you think about. Positive thoughts attract positive situations and people, while negative thoughts attract just the opposite.

Your thoughts may be much more negative than you realize. You are influenced by your past experiences as well as by the people around you. It's common to accept negative thinking as normal. Over the years, your thoughts may have become more negative than you realize. You accept your progressively negative thoughts as ordinary because this process happens so gradually.

Although your mood is directly affected by what you think about, you are rarely taught to direct, monitor, and be aware of your thoughts. Instead, you see all the wrong examples of people around you thinking negatively.

A change in thinking always precedes a change in results. In order to make any changes in your life, you must first alter what you think about. Before you can change your thoughts, you must first be aware of what they are.

Start making a conscious effort to monitor what you are thinking about. You want to establish a link between your thoughts and your mood. What are you thinking about when you feel good? What are you thinking about when you feel down?

Next, decide how you would like to feel and what goals you would like to attain. What do you need to think about in order to accomplish this? Now you are in a position to change your thoughts as needed.

Your thought patterns are well engrained. Persistent effort is required to change them. Don't worry if at times you revert to your old negative ways of thinking. When you catch yourself regressing, immediately adjust your thoughts to get you back on track.

This system isn't magic. It's proven and time tested to work. Unfortunately, you won't be able to readily get support because not enough people understand this process and how it works. However, you may receive a fair amount of criticism from those you share this with.

People become comfortable with their negative thinking and don't believe there is any reason to change. Furthermore, they don't recognize any cause and effect relationship between their thoughts and what is happening in their lives. It's difficult, if not impossible to convince these people otherwise.

You don't have to prove anything to anyone. All you need to do is apply this concept to your life and you will see results. Don't get frustrated. Changing any habit takes time and effort. You control your life through your thoughts.

Get started today thinking about what you want to achieve rather than reasons you can't do it. Your mind works on whatever you think about. Be vigilant to ensure your thoughts are positive. Keep at it in order to reach any destination you desire.

Bryan is the author of "Dare to Live Without Limits." Contact Bryan at [Bryan@columlist.com](mailto:Bryan@columlist.com) or visit [www.DareToLiveWithoutLimits.com](http://www.DareToLiveWithoutLimits.com) Copyright 2022 Bryan Golden

# CLASSIFIEDS



**2021-22 Groton Area Girls Basketball Team: (front row) Emily Clark, Kennedy Hansen, Alyssa Thaler, Allyssa Locke, Laila Roberts, Brooklyn Hansen, (middle row) Cali Tollifson, Kayla Lehr, Elizabeth Flihs, Jerica Locke, Brooke Gengerke, Talli Wright, Coach Matt Locke, (back row) Coaches Joie Berg and Becky Erickson, Rylee Dunker, Ashley Johnson, Faith Traphagen, Gracie Traphagen, Sydney Leicht, Aspen Johnson, Hollie Frost, Jaedyn Penning, Coach Trent Traphagen. Not pictured: Mia Crank and Emma Kutter. (Photo by Deb Gengerke)**



**2021-22 Girls Basketball Letter winners: (front row) Elizabeth Flihs, Laila Roberts, Alyssa Thaler, Allyssa Locke, Jerica Locke, (back row) Kennedy Hansen, Jaedyn Penning, Faith Traphagen, Aspen Johnson, Gracie Traphagen, Sydney Leicht, Brooklyn Hansen, Brooke Gengerke. (Photo by Deb Gengerke)**



**The Girls Basketball Banquet was held Friday evening at the Olive Grove Golf Course. Individual award winners are: (front row) Jerica Locke, Defensive MVP; Sydney Leicht, Coaches' Award; Aspen Johnson, Coaches' Award; Gracie Traphagen, NEC Second Team All-Conference and Offensive MVP; (back row) Brooke Gengerke, Hustle and Heart; Allyssa Locke, Academic All-State, Tiger Award, and B103 Senior Game; Alyssa Thaler, Academic All-State and B103 Senior Game. (Photo by Deb Gengerke)**

## EMPLOYMENT

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## EDUCATION INSTRUCTORS WANTED

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**Brown County  
Spray Insulation  
Notice**

**NOTICE TO SPRAY INSULATION 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 April 5, 2022, at said time and place all bids will be publicly opened, read and considered by the Brown County Board of Commissioners for: Project – Labor and supplies required for either one inch (1") or two inches (2") foam insulation spray on the ceiling of the Beef Barn located on the Brown County Fairground, 400 24th Ave NW, 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 Fairground Beef Barn Spray Insulation Project" to be opened on April 5, 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. (0323.0330)

ATTEST: Cathy McNickle, Brown County Auditor

Published twice at the total approximate cost of \$44.15. 21033



**11 Tuff Tigers place at state**

The Groton Tuff Tigers participated the SDWCA State Wrestling Tournament this past weekend in Sioux Falls at the T Denny Sanford Premier Center. It was a fun, exciting, and rewarding experience had by all of the wrestlers! 11 Tigers placed at the tournament! All the kids wrestled hard and we couldn't be more proud!

