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New water tower changes city landscape



A welder from Maguire Iron, Inc. of Sioux Falls works on the bottom of the bowl of the city's new water tower Friday, Dec. 27, before it was raised by a crane high above the ground. The welders worked in pleasant 55-degree weather on Friday, but had to cope with high winds and sub-zero temps and windchills that moved in the following day.

(Photo by David Lias)

By Travis Gulbrandson

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Vermillion's new water tower is up, but it won't be running until August at the latest.

The tower was erected Monday, following the arrival Friday, Dec. 27, of the crane that was used to put it together. On Tuesday morning, workers were preparing to put the top portion of the tower in place.

Water department superintendent Randy Isaacson said the tower was put up by Maguire Iron, Inc., of Sioux Falls,

which also built the individual parts of the tower.

"They set the first piece on the column, or the standpipe, and then they do what they call tack welding," Isaacson said. "There will be about three to four two-foot-long welds. They complete that, and then they put the next part up, which is the bottom of the bowl."

Additional tack welds were then made, after which point the top of the tower was added.

"That just sits on there," Isaacson said. "They have a wedging clamp system that they

use to hold the pieces together before they weld, and that's how the top part is held on until they get to weld it."

Once all the pieces were put together, the crane was disassembled.

"That's about a one-day process," Isaacson said.

City crews will then finish the welding job until the tower is completed, although it won't be painted until the spring or summer.

"There's welding to do on the inside also, and then they'll have to coat the inside, paint it,"

Isaacson said during a meeting last month. "That's going to be a process. There are some control things to do, and wiring things. There's going to be lighting all the way up and down the column on the inside for climbing purposes. It's more mechanical-type stuff."

The tower won't be in use until the coating is cured, after which point the paint will have to be tested for discontinuities.

The new tower will be up and in service before anything is done with the old one, Isaacson said.

"When that's going to be, I don't know," he said last month. "If they can get in there this spring and get the coating system done and all the wiring and controls are put in place and we get it in service, I think then we'll start the process maybe next fall or spring."

"We don't have a schedule yet for the old tank," he said.

The crane used for putting the tower together was 150 feet tall, a size so large that six semis were used in bringing its

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2013 a time of highs and woes for Vermillion, region

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The past year offered a wide variety of local news stories, both good and bad.

The following is a recap of some of the biggest that appeared in the *Vermillion Plain Talk* in the year 2013.

1. Skeletal remains found

A lower than usual water level in Union County's Brule Creek led to the discovery Sept. 23 of a 1960 Studebaker Lark that was last seen 42 years ago, being driven by two 17-year-old Vermillion girls, Cheryl Miller and Pamela Jackson.

The girls went missing in May 1971.

Although South Dakota Attorney General Marty Jackley said the skeletal remains of two individuals were recovered from the car, DNA testing has not yet confirmed their identities.

Jackley did reveal that the Studebaker was found to be in its highest gear when it entered the water, which he said "would not be consistent with foul play."

2. Tim Johnson announces his retirement

Sen. Tim Johnson ended weeks of speculation when he returned home to Vermillion to announce his retirement March 26.

Standing before reporters and well-wishers, with his wife Barb at his side, Johnson announced during an afternoon press conference that he would not be seeking a fourth term in the U.S. Senate.

"I will be 68 years old at the end of this term and it is time for me to say good-bye," he said. "I will not be running for re-election to the United States Senate in 2014 or any other office."

3. Eagle Creek comes to Vermillion

Following the announcement of its arrival last March, ground was broken Aug. 13 for Eagle Creek Software Services behind the old Pamida building.

The completed facility will bring approximately 200 new jobs to the community.

"We think over the next 10 years there's going to be hundreds of thousands of jobs repatriated to the

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MUC EXPANSION CONTINUES



Some of the expanded portions of the Muenster University Center are now visible to visitors. Passersby have been able to glimpse the new sections of the building for at least a week. The completed facility will feature expanded seating and national restaurant options, such as Chick-fil-A, Qdoba and Einstein Bros. Bagels, the last of which has been open for some time. The 31,000 square foot expansion is budgeted at \$11.6 million, and university officials said last summer that they hoped it would be open by the beginning of the 2014 spring semester. The original MUC building opened in February 2009, and expansions of it have been discussed since USD President James Abbott's State of the University address in 2011.

(Photo by Travis Gulbrandson)



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