



PLAIN TALK

Volume 128, Issue 22

USPS 657-720



Friday, May 31, 2013

75¢



© 2013 YANKTON MEDIA, INC., all rights reserved

INSIDE:

- Veterans honored at service Page 03
Tanager track at state meet Sat., Page 07

Serving our readers since 1884.

www.plaintalk.net

Thune addresses Girls Staters

Senator advises attendees to stay rooted in their beliefs

By Travis Gulbrandson

travis.gulbrandson@plaintalk.net

Sen. John Thune said that if someone enters politics, they must maintain their character and moral strength.

This was among his messages to the attendees of the 67th annual South Dakota Girls State, which is being held at the University of South Dakota this week.

"If you know who you are and you know what you believe, you stay anchored and grounded in that," Thune said Tuesday morning during a presentation at Aalfs Auditorium.

"That means you've got to stay really rooted in your beliefs and the principles that are important to you," he said.

Thune said the things that keep him most anchored are his family, community and state.

"I've spent a lot of time here in South Dakota, and it's very easy for people to go to Washington, DC, and ... kind of forget what they're about, who they are and what they're there to do," he said.

In short, listen to your conscience and the people you represent, he said.

"Once you lose that, then you just become an unanchored, untethered person, and it's easy to be persuaded and pushed in different directions," Thune said.

The Girls Staters had the opportunity to ask the senator questions following a short speech, among which was what Thune feels is the most difficult aspect of his job.

Thune had two responses. First, he said it is difficult to find enough "bandwidth" to keep up with everything that is going on, between committee memberships, Senate hearings and votes.

"There is so much stuff coming at you every single day, and so many things to try and stay on top of," he said.

The second answer regarded Thune's "frustration in not seeing a direct result in things that you're doing."

He said he always tells people that in Washington, there is a lot of activity, but not a lot of productivity.

"People are very busy, but they're not getting a lot done, and it's frustrating to me that we don't get more done when you look at the problems that we have in this country," Thune said.

"When you work on something and you actually do get a chance to see it become a law, something get done, something that will benefit the people that you represent, that's what keeps you motivated," he said.

Thune encouraged all the Girls State attendees to be active during the week, and said he hoped some of them might be inspired to enter politics as a result of it.

Thune himself is an alumnus of the 1978 Boys State.

"I didn't grow up aspiring to go into politics. I grew up in Murdo, SD," he said. "My life began and ended with the city limits of Murdo. It was before the Internet, before cell phones, so it was a world that a lot of you ... probably wouldn't be able to identify with all that much."

His first political inclinations followed a meeting with a congressman when Thune was a high school freshman.

After completing graduate school, that congressman - by then a senator - offered Thune a job on his staff, a position he held for four and a half years.

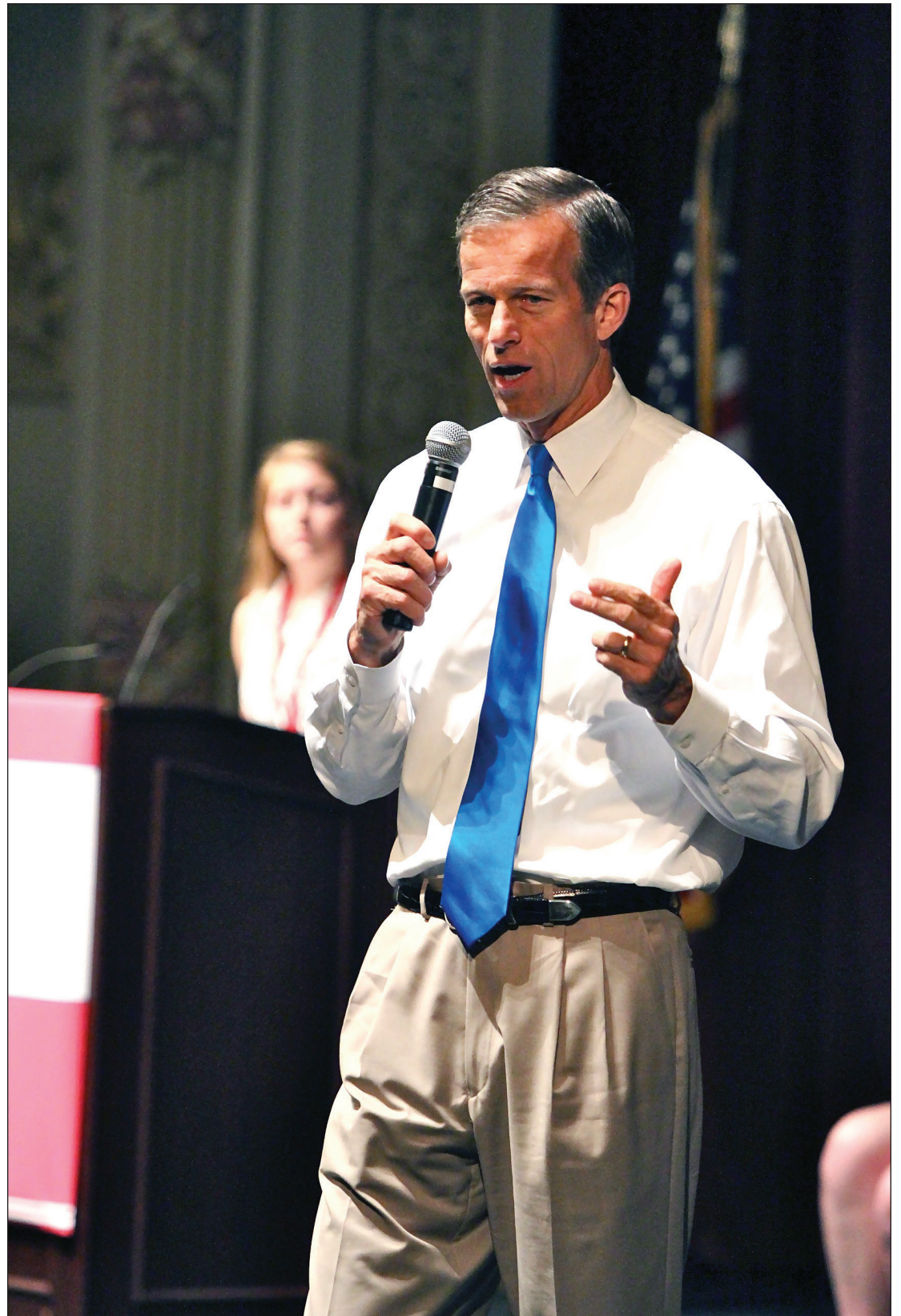
"I guess what I concluded from that experience was, if the timing and the opportunity were right, it might be something I would like to do some day, and so it was really that experience that opened that door," he said.

