

Heartland Humane Society plans meet & greets

Heartland Humane Society welcomes the community two chances in December to meet the dogs up for adoption.

Join HHS on Saturday, Dec. 10 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Alcoa 4-H Center and Arena located at 902 Whiting Drive in Yankton. Animals will be available for adoption and the dogs and puppies from foster care will be available to meet as well.

"This will be the larger Meet & Greet for the month," said Kerry Schmidt, executive director at Heartland Humane Society. "We are at full capacity right now with cats and

dogs and many of our animals will be at the ice arena."

In addition, the shelter will be open from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. to view or adopt cats.

The second chance to view dogs will be Wednesday, Dec. 14 from 6 to 7:30 p.m. near the Santa Pictures station at the Yankton Mall.

"Families will be able to do animal photo's with Santa that night from 6 to 8 p.m., and we'll be there showcasing a few of our animals," Schmidt said. "Proceeds from the pictures that night will benefit HHS."

For more information on either event,

contact Heartland Humane Society 605-664-4244 or email hhs@midconetwork.com. You can check all the animals up for adoption at www.heartlandhumanesociety.net

Heartland Humane Society is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that serves Yankton and Clay Counties in South Dakota and Cedar County in Nebraska and surrounding communities, protecting and enhancing the lives of companion animals by promoting healthy relationships between pets and people. Visit Heartland Humane Society online at www.heartlandhumanesociety.net.

USD FY11 grants, contracts show growth

The University of South Dakota recently released its Grants and Contracts Report for fiscal year 2011, and reported growth despite poor economic conditions and tightening budgets. It proved to be a productive year, with a record amount of awarded grants totaling \$38.15 million – a three-fold increase since fiscal year 2000.

The University of South Dakota is made up of eight colleges and schools. Each of these units helped contribute to the overall growth. Many departments have maintained or increased their successful grantsmanship, while others have the opportunity for growth in sponsored activities.

A downturn in the economy and increasing financial pressures has led to competitive budget changes for educational institutions across the state. This has also led to an increasing diversity in the sponsor agencies. While federal grant dollars still accounted for the majority of USD's external funding, other funding aspects, such as nonprofit sources, saw growth as well.

"The fact that we reached a record amount in sponsored funding in 2011 is a testament to the dedicated researchers at USD," said Laura Jenki, Ph.D., Vice President for Research at USD. "Our challenge is to develop new research partnerships, to continue moving onward with dwindling federal support."

The complete Grants and Awards Report is available for viewing online at: www.usd.edu/research/research-and-sponsored-programs/upload/FY2011-Grants-Contracts-Public.pdf.

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COACH

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large fourth-quarter leads get wasted. In both games, USD had a chance to clinch a share of the Great West Conference.

Yet, Saylor maintained that his decision was not "contingent on one or two games."

"Ed has done a good job in terms of winning games and putting us in the position we're in," he said. "Right now, it's a combination of different leadership and different discipline."

"We need to look at meeting more rigorous academic standards, and we want to win

conference championships."

Next season, USD will join the Missouri Valley Football Conference – a league that will ensure the Coyotes resume annual games with South Dakota State and North Dakota State.

While the Coyotes will be playoff eligible next fall, Saylor said he "realizes how tough this is for the seniors" who played their careers in the D-I transition.

"It's tough to part with Ed, he's been a great ambassador," Saylor said. "I'd like to commend all the athletes, especially the seniors who came to school here with no hope for a playoff bid."

"The memories they've made will stick with them, and I'm forever indebted to them."

News of Meierkorf's firing

haven't found it yet. That's part of the human condition."

Pittenger outlined his view in an article that ran in the local paper.

Soon, he was visited by the boy's mother.

"(The article) helped name some of the feelings that she had, because when she talked to her pastor, he told her, 'It's God's will. You just have to get over it.' And I don't know how a pastor could say that to a parishioner," Pittenger said.

As a thank-you for what he wrote, the boy's mother gave a stained-glass Nativity scene that was purchased with memorial money to Pittenger's church.

She also gave Pittenger a stained-glass scene depicting St. Francis of Assisi. It hangs in the window of his office today.

Pittenger said it is one of the roles of all churches to give comfort to their members all year-round – not just during the holiday season.

"I think that we should have more of a grace-filled message instead of beating people up when they feel less than whole, and lost," he said.

– Look in future issues of the Vermillion Plain Talk to find stories where local church leaders give their views on the holiday season.

TIME

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"I wrote an article in the paper about the will of God, because people throw that around way too easy, I think. They say, 'Well, it's God's will, you've just got to accept it and move on,'" Pittenger said. "I don't think that was God's will. I think we live in a world where human beings make mistakes. ..."

"I think God is the first to cry when something like that happens," he said.

Pittenger said there is the circumstantial will of God, and the natural will of God.

"The natural will of God is, if you fall off a 10-story building and land on concrete, chances are you're going to die, and that's just the natural law," he said. "Circumstantial will is that you walked in front of that truck, or you smoked cigarettes and you got cancer."

