

MEET VERMILLION COUNTY COMMISSIONER: TRAVIS MOCKLER

By Zach Wetzel
For the Plain Talk

Travis Mockler, a Clay County Commissioner, has made many contributions to South Dakota over the years.

As a County Commissioner, Mockler is heavily involved with the budget. He helps control the budget for Courthouse offices.

Mockler also works with Roads and Bridges, the Highway Department, and the Sheriff's office.

Finances and welfare projects are part of the job for a County Commissioner.

The biggest project for Mockler has been trying to

get the Wheel Tax passed. "My favorite thing about being County Commissioner is thinking that you're actually helping make the County better," said Mockler. "Another aspect of the job that I love is getting to know different people."

Mockler has met a variety of people as County Commissioner and in his service on the South Dakota Corn Growers Association board of directors.

According to sdcorn.org, Mockler is in charge of a farming business in Centerville.

He harvests corn, soy beans, and alfalfa. Mockler also raises cattle and runs a

custom haying service. According to Mockler, the greatest challenges for corn producers today are production costs, changing markets, and maintaining end users.

Mockler has also been a member of the Pleasant Valley and Dalesberg Dike Association and the UCY Pork Producers.

"I have participated in leadership training as a SDCGA board member and it has been very helpful," said Mockler.

"The Corn Growers and the County usually seem to be on the same page when

we're trying to get things done, especially with legislative issues."

Mockler was raised on a dairy farm in Clay County and attended Vermillion High School.

He was a member of the first State Championship football team of Vermillion, which was also dedicated one of the best teams of the 1990s.

According to the sdcorn.org, Mockler attended a couple years of school at Iowa Lakes Community College and South Dakota State University. After that he

worked as a hired man and began establishing his farming business.

Mockler went through a second election and was able to be elected as County Commissioner after that. He is now starting his third year as County Commissioner.

Mockler enjoys serving as a board member and as County Commissioner.

"It's a different change and a good experience," said Mockler.

Mockler's farming work does not have a typical schedule.

"I get up in the morning and make sure that the cows haven't wrecked something and gotten out," said Mockler.

The items of business are to plan the day and work on chores.

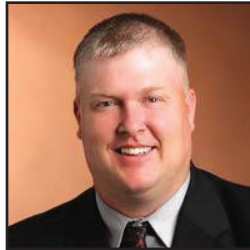
In the wintertime Mockler hauls grain and plans additional projects such as stockpiling the feed and basic maintenance.

During the summer he plants and sprays crops.

In his free time, Mockler enjoys attending his kid's sporting events. He watches football when time permits.

Mockler also goes golfing occasionally in Sioux Falls and Vermillion. He likes to take his girls on fishing trips as well.

Mockler is a family man, a farmer, and a force for good in the community.



Attorney Asks State Judge to Allow Gay Marriages Immediately

By Carson Walker
Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS (AP) — A lawyer representing six South Dakota couples challenging the state's ban on gay marriage has asked a judge who declared it unconstitutional to let her ruling take effect immediately and allow same-sex weddings in the state.

U.S. District Judge Karen Schreier declared the ban unconstitutional last month but also put legal same-sex marriages on hold. Minneapolis attorney Josh Newville filed a motion Tuesday to set aside that stay on grounds it doesn't take into consideration other cases in which the U.S. Supreme Court allowed states to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples while those cases were appealed.

The South Dakotans involved have waited long enough and should not have to wait for the judicial process, Newville said.

"Since October, the Supreme Court has consistently and repeatedly declined to enter a stay on judgment while the appeals process unwinds," he said

in a telephone interview. "It is fundamentally unfair and logically inconsistent to deny South Dakotans the freedom to marry while, meanwhile, marriage equality is a real thing in Alabama and Florida."

The 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals has granted a request to consider appeals from South Dakota, Arkansas and Missouri that positions itself to weigh in before an expected U.S. Supreme Court ruling that could settle whether same-sex couples can marry nationwide.

The 8th Circuit hearing is scheduled for week of May 11 in Omaha, Nebraska.

"The determination of whether the citizens of a state define marriage is presently before the 8th Circuit federal court and U.S. Supreme Court. Plaintiffs may want to reconsider relying on what is developing in Alabama to support their position," South Dakota Attorney General Marty Jackley said of Newville's request.

Death Penalty Repeal Moves Unsuccessful
PIERRE (AP) —

Opponents that include two former state attorneys general have been unsuccessful in swaying South Dakota lawmakers to repeal the state's death penalty.

The Senate State Affairs Committee on Wednesday voted down two measures to repeal or limit the practice.

One proposal would have replaced capital punishment with a life prison sentence without parole.

The other would have added a requirement that offenders could only receive the death penalty if they are considered too dangerous to be incarcerated.

The main sponsors of the bipartisan bills are Democratic Sen. Bernie Hunhoff and Republican Rep. Steve Hickey.

Former Republican Attorney General Mark Meierhenry told the committee that violence doesn't solve violence. Current Attorney General Marty Jackley urged lawmakers not to change the law.

The Legislature declined to repeal the death penalty last year.



Photo of District 18 Sen. Bernie Hunhoff (D) of Yankton, shown at a legislative cracker barrel on Jan. 31 at the Avera Professional Pavilion, Yankton. Hunhoff is a main sponsor of bipartisan bills that deal with the possible repeal of the state's death penalty.

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