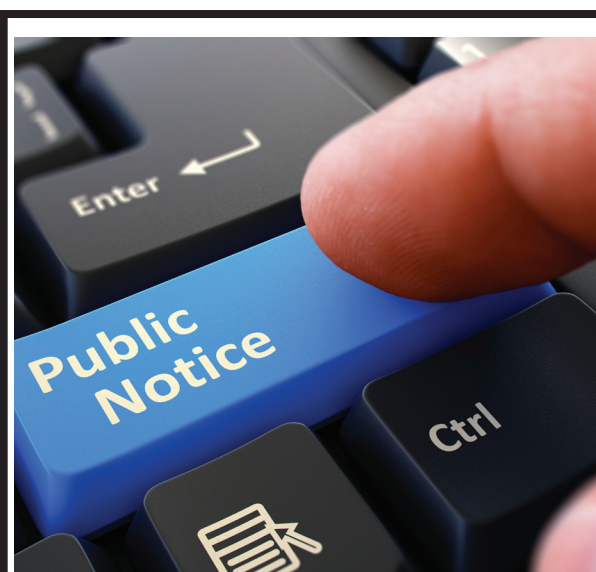
- Back Row: Bentley Ehresmann (4th Place), Liza Krueger (5th Place), Xzavier Klebsch (7th Place), Hank Flihs, Hank Hill, Keenan Moody (6th Place), Parker Zoellner (6th Place)**  
**Front Row: Huntley Overacker (2nd Place), Brooks Sombke, Preston Hinkelman (5th Place), Rosalyn Block, Henry Pharis (2nd Place), Kroy Kahli (7th Place)**  
**Not Pictured: Lane Krueger (2nd Place), Christian Ehresmann (3rd Place)** (Courtesy Photo)

**Groton Senior Citizens**

February 14 Groton Seniors met and nine members were present. President Sarge Likness opened the meeting with the flag pledge. Minutes and treasure reports were read and accepted. There was no old or new business. A get well card was given to Dick Donovan. He sliced on the ice and cracked some ribs and hurt his shoulder. Meeting was adjourned, Cards were played. The winners of each game. Pinochle- Sarge Likness, Canasta- Eunice McColister, Tony Goldade brought a birthday cake and ice cream for his birthday. The birthday song was sung to him. Paper Paul gave each a stuffed animal for Valentine day. Door prizes, Bev Sombke, Elda Stange and David Kliensassor. February 21 Senior citizens met for their pot luck dinner. Ten members attended. President had the flag pledge and table prayer. After dinner Bingo was played Pat Larson won black out. Cards were played after bingo. Door prizes went to Pat Larson, Dick Donovan, and Sarge Likness.

**Groton Prairie Mixed**

- Team Standings:** Jackelopes 22, Coyotes 16 1/2, Foxes 13, Chipmunks 12, Shih Tzus 11 1/2, Cheetahs 9  
**Men's High Games:** Mike Siegler 244, Brody Sombke 219, 201, TJ Sperry 211, Lance Frohling 202  
**Women's High Games:** Vicki Walter 170, Dar Larson 169, Nicole Kassube 166  
**Men's High Series:** Brody Sombke 577, Mike Siegler 562, Brad Waage 550  
**Women's High Series:** Nicole Kassube 472, Lori Wiley 455, Sue Stanley 448



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# National political climate aided passage of SD transgender sports ban in 2022 session

**Stu Whitney**

**South Dakota News Watch**

Much of the political momentum behind South Dakota's transgender sports ban, signed into law by Gov. Kristi Noem in February, can be traced not to the legislative process in Pierre but to national athletic competitions and the controversy involving University of Pennsylvania swimmer Lia Thomas.

Thomas swam collegiately as a male before transitioning and competing as a female in 2021-22 after undergoing hormone therapy. She eventually became the first openly transgender athlete to win an NCAA Division I championship in any sport. Her success was seized upon by conservative politicians and media as proof that "boys competing against girls" was a threat to competitive fairness in female athletics.

In South Dakota, one of several battleground states over transgender rights, getting Senate Bill 46 passed and signed into law was not as much a story of who fought for the measure as a matter of which groups did not argue against it, with the Lia Thomas situation changing the narrative.

"It struck a chord," said lawyer and lobbyist Dave Zimbeck, who represents the Sioux Falls Sports Authority, one of several organizations that publicly opposed transgender sports legislation in 2021 but which stayed out of the fray this year. The group's strategy changed due to shifting public sentiment and the belief that the National Collegiate Athletic Association, which stages championship events in South Dakota, no longer plans to pull events from states that pass transgender legislation.

"Lia Thomas came along and Fox News and other outlets made her the poster child for their cause," said Zimbeck, whose organization works to lure sporting events to Sioux Falls in conjunction with First Premier Bank and Sanford Health. "A lot of people who were in the middle on this issue saw the physical stature of (Thomas) and her success and had trouble getting past that. We made the decision that there was a lot of futility in jumping in and taking a big stand, that this thing was on a fast track to approval."

South Dakota is one of 12 states that have passed laws that ban transgender females — people born as males who transition to females — from competing in women's and girls' sports, with SB 46 set to take effect July 1.

These types of legislation have sparked a national debate about the balance between inclusivity and competitive integrity, as well as on the scope of civil rights for transgender students.

Organizations such as the South Dakota Board of Regents, South Dakota Chamber of Commerce, Greater Sioux Falls Chamber of Commerce and Visit Rapid City also remained neutral this year after previously working to defeat transgender sports bans. In 2021, these groups played a role in Noem refusing to sign House Bill 1217 despite the Republican governor earlier declaring support for the measure, a reversal that drew heat from far-right conservatives in South Dakota and nationally.

At this year's session in Pierre, when Noem



**Gov. Kristi Noem signs Senate Bill 46 into law at the State Capitol in Pierre on Feb. 3. The South Dakota legislation prevents transgender students from playing on sanctioned sports teams that align with their gender identity.** Photo: Courtesy Joe Sneve, Argus Leader

brought her own bill and touted it as protecting fairness in female sports, she encountered less resistance.