"But the ultimate will of God is that we all live long and healthy lives. I think that's God's ultimate will for our lives," he said. "Just because we don't have the cure for cancer or heart disease doesn't mean there isn't one out there. We just

MUC

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learning environment for our students," Parker said. We're excited for the project to get underway."

Planning for the expansion began in the fall of 2010, when the university was looking into making renovations to the North Complex Commons, an on-campus dining facility.

Making those renovations would have cost "relatively the same" as an expansion of the MUC, Parker said.

"That's when we began to look at the feasibility of, should we truly expand, as opposed to renovating an existing dining facility," he said. "When we looked at all of the different research that we did within our students, faculty, staff and community members, the Muenster University Center was a much better option than renovating the Commons."

During his state of the university address, Abbott said the MUC had been designed with an eye toward eventual expansion.

USD's Planning and Construction office currently is working with RSArchitects of

Sioux Falls to finalize plans for the project.

"(The architects) will take data from as many constituents as they possibly can, and create a design for us," Parker said.

The expansion will take place south of where the MUC now stands.

"There's that link that goes between the MUC and the library. It'll be on both sides of that, south of the existing structure," Parker said.

The expansion will not extend all the way to I.D. Weeks Library, he added.

The MUC opened in February 2009.

O-C

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41-38 upset of Big Ten Conference member Minnesota in 2010.

Still, Beschornor said he is well aware of the challenges ahead. NCAA signing day is two months away, Feb. 1, 2012, and the Coyote coaching staff will have to not only reassure committed recruits but will have to convince potential recruits that the program is headed in the right direction.

"Whoever ends up getting the job, you'll feel like you're behind in recruiting no matter what," Beschornor said. "The assistants have done a good job identifying guys we think belong here and can help us win. Kids will be told a bunch of different things about USD, but the bottom line is we're 40-5 at home."

"That's got a lot to do with the coaches here on staff and the ones who have been here before."

Following the Nov. 22 decision by athletic director David Saylor to not renew Meierkorf's contract, the remainder of the USD coaching staff was retained to guide the program through the recruiting process.

The news of Meierkorf's firing was a bit surprising to those on staff, Beschornor said.

"From the beginning, when Ed told me, I was a little bit in shock," he said. "It was one of those things where you felt like one or two more wins and it's darn near impossible to make changes, especially knowing where we're at and where we came from."

When Beschornor got to USD in the fall of 2001, the Coyotes were coming off an 8-3 season under former coach John Austin. Over the next three years, the program had a record of 10-22 before Meierkorf was hired after the 2003 season.

With Beschornor as the starting quarterback, USD posted back-to-back 9-2 records in 2004

and 2005, and clinched a share of the North Central Conference title in 2005.

"When I got to school here, USD football was not that relevant; hadn't had much success at all," Beschornor said. "So, to get that turned around in the next 10 years and to be ranked in the top 25 for 10 straight weeks (this season), I have a lot of pride in that."

That feeling is shared by those players who have eligibility remaining with the Coyotes, Beschornor said.

"Our guys, from the day we recruited them and ever since, are resilient young men; they fight through a lot of stuff," he said. "We've had to go through a lot of different things here. We've played every different kind of team in every different atmosphere, and had some success."

Beschornor didn't shy away from USD's late-season struggles, saying that will be a point of improvement for those players coming back. The Coyotes (6-5) had two chances to win a share of the Great West championship, but lost both road games to close the season – blowing fourth-quarter leads at Cal Poly and North Dakota.

"The guys will look to the off-season as a chance to get better, that's the number one thing," he said. "They'll ask themselves, 'What do I need to do to help this football team to get to the point of true success in every way?'"

Though Saylor wasn't in his office Friday, the second-year athletic director made clear earlier this week that a national search for a head coach will begin immediately.

In the meantime, Beschornor was adamant in his interest for the job.

"I'd like to continue that success we've had," he said. "It's something I feel I've helped start in a small way; you have to have that sense of pride. Everyone's got that. With me personally, I feel like I'd be a great fit, but that's obviously very biased on my part."

are your taxes, so get involved," she said at the meeting. "Figure out what your priorities are, what you're willing to pay for, what you're not willing to pay for, and what you want to spend it on. And then let your legislators know."

South Dakotans Talking has been taken throughout the state since Oct. 14, and will continue to gather information until Dec. 15.

The program was brought to Vermillion through the Extension Service, the Bush Foundation and the Northwest Area Foundation, with local support from the Vermillion Area Chamber & Development Company's Legislative Affairs Committee and the W.O. Farber Center's Civic Leadership Program.

TALK

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Mines, and Dakota State to either USD or SDSU."

Wymar's group also suggested that incoming higher ed students could reduce their personal expenses by taking college-level courses while still in high school, an option that is available in Vermillion.

Joy Smolnisky, director of the South Dakota Budget and Policy Project, stated at the meeting that she hoped the event would encourage people to take more of an active role in public policy.

"Our encouragement to you is, this is your government, (these are) your services, they

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