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# The Groton Independent

Vol. 140 No. 22 ♦ Groton, SD ♦ Wednesday, Feb. 15, 2023 ♦ Established in 1889

## Groton Area school board approves hiring new principal, looks toward future of 1969 gym

by Elizabeth Varin

A new Middle School and High School Principal has been hired. The Groton Area School District Board approved hiring Shelby Edwards as the sixth through 12th grade principal for the district at its February 13 school board meeting. The board held interviews February 8 with the two candidates for the position in executive session, and, at the beginning of the February 13th meeting, Board President Deb Gengerke proposed amending the agenda to include hiring Edwards as principal for the 2023-2024 school year.

Edwards is currently a physical education and health teacher at Simmons Middle School in Aberdeen, according to the Aberdeen Public School District website.

Edwards has a Master's Degree of Education in teaching and learning from Nebraska and a specialist in education degree in educational administration and the school principal degree program from the University of South Dakota, Vermillion, according to the South Dakota Department of Education.

Edwards will bring "a lot of good ideas and good energy," said Superintendent Joe Schwan.

The position opened up when current middle school and high school principal Kiersten Sombke submitted her letter of resignation at the board's December 12, 2022 school board meeting.

The district board also voted to move forward with a \$10,500 architectural proposal from JLG Architects to explore future uses for the 1969 gym renovation. The proposal would help the district and board come up with ideas for the gymnasium.

Before the vote, Gengerke asked the board if they thought it was reasonable and worthwhile to do. She also polled the board about whether they believe the public would like to redo the facility.

"I think it would be great to do something with the bleachers and the floor," said board member Tigh Fliehs. "They're terrible."

He has heard from a lot of people who came back from recent games in Mobridge complimenting that school's facilities.

"I'd be in favor," Fliehs said of looking into options for the 1969 gym.

An architectural proposal would help the district get more focused and more serious about what the community wants for the facility, said Superintendent Schwan.

"I think if it's going to be a serious discussion, it warrants some professional discussion," he said. "...This would be a start to that."

There's been a lot of talk about doing something with the gym space, said board Vice President Marty Weismantel.

"We'd have to get something put together before we ask for support," he said.

While the district will contract with the architectural firm for the gym project, the board put a hold on getting an architect to create plans for renovations of the health science lab.

The architect would charge 10-and-a-half percent of the total construction cost to create plans to renovate the current health science lab, Schwan said. However, there may not be a need to contract for those plans if the work can be done without an architect.

Schwan has a meeting Thursday, February 15, with a construction company to discuss the project, he said. That would include taking out the current lab tables, covering the lab floor and moving electrical and plumbing access.

If the district can move forward with the renovations without an extra bill like that, it would be preferred, Schwan said. The grant to improve the facility doesn't include work on the physical space.

Earlier in the school year, the district received a South Dakota Department of Education CTE Innovation Equipment Grant for \$236,522 to be used for the Health Science Simulation Lab. That grant, Schwan said, includes equipment purchases, but not updates to the existing facility.

"It needs a facelift," he said.

The board approved more expenditures Monday, including elementary school roofing repairs and a school bus purchase.

The district will contract with Hub City Roofing for \$320,000 to repair two areas of the elementary school roof. The board also approved purchasing a 2024 International school bus from Harlow's School Bus Service for \$111,680.70.

Board Vice President Weismantel expressed concerns about whether the district would have to travel to Minnesota for any warranty repairs that may be needed.

"It's a new bus," joked Business Manager Mike Weber. "We shouldn't need it."

"You jinxed us," jokingly replied board President Gengerke.

In other personnel changes, the board approved hiring Caitlyn Fischbach as a first grade teacher for the 2023-2024 school year. Fischbach, who is finishing a degree at Valley City State College in North Dakota, has been assisting a third grade class for her student-teaching period, said Elementary School Principal Brett Schwan.

The district had 12 applicants for the position, said Superintendent Joe Schwan, but the applicant pool was not very experienced.

The board also accepted a letter of resignation from elementary school special education teacher Dustin Vogel.

## Groton Area has two foreign exchange students

by Dorene Nelson

Celia Moreno, a foreign exchange student from Madrid, Spain, is staying with the Dan and Marjae Schinkel family while she attends school in Groton.

"I actually chose to come here to school since my older sister had been here three years ago and really enjoyed the school and the area," Celia explained. "She is now in her second year of college and studying to become a nurse. My parents are both employed in the business field."

"Compared to Spain, South Dakota is very large but with a very small population," she smiled. "I'm from Madrid which has over 3 million residents compared to only 800,000 in the entire state of South Dakota!"

"Obviously it feels more crowded back home since the size of Spain is about the size of North and South Dakota combined," Celia said. "It is also much colder here than back home! I actually bought a heavy winter coat, just to be prepared for the below zero temperatures!"

"Madrid's winters are cold and dry but usually with no snow," she explained. "We very seldom have freezing temperatures."

"I am a junior here in Groton, taking art, English, agribusiness, world history, biology, and chemistry. I also participate in cheer and dance," Celia listed. "In Spain we study general history instead of dividing in into groups like is done here in America."

"I have been able to speak English since I was three years old," she stated. "English is taught in the schools, even in the pre-schools."

"My school in Madrid, which has about 700 students, is close enough for me to walk there," Celia said. "School is much harder in Spain with more homework and tests that cover more information."

"Our tests in Spain are all short answer too," she smiled. "Lots of the tests here in America are multiple choice and cover smaller amounts of material."

"I have found that the people in the Groton area are very friendly and have a wonderful sense of community," Celia said. "When someone here needs help or is sick, others automatically offer help and support. That is something I've never seen before!"

"After I return home and finish high school, I plan to become a criminal psychologist," she stated. "I have really enjoyed my visit to America and to the Groton community and am very grateful that the Schinkels let me stay with them too!"

The other foreign exchange student, Nicolas Fernandez, will be featured next week.



Celia Moreno

## We were in love

I was saddened when my mother told me that JoAnn Derry had passed away. She was 90. Her obituary described her as "a firecracker with grit and determination." Yup. That was her, all right.

I met her in Sunday School at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Frederick, SD, in 1968. I was misbehaving one day—hard to imagine, I suppose—when she threatened me with the most dire consequences. If I didn't straighten up I would have to sit on her lap.

"That would be just fine," I said cheerily, and that was it. She adored me from that day forward. JoAnn didn't have a glamorous bone in her body and that overt flattery won her over. We were in love.

She loved telling that story.

She looked at first glance like a hundred other Nordic housewives, but her face was especially kind, freckled, and sun-scorched, with a smile—that's what was special—that made you feel like everything was going to be just fine. She had a slight lisp that made her forever cute.

Her daughter Kristie was a classmate. She died 10 years ago from the ravages of diabetes, the heartbreak of a lifetime for JoAnn and Ted. Their only. When Ted died at 95 in August, I didn't dare think it, but they were, as Forrest Gump would say, like peas and carrots. I was not surprised to learn that JoAnn so quickly followed him.

But heartbroken.

She met Ted in 1953 at a dance, and was mortified to learn that he didn't dance. They dated again on the Fourth of July, Ted and The Firecracker, and they were engaged in August.

She entertained the idea of sticking it out alone on the farm but that fantasy quickly evaporated. Indeed, it was tough enough for her and her walker to manage the small senior apartment she took in Frederick. I'm glad I visited her there a couple of times because she moved to assisted living in Aberdeen rather quickly after that. She was tough, but a realist about living alone at her age.

She had the same sharp and slightly naughty wit. Made me laugh, and my face hurt from

smiling after those visits. I brought her flowers. She fed me baked treats.

Jack and Rayma Smith were there one day when I dropped in unannounced. JoAnn, adept on keyboards or accordion, any instrument, really, played with "Rae and the Ranch Hands" and the "Chicken Pluckers." If you didn't have Rae and the Ranch Hands play for your wedding dance you weren't officially married. I think that's a real law.

As I look back, I remember that JoAnn was the first one I challenged about what I saw as a grade schooler as contradictions in the Bible. I realize now, it was the beginning of a spiritual search for me. I need resolution. Explanations.

You might say Christianity and I had a falling out. As I grew older, I read everything I could find on every religion. I meditated. It took years but I saw the parallels between the religions, and I adopted my own truth. One commandment was enough: Be kind.

I joked with my mother once about being a heathen. "No, your church is the sun and the stars like my father's was," she said.

In spite of the prevalent meanness cloaked in the guise of religion these days, I've reconciled with the church because of the JoAnn Derry's of the world. The Christians I grew up with were simply good people doing good things. You can't argue that.

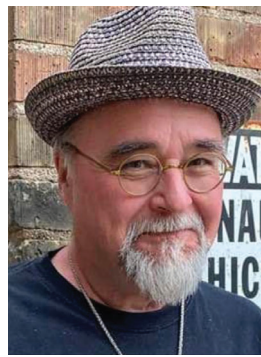
It's funny, too, that despite my aversion to pews, that I've always had a number of friends in the ministry. Maybe they're trying to save a renegade. Maybe they see me as an ally who's on the right side of things just often enough. Maybe a little of both.

JoAnn didn't have an answer to the contradictions, nor did she need one. She had faith. Which is much easier than needing explanations. Now, I've come full circle. The whys and the whats are less important to me as long as I'm around good people doing good things. Sometimes it takes the loss of someone dear to realize what connected you, what an impact they had.

Over the years, JoAnn and I made each other's days when we'd see each other. It was like a holiday. Now, I bid you adieu, dear JoAnn.

We were in love.

© Tony Bender, 2023



## That's Life

by Tony Bender

## Weekly Vikings Recap -

By Jack & Duane Kolsrud

Super Bowl LVII

A matchup of the top two seeds in this year's playoffs met in Arizona for the 57th Super Bowl. The Kansas City Chiefs came in as slight underdogs to the Philadelphia Eagles.

The Eagles jumped out to an early lead, marching the opening kick down the field in the first five minutes ending in Jalen Hurts one-yard sneak.

Just three minutes later, Pat Mahomes hit his favorite target, Travis Kelce, for a 20-yard touchdown Game on- it looks like we're in for a shootout.

After taking a 14-7 lead on a long pass to AJ Brown, Jalen Hurts fumbles, and the Chiefs returned it for a 44-yard touchdown to tie the score at 14.

