

Elder Abuse Task Force's Report Will Be Done Soon

BY BOB MERCER
STATE CAPITOL BUREAU

PIERRE – South Dakota's special task force on elder abuse gathers Oct. 29 to discuss its final report. Based on the statistics, findings and recommendations that comprise the core of the draft, this promises to be a call to action across South Dakota.

Drawing on real situations in South Dakota and upon proven practices in other states, the report will lay out changes to be made. Accomplishing the reforms identified in the report will demand a stronger focus on elderly protections from the Legislature, the state's courts, the state's attorney general, the governor, local law enforcement, banks, lawyers and care givers.

The take-away is South Dakota has a long way to go to in protecting older citizens. David Gilbertson, chief justice of the South Dakota Supreme Court, called for the study during his State of the Judiciary speech to the Legislature in January.

An earlier attempt by Gilbertson to put elder abuse on the political agenda went unheeded. This time, Sen. David Novstrup, R-Aberdeen, took up the issue.

Legislation sponsored by Novstrup, R-Aberdeen, led to establishing the task force.

With the Legislature's approval came the chief justice's offer for the Unified Judicial System to fund and lead the work.

In his speech to the Legislature, Gilbertson used the word tsunami to describe the problem. Based on demographic trends in the draft, tsunami wasn't too strong.

Presuming the final report is generally similar to the draft version, the task force will present a set of recommendations for achieving much stronger protection of elderly people in South Dakota.

Next will be action by the Legislature in the 2016 session that starts Jan. 12.

The task force chairman is another Supreme Court member, Justice Steve Zinter. Six legislators serve on the panel.

They are representatives Brian Gosch, R-Rapid City; Kris Langer, R-Dell Rapids; Lee Schoenbeck, R-Watertown; and senators Jim Bradford, D-Pine Ridge; Bruce Rampelberg, R-Rapid City; and Novstrup.

The governor's appointees to the task force are Sara Dahlin Jennings, South Dakota director for AARP; Jennifer Murray, a regional manager for adult services and aging in the state Department of Social Services; and Robert Kean, a lawyer and retired head for South Dakota Advocacy Services.

The chief justice appointed seven people including Justice Zinter. The others are:

Dr. Victoria Walker, chief medical and quality officer for The Evangelical Lutheran Good Samaritan Society;

Quentin Riggins, an attorney who chairs the Real Property, Probate & Trust Law section for the State Bar of South Dakota;

Tim Neyhart, executive director, South Dakota Advocacy Services;

Dr. David Brechtelsbauer, a geriatrician, and faculty member at the USD Sanford School of Medicine;

Rick Rylance, regional president for Dacotah Bank; and

Kristina Schaefer, a vice president and general counsel for Fishback Financial Corp., where she is director of risk management.

Attorney General Marty Jackley appointed Paul Cremer, an assistant attorney general and the director for the office's Medicaid fraud control unit.

They are South Dakotans of substance. So promises to be their report.

"It is probably not the final answer but I think it is an impressive start to a most serious issue," Chief Justice Gilbertson said Friday.

Advocating For Reforms To The Endangered Species Act

A COLUMN BY GOV. DENNIS DAUGAARD:

Last week I had the opportunity to participate in a Western Governors Association trip to Washington, D.C. Along with the governors of Wyoming, North Dakota, Montana and Utah, I visited with federal officials about issues impacting South Dakota and other western states. One of the topics we discussed was the Endangered Species Act.

A recent poll from the Morning Consult indicates that the majority of Americans believe the Endangered Species Act (ESA) needs to be reformed. The poll also found that less than one-third of Americans think the federal government should take the lead on endangered species.

Allowing states to play a more active role in the administration of the ESA just makes sense. In a state like South Dakota where 80 percent of the land is privately owned, it should be standard practice to gather input from landowners early in

the process. They know the land better than anyone and endangered species decisions can directly impact their livelihoods. It's also easier for states to work with landowners once an ESA decision has been made.

Unfortunately, state governments are routinely left out of the conversation when it comes to ESA decisions. Time and time again, we have been impacted by unfounded listings and a lack of implementation at the federal level.

Our state's experience with the Topeka Shiner listing is a prime example. Habitat and population problems don't exist in South Dakota for this type of fish; but because those problems persist in other states, the species is listed as endangered in our state. It has been 16 years since the Topeka Shiner was listed, and we are still waiting for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to develop a complete recovery plan for the species. How can we aim for recovery, if we don't

know what is the goal?