At the time of the offer, Thune and his wife had just gotten married and were living in Pierre,

THUNE, Page 12

Sen John Thune speaks to the attendees at the 67th annual South Dakota Girls State, which is being held this week at the University of South Dakota.

(Photo by David Lias)



SD attorney general encourages pursuit of law, public service careers

By Travis Gulbrandson

travis.gulbrandson@plaintalk.net

Many of the students currently attending Girls State probably are considering what career they should pursue following graduation.

During his remarks in a presentation Tuesday morning, state Attorney General Marty Jackley suggested they study law.

"You won't find a more gratifying, satisfying profession," he said. "I can't describe the feeling when ... you walk out of the courtroom, and you just defended a guy falsely accused of murder who was acquitted. He's either going to walk out of that courtroom, or he's going to spend the rest of his life in jail."

"On the other side, as a prosecutor, when you walk into that courtroom with a victim and some guy who abused her is in the courtroom, and she grabs you so tight that it cuts the circulation off in your arm," he said.

Jackley acknowledged that the girls are still in high school, but told them if they are interested in



South Dakota Attorney General Marty Jackley addresses Girls State delegates Tuesday morning in Aalfs Auditorium on the University of South Dakota campus.

(Photo by David Lias)

law as a profession, they should start preparing as soon as possible.

"Now is the time to begin those preparations and begin developing your study habits,

making the grades so that you can go on and get a four-year degree and two more years of law school," he said.

He also told them to remember that despite its rewards, there also can be conflicts.

For example, Jackley said that as a Catholic, the state's two recent executions gave him pause.

However, he was ultimately able to justify them in terms of his belief, which he explained in the case of Eric Roberts, a prisoner who was executed last year for his role in the murder of a guard.

"(Roberts was) already in jail for very, very violent crimes ... things that justified housing (him) to protect people," Jackley said.

"So, we can no longer keep (him) in there for life. We have to do something, or else (he) will hurt another inmate, kill another guard, kill a nurse, kill

LAW, Page 12

Sen. Thune favors supporting rebels in Syria

By David Lias

david.lias@plaintalk.net

Sen. John Thune, R-SD, quietly laughed Tuesday morning, when asked about the surprise visit his colleague, Sen. John McCain, R-AZ, paid to Syria on Monday.

"John makes some trips over there ... he goes places that most people don't get access to," Thune said.

He also, however, voiced support for a policy that appears to contain guidelines that McCain believes the U.S. should follow concerning Syria.

"He (McCain) is very passionate about getting a good outcome there," Thune said.

Sen. Thune was in Vermillion Tuesday to address the morning session of Girls State, which is meeting this week on the University of South Dakota campus.

According to news reports, McCain quietly slipped into Syria for a meeting with anti-government fighters Monday. The visit took place amid meetings in Paris involving efforts to secure participation of Syria's fractured opposition in an international peace conference in Geneva.

McCain, a member of the Armed Services and Foreign Relations committees, favors providing arms to rebel forces in Syria and creation of a no-fly zone. He has stopped short of backing U.S. ground troops in Syria.

SYRIA, Page 06

Have you been



Spotted?

Go to spotted.yankton.net to view and purchase our photos. Upload & Share Your Photos For FREE