Critics called it a solution without a problem, since South Dakota has had one transgender female compete in high school sports since the state activities association adopted its transgender policy in 2013. Yet the threat of repercussions from a business perspective had lessened.

"What's different from prior years is the inaction or ambivalence of the NCAA, as evidenced by the growing number of states that have passed legislation with little or no consequence," said Nate Lukkes, general counsel for the South Dakota Board of Regents, which oversees the state's colleges and universities. "When you see states like Texas, Florida and Alabama passing laws and the NCAA not acting upon them, the fear of reprisal starts to get diminished and watered down."

## Caught in the middle

Sioux Falls is scheduled to host a Division I men's hockey regional in 2024 and 2026, in addition to a Division II volleyball championship in 2024 and Division II wrestling championship in 2026. The city also hosts the Division I Summit League basketball tournament each year at the Denny Sanford Premier Center, with winners advancing to the NCAA men's and women's tournaments.

Despite the transgender sports ban, Sports Authority officials expect those events to stay in Sioux Falls, though future bid cycles could be in flux. "It's a moving target right now," Zimbeck said, citing the challenges faced by the NCAA to keep up with an evolving legal and cultural issue.

Educational organizations such as the Associated School Boards of South Dakota and the South Dakota High School Activities Association have consistently argued against transgender sports bans, pointing out that they run counter to federal Title IX guidelines and recent court decisions establishing transgender individuals as a protected group.

Title IX, passed as part of the Education Amendments of 1972, prohibits sex discrimination in educational institutions that receive federal funding. President Joe Biden's administration issued guidance last June saying that discrimination based on a student's sexual

orientation or gender identity will be treated as a violation.

"If you have state law on one side mandating a certain position and federal law and the courts seeing it differently, you're in a difficult situation," said Wade Pogany, executive director of the Associated School Boards of South Dakota. "When I met with school board members from across the state, their clear message was that they supported the process that the SDHSAA already had in place and that this issue had not been a problem at the local level."

Nationally, though, Lia Thomas' emergence after satisfying NCAA transgender protocols — which required testosterone-suppressing drugs for a least a year prior to women's competition — moved the political meter. A 2021 Gallup poll showed that while 66 percent of respondents favored allowing openly transgender men and women to serve in the U.S. military, only 34 percent said that

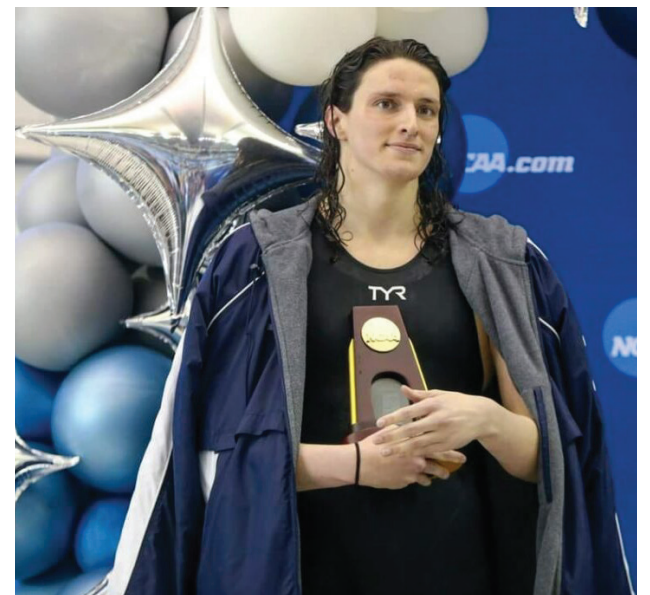
transgender athletes should be able to play on teams that match their new gender identity.

As public opinion shifted, so did the NCAA. The organization changed its policy in January to require transgender athletes to meet testosterone thresholds set by the governing body of each separate sport, while also remaining quiet on punitive measures against states that passed transgender laws.

Gail Dent, the NCAA's associate director of communications, wrote to South Dakota News Watch in an email that "there is no additional information to share at this time" regarding potential boycotts. She also shared a link to the association's revised transgender participation policy.

For transgender rights activists seeing a wave of restrictive legislation in statehouses around the country, the silence of the NCAA is deafening.

"The NCAA is faltering and backtracking in terms of articulating what its stance is," said



**Lia Thomas, a transgendered female swimmer at the University of Pennsylvania, became in March the first transgendered athlete to win a national NCAA title, spurring controversy over participation of transgendered females in women's athletics.** Photo: Courtesy Facebook

**Continues on next page**

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Shannon Minter, a transgender legal expert with the National Center for Lesbian Rights in San Francisco. "They've caved to political pressure and tried to remove themselves from the responsibility of having their own policy by punting to these various sanctioning bodies, which is very disappointing."

### Legal uncertainties loom

The South Dakota High School Activities Association drafted its policy for transgender athletes in 2013, responding to a recommendation by 77 percent of superintendents in a statewide survey. The move came in reaction to guidance from the Office for Civil Rights under the Obama administration that transgender status was protected under Title IX, not just in theory but in legal actions taken by the Department of Justice.

The SDHSAA policy required that transcripts and family statements be submitted to "prove" that a student has an affirmed gender identity other than the one assigned at birth, with an independent hearing officer (such as a judge or current member of the state bar) available to review submitted information before rendering a decision.

SDHSAA Executive Director Dan Swartos said the organization has had one transgender female athlete go through the system (she graduated several years ago) and fewer than five transgendered males out of 40,000 students who participate annually in high school sports in South Dakota.

"As it stands now, if a student comes and wants to compete as a transgender female, the school or student would contact us and fill out a waiver form and that would begin the process," said Swartos. "After July 1, if schools contact us with a student wishing to file a waiver, we will refer them to state law and tell them it's not allowable under the statute."