Hurts came right back, rushed for 50 yards on the next drive, and finished with a 4-yard touchdown run. A last second field goal by the Eagles made it 24-14. The big question was will Mahomes be able to return after reinjuring his ankle late in the second half.

After the Rihanna half-time show, Pat Mahomes returns and leads the Chiefs to a 75-yard touchdown drive to cut the lead to three. The Eagles get a field goal to make it a 6-point lead going into the fourth quarter.

In the fourth, Andy Reid dials up two great goal line plays for touchdowns (motion in and throw back to the receiver) to give KC an eight point lead. Jalen Hurts immediately takes the Eagles down the field to score his third touchdown of the game and converts a two point conversion to tie it at 35 with 5:15 to go.

Pat Mahomes (Super Bowl MVP) does it again as he takes the Chiefs down the field and even runs for 15 yards on a bad ankle. Sadly the key-play of the drive is a questionable defensive holding call on third down that allowed the Chiefs to basically run out the clock and kick a game winning field goal. Tough way to end a great game.

Chiefs are Super Bowl champions for the second time in four years, and Andy Reid beats his former team. This could be the final game for Reid, as there are rumors of a possible retirement and passing the torch to his OC, Eric Bienemy.

As for the Vikings, there was a lot of speculation and uncertainty but on Monday, they got the defensive coordinator they coveted the most, Brian Flores. There were rumors of the Vikings going in another direction, but it really felt as though they were waiting on Flores (former head coach at Miami) to see if he might get a head coaching job.

From the NFL Awards night, there was some good and bad news.

The good news was Justin Jefferson walked away with two awards, the NFL Offensive Player of the Year and the Play of the Year, for his catch against the Buffalo Bills. The not so good news was Kirk Cousins boldly came on stage with the host Kelly Clarkson and sang a funny tribute to Tom Brady (he should probably keep his day job). The bad news was former Viking Jared Allen has to wait another year to get into Canton, just missing out for the second year in a row.

It's all about the commercials:

As in every year, many new commercials debut during the Super Bowl. With help from the smartest person in the house (Gayle), we have come up with our top 5.

1. T-Mobile spin on the movie Grease with a cameo by John Travolta
2. Dodge Ram REV pickup electrification
3. General Motors EV with Will Farrell
4. Greg Gutfeld King of Late Night cut short because ads are expensive
5. Etrade Baby's at a wedding.

That takes us to the end of another great season. The Vikings overachieved under first year head coach Kevin O'Connell and are looking for even more in 2023. SKOL!!

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# We the People

The South Dakota Humanities Council is making available a weekly column -- "We the People" -- that focuses on the U.S. Constitution. It is written by David Adler, who is president of The Alturas Institute, a non-profit organization created to promote the Constitution, gender equality, and civic education.



By David Adler

## STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS: THE CONSTITUTION & POLITICS

President Joe Biden's delivery the annual State of the Union Address fulfilled one of the few constitutional obligations imposed upon the nation's chief executive.

What were the framers of the Constitution thinking when they wrote in Article II, section 3, that the president "shall from time to time give to the Congress information of the State of the

Union and recommend to their Consideration such Measures as he shall judge necessary and convenient"?

In the Constitutional Convention, delegates spent virtually no time discussing this duty. In Federalist No. 77, Alexander Hamilton wrote: "No objection has been made to this class of authorities, nor could they possibly admit of any." In his magisterial three volume Commentaries on the Constitution, Justice Joseph Story provided the rationale for assigning this important informing responsibility to the president. "From the nature and duties of the executive department, he must possess more extensive sources of information, in both foreign and domestic affairs," Story wrote. "There is great wisdom, therefore, in not merely allowing, but in fact requiring, the president to lay before congress all facts and information, which may assist their deliberations; and in enabling him at once to point out the evil, and to suggest the remedy."

Although the Constitution specifies that the president shall inform Congress on the "State of the Union" from "time to time," presidents, beginning with George Washington, have interpreted it as an occasion to introduce and promote an agenda each year.

Washington delivered the first annual message to Congress on Jan. 8, 1790. It generated no small amount of controversy. Without any constitutional or statutory guidance or, for that matter, any tutorial advice on the form, tone and manner of the address, Washington drew upon the traditional monarchical speech from the throne. The "King's Speech" was understood to be a legislative mandate for Parliament. The tradition called for Parliament to organize a "reply speech" that pledged cooperation and represented little more than an echo of the King's address. Washington, however, was chief executive in a republic and members of Congress, as untutored as the president in this matter, adhered to the centuries old practice, even though some members grumbled about conducting business in the British mode.

John Adams, the nation's second president, who enjoyed formality, along with a dutiful Congress, followed Washington's "precedent," which led Edmund Randolph to complain about the mirror literature developed in the annual messages. Randolph declared: "No man can turn over the Journals of the First Six Congresses of the United States without being fairly sickened with the adulation often replied by the Houses of Congress."

It was left to President Thomas Jefferson in 1801 to eliminate what he regarded as the royal pretensions inherent in the personal address and to "put the ship of state back on its republican tack," by replacing a personal presentation of the State of the Union, with the transmission to Congress of a written report. Jefferson pledged to "return to simple, republican Forms of Government," and invited no congressional response.

Subsequent presidents adhered to Jefferson's method until Woodrow Wilson, in 1913, resumed the practice of a personal presidential report. He hoped to remind the nation that the executive branch included a president, who is a "human being trying to cooperate with other human beings in a common service." Every president since Franklin D. Roosevelt has followed suit.

Presidents have used the State of the Union as an exercise of forceful and often, dramatic leadership. James Monroe introduced the Monroe Doctrine. Abraham Lincoln declared that "in giving freedom to the slave we assure freedom to the free." Franklin Roosevelt laid the path for the Four Freedoms. Lyndon Johnson outlined the Great Society. Ronald Reagan, like Joe Biden, used the occasion as a de facto announcement of his candidacy for reelection.

Use of the State of the Union to "recommend measures" has become a primary way in which presidents seek to shape the nation's political agenda. With few formal mechanisms to influence the legislature, presidents delight in the opportunity to speak directly to the American people through the full television coverage of their speech to both houses of Congress. To determine what is or is not a priority influences what government will do. The other two branches lack a similar forum and thus the president enjoys a distinct advantage over Congress and the judiciary in influencing the direction of the country.

A distinguished political scientist in the mid-20th Century, E. E. Schattschneider, wisely observed: "He who determines what politics is about runs the country, because the definition of the alternatives

is the choice of conflicts, and the choice of conflicts allocates power."

The presidency has become the focal point of American politics, and there is for the nation's chief executive no greater stage than the State of the Union address. That exclusive stage, which certainly inspires envy in congressional leaders, affords the unique opportunity to assert psychological and political influence while communicating presidential goals to the tens of millions of citizens who listen to the annual message. It is at that singular moment that the president commands completely the public space and forces other participants in the political process to respond to the issues as he frames them.

Edward Jones

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## Can you count on Social Security?



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Financial Advisor

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If you're getting closer to retirement, you might be thinking more about Social Security.

Specifically, can you count on it to contribute part of the income you'll need as a retiree?

There's been an increase in alarming language surrounding the solvency of Social Security, but in reality, its prospects are not nearly as gloomy as you might have heard.

Here's the story: Under current law, Social Security is estimated to exhaust its trust funds by 2035, after which benefits could be cut by 20%, according to the 2022 Social Security Trustees report. However, the large cost of living adjustment (COLA) (8.7%) for 2023 could cause the trust funds to use up their resources sooner.

But this outlook may represent a worst-case scenario. For one thing, the cost of the 2023 COLA will be somewhat offset by higher taxes on workers contributing to Social Security. The maximum amount of earnings subject to the 6.2% Social Security tax jumped from \$147,000 in 2022 to \$160,200 in 2023. And in looking down the road, further increases in this earnings cap may also help reduce the gap in the trust funds. Increasing the payroll tax is another possibility for boosting funding to Social Security.

And here's a political reality: Social Security is a popular program and it's unlikely that any future Congress wants to be blamed for reducing benefits. Of course, there are no guarantees, but it seems fair to say that you can reasonably expect some benefits from Social Security when you retire.

But perhaps the bigger issue is just how much you should depend on Social Security for your retirement income. On average, Social Security benefits will provide about 30% of a beneficiary's preretirement earnings, according to the Social Security Administration. But the higher your earnings before you retire, the lower the percentage that will be replaced by Social Security.

Still, you'll want to maximize the benefits that are available to you — and that means deciding when to start taking Social Security. You can begin as early as 62, but your monthly payments could be as much as 30% lower than your normal (or "full") retirement age, which will likely be between 66 and 67.

Even if you were to wait until your full retirement age before collecting Social Security, you'll also need to draw on other sources of funding. So, while you are still working, it's a good idea to keep contributing to your IRA and 401(k) or other employer-sponsored retirement plan.

The amount you contribute should depend on your overall financial strategy and your financial needs, so, for example, you probably shouldn't put in so much into your retirement accounts that you feel significant stress in your monthly cash flow. But when you do get a chance to invest more in these accounts, such as when your salary goes up, you may want to take advantage of the opportunity.

Ultimately, you should be able to count on Social Security as part of your retirement income. You may want to consult with a financial professional to determine when taking Social Security makes the most sense for you and how you can also get the most from your other retirement accounts. You'll want a retirement income strategy that's built for the long run.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Travis Schuring can be reached at 605-330-0090, [travis.schuring@edwardjones.com](mailto:travis.schuring@edwardjones.com), or [www.edwardjones.com/travis-schuring](https://www.edwardjones.com/travis-schuring).

Edward Jones, Member SIPC

# The Groton Independent

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## EMPLOYMENT

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## Groton Chamber of Commerce February 1, 2023

12pm City Hall

• Special thanks to Brian Bahr of Bahr Spray Foam for providing Jungle Pizza for all!

• Individuals present: Brian Bahr, Christine Hilton, Katelyn Nehlich, Doug Heinrich, Carol Kutter,

April Abeln, Kellie Locke, and Ashley Bentz.

• Minutes from the previous meeting were approved on a motion by Heinrich and seconded by

Locke. All members present voted aye.

