



Forkfly

Live Local. Spend Less.  
Start getting great local deals today!

www.forkfly.com

# PLAIN TALK

Serving our readers since 1884.

Volume 128, Issue 14

USPS 657-720



Friday,  
April 5,  
2013

75¢



© 2013 YANKTON MEDIA, INC., all rights reserved

www.plaintalk.net

**INSIDE:**

- VFD utilizes new technology, **Page 03**
- McNeese State ends USD's run, **Page 05**



## Fired up

USD junior Michael Wilbur and other members of the Coyote Pep Band helped fire up the DakotaDome crowd as the USD women faced McNeese State in semifinal action of the Women's Basketball Invitational (WBI) on March 28. Read more about the game on page 05

(Photo by David Lias)

### Vermillion City Council approves texting ban

By Travis Gulbrandson

travis.gulbrandson@plaintalk.net

The Vermillion City Council has approved an ordinance that prohibits texting while driving.

The action was taken at the council's regular meeting Monday night.

The ordinance as adopted said that drivers may not "operate or be in actual physical control of a motor vehicle while using a handheld wireless communication device to compose, read or send an electronic message when the vehicle is in motion or where the motor vehicle constitutes a part of the flow of traffic or an obstruction and hazard to traffic."

City Attorney Jim McCulloch made clear that the ordinance does not include the use of GPS or navigation systems, or voice and other data transmitted through regular phone calls.

Two-way and CB radios, as well as walkie-talkies, are not included, either.

The ordinance does include two exceptions: The first is "the reasonable belief that a person's life or safety is in immediate danger," while the

second is for people in an emergency vehicle while performing official duties.

The council also adopted a \$54 fee for those who violate the ordinance.

City Manager John Prescott added that violators can expect to pay an additional \$60 in court costs, as well.

The city council had its first reading of the ordinance last month, as well as a meeting during which the members discussed the recent failure of a statewide texting ban to pass during the recent legislative session.

At that special meeting, council member Kelsey Collier-Wise had said that while it's a good thing there are representatives from each county in the state serving in the legislature, this could also have led to the texting bills' failures to pass on a state level.

"Part of the problem is ... there are a lot of places that have very different traffic issues than the 10 largest cities, and obviously where you're seeing this happening is where the populations are," she said. "Maybe out in the middle of

■ **BAN**, Page 10

### Despite setbacks, advocates press on

By Travis Gulbrandson

travis.gulbrandson@plaintalk.net

It was not the most successful year for advocates of youth driving safety at the 2013 South Dakota legislative session.

Of the four bills drafted in part by South Dakota Voices for Children – a group focused on program and policy advocacy – only one of them was signed into law by the governor.

That has to change, said Jennifer Kline, Voices for Children's executive director.

"In the last 10-plus years, South Dakota has either led the nation or been close to leading the nation in the number of accidental teen deaths, and those accidental teen deaths are mostly due to car crashes," she said.

Kline's comments were made during a forum held at USD's Muenster University Center on Thursday, March 28.

More than a year ago, South Dakota Voices for Children was asked to put together a taskforce on safe teen driving, to do research and find a reason for those numbers, a process which began last year and involved members of the state highway patrol, insurance companies, legislators and driver education teachers.

"That committee came to the conclusion that there were two main reasons, Kline said. "One was that there was not enough education of our young drivers, and the second one was distractions."

The four bills each addressed these issues in some way, she said.

SB106, the lone bill to pass, prohibits beginning drivers from using wireless communication devices while operating



Jennifer Kline, executive director of Voices for Children, discusses several bills regarding child safety that were killed at the recent state legislative session.

(Photo by Travis Gulbrandson)

motor vehicles on public highways.

Kline said the other three bills also could have prevented further accidents and possibly deaths.

SB105 would have revised provisions regarding instruction permits and restricted minor's permits to drive.

"Right now, a 14- or 15-year-old can ride with an adult or their parents for three

months, and then essentially get their drivers license and be able to drive by themselves," Kline said. "What the taskforce recognized was, sometimes that's June, July and August or July, August and September, and in South Dakota, we know the roads are better (at that time)."

■ **SAFETY**, Page 10



Forkfly

Live Local. Spend Less.  
Start getting great local deals today!

www.forkfly.com

