

State Prison Inmate Dies

SIoux FALLS – A state prison inmate has died. Inmate Frederick Sealey passed away Monday at a Sioux Falls hospital following an extended illness. Sealey, age 70, was serving a 35-year sentence with 10 years suspended following a 2001 conviction for criminal pedophilia out of Clay County. Sealey was also serving a consecutive 15-year sentence with all of the time suspended for a conviction of sexual contact with a child under the age of 16 out of Clay County. An autopsy is being conducted.

Youth Art Contest Planned

The South Dakota Department of Transportation is hosting a youth art contest to celebrate aviation and space exploration as part of the 2016 International Aviation Art Contest. Over 800 letters to schools are being sent to South Dakota schools throughout the state seeking contest entries. Aviation has a rich history in South Dakota dating back to the early 1900s when Charles Lindberg flew into Pierre heralding the possibilities of flight in the state.

The theme of this year's art contest celebrates the "Air Sports In Harmony With Nature." The beauty of the earth is never clearer than when seen from the air. Every day, thousands of people flying in airliners look at the earth with a new perspective from above. Another group of boys, girls, men and women involved in air sports are fortunate to have a special view of the grandeur below them as they soar in gliders or float through the air in balloons. Others feel the rush of air as they parachute down to a beautiful field or cross the sky in an ultralight or helicopter.

The South Dakota Pilots Association is a co-sponsor for the contest and is encouraging eligible youth to show off their imagination and art skills by making an entry into the contest. Entries will be grouped into three age categories: Junior (age 6-9), Intermediate (ages 10-14), and Senior (ages 14-17).

Prizes will be awarded to the winners of each age category and the top three entries will be displayed at the South Dakota Air and Space Museum located adjacent to Ellsworth Air Force Base.

All applications must be submitted to the SD Department of Transportation by January 22, 2016. Specific information for submitting artwork can be provided by going to the SDPA web site (www.sdplpilots.org) or by contacting Jennifer Boehm (605-773-4430 or jennifer.boehm@state.sd.us), South Dakota DOT Office of Air, Rail & Transit. Additional information can also be provided by contacting Steve Hamilton, Executive Director, SDPA (605-665-8448 or email skyhawk@iw.net).

Elk's Hoop Shoot This Saturday

YANKTON – Yankton Elks Lodge #994 would like to announce that it is once again hosting the Elk's Hoop Shoot this year. A change has been made in the format of the competition. Most of area schools, including the schools here in Yankton, will not be hosting a school qualifying round. Instead Yankton students and area students wanting to participate in the Hoop Shoot competition can come directly to the local Lodge competition, which will be held on, Saturday, December 19th at the Summit Activities Center, 1801 Summit St, Yankton, SD 57078. Doors will open at 9 a.m. for registration, and registration will be closed at 9:30 a.m. The competition will begin at 10 a.m. There will be two divisions – Boys & Girls – And three age brackets in each division for a total of six groups.

Please Note:
 • If the contestant will be age 7 on April 1, 2016, they are too young to participate.
 • If the contestant will be age 14 on April 1, 2016, they are too old to participate.

The 8 & 9 year old age groups will shoot from 4 feet in front of the free throw line.

The contestants that make the most free throws in each group will advance to the next round of competition, which is the State Level, with the opportunity to then advance to the Regional Level, and finally the National Level. The South Dakota Elks will pay for the expenses of the champions to advance to the Regional and National levels of the competition. The next levels are scheduled as follows.

If you have questions, please contact the local Hoop Shoot director, Steven Pietila, at 605-760-4916. For more information and rules, go to <http://www.elks.org/hoopshoot>

VCDC Welcomes New Member Services Manager

BY SARAH WETZEL
 For the Plain Talk



LINDSEY PETERSON

Lindsey Peterson has recently taken up the post of Member Services Manager for the Vermillion Chamber and Development Company.

Peterson has lived in Vermillion since April of last year when her husband was hired on as a Men's assistant basketball coach at the university.

Peterson said they moved from North Dakota where she had worked as a college volleyball coach and then supervisor of the rec center, helping them build a \$73 million facility.

"So I've always worked with and been involved with the community somehow whether it be as a supervisor of the rec center or coaching volleyball and getting sponsorships and advertising with those businesses," she said. "So then once we moved here I actually got a job at the medical school at the university. I loved working with the students. It reminded me of what I did while I was coaching but it wasn't who I was to sit behind a desk. I had to be out working in the community like I had been. When this job opened up it seemed exactly what I was looking for."

Peterson has wasted no time at VCDC getting her feet wet.

"Right off the bat for the first month and a half I've been trying to get a game plan together of reaching out to all the businesses whether it be initially telephone call and hopefully

following up with a meeting in person," she said. "The biggest thing I see will be spending my time figuring out what I can do to help the businesses in Vermillion whether it be to promote whatever events they have going on, promoting their business, and

just getting everybody to help each other out. I think that's going to be the biggest thing, getting the community of Vermillion together and everybody supporting everybody."

According to Peterson, her main focus is managing her time so the businesses receive the attention they deserve.