• Treasurer's report was given. Dacotah Bank checking account balance is \$30,455.41. An estimated \$1500.00 is in the Bucks account. Report was approved by Abeln and seconded by Locke. All members present voted aye. \$8,600.00 has been received for 2023 dues which is down from last year. No 1099's will need to be issued for 2022.

• Rack cards have been printed and registered with the SD Dept. of Tourism Interstate Welcome Centers Publication Program. No date has been set for the Literature Drop but will

be sometime this Spring.

• Jim Lane hasn't been able to fix the lighting on the 2 wood hwy signs that was malfunctioning; but lighting does seem to be better.

• Motion by Abeln and seconded by Heinrich to pay \$100 to Olive Grove Golf Course for a whole page ad in their Monday Night Football booklet. All members present voted aye.

• Our \$50 Facebook ad has ended for our electronic Hwy 12 sign drawing. Drawing will be held Wednesday, February 15th at 12pm at City Hall. Nehlich will put together drawing materials.

• Motion by Abeln and seconded by Heinrich to pay for a 6x4' baseball advertising sign for Dakota Broadcasting in exchange for 240 radio ads to be used in the next 4 years. All members present voted aye.

• Abeln will contact new business owner, Hunter Bahr from Northern Plains Insulation and set up a welcome visit.

• Groton Lions Club will be sponsoring their annual Easter Egg Hunt on April 1st. It was suggested the Chamber purchase youth shirts to be hidden in plastic eggs. We have 5 of the adult shirts left as well to use for promotions.

• It was mentioned to start brainstorming our 2023 shirt design.

• Next meeting:  
o March 1st at City Hall 12-1pm BYOL

• Upcoming events  
o 02/04/2023 - 02/05/2023 Lion's Club Consignment Sale 1-5pm, Community Center

o 02/15/2023 FB Live Electronic Hwy 12 Sign Drawing, 12pm, City Hall

o 02/25/2023 Littles and Me, Art Making 10-11:30am, Wage Memorial Library

o 03/25/2023 Spring Vendor Fair, 10am-3pm, Community Center

## 11 MONTH CD SPECIAL

# 4.16%

ANNUAL PERCENTAGE YIELD

\$5000 minimum balance



May be a penalty for early withdrawal. Interest rate of 4.15% and annual percentage yield are accurate as of December 21, 2022.



MEMBER FDIC

## Brown County Feb. 7, 2023

### Meeting Minutes

FEBRUARY 7, 2023 – GENERAL MEETING

Meeting called to order by Chairman Sutton at 8:45 A.M. in the Commission Chambers, Courthouse Annex, Brown County, SD. Present were Commissioners Dennert, Fjeldheim, Gage, Sutton and Wiese. Auditor Heupel led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** Commissioner Gage moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Fjeldheim. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

**WILDLAND FIRE DESIGNEE:** Moved by Commissioner Fjeldheim, seconded by Dennert to appoint Scott Meints and Patti Woods as the Designees for the Wildland Fire Division. Commissioner Wiese was appointed during the Reorganization meeting on January 3rd. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**NECOG MEMBER-AT-LARGE BOARD MEMBER:** Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Dennert to appoint Scott Meints, Emergency Management Director as Brown County Member-At-Large on the NECOG Board. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**SLEDDING AT LANDFILL:** Mike Scott, Landfill Manager met with the Brown County Commissioner asking them for approval to allow a Church Youth Group to go sledding at the Landfill. He shared that they would have to sign a waiver so no liability on the County. Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Gage to approve this. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**LANDFILL UPDATE:** Mike Scott, Landfill Manager gave a brief department update letting the Commission know that they will be purchasing a New Payloader and Scale which were budgeted for this year. Also, they will be doing some upgrades at the Fire Station.

**MINUTES:** Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Fjeldheim to approve the General Meeting minutes of January 31, 2023. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

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

Professional Fees: Adamsoft LLC \$2,437.50; Association of SD County Weed & Pest Boards \$150.00; Avera St. Luke's \$251.26; CenturyLink \$183.45; Commercial Electronics Corp \$5,550.00; Dakota's Finest Investigations, LLC \$477.50; Helms & Associates Inc \$687.40; Kristi Brandt \$38.25; Lincoln County Treasurer \$242.40; Minnehaha County, SD \$10,276.50; Mitchell Alan Vilhauer \$698.04; RegistrationMax LLC \$750.00; Sanford Health Occupational Medicine Aberdeen \$47.00; SD Secretary of State \$30.00; SDSU Extension \$21,770.63; Zylstra Investigations \$1,435.00. Publishing: Groton Independent \$478.98; Midstates Printing \$1,140.00; Northwest Blade \$161.50. Repairs & Maintenance: Aberdeen Auto Center, Inc \$77.35; Auto Glass Solutions Inc \$40.00; Butler Machinery Company \$1,320.00; Century Business Products \$61.46; Crawford Trucks & Equipment \$754.87; Dakota Electronics \$443.15; Dakota Fluid Power, Inc \$843.02; Hase Plumbing & Heating Inc \$961.60; House of Glass \$2,751.50; Lang's Audio TV & Appliance \$95.00; Lawson Products Inc \$26.97; Mark Kolb \$1,410.00; Pantorium Cleaners Inc \$235.96; R.D. Offutt Company \$3,585.57; Schwan Welding \$445.70; Tru Green Chemlawn \$478.21. Supplies: Aberdeen Auto Center, Inc \$91.00; Ag-tegra Cooperative \$81,993.73; APH Stores, Inc \$38.43; Bakken Building Maintenance \$500.00; Bimbo Foods USA, Inc \$859.00; Butler Machinery Company \$7,987.46; Century Business Products \$4.08; Cole Papers \$3,249.17; Cook's Correlational \$105.95; Crawford Trucks & Equipment \$1,813.54; Dakota Fluid Power, Inc \$2,123.34; Dakota Mailing & Shipping Equipment Inc \$290.26; Dakota Supply Group \$1,019.70; Dawson Anderson \$5.31; Farm Power Mfg \$42.21; Fastenal Company \$133.80; Gannett Holdings LLC Ohio \$332.80; Henry Fulda \$13.77; Interstate Battery System of SD \$425.85; Lawson Products Inc \$319.54; Leidholdt Tool Sales LLC \$130.35; Menards \$1,207.62; Midstates Printing \$12.42; Napa Central \$58.63; Pantorium Cleaners Inc

\$84.00; Performance Rentals LLC \$28.25; Pitney Bowes Inc \$778.00; Plumbing & Heating Wholesale Inc \$202.51; R.D. Offutt Company \$1,123.49; Runnings \$314.50; US Foods \$9,064.16. Travel & Conference: Aaron Walberg \$197.20; Dave Lunzmann \$458.00; McKenzie Farmen \$14.00. Utilities: AT&T Mobility \$184.50; CenturyLink \$288.56; Midcontinent Communications \$214.97; Northwestern Energy \$12,579.42; State of South Dakota \$118.73; Town of Frederick \$76.00. Machinery & Equipment: Dakota Electronics \$5,063.44. Commissioner Sutton pulled the voucher for Aberdeen Area Chamber of Commerce Membership Dues. After further discussion, it was decided to see what they would charge to include all of Brown County and what the membership entails. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**HR REPORT:** Moved by Commissioner Fjeldheim seconded by Wiese to approve the following Human Resource Report submitted by Human Resources Director, Erica Coughlin: Acknowledge employment ending for Danielle Watson as Brown County JDC Detention Officer, full-time; effective January 27, 2023. Request to fill. Approve hiring of Doug Rush as Brown County Assistant Building Maintenance Superintendent, full-time; starting wage \$26.46/hour; effective February 6, 2023. Approve personal miles driven for December 2022 at .625 per mile as follows: Kendall Titze 126 miles at \$78.75; John Florey 132 miles at \$82.50; Mike Scott 180 miles @ \$112.50. Approve personal miles driven for January 2023 at .655 per mile as follows: Kendall Titze 114 miles at \$74.67; John Florey 120 miles at \$78.60; Mike Scott 200 miles @ \$131.00. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**SURPLUS INVENTORY:** Moved by Commissioner Dennert, seconded by Gage to approve to surplus to the Landfill for disposal a Snapper Snow Thrower/Auger Sheared and Sebo vacuum will use for parts from Maintenance department. All members voting aye. Motion carried.

**CLAIM ASSIGNMENTS:** Moved by Commissioner Fjeldheim, seconded by Wiese to authorize and approve the Auditor sign the Claim Assignments against individuals to Credit Collections Bureau for the purpose of collecting liens. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**LANDFILL TONNAGE REPORT:** Moved by Commissioner Gage, seconded by Wiese to acknowledge the Landfill Tonnage Report for January 2023. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**2023 UNION CONTRACT:** Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Gage to authorize and approve the Chairman to sign the 2023 Union Contract. Commissioner Sutton shared that he wanted to Thank Commissioner Wiese and Erica Coughlin, HR Director for all their work and time working with the Union to get a contract in place. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**AUDITOR'S REPORT OF ACCOUNTS:** Moved by Commissioner Dennert, seconded by Fjeldheim to approve the Auditor's Report of Accounts of December 2022 as follows: Total Cash and Checks on Hand 7,700.00; Total Checking Account Balances 20,153,697.55; Total Savings Account Balances 3,400,447.42; Total Certificates of Deposit 3,979,550.72; Grand Total Cash & Balances 27,541,395.69. General Fund Cash and Investment Balances by Funds: General Fund 8,543,064.01; Road & Bridge Fund 3,072,426.25; Road & Bridge Fund – restricted 423,243.27; 911 Service 990,976.71; Emergency & Disaster 244,504.45; Domestic Abuse 795.00; Teen Court 329.99; Grant 32.11; JDAI 30,167.80; Richmond Youth Camp 0.00; 24/7 Sobriety 20,117.91; ROD M & P 106,856.19; American Rescue Plan Federal Grant 7,545,865.45; Rural Access Infrastructure 295,338.93; TIF Debt Service 1,081.66; Landfill + cash change 3,890,291.17; Landfill – restricted 1,400,479.44; Trust and Agency Funds 975,825.35; Grand Total General Fund Cash & Investments 27,541,395.69. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**TRAVEL REQUESTS:** Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Gage to approve the Travel Request for Rachel Kippley and Fair Board Members for Zone 4 International Association of Fairs & Expos on March 19-21, 2023 in St. Cloud, MN and John Florey,

