

Retirement is in Upward's future

By David Lias
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Long-time educator and Vermillion School District administrator Mark Upward has informed the Vermillion School District that he will be resigning effective at the end of this school year.

"Mr. Upward plans to retire at the end of this contract year, and he is asking for the final salary

payment in June to take advantage of the South Dakota Retirement System," Superintendent Mark Froke said.

The school board unanimously approved Upward's resignation at the end of the school year, and his request to participate in the early retirement program for administrators as outlined in Vermillion School District policy.

Library recognized as exemplary

Eleven South Dakota public libraries were accredited by the South Dakota State Library in 2013, under a tiered accreditation system. The libraries were honored at a recent ceremony before lawmakers, colleagues and patrons at Rawlins Municipal Library in Pierre.

Among the accredited libraries is the Edith B. Siegrist Vermillion Public Library, which received an Exemplary recognition.

Public libraries are accredited at one of three levels: Essential, Enhanced or Exemplary. Accreditation at the

Essential level means a library satisfactorily provides the basic services required by state law and federal guidelines. Subsequent levels of accreditation build on previous levels. Exemplary status recognizes the highest level of service. Accreditation is valid for three years.

Libraries are evaluated in the following areas, as outlined in South Dakota Public Library standards: governance, administration, access, collections and resources, funding, staffing, technology and public relations.

Clay-Union Foundation seeks youth members

The Clay-Union Foundation is seeking a 5- to 10-year-old boy who would like to match with an adult male mentor in Vermillion. A 12-year-old girl and a 14-year-old boy are seeking matches in Elk Point.

The program is seeking new matches throughout

Clay and Union counties, and would like to recruit board members from both counties.

Contact John Gille at (605) 421-5050 or e-mail jgillerrsd60@yahoo.com for more information on mentoring, being a board member or a volunteer.

Report shows Vermillion Fire Department's 'forward momentum'

By Travis Gulbrandson
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Vermillion Emergency Services has released its Fire/EMS Annual Report for 2013, and Fire Chief Shannon Draper said it shows some positive trends.

"We've made a lot of progress across the board in all areas – leaps and bounds, I think," Draper said. "And we're going to continue that forward momentum. We are, I think, solidly focused with the community in mind, and whatever we do, we're keeping the community as the priority. By doing that, we're progressing."

The report gives community members a snapshot of departmental activities and breaks them down by type, including things like the number of calls, peak call times and training hours.

Calls come in 24 hours a day, but according to the report, the majority of them tend to come in around 3 p.m. and 11 p.m., with the busiest day of the week being Thursday.

"We're volunteers here, and if our busiest time is at 3 p.m. ... that's requiring volunteers to leave work," Draper said. "Being that we do have a good response, that shows there's a lot of cooperation with the business community by letting their employees go to respond."

The number of calls was up a bit from last year, with 807 EMS and 160 fire, Draper said.

The majority of EMS calls fell under general medical, with 234, and transfers, with 194, while the majority of fire calls were false alarms, with 32.

"Keeping in mind that we have a volunteer department here, our response time for fire is 5 minutes and 32 seconds," Draper said. "That's the time from dispatch getting the call to a truck leaving the fire station ... which I think is great."

"The arrival of the first unit on-scene is 5 minutes. That's taking into account (the fact that) we cover 150 square miles in Clay County, and so, really, on the town calls, we're there right away. But it's the ones way out

that kind of skew the response," he said.

Draper said the department focuses its attention on the time it takes to get out of the station.

"We have a goal, a kind of benchmark that I have set, of nothing more than 7 minutes that we get out of the station, so we are staying within that," he said.

The report also shows the number of hours that went into training, with 559 hours for EMS and 184 for fire.

Fire prevention is covered, as well, in such areas as plan reviews, private and public education sessions, and inspections.

The goal of the fire department is to get into every high-hazard occupancy, as well as the daycares, Draper said.

"I believe that is crucial," he said. "The general public, when you enter a public space, you feel safe because you expect it to be safe. I look at the inspection program as ensuring that."

"Not that business-owners are doing something intentionally (against code)," he said. "It's just education. They may not be aware of it. They're focused on the business and maybe not stepping back and looking at the grand picture."

This is one area where Draper said there is room for improvement.

"We only completed 28 of those inspections, and on top of that 13 facility pre-plans," he said. "No daycares were inspected. It boils down to time. I don't have the time."

"Of those 29 inspections, there were 49 violations," he said. "All of those required re-inspections. Three of those required two re-inspections. Each of the inspections I go on are easily an hour to do it right. If there are violations, it's more time and research."

For this reason, Draper said he is going to try to get extra help on the inspection end this year.

"I don't want to sound like I mind doing (inspections)," he said. "My goal here is to make sure people understand that ... we can be doing all the daycares, all the businesses, but I can't alone."

Among other changes the EMS and fire departments saw last year were the acquisition of a new ambulance that was purchased through the county, a new fire truck, iPads and thermal cameras.

Concrete and gravel work was done at the Ivan Pierce Fire Training Center, as well.

"My intention is to turn that into a regional training facility, and we're still on cue to do that," Draper said.

"We're going to start bringing in props, like a burning car prop, a confined space prop. The state fire marshal has asked if we could do a grain bin simulator for grain entrapment."

Perhaps the biggest change both EMS and fire underwent last year was the joining of the entities into a single department.

"We still have EMS and we still have fire ... but we no longer at the administrative level have two separate entities," Draper said. "We are together, and what that has done has strengthened us in the respect that we're on the same page, our resources are joint, so it saves on financing, and it makes us stronger."

"We're in the same building, and we have the same mission. We're serving the community in emergency situations," he said.

The decision to join the two was made by the city manager, and called for the EMS chief to report to the fire chief.

