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Welcome Table will meet Jan. 18

The next Vermillion Welcome table will be Monday, Jan. 18 from 5:30 to 7 p.m. at the United Methodist Church. The Jan 18 meal will be sponsored and served by Martin Luther King (MLK) Day of Service Group.

Thank you to The United Methodist Church Women for sponsoring and serving last Monday's meal.

Free throw contest Jan. 24

The St. Agnes Council of the Knights of Columbus is having their free throw contest Sunday, Jan. 24 at 1 p.m. in the Vermillion High School gym.

This free throw contest is for the boys and girls age 10 to 14 years old. The first place winners will receive plaques for each age group.

For more information contact Ray Hofman at 624-6457.

French toast breakfast fundraiser

The St. Agnes Youth Group is having a French toast breakfast fundraiser Sunday morning, Jan. 24 from 9 to 10:30 a.m. at the St. Agnes gym.

This breakfast fundraiser is for the St. Agnes Youth Group winter ski trip to Mt. Kato, Mankato, MN, in February.

There will be a free will offering taken at the door. For more information please contact Ray Hofman at 624-6457. Catholic Aid will have matching funds for this project.

Heartland Humane thankful for support

Heartland Humane Society thanks the community for their support during the holidays. The Animal Health Clinic in Yankton collected donations under their Tree of Hope that included dog and cat food, treats, toys, blankets and monetary donations totaling over \$125.

Animal Health Clinic also raffled one of the doghouses donated to Heartland Humane Society by the Mike Durfee State Prison in Springfield. The raffle raised \$280 and the lucky winner was Barb Harper of Yankton. Congratulations, Barb!

All of the proceeds from the raffle and donations go toward the care of Heartland Humane Society's shelter animals. "Thank you to the community and the Animal Health Clinic veterinarians and staff for all their efforts on our behalf this holiday season," said Tasha Anderson, executive director of Heartland Humane Society. "We greatly appreciate the support from the community and couldn't do it without everyone's contributions."

If you have questions about making your own tax deductible contributions to Heartland Humane Society, please contact Tasha Anderson at 605-664-4244 or email hhs@midconetwork.com.

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.

MidAmerican reps: Natural gas prices unpredictable, but remain stable

By David Lias
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The good news: the price of natural gas provided to Vermillion consumers has followed a similar trend from past years, and has remained stable.

The bad news: the effect that winter weather may have on those prices is as unpredictable as the weather itself.

"Projections have been made that the costs for heating this year will be similar to what it was last year, which was approximately 20 percent lower than the bills in the winter of 2007," said Mary Zanter, operations supervisor for MidAmerican Energy. Her

duties include management over the energy company's construction crews in Vermillion and in the Yankton area. "Hopefully, bills are somewhat stabilized, but the actual heating costs will depend on how cold the winter is, and how much natural gas is used by the consumers. Just because the prices are a little lower doesn't mean you can turn your thermostat way up and still expect your bill to be lower."

She admitted that it's hard to predict what may happen with natural gas prices, because winter temperatures are equally unpredictable. "Hopefully, things will remain stable," Zanter said.

MidAmerican Energy is the natu-

ral gas franchisee for the city of Vermillion, and as such, the energy company is required to meet with the city council annually.

In the past year, MidAmerican Energy has offered an energy efficiency program to South Dakota consumers.

"It involves a number of energy efficiency programs that help consumers reduce energy costs and save money. Customers can install and receive rebates for high efficiency air conditioners, heat pumps, natural gas furnaces and water heaters," she said. "Also, South Dakota customers who own their home and there home was built before Dec. 31, 1989 are eligible for a free energy audit."

This procedure includes installation of simple energy efficiency measures, and financial incentive for insulation improvements," Zanter said.

Brad Howard, an economic development consultant for MidAmerican Energy, told aldermen that the company assists with economic development efforts in the communities it serves through its Local Partners Fund.

"We have money available to the Chambers of Commerce in the different cities through applications. Steve (Howe, executive director of the Vermillion Area Chamber of Commerce and Development Company)

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City personnel ask that all citizens be in compliance with city ordinances, and clear their sidewalks of snow. (Photo by David Lias)

Vermillion residents urged to clear sidewalks of snow

The city of Vermillion began checking and tagging sidewalks effective Tuesday, Jan. 12. Citizens are asked to make sure their sidewalks are not in violation of City Ordinance §96.12 Snow and Ice. The ordinance reads as follows:

• Vermillion City Ordinance § 96.12 SNOW AND ICE, states that every person in control of any building or lot of land within the city fronting, or abutting on a paved sidewalk, whether as the owner, tenant, occupant, lessee, or otherwise, shall remove and clear away, or cause to be removed and cleared away, snow and ice from the sidewalk in front of or abutting on the building or lot of land within 24 hours after any fall of snow or freezing rain. When freezing rain has resulted in frozen ice upon the sidewalk, making it impossible to remove, the person in charge shall sprinkle or spread some suitable material upon the sidewalk to prevent the sidewalk from being slippery and dangerous to pedestrian travel.