Dean Zumbaum and Josh Ulmer from Highway Department to attend Annual Asphalt Conference on February 15-16, 2023 in Oa-coma, SD. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**LEASE AGREEMENTS:** Moved by Commissioner Fjeldheim, seconded by Dennert to approve and authorize the Chair sign the following lease agreements: Randy Zens for lease of Club House for Graduation Reception on May 12, 2023; Justin Scepanski for lease of Club House for Wedding Reception on June 3, 2023; Dacotah Prairie Museum for lease of Holm Expo Building for PickleBall Tournament on June 10, 2023; Heartland Association of Fairs, Festivals and Events for lease of Stage for Heartland Annual Convention on November 16-18, 2023. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**OTHER BUSINESS:** None  
**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Gage to go into executive session to discuss Personnel per SDCL 1-25-2. All members present voting aye. Motion carried. The chair declared the executive session closed with no action taken.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Moved by Commissioner Dennert, seconded by Wiese to adjourn the Brown County Commission meeting at 9:23 a.m. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

Lynn Heupel, Brown County Auditor  
Published February 15, 2023, at the total approximate cost of \$90.23 and may be viewed free of charge at [www.sdpublicnotices.com](http://www.sdpublicnotices.com). 21928

## Brown County Surfacing Project Bid Notice

2023 Brown County Surfacing Project

Brown County, South Dakota  
Sealed Bids will be received by the Brown County Auditor, 25 Market Street, Aberdeen, South Dakota, 57401, until 8:45 AM local time on Tuesday, the 21st day of February, 2023, for the above-referenced project. Bids shall be prepared and submitted in accordance with the Bidding Documents. Brown County reserves the right to accept or reject any and/or all Bids as set forth in the Bidding Documents.

Bids will be publicly opened and read aloud at or shortly after the time named above. Bids will be reviewed by the Brown County Commission at a subsequent meeting of the Brown County Commissioners.  
The Project includes the following Work:

- 3" Asphalt Concrete overlay for approximately 9 miles.
  - Additional items as set forth in the Contract Documents.
- Each bid shall be accompanied by a Bid Security as described in the Bidding Documents. The Successful Bidder will be required to provide Payment and Performance Bonds as described in the Bidding Documents.

Bidding documents may be viewed and obtained at [www.questcdn.com](http://www.questcdn.com) by entering QuestCDN project number 8387131. If you need assistance with the website, please contact QuestCDN Customer Support at 952-233-1632 or [info@questcdn.com](mailto:info@questcdn.com).

A pre-bid conference will not be held.

Attest: Lynn Heupel  
Brown County Auditor  
Published twice (February 8 and February 15, 2023) at the total approximate cost of \$32.01 and may be viewed free of charge at [www.sdpublicnotices.com](http://www.sdpublicnotices.com). 21911

## Mud Creek Notice of Annual Meeting

**NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF BROWN COUNTY MUD CREEK WATERSHED DISTRICT AND REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS FOR BOARD OF MANAGERS**

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN:** That the Annual Meeting of the Brown County Mud Creek Watershed District, will be held in the Groton Community Center, located at 109 N. 3rd Street, Groton, South Dakota on March 21, 2023 at 2:00 p.m., during which annual meeting the eligible voters in the district shall elect, by ballot, under the direction of the secretary of the district, managers to replace those whose terms have expired. Any party interested in becoming a candidate for the Board of Managers for the Brown County Mud Creek Watershed District

shall file their written application with Grant Rix, Secretary of the Board of Managers, at 12960 406th Avenue, Groton, South Dakota 57445 at least thirty (30) days prior to elections pursuant to SDCL 46A-14-38. All managers and candidates shall be eligible voters of the district or designees of eligible voters of the district as provided in SDCL 46A-14-15.1. Upon the election of the managers of the district, officers of the district shall be elected by the managers, except the secretary/treasurer shall be appointed by the managers; and any other personnel of the district may be appointed or hired by the managers. Additionally, at such annual meeting any interested person may appear either in person or by a representative and will be given an opportunity for a full and complete discussion of all purposes, objectives, items, schedules, appropriations, estimates, amounts and any other matters relevant to the Brown County Mud Creek Watershed District. Grant Rix, Secretary, Brown County Mud Creek Watershed District.

Published Feb. 8 and Feb. 15 at the total approximate cost of \$35.87 and may be viewed free of charge at [www.sdpublicnotices.com](http://www.sdpublicnotices.com). 21914

## Groton Area Fire Protection & Rescue District

**NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING GROTON AREA FIRE PROTECTION AND RESCUE DISTRICT**

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that the Annual Meeting of the Groton Area Fire Protection and Rescue District members who live in the District and own any real property interested in the District will be held on February 20, 2023 at 7:30 p.m. in the Fire Hall located on Railroad Avenue, Groton, South Dakota.

Order of Business: This is the time and place for the annual election of board members and a regular meeting of the board.

All interested parties should attend.

/s/ Bruce Sippel  
Bruce Sippel, Secretary  
Published Feb. 8 and Feb. 15 at the total approximate cost of \$16.00 and may be viewed free of charge at [www.sdpublicnotices.com](http://www.sdpublicnotices.com). 21915

## Groton School Feb. 8, 2023 Special Meeting

**UNOFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF BOARD OF EDUCATION GROTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 06-6**

**SPECIAL MEETING**  
February 08, 2023

President Gengerke called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm in the GHS Library Conference Room. Members present: Flihs, Harder, Gengerke, Pharis, Rix, and Weismantel. Absent: Smith. Others present were Supt. J. Schwan and Principal B. Schwan.

Moved by Harder, second Weismantel to approve the agenda as proposed. Motion carried. Pursuant to SDCL 23-3, there was no potential conflict disclosure reported.

Members of the public are allowed five minutes to address the board on any topic of their choice. With no public members requesting to speak, the board proceeded with their agenda items.

Moved by Pharis, second Harder to approve hiring Rebecca Hubsch as Business Manager for the 2023-24 school year. Motion carried.

Moved by Weismantel, second Pharis to go into executive session pursuant to SDCL 1-25-2(1) for Middle School/High School Principal interviews at 5:05 pm. Motion carried.

President Gengerke declared the board out of executive session at 9:03 pm.

Moved by Rix, second Flihs to adjourn at 9:04 pm. Motion carried.

M. J. Weber, Business Manager Deborah Gengerke, President

The addition of signatures to this page verifies these minutes as official.  
Published February 15, 2023, at the total approximate cost of \$15.73 and may be viewed free of charge at [www.sdpublicnotices.com](http://www.sdpublicnotices.com). 21929

## Groton City Feb. 7, 2023 Meeting Minutes

February 7, 2023  
The Groton City Council met on the above date at 7:00 p.m. at 120 N Main Street for their first monthly meeting with the following members present: Bahr, Wells, Wambach, Cutler,

Nehls and Mayor Hanlon presiding. Also present were: Attorney Drew Johnson, Finance Officer Douglas Heinrich, Terry Herron, Dwight Zerr, Todd Gay, Stacy Mayou, Kami Lipp, Tricia Keith, Jarod Flihs, Doug Hamilton, and Elizabeth Varin.

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

Todd Gay, Electric Superintendent, addressed the council regarding his vacation leave accrual. Later in the meeting, it was decided that Todd would continue accruing vacation leave indefinitely at the rate he was in 2022 (4 weeks per year) on motion by Nehls and seconded by Cutler. All members present voted aye.

Department reports were reviewed.

Todd Gay, Terry Herron, and Dwight Zerr exited the meeting. Jarod Flihs and Doug Hamilton addressed the council regarding the baseball concession building and their want to construct a new facility before the 2024 season. Discussion also took place about funding opportunities to assist with the overall cost. The park bathroom facility was also briefly discussed.

Jarod Flihs and Doug Hamilton exited the meeting.

The minutes from the previous meeting were approved on a motion by Bahr and seconded by Wambach. All members present voted aye.

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

Payroll, \$43,940.59, Employee salaries; Executive, \$556.15; Administrative, \$8,855.72; Public Safety, \$9,278.66; Public Works, \$23,240.78; Culture & Recreation, \$2,009.28; Scott Hanlon, \$33.77, Parts for water fountain, tape for hockey sticks; NW Energy, \$66.34, Natural Gas Service - Water Tower; Groton Elementary School, \$160.00, Kevin Lovegreen full book set; Dacotah Bank, \$5,444.26, Withholding/SS/Medicare; Dakotaland FCU, \$730.00, Employee savings; Dacotah Bank, \$1,622.90, HSA contributions; IMEG Corp., \$5,704.39, Engineering fees; Landon Johnson, \$278.31, Mileage/Meal Reimbursement - JUTS 2023; Douglas Heinrich, \$349.00, Med Flex; Verizon Wireless, \$40.01, Wireless router; Guardian Insurance, \$38.49, Employee insurance; Employer's Mutual Insurance, \$85.20, Employee insurance; Aflac, \$336.62, Employee insurance; Allied Benefit Systems, \$10,978.48, Employee insurance; Colonial Life, \$69.40, Employee insurance; Accounts Management, Inc, \$75.00, Wage Assignment; Hauge Associates, Inc., \$250.00, Wage Assignment; Dacotah Bank, \$3,268.03, Withholding/SS/Medicare; Dacotah Bank, \$300.00, HSA contributions; April Abeln, \$104.50, Med Flex; Stacy Mayou, \$140.62, Med Flex; Dacotah Bank, \$5,541.43, Withholding/SS/Medicare; Dakotaland FCU, \$730.00, Employee Savings; Dacotah Bank, \$622.90, HSA contributions; USPS, \$282.21, Utility postage; XL Homes Corp., \$191.13, Utility deposit refund; Jessica & Brandon Papa, \$97.03, Utility deposit refund; Lena Cox, \$250.00, Utility deposit refund; City of Groton, \$211.84, Utility deposits applied to bills; Dakota Fluid Power, \$47.69, Coil for skid loader; Colonial Research, \$148.52, Urinal screens; JDDM, LLC., \$249.00, Repairs to warming house; Menards, \$91.44, Water fountain supplies; Geffdog Designs, LLC, \$140.00, Library banner; SD Department of Health, \$30.00, Water samples; JGE, \$1,518.61, Broom for skid loader; Dakota Doors, Inc., \$1,191.83, Installation of receivers & remotes at city shop; Locke Electric, Inc., \$1,795.19, Electric supplies, labor for repairs; ULINE, \$663.82, Two-tier folding chair dolly; Irby, Inc., \$4,565.00, Electric supplies; Runnings, \$915.34, 2-pack 20v batteries, fuel hose, shop towels, flint, 6' shelving unit; SD Supplemental Retirement, \$240.00, Supplemental Retirement; Farmers Union Co-op, \$2,430.00, #1 Dyed Diesel; NW Energy, \$13.81, Natural Gas Service - PD; S&S Lumber, \$306.86, Screws, washers, parts for water fountain, fuses, door