"We didn't have problems before," Draper said. "It just strengthens us as a department. That's something that's really encouraging for us internally."

The report does a good job of showing where the department has been and where it's going, Draper said.

"I feel that it is due to the community that's funding us that we tell them what we're doing, that we keep them informed," he said. "The community is our boss."

The full report can be found online at <http://www.vermillion.us/> under the fire department's page.

OBITUARIES

Paul Bliss

Paul David Bliss, son of Herbert and Coral (Gran) Bliss, was born on June 22, 1941 (Vermillion). He died on Feb. 10, 2014, at the age of 72 in the Sanford Vermillion Care Center.

After high school Paul attended California Mortuary School where he met (Janice) Gayle Peterson whom he affectionately called "Jan Baby, the blond bomber from beautiful downtown Burbank." They were married in North Hollywood, CA, on May 2, 1964. Following their wedding, Paul accepted a position at Miller Funeral Home and the couple moved to Sioux Falls. Shortly thereafter, Paul and Gayle moved back to Vermillion where he was employed at Iverson Funeral Home. Over the course of his life, Paul had a variety of interests and professional endeavors, including ownership of Bunyan's for almost a decade and 30 years with the USD Medical School where he was in charge of the body donation program. Paul was best known for his wonderful "Bliss Barbeque." He enjoyed spending time at the river, using his colorful expressions, and drinking a quality beverage. Paul is survived by his



Bliss

wife and their children, Julie (Tim) Heine and Craig all of Vermillion; brother, Gary Bliss of San Diego, CA; three grandsons, Luke Heine (fiancée Katie Sokolowski), Gerrit Heine, and Seth Heine; and one great-grandson, Maxon Paul Heine, and 12 nieces and nephews. Paul was preceded in death by his parents and his brother, John. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be directed to St. Agnes School (Vermillion) or the Art with Ari Program c/o the Dakota Hospital Foundation.

A celebration of life was 10 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 13, at the St. Agnes Catholic Church in Vermillion with burial of ashes at a later date. Visitation began at 6 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 12, with a prayer service at 7 p.m. all at the church. hansenfuneralhome.com.

Norman Jacobsen

Norman "Norm" Jacobsen, 86, of Vermillion, passed away on Feb. 5, 2014, at the Sanford Vermillion Care Center.

A memorial service will be held at 2 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 15, 2014, at the First Baptist Church of Vermillion with Rev. Elmer "Sandy" Aakre officiating. Visitation will be held one hour prior to the service.



Jacobsen

Burial will take place at a later date at Hillcrest Cemetery.

Norm was born on July 6, 1927, in Irene, to Soren and Laura (Thompson) Jacobsen.

He married the love of his life, Diane Smith, on Aug. 26, 1996, after a nearly 20-year courtship and the two remained happily married until his passing.

Norm was known as a loyal man, especially when it came to his employment. He held only three jobs over the course of his working life. The longest of which was as a manager for Campbell's Supply Co. in Sioux Falls, Sturgis, and Vermillion, where he worked for a combined 25 years. When he was not at work he was a quiet man who enjoyed spending time at home with his family.

Norm is survived by his wife, Diane (Smith) Jacobsen; and many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Soren and Laura Jacobsen; his brothers, Earl Jacobsen,

Clarence Jacobsen, and Leon Jacobsen; and his sister, Jeanette Jacobsen.

Services have been entrusted to the Kober Funeral Home of Vermillion.

Condolences may be posted online at www.koberfuneralhome.com.

Lloyd Mork

Lloyd H. Mork, 64, of Irene, died Friday, Feb. 7, 2014, as the result of an automobile accident near Yankton. Thursday, Feb. 13, 2014, at Calvary Lutheran Church in Irene with Pastor Mark Ostrem officiating. Burial followed in Hillcrest Cemetery at Irene.

Visitation was from 5 to 7 p.m., Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2014, at the Hansen Funeral Home in Irene.

Lloyd Harvey Mork was born Jan. 18, 1950, in



Mork

Yankton, to Harvey and Judith (Erickson) Mork. He attended grade school at Lincoln Country School and later graduated from Irene High School in 1968.

Lloyd married Vicki Bak on Aug. 20, 1971.

Lloyd farmed from 1969 until they moved to Irene in 1996. He then worked for Meyer Heating and Air Conditioning from 1996 until 1998. He then went to work for the University of South Dakota for 15 years, until beginning his most recent employment at the Human Services Center in October of 2013.

Lloyd was a die-hard Packers fan, golf enthusiast, and all around sports fanatic. He loved his kids and grandchildren endlessly.

Lloyd was presented the Outstanding Young Farmer award in 1982. He held positions in several councils and

organizations including Turkey Valley Township Clerk, Calvary Lutheran Church Council, Councilman and then Mayor of the City of Irene and coached youth basketball and baseball for his sons.

Survivors include his wife, Vicki; sons, Brad (Kiya), Kyle (Jennifer), and Tony (Wendy); six grandsons, Scott, Jacob, Cade, Kaden, Trevor, Andrew; and three granddaughters, Thea, Mckenna and Sienna. Also surviving are mother-in-law, Helen Bak; brothers-in-law, David (Linda) Bak, Larry (Carol) Bak, Ronald (Sandra) Bak; and numerous nieces and nephews and close friends. And we can't forget his favorite Grand-dog Charlie ("Old Boy") as he called him.

For obituary and online condolences visit hansenfuneralhome.com.

Annual Meeting Township of Garfield
will be held
Tuesday, March 4, 2014, 1:30 p.m.
at the Dalesburg Lutheran Church for the purpose of electing one supervisor, treasurer and one clerk and for any other business that comes before the board.
Jim Danielson, Clerk

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