The law is focused on preventing transgender girls from playing female sports, stating that "only female students, based on their biological sex, may participate in any team, sport or athletic event designated as being for females, women, or girls."

The SDHSAA is working with its legal counsel to determine how to handle transgendered males competing in boys sports.

As for language in the law that mandates designating each sport as either female, male or co-ed "based on the biological sex at birth of the participating students," Swartos said that football may need to be labelled "co-ed" to avoid excluding athletes such as a female Garretson High School student who kicked for the varsity team last fall.

Swartos, who testified against the legislation, is well aware that the Office for Civil Rights under President Biden asserts that banning transgender students from participating in extracurricular activities that correspond to their gender identity is a Title IX violation.

Federal judges in Idaho and West Virginia have issued rulings that prevented such actions from taking effect, with appeals pending.

"It's a little nerve-racking that we're in a position where if we follow state law then we're not following guidance from the federal government," said Swartos. "It puts us in a position to violate one or the other."

That conundrum could be costly, as the SDHSAA is not listed among the entities covered in the law's wording that the "attorney general shall provide legal representation at no cost to that entity or individual." In West Virginia, attempts by the state activities association to remove itself as a defendant in the lawsuit were denied by the judge.

Though South Dakota's col-

leges and universities are covered under the law's "hold harmless" clause for legal representation, they still have exposure. While the NCAA's new policy uses testosterone thresholds from various governing bodies for eligibility, South Dakota's law effectively bans participation for transgender student-athletes, putting the athletic departments in conflict with NCAA and Title IX provisions.

"There are uncertainties with respect to the legal landscape and how that will play out," said Lukkes, the Regents' general counsel, adding that the board knows of no current transgender athletes in the state university system. "For the time being, South Dakota, through this legislation, has decided what constitutes fair and equitable competition in this state, and that's what our policy will be based on."

### Preparing for court challenge

Those anticipating challenges to South Dakota's law likely won't have to wait long. Susan Williams, executive director of the Transformation Project, a nonprofit advocacy group in Sioux Falls, said several potential plaintiffs have emerged for a court challenge on Title IX and Fourteenth Amendment "equal protection" grounds.

"At this point, we have a couple of transgender girls who were planning on playing sports next school year," said Williams. "There are a few East River and a couple West River. It's a thing that had crossed their mind, like, 'maybe I'll try out for volleyball,' or 'maybe I'll go out for gymnastics or play soccer with my friends.' Of course, now that is out of the question. They're pursuing all their options."

It's unclear which organization would handle the court cases if they come. National groups such as Lambda Legal, the Human Rights Campaign, the National Center for Lesbian Rights and the ACLU have been active on behalf of transgender rights.

Minter, of the lesbian rights center, said he believes the South Dakota law will be chal-



Wade Pogany

**"If you have state law on one side mandating a certain position and federal law and the courts seeing it differently, you're in a difficult situation [and] when I met with school board members from across the state ... this issue had not been a problem at the local level."**

-- Wade Pogany, executive director of the Associated School Boards of South Dakota

lenged in the federal Eighth Circuit Court rather than waiting to see how the Idaho and West Virginia appeals unfold. He also believes the lawsuit will be filed before July 1.

"The goal is to bring a lawsuit that prevents the discriminatory law from ever going into effect," Minter told South Dakota News Watch. "We can't just stand by and allow this type of extreme law that openly discriminates against an entire class of students to go unchallenged."

The conservative-leaning composition of the U.S. Supreme Court has instilled confidence in some Republican circles that rulings on transgender civil rights will favor the new laws, but recent high-court decisions don't support that assumption.

In 2020, the Supreme Court ruled in *Bostock v. Clayton County* that discrimination against gay or transgender employees falls under the protections of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act and should be classified as sex discrimination. Justice Neil Gorsuch, appointed by President Donald Trump, wrote the majority opinion.

That principle was extended from employment to the educational realm a year later in *G.G. v. Gloucester County School Board*, when the Supreme Court refused to hear a case involving a transgender Virginia student who had sued for being forced to use women's restrooms despite identifying as male. That decision upheld a lower court's ruling that the student's protections under Title IX had been violated by the policy.

Mark Miller, Noem's chief of staff, argued during committee hearings that the principle of Title IX protects female athletes from being denied opportunities because of transgender participation. The governor, whose office didn't respond to a request for comment on this story, has characterized her support for the measure as a way to "protect Title IX" from being misused by the federal government.

But the Idaho judge, in ruling against that state's transgender sports ban in 2020, challenged the claim that motivations behind the law aligned with Title IX, noting that transgender students have been historically discriminated against, not favored.

Zimbeck, who lobbied against South Dakota's legislation for the Sports Authority in 2021, sees similarities between the Idaho case and South Dakota, where there is no evidence of girls or women losing opportunities to transgender athletes or competitive fairness being compromised.

"The whole concept that Title IX is the principle protecting (cisgender females) by putting this law on the books is disingenuous at best – and probably a flat-out falsehood," Zimbeck said.

### South Dakota seen as test state

South Dakota has frequently served as a testing ground for transgender legislation, with Christian groups such as Alliance Defending Freedom, the Family Policy Alliance and the Heritage Foundation providing bill language and testimony.

Some of these efforts drew national headlines, such as when the late South Dakota legislator Roger Hunt, R-Brandon, proposed in 2015 that high school athletes should undergo "visual inspections" to determine their gender as part of the eligibility process.