handle, leather gloves, bolts, nuts, glue traps, rope, receiver hitch, hitch pin & clip, 2" ball for receiver, power steering fluid, brake fluid, grease coupler; Dollar General, \$170.75, Lighter, bottled water, candy, toilet paper, tissues, creamer, garbage bags, batteries, Febreze, glass cleaner; SD Retirement System, \$10,155.02, Employee Retirement; J's Superior Cleaning, \$240.00, Commercial cleaning services - January 2023; Drew Johnson, \$550.00, Legal Services - January 2023; Groton Chamber of Commerce, \$12,000.00, City Donation; Full Circle Ag, \$60.00, Tank rental; A&B Business Solutions, \$341.40, Printer lease; Bell Lumber and Pole Co., \$35,426.00, Electric poles; AutoZone, Inc., \$45.09, Oil filters, seat covers; Groton Daily Independent, \$67.88, Publishing Fees; Dacotah Bank Visa, \$2,193.07, Date stamper, labels, various books for library, fire resistant clothing - jeans & sweatshirts, envelopes, copy paper, light bulbs, postage, fuel, gloves;

The second reading of Ordinance #767 - Amending Rates for Groton Municipal Electric Customers was tabled to the next meeting on a motion by Nehls and seconded by Wambach. All members present voted aye.

Moved by Cutler and seconded by Wells to authorize Douglas Heinrich to attend Finance Officer and Human Resources School in Pierre, SD on June 6th - 9th, 2023. All members present voted aye.

Moved by Wambach and seconded by Bahr to authorize Todd Gay to attend the Emergency Preparedness and Restoration Conference in St. Cloud, MN on February 22nd - 23rd, 2023. All members present voted aye.

Elizabeth Varin exited the meeting.

Moved by Bahr and seconded by Wells to adjourn into executive session for personnel and legal matters 1-25-2 (1) & (3) at 8:05pm. All members present voted aye. Council reconvened into regular session at 9:20pm.

Elizabeth Varin reentered the meeting.

Moved by Cutler and seconded by Wambach to hire Benjamin Smith as Police Officer at a wage of \$28.00/hour with a \$.50 increase following his 6-month probationary period. All members present voted aye.

The second reading of Ordinance #766 - 2023 Summer Salary Ordinance was tabled to the next meeting on a motion by Wells and seconded by Nehls. All members present voted aye.

Moved by Wells and seconded by Nehls to adjourn the meeting at 9:27pm. All members present voted aye.

Scott Hanlon, Mayor  
Douglas Heinrich, Finance Officer

Published February 15, 2023, at the total approximate cost of \$62.36 and may be viewed free of charge at [www.sdpublicnotices.com](http://www.sdpublicnotices.com). 21930

## West Hanson Notice of Caucus

**NOTICE OF CAUCUS AND ELECTION IN WEST HANSON TOWNSHIP**

West Hanson Township will hold its annual caucus, business meeting and election on Tuesday, March 7th at 7:30 PM. The meeting will be held at the Dirks home, 40305 138th St. There will be an election of one supervisor, clerk and treasurer.

The township will also be accepting bids for 1,000 yds., more or less, of screened and/or crushed gravel within the township. We will also take bids on the same date for road blading and mowing on township roads and snow removal work. We will also be taking bids on mowing and maintenance of the West Hanson Cemetery. All bids must be accompanied by certificate of contractor's liability insurance. The board reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids.

Jennifer Dirks, Township Clerk  
Published February 15, 22, March 1, 2023, at the total approximate cost of \$30.56 and may be viewed free of charge at [www.sdpublicnotices.com](http://www.sdpublicnotices.com). 21931



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## **GHS Basketball**

### **Boys win, girls lose at Mobridge-Pollock doubleheader**

Two streaks came to an end Saturday at the doubleheader basketball event held in Mobridge.

According to Jay Davis of the Mobridge Tribune, the girls had a five-year streak going where the visiting team won and the boys had a 15 year streak going where the home team won. The opposite happened in both yesterday as the the visiting Groton Area Tigers defeated Mobridge-Pollock and the home team Mobridge-Pollock Tigers defeated Groton Area.

The boys posted a 58-41 win in the varsity game. The game was tied three times and there were six lead changes before Groton Area took a 27-18 lead at halftime. Groton Area led, 41-36, at the end of the third quarter and Jacob Zak scored eight of his 13 points in the fourth quarter to help propel Groton Area to the win.

Lane Tietz led the Tigers with 17 points, four rebounds, one assist and two steals. Jacob Zak had 13 points, three rebounds and one assist. Tate Larson had 10 points, five rebounds and two assists. Cole Simon had eight points, two rebounds, two assists and one steal. Ryder Johnson had six points, three rebounds and one steal. Keegan Tracy had four points and one steal. Cade Larson had one assist. Taylor Diegel had one assist and two steals. Logan Ringgenberg had one rebound.

Groton Area made 15 of 25 two-pointers for 60 percent, three of 11 three-pointers for 27 percent had 18 rebounds, eight assists and seven steals. Groton Area made 19 of 30 free throws for 63 percent off of Mobridge-Pollock's 23 team fouls. Mobridge-Pollock made three of 10 free throws for 30 percent off of Groton Area's 15 team fouls.

Shane Henderson led Mobridge-Pollock with 11 points while Kobe Good Shield had seven, Jackson Eisemann five, Holden Eisemann, Sion Fried, Turner Pfitzer and Coy Hinsz each had two points.

Groton Area won the junior varsity game, 66-32. Scoring for Groton: Teylor Diegel 11, Logan Ringgenberg 10, Braxton Imrie 8, Holden Sippel 8, Keegan Tracy 7, Turner Thompson 6, Dillon Abeln 5, Ryder Johnson 3, Blake Pauli 3, Jayden Schwan 2, Caden McInerney 2, and Gage Sippel 1.

The junior high boys won both of their games. In the first game, quarter scores were 16-8, 28-16 and 33-24 win rout to a 46-28 win. Karson Zak 12, Ryder Schelle 12, Ethan Kroll 9, Easten Weber 7, Alex Abeln 3, Jace Johnson 2, Quinn Cogley 1.

Groton Area led at the quarters top at 14-7, 26-15 and 34-19 en route to a 41-23 win. Easten Weber 17, Karson Zak 11, Ryder Schelle 7, TC Schuster 4, Alex Abeln 3.

Groton Area had the early lead in the girls varsity game, but Mobridge-Pollock would win the game from the free throw line, 20-6, to a post a 53-44 win. Groton Area led after the first quarter, 18-13, Mobridge-Pollock took a 28-24 lead at halftime. The game was tied three times in the third quarter but Groton Area was unable to get back on top as Mobridge-Pollock led at the third quarter break, 37-35, and would make 12 of 13 free throws in the fourth quarter to get the win.

Sydney Leicht led Groton Area with 15 points, four rebounds and one steal. Jaedyn Penning had seven points, five rebounds, two assists and two steals. Faith Traphagen had six points, four rebounds, two assists and one steal. Kennedy Hansen had five points. Brooke Gengerke had four points, five rebounds, one assist and one steal. Brooklyn Hansen had three points and two rebounds. Rylee Dunker had three points, three rebounds, two assists and one steal. Emily Clark had one point. Jerica Locke had six rebounds, four assists and one steal. Laila Roberts had one assist and two steals.

Groton Area made 13 of 38 two-pointers for 34 percent, four of 17 three-pointers for 24 percent, had 34 rebounds, 13 turnovers, 12 assists and 11 steals. Groton Area made six of 19 free throws for 32 percent off of Mobridge-Pollock's 16 team fouls. Mobridge-Pollock made 20 of 23 free throws for 87 percent off of Groton Area's 23 teams fouls.

Katy Kemnitz led Mobridge-Pollock with 16 points while Emma Keller had 11, Charley Henderson 10, Mariah Goehring nine, Reagan Weisbeck three and Emily Hatzenbuhler one.

Mobridge-Pollock won the junior varsity girls game, 44-33. Brooklyn Hansen had eight points, McKenna Tietz seven, Rylee Dunker six, Taryn Traphagen five, Elizabeth Fliehs three and Faith Traphagen and Talli Wright each had two points.

Thanks to Shane Clark for calling the girls games, to Ryan Tracy and Melanie Johnson for assisting in the boys JV game, to Jeslyn Kosel for running the cameras and to all of our wonderful sponsors on GDILIVE.COM. Akaska Tavern & Bait Shop sponsored the junior games, Ed and Connie Stauch sponsored the boys JV game, Larry and Val Fliehs sponsored the girls JV game, and the varsity game sponsors were Bahr Spray Foam, Bary Keith at Harr Motors, Bierman Farm Service, Blocker Construction, Dacotah Bank, Groton Chamber of Commerce, Groton Ford, John Sieh Agency, Locke Electric, Milbrandt Enterprises Inc., Spanier Harvesting & Trucking, Thunder Seed with John Wheeting.

- Paul Kosel

## **GHS Girls Basketball**

### **Subvarsity teams beat Redfield, Pheasants fly away from Tigers in varsity game**

Groton Area's girls basketball teams won the C and junior varsity games, but lost the varsity one to Redfield Friday night in Groton.

The Tigers won the C game, 47-9. Kella Tracy led the Tigers with 14 points followed by McKenna Tietz and Talli Wright with 11 each, Taryn Traphagen had four, Mia Crank three and Emily Clark and Ashlyn Warington each had two points.

Charli Jungwirth led Redfield with three points.

