

## CHAMBER CHAT

**Vermillion Area Chamber of Commerce & Development Company**  
116 Market Street, Suite 103  
Vermillion, SD 57069  
(605) 624-5571  
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www.vermillionchamber.com

**Chamber Business:** VCDC Welcomes New Executive Director: It is with great pleasure that the VCDC Board of Directors announces and introduces Nathan Welch as the new Executive Director of the Vermillion Area Chamber and Development Company. Welch officially joins the company on Monday, Feb. 24.

Welch comes to us from Sioux Falls where he currently serves as the vice president of operations for Sioux Falls Sports, LLC. Previous to that, he worked in the areas of fund development for Dakota State University and the University of Sioux Falls. Welch helped create and later served as the President of the Sioux Falls Chamber Young Professionals Network.

Welch succeeds Steve Howe, who has served as the VCDC executive director for the past six years. Welch and Steve will work together over the coming months to ensure a smooth and seamless transition. As the VCDC moves into its next chapter, we have many exciting times ahead.

We ask for your continued support and enthusiasm as Welch transitions into his new role. Please join us in officially welcoming him to the VCDC.

**Election information:** The next municipal election will be held June 3. The following offices will become vacant due to the expiration of the present term of office of the elective officer:

- Mayor
- Alderman Central Ward
- Alderman Northeast Ward
- Alderman Northwest Ward
- Alderman Southeast Ward

Nominating petitions can be circulated starting March 1, and must be filed in the City Finance Office by 5 p.m. on March 25. Municipal nominating petitions are available at the City Finance Office.

For more city election information go to [www.vermillion.us](http://www.vermillion.us). Information provided by

the VCDC Legislative Affairs Committee. Cracker Barrel session with our Legislators will be Saturday, March 1, from 10 a.m. to noon at the City Hall Council Chambers at 25 Center St. Please join District 17 Legislators, Senator Tom Jones and House Representatives Nancy Rasmussen and Ray Ring for an update on the 89th Legislative Session. Open to the public. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to join us for some great discussion. Refreshments will be served. Sponsored by the VFW Auxiliary, Clay County Democrats, Clay County Republicans and the VCDC Legislative Affairs Committee.

**Business After Hours:** Are you looking for an opportunity to showcase your business and network with your peers? Sign up to host a Business After Hours event.

These events generally run from 5-7 p.m. on a weeknight and the hosting business provides hors d'oeuvres and refreshments.

If interested, contact Ann at [annb@vermillionchamber.com](mailto:annb@vermillionchamber.com) or at 624-5571.