Rep. Fred Deutsch, R-Florence, a supporter of transgender legislation, apologized in 2020 for comparing gender reassignment procedures to



**Gov. Kristi Noem has characterized South Dakota's new law as a way to protect fairness in girls sports. Executive director Dan Swartos said that the SDHSAA has had one transgender female athlete go through the system since 2013 and fewer than five trans males out of 40,000 students who participate annually in high school sports in South Dakota.** Photo: Courtesy Sioux Falls Argus Leader

Continues on next page

Nazi medical experiments that occurred during the Holocaust. His bill to ban such procedures died in a Senate committee after drawing tepid support from Noem.

Deutsch was also instrumental in the 2016 Legislature passing a "bathroom bill" that would have banned transgender students from using restrooms and locker rooms aligned with their gender identity, instead segregating them by offering single-occupancy facilities or "controlled use" of restrooms or locker rooms. Critics derided the bill as discriminatory and potentially damaging to the state's business interests.

When then-governor Dennis Daugaard, a Republican, weighed whether to veto the measure, the Sioux Falls mayor at the time, Mike Huether, and major employers Sanford Health, Citibank and First Premier Bank, expressed concern that adopting the law would put South Dakota in the crosshairs of powerful entities such as the NCAA.

"Our commitment to the fair treatment of individuals, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, has not changed and is at the core of what we believe," the NCAA said in a statement at the time. "We'll continue to monitor current events in all cities bidding on NCAA events, as well as cities that have already been named as future host sites."

Daugaard ultimately vetoed the bill, citing liability concerns and adding that the measure "does not address any pressing issue concerning the school districts of South Dakota."

North Carolina passed a similar law that was signed into law several weeks later, triggering a national backlash. Companies such as Adidas and PayPal reversed plans to invest in the state, the NBA removed its 2017 All-Star Game and the NCAA made good on its promise by moving several championship events to different sites.

The economic toll from those actions was not lost on other governors, including Noem, who mentioned the NCAA's sway when explaining her decision to withdraw support for last year's transgender sports bill in South Dakota.

"The NCAA is a private association," Noem said at a press conference following her decision not to sign the bill. "That means they can do what they want to do. And even though I fundamentally disagree with them when it comes to this issue, if South Dakota passes a law that's against their policy, they will likely take punitive action against us."

Though Noem tried to rally support for a "Defend Title IX Now!" coalition, she was assailed by hard-core conservatives as a "sellout" who "caved" to corporate interests. In a contentious interview on Fox News, host Tucker Carlson asked her: "Why not just say, 'Bring it on, NCAA. I'm a national figure. Go ahead and try and exclude us. I will fight you in the court of public opinion and defend principle.' Why not just do that?"

The first-term governor took a more aggressive position for the 2022 legislative session. Her office put forth a retooled bill, removing logistical challenges for schools and adding a clause to provide legal representation from the attorney general for various entities in case they were sued.

Mainly, though, Noem rode a wave of shifting sentiment resulting from Lia Thomas's collegiate swimming success. Not only did the NCAA soften its rhetoric about consequences for anti-trans sports legislation, but powerful interests within her own state stayed mostly silent.

The Sioux Falls Chamber, whose public policy director said the 2021 measure would "negatively affect the whole state," declined to take a stand this time around, even with Amazon scheduled to open a fulfillment center in the city later this year.

"The Chamber engages in advocacy on

policies that have the potential to impact the business climate in our city and state," president and CEO Jeff Griffin said in response to emailed questions from News Watch. "We carefully reviewed the language in SB 46 and determined that we would maintain a neutral stance on the bill."


Asked whether Amazon or any other company had weighed in, Griffin said his office is "not aware of any businesses that have voiced concern about this legislation."

And yet, with public sentiment leaning in one direction and judicial precedents trending the other, the transgender sports issue is far from settled. The final evaluation of South Dakota's latest foray into the culture wars will likely be determined at the end of a long and potentially expensive trail of appeals.

"This is going to have to be heard probably

by the Supreme Court," said Swartos. "Our approach has been, 'Let's wait for this to play out in the courts so we can get that ruling and base our policy on it.' This year a different approach was taken, and you have to follow the legislative process whether you agree with it or not."

**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.



## Marzahn, Johnson take first at NSU

The first track meet of the season was held inside at Northern State University. Aspen Johnson placed first in the triple jump and Andrew Marzahn placed first in the 55m dash.

### Girl's Division

55m Dash: 7, Laila Roberts, 8.21; 13, Jerica Locke, 8.45; 18, Karen Jangula, 8.71; 21, Brooklyn Hanson, 8.79; 22, Kayla Lehr, 8.88; 30, Emilie Thurston, 9.06; 42, Trista Keith, 9.54.

4x160 Relay: 2, Groton (Jerica Locke, Kennedy Hanson, Aspen Johnson, Laila Roberts), 1:33.27.

4x160 Relay: 9, Groton (Kayla Lehr, Brooklyn Hanson, Jayla Jones, Karsyn Jangula), 1:39.58.

4x400 Relay: 5, Groton (Jerica Locke, Faith Traphagen, Kennedy Hanson, Rylee Dunker), 4:54.

SMR 100-100-200-400m: 3, Groton (Laila Roberts, Kennedy Hanson, Jerica Locke, Faith Traphagen), 3:51.43.

SMR 100-100-200-400m: 7, Groton (Kayla Lehr, Karsyn Jangula, Brooklyn Hanson, Rylee Dunker), 4:01.02.

Shot Put: 5, Maddie Bjerke, 8.77m; 7, Faith Flihs, 8.43m; 13, Emma Kutter, 7.48m; 17, Emma Schinkel, 7.20m; 23, Ashley Johnson, 6.50m.