Groton Area won the junior varsity game, 41-15. Kennedy Hansen had 14 points, Brooklyn Hansen had nine points, McKenna Tietz had six points, Faith Traphagen had four, Taryn Traphagen and Mia Crank

each had three points and Talli Wright and Kella Tracy each added two points.

It was close at the early part of the varsity game before Redfield scored 10 straight points to take a 15-9 first quarter lead, then led, 24-18 at half time and 34-23 after three quarters. The Tigers did close to within three points, 37-34, late in the game but the Pheasants would pull away at the end.

Brooke Gengerke had six points and three rebounds. Jerica Locke had six points, three rebounds and three assists. Sydney Leicht had five points, one rebound and one steal. Jaedyn Penning had five points and six rebounds. Faith Traphagen had five points and one rebound. Rylee Dunker had two points and one rebound. Aspen Johnson had three rebounds, one assist and one steal. Kennedy Hansen had two rebounds and one steal.

- Paul Kosel

Groton Area made 10 of 27 two-pointers for 37 percent, three of 17 three-pointers for 18 percent, five of eight free throws for 63 percent, had 21 rebound, 13 turnovers, six assists, four steals and 16 team fouls.

All three games were broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM with Mr Anonymous sponsoring the junior varsity and C games while the varsity game was sponsored by Bahr Spray Foam, Bary Keith at Harr Motors, Bierman Farm Service, Blocker Construction, Dacotah Bank, Groton Chamber of Commerce, Groton Ford, John Sieh Agency, Locke Electric, Milbrandt Enterprises Inc., Spanier Harvesting & Trucking, Thunder Seed with John Wheeting. Shane Clark called the varsity game.

## **GHS Basketball**

### **Boys beat Redfield, free throws propel Huskys to win over Lady Tigers**

Groton Area boys defeated Redfield on Thursday, 57-44, in a game played at Redfield. There were seven lead changes and the game was tied three times in the first quarter before the Tigers took a 16-12 lead. Groton Area led at half time, 30-23, and after three quarters, 48-31.

Ryder Johnson led the Tigers with 16 points, five rebounds and four steals. Tate Larson had 13 points, eight rebounds, three assists and three steals. Lane Tietz had 11 points, seven rebounds, four assists and four steals. Cole Simon had five points, two rebounds and four steals. Taylor Diegel had five points. Keegan Tracy had five points, one rebounds. Jacob Zak had two points, two rebounds, two assists and one block. Cade Larson had two rebounds and one assist. Logan Ringgenberg had one rebound and one block.

Groton Area made 19 of 36 field goals for 53 percent, three of 20 three-pointers for 15 percent, 10 of 16 free throws for 63 percent, had 28 rebounds, 10 turnovers, 10 assists, 15 steals, 16 team fouls with Zak fouling out and two block shots.

Mitchell Mack scored all 14 of his Redfield points in the first half while Nolan Gall scored all 14 of his points in the second half to lead the Pheasants. Then Jerron Haider and Justin Ratigan each had four points and Zach Akin had three points. Redfield made 19 of 37 field goals for 51 percent, six of 11 free throws for 54 percent, had 19 turnovers and 12 team fouls.

Groton Area won the junior varsity game, 49-19. Keegan Tracy led the Tigers with 16 points followed by Dillon Abeln with 13 points, Ryder Johnson and Logan Ringgenberg each had six points, Jayden Schwan and Gage Sippel each had three points and Blake Pauli had two points.

Groton won the junior high game, 42-12. Ryder Schelle and Carson Zak each had nine points, Easten Weber had eight, Alex Abeln and Jace Johnson each had four, Blake Lord and TC Schuster each had three points and Ethan Kroll had two points.

Meanwhile in Groton, the Lady Tigers took on Elk Point-Jefferson and watched their first half lead evaporate into defeat, 52-44. Groton Area led after the first quarter, 17-8, and at half time, 26-25. Elk Point-Jefferson took control in the third quarter and led at the break, 39-31. The Huskys won the game from the line, 21-10.

Sydney Leicht led the Tigers with 12 points, two rebounds and one steal. Jerica Locke had 10 points, five rebounds, one assist and five steals. Faith Traphagen had eight points, three rebounds, one assist and one steal. Jaedyn Penning had six points, two rebounds, one assist and one steal. Kennedy Hansen had four points, five rebounds and two assists. Aspen Johnson had two points, one rebound and three steals. Brooke Gengerke had two points, three rebounds and two assists. Brooklyn Hansen had one rebounds and two assists.

Groton Area made 11 of 36 field goals for 31 percent, four of 14 three-pointers for 29 percent, had 22 rebounds, nine turnovers, nine assists, 11 steals and 21 team fouls with four players having four fouls. Elk Point-Jefferson made 21 of 24 free throws for 88 percent. Elk Point-Jefferson had 18 team fouls with three players having four fouls that allowed the Tigers to make 10 of 19 free throws for 53 percent.

Groton Area won the junior varsity game, 39-25. Kennedy Hansen led the Tigers with eight points followed by Faith Traphagen with six, Brooklyn Hansen and Elizabeth Fliehs each had five points, Rylee Dunker had four points, adding two points apiece were McKenna Tietz, Kella Tracy, Taryn Traphagen, Emily Clark and Talli Wright, and Laila Roberts made a free throw.

Special thanks to Shane Clark and Jeslyn Kosel for running the GDILIVE.COM broadcast in Groton, and to Ryan Tracy who assisted Paul Kosel in Redfield. Also to Becky Erickson for bringing Jeslyn down to Redfield after the girls game. Game sponsors were as follows: Girls JV: Mr. Anonymous. Boys JV: Grandma and Grandpa. JH Boys at Redfield: Akaska Tavern & Bait Shop. The both varsity game sponsors were Bahr Spray Foam, Bary Keith at Harr Motors, Bierman Farm Service, Blocker Construction, Dacotah Bank, Groton Chamber of Commerce, Groton Ford, John Sieh Agency, Locke Electric, Milbrandt Enterprises Inc., Spanier Harvesting & Trucking, Thunder Seed with John Wheeting.

## Boys' Basketball

### Groton Area boys have clean sweep over Aberdeen Roncalli

Groton Area's boys' basketball teams won all five games Tuesday at Aberdeen Roncalli.

The varsity team had a nine-point run in the second quarter and an eight-point run in the third quarter to help get the win. Groton Area led at the quarters tops at 7-4, 22-9 and 39-17 en route to the 45-22 win.

Tate Larson had 14 points and nine rebounds. Lane Tietz had 13 points, two assists and three steals. Cole Simon had seven points, five rebounds, one assist and one steal. Jacob Zak had five points, eight rebounds, two assists and two steals. Ryder Johnson had four points, one assist and one steal. Keegan Tracy had two points and two steals. Cade Larson and Taylor Diegel each had one rebound and one assist. Logan Ringgenberg and Gage Sippel each had one rebound. Braxton Imrie had one steal.

Groton Area made 18 of 33 two-pointers for 55 percent, two of 15 three-pointers for 13 percent, had 28 rebonds, five turnovers, eight assists and 10 steals. The Cavaliers had 10 team fouls which allowed the Tigers to make three of eight free throws for 38 percent. Groton Area had 16 teams fouls which allowed the Cavaliers to make 10 of 14 free throws for 71 percent.

Roncalli was led by Jayden Munroe with eight points followed by Zane Backous and Maddox May with three points each, and adding two points apiece were Maddox Miller, Caden Shelton, Darwin Gambler and Aiden Fisher.

Roncalli made six of 34 field goals for 17 percent and had 18 turnovers.

Groton Area won the junior varsity game, 40-10, leading at the quarters tops at 14-0, 26-0 and 35-4. Ryder Johnson and Taylor Diegel each had 11 points while Keegan Tracy had six, Gage Sippel four, and Braxton Imrie and Logan Ringgenberg each had three points.

Groton Area won the C game, 28-19, leading at the quarters tops at 8-2, 16-6 and 20-13. Blake Pauli led Groton Area with six points while Logan Pearson and Gage Sippel each had five, Jayden Schwan had four, Karsten Flihs three, Logan Warrington and Carter Simon each had two points and Caden McInerney added one free throw.

Groton Area won the seventh grade, 49-18. Ryder Schelle led Groton Area with 12 points while Easten Weber had 10, TC Schuster had nine, Jace Johnson and Ethan Kroll each had seven points and Karson Zak added four points.

Groton won the eighth grade game, 40-34. Easten Weber had 18 points, Ryder Schelle had 10, Karson Zak eight and Ethan Kroll four.

The C game was broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by Darcie and Eric Moody. The junior varsity game was sponsored by Coach Kyle and The Gerlach. Varsity game sponsors were Bahr Spray Foam, Bary Keith at Harr Motors, Bierman Farm Service, Blocker Construction, Dacotah Bank, Groton Chamber of Commerce, Groton Ford, John Sieh Agency, Locke Electric, Milbrandt Enterprises Inc., Spanier Harvesting & Trucking, Thunder Seed with John Wheeting.

- Paul Kosel

## GHS Wrestling

### Four grapplers place at Northeast Conference Tournament

Four Groton Area wrestlers placed at the Northeast Conference wrestling tournament held Saturday in Webster. Christian Ehresmann placed first at 138 pounds, Korbin Kucker placed second at 160 pounds, Cole Bisbee placed second at 170 pounds and Gavin Englund placed third at 220 pounds.

Deuel won the team title with 125.5 pounds, edging out Redfield for the title with 125 pounds. Clark/Willow Lake took third with 116 points, Hamlin fourth with 100, Milbank fifth with 96.5, Sisseton sixth with 87, Groton ARea seventh with 64, Webster Area eighth with 51 and Britton-Hecla ninth with 30 points.