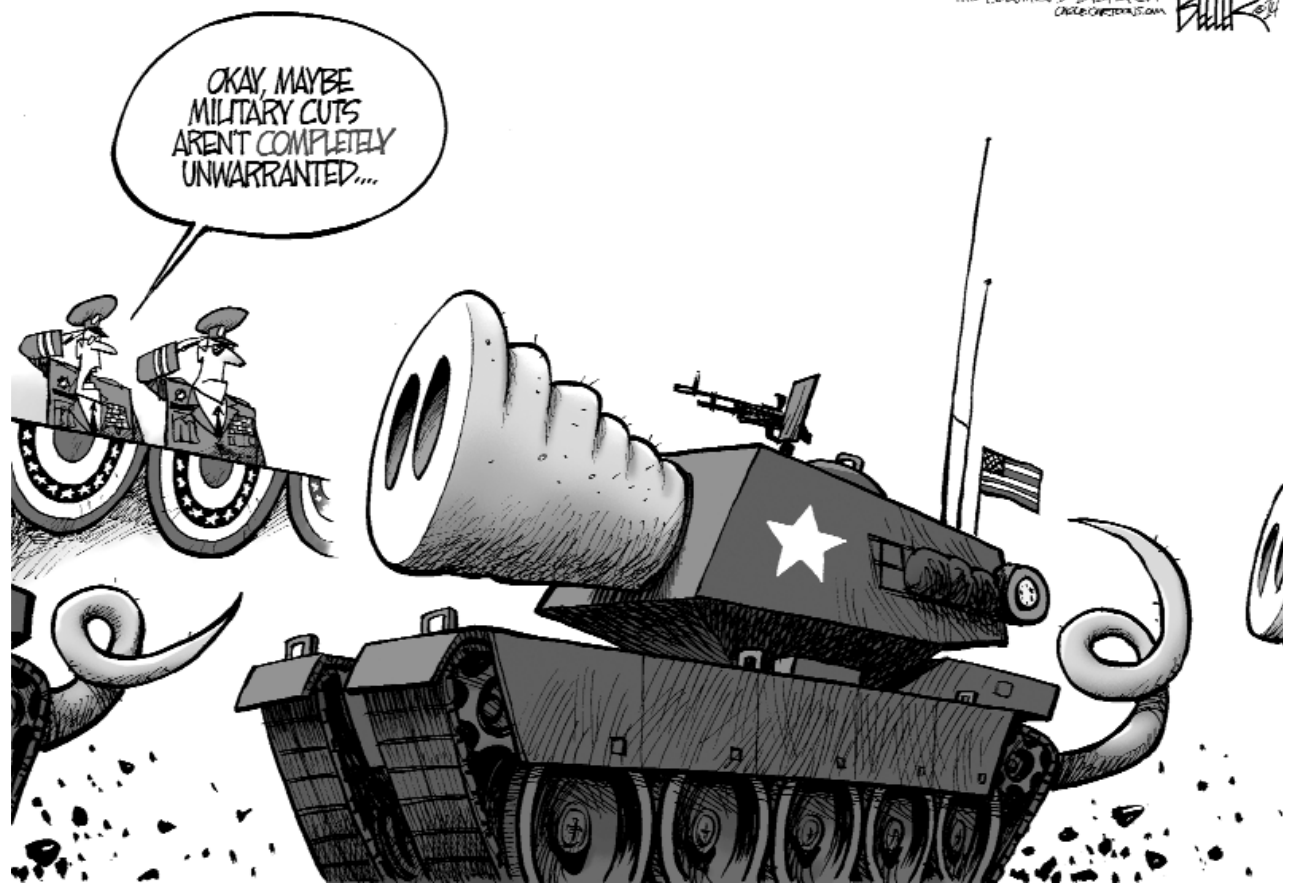
**Announcements:** Vermillion Area Community Foundation (VACF) updated grant application information: Beginning this year, there are only two grant periods: The second Thursday in April and the second Thursday in October.

Grant applications for the first session are due by March 15, and for the second session by Sept. 15. Grant guidelines can be found at <http://vermillion.sdcommunityfoundation.org> or applications can be picked up at the VCDC, 116 Market St.

The Clay-Union Foundation is seeking a 5-10-year-old boy in Vermillion to match with an adult male mentor who is screened and ready to match.

Elk Point needs two volunteers to match with a 12-year-old girl and a 14-year-old boy. The board is seeking two adults from Vermillion and two from Elk Point or Jefferson to serve on their board. Board meetings rotate between Elk Point and Vermillion. Two USD students are also being sought to serve on the board.

Contact John Gille at [jgillerrsd60@yahoo.com](mailto:jgillerrsd60@yahoo.com) or call (605) 421-5050 to help fill their program needs.



# Greetings from Pierre

**By Rep. Ray Ring**  
District 17

Thanks to everyone who came out for Cracker Barrels in Irene and Viborg. We had a good discussion and exchange of ideas. I wish more people would come out to share their views. Your next – and probably last – Cracker Barrel for this session is Saturday, March 1, 10 a.m., at Vermillion City Hall.

This past week, I met with several District 17 school board members and administrators, some constituents, and of course, the paid lobbyists. I really want and need to hear directly from more constituents. If you can't come to Pierre, please call, e-mail or come to a Cracker Barrel. My contact information is at the end of this column. I do read all e-mails, even though I don't always have time to answer all of them.

Week 6 was a busy one. The House Committee on State Affairs considered another bill to improve school funding, then deferred it to the 41st day. (There is no 41st day; that's an indirect way to kill a bill.) South Dakota education remains sorely underfunded. The Education Committee also defeated more attempts to stop the state

from adopting the Common Core. I still believe that many of the opponents are misinformed. Many teachers and administrators are e-mailing me in support of the Common Core. They're the experts and I think we need to listen to them.