"For now that seems to be my biggest challenge, making sure that I give everybody a chance to tell me what their needs and maybe what some wants are that they have and just making sure I have all that time for everybody," she said.

So far the community has made a great impression on Peterson and her family.

"I love Vermillion," she said. "It reminds me of where my husband and I were at before in North Dakota before the oil came and sort of took it over. So I enjoy Vermillion. It's been a great

place to raise our family. My daughter is now in the preschool system. The schooling has been great and everybody's been very welcoming so I couldn't have anything better to say about Vermillion. I don't worry about her being outside and playing and that's always nice to be in a community like that."

Peterson said she hopes community members and businesses feel free to keep in close contact with her and the VCDC in general.

"I think that it's extremely important and it's something that's going to help our community continue to grow and strive to be the best that it can be," she said. "If there's something we can help do or make better than we need to hear that from the community. We're not going to catch everything, we're going to miss some things but we want to make sure that if we do there's somebody letting us know that information. Businesses in this community can help be ambassadors for us and reach out to all those other businesses that aren't members right now. I think it's really important they stay in contact with us and we'll do the best we can to keep in contact with them as well."

The VCDC can be contacted at their office at 1012 Princeton St. in Vermillion or by phone at 605-624-5571.

More information can also be found at vermillionchamber.com.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

A Look Forward Toward Education Funding

BY SENATOR ARTHUR RUSCH,
 District 17

The 2016 session of the South Dakota Legislature will be starting on January 12, 2016, in less than a month, but there are numerous legislative events and activities that are already taking place. In the past month I have met with at least a dozen different groups who have ideas that they would like to see enacted by the legislature.

The most significant event which has taken place so far has been the Governor's budget address in which he told us of what he thinks next year will bring as far as revenue and how he would like to see the legislature spend that money. Of course there is a long process of budget hearings and many decisions to be made by the appropriations

committee and both houses of the legislature before we decide to what extent we want to go along with the governor's recommendations.

The Governor told the legislature that the South Dakota economy is much better than it was in 2011 when he became governor and last year the state had a 21.5 million dollar surplus which was caused by a combination of revenue which exceeded estimates and budgeted money which was not spent. He predicted that the revenue which the state receives next year will be higher, but not by a large amount. In estimating next year's revenue the state is assuming low inflation and a growth in sales and use taxes depending upon the farm economy this fall.

In the proposed budget are a number of items which

will impact this part of the state. They include: 1) the use of one time money (money from the reserves) to pay off higher education bonds so that the money which would have been used to pay that indebtedness could be used to prevent tuition increases for next year, 2) expand Medicaid if the federal government will begin reimbursing the state for the medical expenses of Native Americans (which the Federal Government agreed to do in the treaties they made

with Native Americans), 3) a 2.7% cost of living increase for state employees, and 4) an increase in funding for the South Dakota Opportunity Scholarships. As far as the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon task Force on additional funding for K-12 education, the Governor indicated that his office is still working on some proposals that would be addressed at the State of the State speech in January.

Graduation

From Page 1

"The University has given you all the tools you need for success. You have the theory to practice and all of those tools will work well for you. One of the things the University also gave you was this community. This incredible family that are your colleagues, your friends, your associates, that is what will change the world."

Kersten Johnson, Executive Director of the Alumni Association welcomed the graduates into the Alumni family.

"On behalf of the University of South Dakota Alumni Association I congratulate you and welcome you into our family of more than 65,000 alumni living around the world," she said. "We share in your excitement today, beginning your journey knowing with confidence that you have received the greatest education here at USD among the finest in the nation. And you are among tomorrow's leaders, healers, innovators and heroes. As you prepare to move onward remember wherever you go the University is going with you. Carry her banner with pride."

Not only the students' achievements were recognized during the ceremony. "The academic success of our students is a direct result of our extraordinary faculty who go above and beyond the call of duty to ensure that our students thrive in the classroom, the courtroom and the laboratory," said University President James W. Abbott. "Our faculty's commitment to making USD a center for competitive research and creative activity helped generate almost \$20 million in grants and contracts this past year. Their service to our state and nation is outstanding."

Parents, relatives and friends of the graduates were also recognized by President Abbott for the support, encouragement and inspiration given to those receiving their degrees.

The USD Chamber singers graced the ceremony with several musical numbers including the Alma Mater song to conclude the ceremony.

"Art, like music theatre and dance, are essential nutrients that help people sustain healthy lives," said Dr. Larry Schou, Dean of the college of Fine Arts. "They are tools that help us grasp the diversity of the world and its history and explore the emotional capacities with which we navigate the world. They illuminate, they humble and they inspire. They teach us to use our eyes and to know ourselves by knowing others."

More common sentiments were expressed by Harvey Jewett of the SD Board of Regents.

"It's a thrill to see people who came here for our five years ago unsure of

themselves, nervous and probably the first time away from home on an extended basis, and see them four or five years later self-assured and ready to go out and lead their chosen professions in the state, county, city," he said. "We hope you are involved in the state and county and city. There's a

need for the kind of people with the education you've been privileged to have here."

A printable PDF of graduates can be found online at www.usd.edu/news/2015/usd-holds-40th-winter-commencement.

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