#### 106 Lincoln Krause (1-9)

Quarterfinal - Cooper Pommer (Clark/Willow Lake) 42-4 won by fall over Lincoln Krause (Groton Area) 1-9 (Fall 0:41)

Cons. Round 1 - Lincoln Krause (Groton Area) 1-9 received a bye () (Bye)

Cons. Semi - Kayden Tchida (Sisseton) 6-1 won by fall over Lincoln Krause (Groton Area) 1-9 (Fall 1:35)

#### 126 Kellen Antonson (4-14)

Quarterfinal - Kellen Antonson (Groton Area) 4-14 received a bye () (Bye)

Semifinal - Taylor Merkel (Clark/Willow Lake) 21-22 won by fall over Kellen Antonson (Groton Area) 4-14 (Fall 2:24)

Cons. Semi - Reed Gray (Sisseton) 2-1 won by fall over Kellen Antonson (Groton Area) 4-14 (Fall 0:55)

#### 132 Tristan McGannon (2-17)

Quarterfinal - Haeden Jorgenson (Webster Area) 32-6 won by fall over Tristan McGannon (Groton Area) 2-17 (Fall 1:47)

Cons. Round 1 - Damian Severson (Clark/Willow Lake) 4-19 won by fall over Tristan McGannon (Groton Area) 2-17 (Fall 3:46)



**138 Christian Ehresmann (30-3) placed 1st and scored 24.0 team points.**

Quarterfinal - Christian Ehresmann (Groton Area) 30-3 won by fall over Hayden Cooper (Deuel) 2-10 (Fall 0:20)

Semifinal - Christian Ehresmann (Groton Area) 30-3 won by fall over Tate Everson (Hamlin) 19-20 (Fall 3:38)

1st Place Match - Christian Ehresmann (Groton Area) 30-3 won by fall over Josh Kannegieter (Clark/Willow Lake) 25-8 (Fall 0:19)

#### 145 Nick Morris (5-16) scored 3.0 team points.

Quarterfinal - Brock Gisselbeck (Hamlin) 30-10 won by fall over Nick Morris (Groton Area) 5-16 (Fall 0:59)

Cons. Round 1 - Nick Morris (Groton Area) 5-16 won by fall over Blaise McGregor (Webster Area) 6-19 (Fall 3:39)

Cons. Semi - Collin Dean (Redfield) 21-27 won by fall over Nick Morris (Groton Area) 5-16 (Fall 0:29)

#### 152 Easten Ekern (4-16)

Champ. Round 1 - Mason Whitley (Redfield) 38-6 won by fall over Easten Ekern (Groton Area) 4-16 (Fall 1:11)

Cons. Round 1 - Easten Ekern (Groton Area) 4-16 received a bye () (Bye)

Cons. Round 2 - Nollen Sheeley (Milbank) 11-18 won by fall over Easten Ekern (Groton Area) 4-16 (Fall 2:09)

**160 Korbin Kucker (9-3) placed 2nd and scored 16.0 team points.**

Quarterfinal - Korbin Kucker (Groton Area) 9-3 received a bye () (Bye)

Semifinal - Korbin Kucker (Groton Area) 9-3 won by fall over Reese Rabe (Milbank) 8-16 (Fall 3:30)

1st Place Match - Korbin Whiteley (Deuel) 27-11 won by fall over Korbin Kucker (Groton Area) 9-3 (Fall 5:05)

**170 Cole Bisbee (19-13) placed 2nd and scored 14.0 team points.**

Semifinal - Cole Bisbee (Groton Area) 19-13 won by fall over Conner Glines (Britton/Hecla) 11-15 (Fall 3:32)

1st Place Match - Barrett Schneck (Milbank) 26-0 won by tech fall over Cole Bisbee (Groton Area) 19-13 (TF-1.5 4:43 (17-2))

**220 Gavin Englund (6-16) placed 3rd and scored 7.0 team points.**

Semifinal - Raymond Klein (Deuel) 11-11 won by fall over Gavin Englund (Groton Area) 6-16 (Fall 5:28)

3rd Place Match - Gavin Englund (Groton Area) 6-16 received a bye

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# Gear Heads made it to quarterfinals; G-Force placed sixth at SD School of Mines VRC Robot Rumble

Groton Robotics sent two teams down to Rapid City on Saturday, February 11th to compete in the SD School of Mines VRC Robot Rumble: Gear Heads 9050B- Seniors Ethan Clark & Jack Dinger, G-Force 9050A- 6th grade, Grant Cleveland & Connor Kroll. They competed against 25 teams from 7 towns: Omaha, NE(2), Mitchell, SD(4), Harrisburg, SD(4), Groton, SD(2), Windsor, CO(6), Spearfish, SD(2), Box Elder, SD(5).

The competition started off with 38 qualifying matches, each team competing 7 times. At the end of 38 qualifying matches Gear Heads 9050B was ranked 3rd and G-Force 9050A 6th.

Gear Head Seniors-Ethan and Jack, worked on the robot's intake by adding flex wheels (see picture) to the bottom of their giving 9050B the ability to pick up disks easier. The autonomous was reprogrammed telling the robot to turn a roller instead of pushing a disk as rollers have more points. The vision sensor, intended to sense the goal and guide the disk to the basket when shot out by the robot, is still a work in progress. 9050B was able to aim and score points a couple times by shooting disks into the basket (5 points each), but mostly worked on owning rollers by turning to their alliance color(10 points each 'owned' roller). They lost in the quarterfinals with a very close score of 48-49! Great job Ethan and Jack!

G-Force 6th graders-Connor and Grant added two end game expansion arms (see picture) to their robot and successfully launched them at the end of a match scoring points for each tile they touched! They also changed a motor on 9050A's roller giving it more power to turn and slowed down the autonomous for more control during the 15-second autonomous period at the beginning of every match. G-Force also ended their day in the quarterfinals with a score of 35-88. An amazing feat as a 6th grade team to be in 6th place out of 25 teams! Keep up the good work Connor and Grant!

Tournament champions were from Harrisburg and Mitchell.

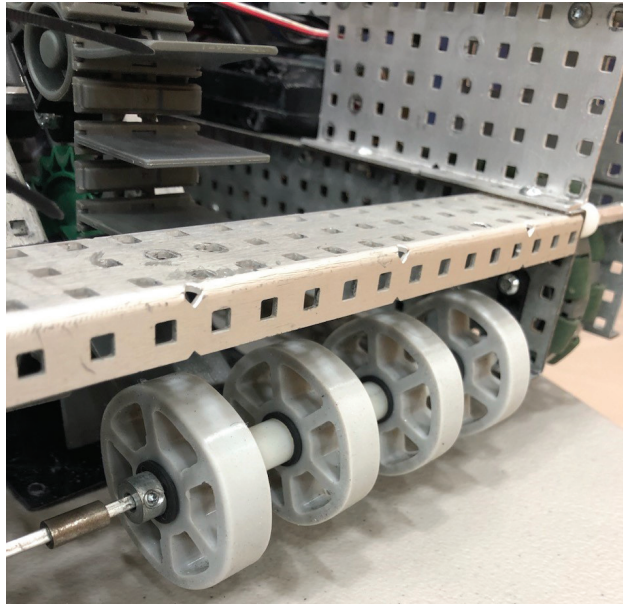
Congratulations to all the robotist who participated!

Groton Robotics will be headed back out to Rapid City on

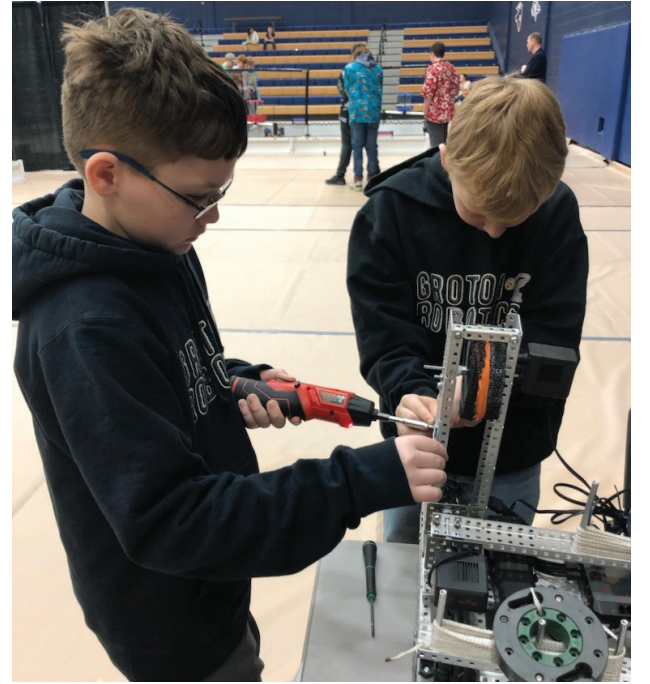
Saturday, March 4th for the South Dakota State Vex Tournament at Douglas High School in Box Elder, SD.

For more information check out the vex VRC robotics website, download the VEX via app and follow Groton Tiger Robotics on Facebook.

Thanks to all who support Groton Robotics!  
Submitted by Groton Robotics



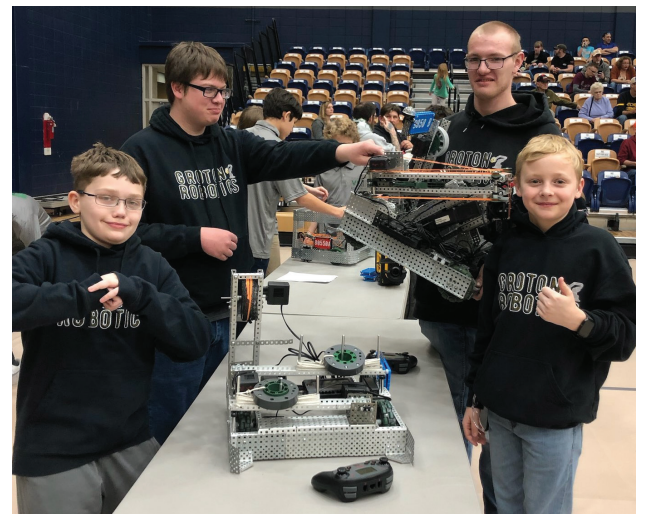
**Soft 'intake' wheels on 9050B, Jack and Ethans robot. Makes it easier to roll a disk up and shoot it out.** (Courtesy Photo)