High Jump: 7, Anna Fjeldheim, 1.32m.

Long Jump: 2, Aspen Johnson, 4.26m; 7, Kennedy Hanson, 4.07m; 9, Trista Keith, 3.97m; 13, Anna Fjeldheim, 3.77m.

Triple Jump: 1, Aspen Johnson, 8.72m; 8, Tristia Keith, 7.87m.

### Boy's Division

55m Dash: 1, Andrew Marzahn, 6.92; 6, Keegan Tracy, 7.22; 10, Korbin Kucker, 7.36; 22, Colby Dunker, 7.65; 32, Christian Ehresmann, 7.87; 42, Karsten Jeschke, 8.02; 45, Logan Ringgenberg, 8.10; 51, Payton Mitchell, 8.32; 52, Caden McInerney, 8.43.

4x160m Relay: 5, Groton, (Andrew Marzahn, Keegan Tracy, Colby Dunker, Jackson Cogley), 1:23.37.

4x160m Relay: 9, Groton, (Christian Ehresmann, Korbon Kucker, Karsten Jeschke, Caden McInerney), 1:28.94.

4x400m Relay: 4, Groton (Andrew Marzahn, Keegan Tracy, Colby Dunker, Jacob Lewandowski), 4:11.29.

SMR 100-100-200-400m: 4, Groton (Andrew Marzahn, Colby Dunker, Keegan Tracy, Jacob Lewandowski), 3:15.11.

Shot Put: 4, Holden Sippel, 12.15m; 5, Caleb Hanten, 11.83m; 10, Kaleb Antonsen, 11.12m; 28, Logan Ringgenberg, 9.34m; 42, Drew Thurston, 7.91m.

High Jump: 5, Jackson Cogley, 1.57m.

Long Jump: 6, Jackson Cogley, 5.26m; 25, Caden McInerney, 3.96m; 27, Payton Mitchell, 3.72m.

## Death Notice: Hilda Sippel

Hilda Sippel, 99, of Groton passed away March 30, 2022 at Good Samaritan Society, St. Martin Village in Rapid City. Memorial services are pending with Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton.



**A nice blanket of snow fell Wednesday morning About four inches has fallen with the moisture content being about half an inch.**

(Photo by Paul Kosel)