• 24 hours after accumulations of 2 inches or more of snow, blowing snow or freezing rain, city staff will check all sidewalks for compliance. Complaints can also be made to the Code Enforcement Department at (605) 677-7050.

• Please clear the entire constructed width of the public sidewalk, also clear ramps at corners that abuts your property.

• If possible, wait until the snow plows have cleared the streets before shoveling. Plows may need to push snow onto curbs and sidewalks, to keep streets clear.

• The fine for failing to comply with the city's sidewalk snow removal ordinance is Ten dollars (\$10.00) per Violation.

• Even if you are on vacation, or have equipment breakdowns, it is still your responsibility, as the property owner, to ensure that your sidewalks are cleared.

• A provision of this ordinance also permits that if the owner or occupant fails to clear the sidewalk of snow within the time allowed, the city may remove the snow and clear the sidewalk. The city may then seek reimbursement of the expense incurred plus a twenty five dollar (\$25.00) service fee from the owner or occupant.

New building requirements approved for fire safety

By David Lias
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Anyone wishing to construct a new building in Vermillion's downtown business district will need to follow new standards after the Vermillion City Council amended a building regulation ordinance at its Jan. 4 meeting.

The city is divided into fire districts, which each have an individual set of standards. According to Farrel Christensen, city building official, downtown districts, in particular, have a stricter set of construction standards to prevent or slow the spread of fire.

In order to prepare for an upcoming zoning ordinance amendment that will allow zero lot line construction in the central business district, the city building department and the Vermillion Fire Department reviewed the minimum standards for construction in the downtown area.

The review, Christensen noted in a memo to the Vermillion City Council, revealed that some important standards for construction were not present in the current city ordinance.

As a result, the building department and

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New building requirements approved by the Vermillion City Council set rules for building exteriors, roofs, and stairways in new construction for fire safety. (Photo by David Lias)



Vermillion High School students will be presenting "The Arkansas Bear" next weekend in the VHS Performing Arts Center. The play, a children's fantasy drama, explores the cycle of life through a dancing bear, a chorus of circus performers, and a little girl's wish upon a star. This 45 minute production will be performed Friday, January 22 at 7:30 p.m. on the Vermillion High School stage. It is free and open to the public. Pictured are (bottom) Samantha Cooper, Rosie Ahmed, Sarah Axtell, Nathan Ford, William Card, Joe Geis, and (top row) Lea Geis, Randy LaMie, Joe Ford, Hannah Ford, Julie Renner, Courtney Eidem and Paige Myron. (Photo by Ellen Hanson)

VCDC joins state to recruit hunting, firearms companies

Local business will be showcased at trade show

Several communities across South Dakota, including Vermillion, are joining forces with the Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED) to bring more businesses to South Dakota. Community leaders and GOED officials, including Gov. Mike Rounds, will attend The Shooting, Hunting, Outdoor Trade Show and Conference (SHOT Show) in Las Vegas, NV, Jan. 19-22. The SHOT Show is the largest and most comprehensive trade show for shooting

sports and hunting industries professionals.

"Given the amazing outdoor opportunities South Dakota provides, along with the unparalleled business climate, the SHOT Show is a natural fit as a business recruiting event, and having Gov. Rounds personally attend tells you the importance of this industry to the state," said Steve Howe, executive director of the Vermillion Area Chamber and Development Company. "Vermillion and Clay

County have great outdoor amenities with the terrific hunting and ready access to the Missouri River. We want to make sure businesses that serve the outdoor industry see us as a viable community in which to do business."

Products from Vermillion-based Dakota Decoy will be featured in the South Dakota booth along with other outdoor products and businesses from around the state.

"Dakota Decoy's products are some of the best in the industry, so showcasing them at this national event is a perfect way to show that Vermillion

can be a player in the outdoor industry," Howe said. Howe hopes to bring attention to BidYourHunt, an online auction service that brings hunters and landowners together in order to provide a premier experience to hunters as well as generate new revenue for landowners. BidYourHunt is a tenant of the VCDC's Three Rivers Business Incubator.

"This business startup is example of the growth and interest of the outdoor industry in this area. There is no reason we cannot compete for businesses in this industry," he said.