In the Committee on State Affairs, over a dozen proponents testified for Medicaid Expansion. The only two opponents represented the Daugaard Administration. A representative of the Bureau of Finance and Management (BFM), South Dakota's budget office, acknowledged that the state would qualify for Federal payments of \$275 million next year, in return for \$1.9 million of state funds, then admitted (or claimed) that the folks at BFM haven't even discussed that very high "return on investment". Our hospitals typically lose around \$90 million a year in uncompensated care; expanding Medicaid would save them about one-third of that. Several recent studies find that access to health care improves health and reduces mortality. One study estimates that expanding Medicaid would save 36-95 South Dakotans' lives each year. Despite all the support

for Medicaid expansion (including polls of South Dakotans), the committee voted along party lines to reject the bill. South Dakotans remain uninsured despite a ready opportunity to insure many of them at very little cost to the state.

On Friday, House Bill 1183, a bill to repeal the death penalty and replace it with a sentence of life without parole, was heard. A District 17 resident was the major motivating force behind this bill, spending countless hours and travelling all over the state to foster support for repealing the death penalty. I have done what I could to support the effort. There is no conclusive evidence that the death penalty is a deterrent to crime. Litigation costs that result from appeals, many of which the counties must pay, are usually greater than would be the cost of housing an inmate for life. Prisons, correctly run, can protect other persons from "lifers". A life sentence leaves time for the prisoner to seek redemption. Nearly all religious denominations favor repeal. For me, repealing the death penalty, like providing access to health care, is part of a consistent pro-life ethic. As the bill's

prime sponsor said in his introductory comments, "If human life is sacred, it's always sacred." After more than two hours of testimony and debate, the Committee on State Affairs killed the bill, 6-7.

Many of you know by now that District 17 Sen. Tom Jones announced he will not run for re-election this fall. I know you join me in thanking Senator Jones for his selfless service to District 17 and all of South Dakota, not only as our state representative and senator, but also through his generous gifts of time and talent to many boards and commissions.

I am personally grateful for Tom's support, advice, and encouragement for the last two years. He encouraged me to run, gave excellent advice on organizing and running my campaign, and continues to provide wise counsel as I learn to navigate the legislative maze. Future legislatures will miss his wise, objective, and practical approach to government and to life.

Please contact me at [Rep.Ring@state.sd.us](mailto:Rep.Ring@state.sd.us) or (605) 675-9379. Don't forget the cracker barrel, March 1, 10 a.m., at Vermillion City Hall. Please come to share your views.

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**Saturday, April 5, 2014**

For proper advertising we need your consignments in by March 14<sup>th</sup>. Call one of our auctioneers.

- John Wortmann, 402-355-2614
- Kelly Konken, 402-254-3472
- Ed Huwaldt, 402-337-0784



**ATTENTION**

The Garfield Board of Supervisors will meet as a Board of Equalization at the Marshalltown School Wednesday, March 19th, 2014 at 7 p.m. Please call 605-253-2524 for an appointment.

*Jim Danielson, Clerk*

**SPRING FARM MACHINERY CONSIGNMENT Auction**

**Friday, March 14th • 10AM**

**Located: Girard Auction Facilities, Wakonda, SD**

Already consigned: Tractors, discs, field cultivators, soil finishers, swathers, sprayers, planters, drills, round balers, semi tractors, trucks, pickups, cars, livestock equipment, new continuous fence, panels, skid loader attachments, pressure washers, ATVs, snow mobiles, lawn mowers, sporting goods, plus much more.

**3-DAY FARM TOY & TRUCK Auction**

**March 7-8-9th**

**Located: Wakonda Legion Hall, Wakonda, SD**  
**Friday March 7th 4:00 p.m. & Saturday March 8th 10:00 a.m.:**  
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The next BigIron.com auction is on March 19, 2014

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**Watch next week's paper for full listing. Still time to advertise—but you must call now!**

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