# 2022 April Groton Community Calendar

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p><b>Aberdeen</b> 225-6772 1-800-843-1865</p> <p><b>Redfield</b> EQUIPMENT CO. 1-800-247-4650</p>	<p><b>Webster</b> 1-800-658-2252</p> <p><b>JOHN DEERE</b></p>	<p><b>GROTON VET CLINIC</b> 1503 N Broadway, Groton, 605/397-8145</p>				
<p><b>3</b> 2 p.m. and 5 p.m., POPS Concert 3:30 p.m.: GHS FCA Meeting: "The Chosen" Watch Party at Kim Weber's house, 501 E 16th Ave Emmanuel: 9 a.m. Worship with communion, 10:15 a.m. Sunday school, 10:15 a.m. 1st Communion Class, 7 p.m., Choir St. John's: 8 a.m. Bible Study, Worship with communion at 9 a.m. at St. John's and 11 a.m. at Zion, 10 a.m. Sunday School</p>	<p><b>4</b> Emmanuel: 6:30 a.m., Bible Study School Breakfast: Breakfast pizza. School Lunch: Cheese sticks, marinara sauce, corn. Senior Menu: Ranch chicken breast, boiled potato, squash, fruit, whole wheat bread.</p>	<p><b>5</b> 7 p.m.: City Council Meeting St. John's: 1 p.m.: Ladies Aid LWML School Breakfast: French toast sticks. School Lunch: Tangereine chicken, rice. Senior Menu: Hamburger with bun, oven roasted potatoes, mixed vegetables, fruit, ice cream sundae.</p>	<p><b>6</b> Emmanuel: 6 p.m. Soup Supper (Nigeria Circle is host) 7 p.m. Lenten Service St. John's: Lenten Service, 7 p.m. School Breakfast: Egg omelets. School Lunch: Hamburgers, fries. Senior Menu: Scalloped potatoes with ham, peas, sunset salad, cookie, whole wheat bread.</p>	<p><b>7</b> 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.: FFA CDE in Groton 6 p.m.: FFA Banquet Emmanuel: 2 p.m. Nigeria Circle School Breakfast: Biscuits and jelly. School Lunch: Nachos. Senior Menu: Roast beef, mashed potatoes with gravy, carrots, peach cobbler, whole wheat bread.</p>	<p><b>1</b> FFA CDE at SDSU, Brookings School Breakfast: Stuffed Bagels School Lunch: Fish Sandwich, Puzzle Tots Senior Menu: Lemon baked fish, rice pilaf, California blend veggies, fruit crisp, whole wheat bread.</p>	<p><b>2</b> ACT testing in Groton, 8 a.m. to Noon</p>
<p><b>10</b> Emmanuel: 9 a.m. Worship with communion, Procession of Palms, 10:15 a.m. Grace Alone Study, 1:30 p.m. Baby Shower for Jared and Alyson Anderson, 7 p.m. Choir St. John's: 8 a.m. Bible Study, Worship at 9 a.m. at St. John's followed by Voter's Meeting and 11 a.m. at Zion, 10 a.m. Sunday School</p>	<p><b>11</b> 7 p.m.: School Board Meeting 1 p.m.: Senior Citizens meet at Groton Community Center Emmanuel: 6:30 a.m., Bible Study School Breakfast: Frittata. School Lunch: Lasagna hot dish, corn. Senior Menu: Lasagna rotini, tossed salad with dressing, ambrosia fruit salad, cookie, whole wheat bread.</p>	<p><b>12</b> 11 a.m.: Track meet in Groton Emmanuel: 7 p.m. Church Council School Breakfast: Blueberry French Toast Bake. School Lunch: Hot dogs, fries. Senior Menu: Hot turkey sandwich, macaroni salad, mandarin orange dessert, sherbet.</p>	<p><b>13</b> 7 p.m.: "Way of the Cross" at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church Emmanuel: 6 p.m. Confirmation, 6:30 p.m. League School Breakfast: Eggs and sausage. School Menu: Chicken nuggets, mashed potatoes. Senior Menu: Oven fried chicken, mashed potatoes, mixed vegetables, buttermilk biscuits, banana pudding with bananas.</p>	<p><b>14</b> Emmanuel: 7 p.m.: Worship with 1st communion for youth St. John's: 7 p.m. Worship with communion School Breakfast: muffins. School Lunch: Tacos. Senior Menu: Sweet and sour pork, steamed rice, carrot and broccoli medley, honey fruit salad, whole wheat bread.</p>	<p><b>15</b> No School, Groton City &amp; States offices closed 7 p.m.: Worship at Emmanuel with Methodist &amp; CM&amp;A. St. John's: 7 p.m. worship</p>	<p><b>16</b> Emmanuel: 10 a.m.: Rosewood Court</p>
<p><b>17 - EASTER</b> Emmanuel: 7 a.m. Worship with communion and breakfast, 9:30 a.m. Worship with communion, 3 p.m. worship at Avantara (serving group) St. John's: 8 a.m. Bible Study, Worship with communion at 9 a.m. at St. John's and 11 a.m. at Zion, 10 a.m. Sunday School</p>	<p><b>18</b> No School, Groton City &amp; States offices closed 10 a.m.: Girls Golf at Whetstone Creek GC in Milbank 1 p.m.: Senior Citizens meet at Groton Community Center St. John's: Christian Literature Circle, 7:30 p.m. Senior Menu: Creamed chicken, buttermilk biscuit, peas, mandarin oranges, cookie. Emmanuel: 6:30 a.m., Bible Study</p>	<p><b>19</b> 7 p.m.: City Council Meeting St. John's: 9 a.m.: Quilting School Breakfast: Cereal. School Lunch: Pulled pork sandwich, tater tots. Senior Menu: Salisbury steak, mashed potatoes/gravy, coleslaw, fruit, frosted brownie, whole wheat bread.</p>	<p><b>20</b> 6 p.m.: FCCLA Banquet in GHS Arena Lobby Emmanuel: 6 p.m. Confirmation, Newsletter deadline School Breakfast: Hash browns, pizza. School Lunch: Grilled cheese sandwich, cooked carrots. Senior Menu: Baked chicken breast, noodles romanoff, lemon buttered broccoli, pineapple strawberry ambrosia, whole wheat bread.</p>	<p><b>21</b> Track Meet in Redfield School Breakfast: Stuffed bagels. School Lunch: Chicken fries, mashed potatoes. Senior Menu: Ham and raisin sauce, sweet potatoes, mixed vegetables, crazy cake, dinner roll.</p>	<p><b>22</b> School Breakfast: Waffles. School Lunch: Pizza, green beans. Senior Menu: BBQ beef sandwich, potato salad, carrots and peas, fresh fruit.</p>	<p><b>23</b> GHS Prom, 7 p.m. Firemen's Spring Social at the Fire Station 7pm-12:30am</p>
<p><b>24</b> Princess Prom 4:30-8pm Emmanuel: 9 a.m. Worship, 10:15 a.m. Sunday school, 10:15 a.m. Grace Alone Study, 7 p.m. Choir St. John's: 8 a.m. Bible Study, Worship at 9 a.m. at St. John's and 11 a.m. at Zion, 10 a.m. Sunday School</p>	<p><b>25</b> Emmanuel: 6:30 a.m., Bible Study Noon: Senior Citizens potluck meeting at Groton Community Center School Breakfast: Eggs and breakfast potatoes. School Lunch: Hamburgers, tiny whole potatoes. Senior Menu: Swiss steak with mushroom gravy, mashed potatoes, mixed vegetables, peas, whole wheat bread.</p>	<p><b>26</b> State FFA Convention at SDSU 11:30 a.m.: Track Meet in Groton School Breakfast: Doughnuts. School Lunch: Popcorn chicken, tater tots. Senior Menu: Lemon chicken breast, creamy noodles, spinach salad, baked apple slices, whole wheat bread.</p>	<p><b>27</b> Emmanuel: 6 p.m. Confirmation, 6:30 p.m. League. School Breakfast: Muffins. School Lunch: Sub sandwiches, chips. Senior Menu: Tater tot hot dish, green beans, grape juice, sour cream apple pie square, whole wheat bread.</p>	<p><b>28</b> 10 a.m.: Girls Golf Meet in Redfield 7 p.m.: Middle School Spring Concert School Breakfast: Egg omelets. School Lunch: Corn dogs, smiley fries. Senior Menu: Turkey and dressing, mashed potatoes and gravy, broccoli, cranberry sauce, pumpkin bar, whole wheat bread.</p>	<p><b>29</b> 1 p.m.: Track Meet at Webster School Breakfast: French toast sticks. School Lunch: Pizza crunchers, green beans. Senior Menu: Salmon loaf, creamed peas, fruit, brownie, whole wheat bread.</p>	<p><b>30</b> Lynso Keller Benefit Auction, 5:30 p.m., Groton American Legion</p>



Dear EarthTalk: I've heard that PPE waste is a growing environmental burden these days. Is anyone working on ways to solve this problem? -- B. Jackson, Jewett City, MD

From healthcare workers and teachers, grocery clerks and students, no one has escaped the increased need for personal protective equipment (PPE) the past two years. Though inarguably a critical agent in preventing the spread of disease, PPE has inadvertently created a new "shadow pandemic"—billions of these single-use items now line streets and parking lots and pollute oceans. Globally, it is estimated that 129 billion facemasks and 65 million pairs of gloves are disposed of each month. "Other than burning [PPE], there is really nothing we can do," says Sander Defruyt, head of the plastics team at the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, a charity aimed at eliminating waste and pollution. "It's designed to be waste."