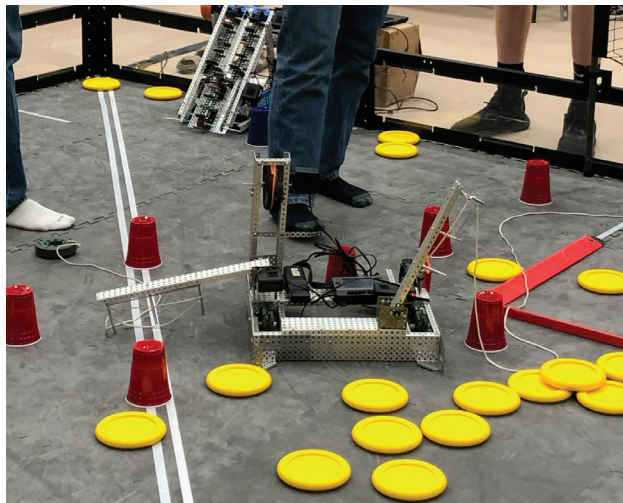
**Grant Cleveland and Connor Kroll making some final adjustments to their robot.** (Courtesy Photo)



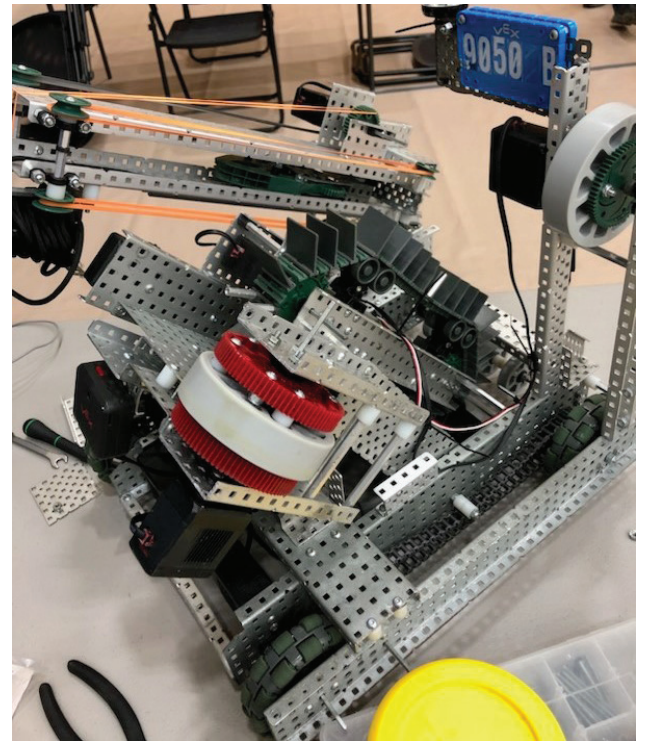
**Gear Heads Jack Dinger and Ethan Clark at the queuing table before a match.** (Courtesy Photo)



**Groton teams hanging out at the queuing table before a match.** (Courtesy Photo)



**9050A (Connor and Grant's) Successful expansion arms. Each cup place equals a point for that match.** (Courtesy Photo)



**9050B resting between matches.** (Courtesy Photo)



**G-Force and Gear Heads waiting for a match to start.** (Courtesy Photo)



**G-Force Connor Kroll and Grant Cleveland.** (Courtesy Photo)



**Jackson Dinger and Ethan Clark between matches.** (Courtesy Photo)



## Free popcorn nets \$507 to the concession stand

Representatives from Dacotah Bank, Groton, presented a check for \$507 to the Groton Area PAC for popcorn that was given away at the Northwestern double header. The PAC runs the concessions stand the Dacotah Bank gave away 507 bags of popcorn. Pictured left to right are Heidi Locke, Jonna Waage, Kiertsten Sombke (MS/HS principal), Joni Groeblichhoff (Groton PAC), BJ Wiest and Katelyn Nehlich. (Courtesy Photo)



## Groton Prairie Mixed Bowling

**February 8 Team Standings:** Shihtzus – 4, Chipmunks – 3, Foxes – 3, Jackelopes – 1, Cheetahs – 1, Coyotes – 0

**Men's High Games:** Tony Waage – 210, Tony Madsen – 195, Roger Spanier – 192

**Women's High Games:** Vicki Walter – 176, Lori Giedt – 172, Karen Spanier & Alexa Schuring – 170

**Men's High Series:** Tony Waage – 586, Brad Waage – 539, Roger Spanier – 488

**Women's High Series:** Alexa Schuring – 458, Vicki Walter – 451, Darci Spanier – 450

**Fun Game** – 2 or more strikes in the same frame – Shihtzus with 10!

## New homeowners must file by March 15 to get owner occupied property tax reduction

PIERRE, S.D. -- NEW homeowners have until March 15 to apply for owner-occupied classification on their property, which provides property tax relief through a reduced school general fund levy.

Any South Dakotan who owned and occupied a home before November 1, 2022, is eligible at this time. An individual may only have one owner-occupied classification in the state.

Homeowners who have previously received this classification and still own and occupy the same home will continue to receive the property tax reduction without re-applying.

Taxpayers can check their county notices to verify whether they are already classified as owner-occupied. By looking at their most recent tax bill or assessment notice, a homeowner should see a denotation of an 'OO' or some variation of an abbreviation of the words 'owner-occupied'. The local county director of equalization's office can also look up the property and let the individual know if they have the classification.

Homeowners must apply for this classification through the local county director of equalization that the property is located in. The form can be found online at <https://sddor.seamlessdocs.com/f/3001> and can be submitted electronically to the county through the Department of Revenue website.

If applicants have questions about the owner-occupied program, they are encouraged to contact their local county director of equalization.



## February GHS Students of the Month

**From left back:** Carly Guthmiller (11th), Chesney Weber (7th), Carly Gilbert (9th), Kennedy Hansen (10th)

**From left front:** Ashtyn Bahr (12th), Gavin Kroll (8th), Abby Fjeldheim (6th)

(Courtesy Photo)

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.

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Dear EarthTalk: Did the Tiger King documentary of 2020 have any impact on the business of illegal wildlife trafficking?

-- Susan W., Raleigh, NC

Netflix's Tiger King special was as informative as it was sensational, showcasing not only the wild nature of its main star, the Tiger King himself, Joe Exotic (Joseph Maldonado-Passage), but also the harm caused to big cats trapped within the exotic animal industry. On more than one occasion, the outlandish documentary highlights how terribly these animals were treated, all in the name of fame and fortune.

Thankfully, the special brought more to the table than just views, notoriety and cash. Since Tiger King first aired on March 20, 2020, a number of justices have been served.

First and foremost, Joe Exotic's GW Zoo has been shut down, he has been charged and convicted on 17 counts of animal abuse, including the killing of five healthy tigers (as

well as attempted murder for hire). As a result of his crimes, he will be serving 22 years in prison. Not only that, all the tigers that were kept in his captivity were eventually removed, and are now safely kept in a sanctuary in Colorado.

Secondly, President Joe Biden has gotten involved in the fight for big cats, a fight that was arguably championed by none other than Carol Baskin (an early supporter of the bill), the infamous star of the Tiger King special, and a rival of Joe Exotic. On December 20 of last year, Biden signed into law HR.263, otherwise known as the "Big Cat Public Safety Act." According to the new law, private citizens may no longer breed, purchase or transport big cats; if they already own any, they must have them registered. The bill also restricts public contact with lions, tigers, cougars, leopards, snow leopards and jaguars, effectively ending the private ownership and exploitation of big cats in the US.

Thirdly, as much as the show focused on Joe Exotic, there was another character, Doc Antle, who was arguably guilty of many similar exploitations of big cats. In fact, during June of 2022, Antle, among others, was charged with both wildlife trafficking and money laundering, and will be facing a maximum of five years in prison for the wildlife charges, and 20 years for the money laundering charges.

Another, less obvious positive consequence of the Tiger King special is that the illegal wildlife industry is now under increased public scrutiny. The special itself was viewed by some 64 million households after a month and a half,



Since Tiger King first aired in March of 2020, a number of animal rights and wildlife trafficking justices have been served. Credit: Ellie Burgin, pexels.com.

drawing 5.3 billion minutes of view-time within the first week of its release. With these kinds of numbers, the exploitation of wild animals will be taken more seriously in the future.

If you're looking to help big cats yourself, there are a number of conservation initiatives that focus on rehabilitating big-cat locales. For example, Save the Tiger Fund and Panthera are collaborating to increase tiger populations in specific locations by 50 percent over a 10-year period. They are looking for donations from those who are interested in helping out.

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).

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## "Hidden in Plain Sight"

If I asked you to name a chronic disease, you would probably think of conditions like high blood pressure, diabetes, cancer, or dementia. The odds are, one of

the most common chronic diseases would never cross your mind.

World wide, this condition affects over 3 billion people, and causes significant physical and emotional suffering. Annually it costs the American economy upwards of 45 billion dollars in productivity. Our children miss nearly 35 million hours of school. Our emergency rooms field nearly 2 million visits.

So what is it?

Dental disease.

Those of us whose experiences with dental disease have been limited to the occasional cavity, or perhaps wearing braces for a year or two, may be tempted to dismiss it as an inconvenience or annoyance, not a threat. No doubt this impression is reinforced by the artificial distinction the insurance industry draws between our teeth and our bodies.

However, an unhealthy mouth can lead to what we all understand to be a serious medical illness: pneumonia, bloodstream infections, and malnutrition, to name a few. It is linked to heart disease and preterm birth. It can worsen other underlying diseases, such as diabetes. And many conditions, or their treatments, can in turn worsen oral health.

In addition to the physical suffering, dental disease can cause significant social consequences. How often do we say, without even thinking, "They have a nice smile?" Consciously or not, we assess people by their teeth. Those with visible dental disease are acutely aware of this judgement. I almost never saw my wonderful mother in law with a full smile on her face, no matter how happy she was. She was just too aware of her discolored and crooked front teeth. The consequences are more severe for many others: lost job or educational opportunities, lost social standing, relationships that don't move forward. Dental diseases can affect not just the appearance but the function of the mouth, impacting speech and communication, and even the fundamental daily activity of eating.

Preventing dental disease begins very early in life, and continues indefinitely. Most people know brushing, flossing, and seeing a dentist regularly are important. They may know that sugar and tobacco are bad for their teeth, and athletes probably know they should wear mouth guards. Many people do not know that cavities are contagious: the bacteria that contributes is often spread from person to person, especially parent to child. They may not know that their sports drink or diet soda is acidic enough to damage the enamel protecting their teeth.

A healthy mouth is fundamental to health. When was your last trip to the dentist?

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