Compare that to the Sage Grouse. In 2010, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service listed Sage Grouse as "warranted but precluded." Western states joined with the Department of Interior to implement measures to prevent an endangered listing of the species. States developed their own conservation plans and local governments became involved in the efforts. Just last month, the Department of Interior announced it would not place the bird on the endangered species list.

In South Dakota, we value the goal of improving and maintaining habitat. Rather than viewing states as unnecessary hurdles, I hope the federal government will come to see the states as partners in accomplishing this goal.

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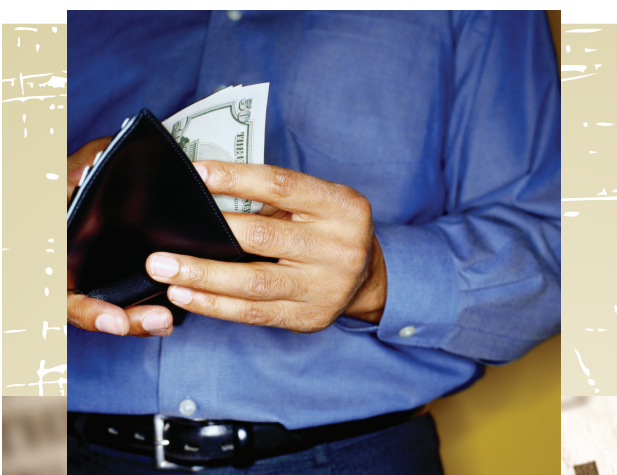
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Give One Of Our Animals A Loving Home With Our "Meowloween" October Adoption Event!

Yankton, SD September 25, 2015 - Heartland Humane Society and The Landing have teamed up to offer discounts and promotions for all adoptions during October's "Adopt a Shelter Dog" month celebration.

All month long, those adopting pets at Heartland Humane Society will receive a \$15 gift card to The Landing Restaurant and Lounge in Yankton. In addition, HHS will have discounted adoption prices on all black or orange pets as part of Meowloween promotion. Reduced rates will include \$75 for dog adoptions and \$30 for cat adoptions.

All pets qualified for the program will be healthy, fully vaccinated, microchipped, and spayed/neutered if applicable.

"Traditionally, October is one of our busier adoption months for the shelter,"

Shelter Coordinator Christa Kranig said. "We want to celebrate our new pet parents with discounts and deals and say thank for adopting, not shopping."

All cats and dogs available for adoption can be found on the shelter's webpage www.heartlandhumane.org or you can stop by the shelter at 3400 East Highway 50 in Yankton.

Please contact the shelter if you have any questions at 605-664-4244.

Heartland Humane Society is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that serves Yankton 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.heartlandhumane.org.

REAL ESTATE AUCTION

Saturday, October 24, 2015 • 12:00 PM
1307 Eastside Drive, Yankton, SD 57078
Edward J (Red) Nelson Estate

Sec/twp/range: 9-93-55; N2N2 S1/2 of Parcel G SE4SE4 +/- 1.25 acre lot
1,082 sq. ft. 2 bedroom home w/central air, full basement with a 36x48 shop building w/concrete floor. This property would make a great project home with lots of potential and a great location on the east side of Yankton, SD and out of the city limits.

Terms & Conditions: \$10,000 non-refundable down payment day of auction with balance due at closing. 2015 real estate taxes pro-ratable to closing. Title, insurance and closing fees split 50/50 between buyer and seller. Closing agent: Yankton Title Co. Possession upon receipt of final payment. 2014 taxes: \$567.40.

This information is deemed reliable but not guaranteed by seller or Harts Auction Service. Property will be sold as-is with seller confirmation and NO warranty as to property boundaries. Announcements made day of auction take precedence over printed material. Harts Auction Service Leo Harts RE#278 is representing the seller. Property can be viewed by appointment.

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Vermillion School District Fall 2015 Parent-Teacher Conferences

Monday, October 19th – 2:30pm – 8pm
There will be an early dismissal for the students on Monday, October 19th as follows:
Austin and Jolley Elementary – 1:50pm
Middle and High School – 2pm

Wednesday, October 21st – 1pm – 6pm
There will be no school on Wednesday, October 21st.
Teacher In-Service will be held from 8am – noon and conference to begin at 1pm after In-Service.



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