The issue isn't PPE itself; it's single-use PPE made from non-reusable materials. Designed to be leak-proof and tear-resistant, disposable PPE can't be washed and reused, since the cleaning process would compromise the

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protective integrity. Deepening an already astounding waste mismanagement problem, these throwaway items end up as potentially contaminated pollution simply because they have to.

Luckily, the problem has not gone unnoticed. In the medical community, the case for reusable PPE has gained traction as institutions have developed methods and materials to lengthen the lifecycle of protective gear. Burlington Medical, a maker of durable, reusable medical garments, increased production of their healthcare clothing supplies by 500 percent during the pandemic. They use sustainable materials in their process and operate an on-site medical laundry facility to sterilize PPE. Studies on mask filtration by the Nonwovens Institute (NWI) at North Carolina State led to a partnership with NatureWorks to develop new technology that allows for mask reuse even after chemical cleaning. Globally, companies are testing science-backed efforts to improve mask viability without compromising safety.

Those outside the medical community have access to a variety of sustainable PPE options. French company Geochanvre makes 100 percent biodegradable face masks from hemp, including a recyclable band. Change Plastic for Good developed an additive to make plastic biodegradable, now used to create masks, and MEDU Protection offers washable medical PPE that can be returned for disinfecting and conversion into scrubs and bags. EcoGreen Communities offers compostable face masks, reusable gloves and reduced carbon medical aprons.

The most sustainable option is undoubtedly reusable PPE, but the use of plastic and other disposable protective gear isn't going away anytime soon. Rather than tossing in the garbage, there is a way to recycle some of these items. TerraCycle offers paid recycling services that collect, inspect and repurpose PPE through a detailed process available through their website, and Thermal Compaction Group (TCG) out of Wales has developed a process that re-engineers specific PPE to resell to the plastics industry.

"Plastics are not the problem; the way the human race discards plastic remains the issue," says Tim Hourahine, compliance manager at TCG. With PPE becoming part of our daily routine, we have alternative solutions to sustain both our health and the environment.

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



**Waste from disposable personal protective equipment is piling up. What can be done about making and using more sustainable forms of PPE?** Credit: Anna Shvets, Pexels.

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## What About Medical Cannabis?

Since ancient times, marijuana has been used for medicinal and recreational purposes in many cultures. In the United States, it became illegal during prohibition, like alcohol. Later, under the Controlled Substances Act in the 1970's, the federal government classified marijuana a Schedule 1 drug. This classification includes heroin, LSD, and ecstasy, all deemed to have no safe, effective medical use and a high potential for abuse.

This Schedule 1 status imposes bureaucratic and legal barriers, making it difficult to conduct scientific research on the medical benefits from marijuana. Studies that have been conducted are small and limited. Thus, physicians are less confident recommending marijuana for patients. Not to mention, use or possession remains illegal federally and in many states.

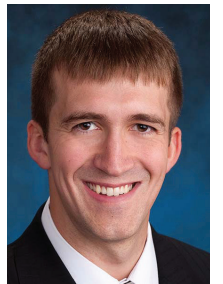
The word cannabis refers to all products derived from the plant cannabis sativa. There are hundreds of compounds in this plant, called cannabinoids. Cannabidiol (CBD) is one of them, and tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) is another. The word marijuana often refers to products from the plant that contain large amounts of THC, which is psychoactive and can alter someone's mental state.

Cannabinoids can trigger receptors in the brain to release neurotransmitters to affect mood, sleep, pain, and memory. Drugs with cannabinoids may be helpful in treating nausea and vomiting from cancer treatments, loss of appetite and weight loss from AIDS, chronic pain syndrome, multiple sclerosis symptoms, glaucoma and children suffering from seizures. There may be other medical benefits we are not yet aware of. We need more research to determine safe treatments and establish confidence.

Marijuana use can cause harm. It can do more than dull the brain and give someone the munchies. It can increase the risk of motor vehicle crashes. In some individuals it can increase the risk of developing schizophrenia or other mental illnesses. Frequent use by adults and use in adolescence can decrease attention and memory, or cause cannabis use disorder, which has symptoms of craving, withdrawal, lack of control, and negative effects on personal and professional responsibilities. Sometimes people develop recurrent severe vomiting. Vaping products with THC have resulted in severe lung injury.

Marijuana has been used as a medicine for a very long time in various cultures. Yes, it can be addictive, and it can cause problems. Although, when you consider the harms from alcohol, tobacco, narcotic pain killers, and other medications, perhaps cannabis deserves a chance to be further studied and used when medically appropriate.

Andrew Ellsworth, M.D. is part of The Prairie Doc® team of physicians and currently practices family medicine in Brookings, South Dakota. Follow The Prairie Doc® at [www.prairiedoc.org](http://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.



Andrew Ellsworth, MD