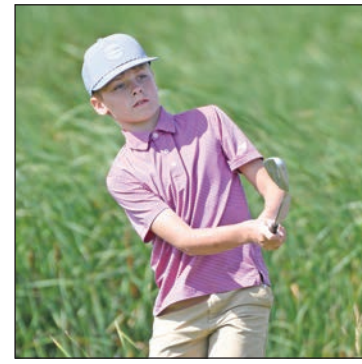


YANKTON DAILY PRESS & DAKOTAN



SDGA Junior Golf Event
Held In Yankton · 7

Volume 152
Number 44

The Dakotas' Oldest Newspaper | 16 PAGES | www.yankton.net

\$1.50



Our Special Recipe bratwurst links or patties regular or skinless, 3 or 3.75 oz.

Gatorade sports drink 28 fl. oz.

Bush's beans 15 to 16 oz.

Hy-Vee Yankton 99¢ SALE 3 DAYS ONLY! JUNE 26-28, 2026

Hy-Vee mustard 8 oz.

Holten beef patties sold in a 1.5 lb., 6 ct. pkg. for **5.94** (99¢ per patty)

Bar-S franks 12 oz.

A Learning Experience

Education Session Examines Issues Looming For The County Commission

BY JAY GRAVHOLT
jay.gravholt@yankton.net

Yankton Thrive held an educational forum Wednesday night on three separate topics that the Yankton County Commission will be considering at a special meeting scheduled for June 30.

Wednesday's forum was held at the Yankton Elks Lodge and approximately 40 people were in the audience, including members of the Yankton City Commission, Yankton County Commission and District 18.

Thrive CEO Nancy Wenande explained that the presenters would be providing education on those topics and try to represent the pros and cons of each.

The three topics were Senate Bill 96 (SB96), allowing counties to impose a half penny sales tax to be used to lower the county portion of property taxes on owner-occupied properties; the road and bridge levy; and data centers.

SB96

Mike Bockorny of the Economic Development Professionals Association (EDPA) presented on SB96, which was passed in this past legislative session.

The bill allows counties to impose a half-penny sales tax throughout the county. The revenue generated by this increase in sales tax is earmarked specifically to pay down the county portion of property taxes on owner-occupied dwellings and property.

Bockorny dove a little deeper into the subject, trying to explain generally how it can be passed, how it would be implemented and the time frames involved before people see any benefits.



KELLY HERTZ/P&D

Mike Bockorny of the Economic Development Professionals Association discusses the pros and cons of Senate Bill 96, which would allow counties to impose a sales tax to facilitate property tax relief, during a Yankton Thrive education forum Wednesday.

"The tax applies only to primary residences and cannot be used for other purposes or spent outside the county," he said. "The county has to enact it first."

Bockorny said county commissions have the ability to enact the law, but county

residents also have the right to refer it to a vote. A county commission could also add it to the ballot without a referral for transpar-

SESSION | PAGE 9

Economic Task Force Looks At Avenues For Steady Growth

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF
randy.dockendorf@yankton.net

Slow and steady wins the race.

At Thursday's meeting, a Yankton County task force discussed a forward-thinking approach to economic development by building on current strengths for slower, steady growth.

"We need to be looking forward, not back," Chairman Kelly Kneifl said.

The task force conducted a wide-ranging discussion during the 90-minute meeting. The group plans to focus on three or four areas when sending its recommendations to the Yankton County Commission.

During Thursday's meeting, the task force noted the areas already serving Yankton County well, providing a springboard for moving forward with economic development.

They pointed to Yankton County's economic diversity, which includes agriculture, manufacturing, retail, education, health care and government services in addition to tourism and recreation.

Yankton County's broad economic base has allowed it to weather major events, such as recessions or the COVID-19 pandemic.

Also, the county contains a

mix of small, medium and large businesses. The broad range means the county doesn't rely on one major employer whose downsizing or closure would devastate the local workforce and economy.

FINDING OPPORTUNITIES

Topics included the promotion of the ag sector and rural communities, lakefront development, grant writing and a business incubator providing a place for a small business to start or expand its operation.

Other topics included expanding tourism, making greater use of the Napa Junction and rail line for rural growth, partnering more with the Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED) and leveraging more uses of the Missouri River.

The task force also discussed housing affordability, attracting young families and creating job opportunities with higher wages.

In addition, the group discussed revising the county's comprehensive plan so the local infrastructure and zoning can handle the additional demands.

"If you have it in your comprehensive plan, it's easier for utilities to plan," said task

COUNTY | PAGE 9

'One Book South Dakota' Author Discusses Mount Rushmore During Yankton Visit

BY MARK MAHONEY
mark.mahoney@yankton.net

The 2020 Fourth of July holiday celebration speech by President Donald Trump in front of Mount Rushmore inspired Matthew Davis to dive deep into the history of the national memorial.

The 49-year-old author gave a presentation on his book, "A Biography of a Mountain: The Making and Meaning of Mount Rushmore," on Thursday at the Mead Museum in Yankton, as well as answered questions and heard comments from roughly 40 event attendees about the famous monument located in the Black Hills region of western South Dakota.

Davis' work of narrative nonfiction about one of the most famous and polarizing symbols in the United States is the South Dakota Humanities Council's 2026 choice for its One Book South Dakota program. Since 2003, this program has encouraged people across the state to read and discuss the same book throughout the year.

According to the Humanities Council, the 2026 One Book South Dakota theme, "One Book, Many Stories," reflects the organization's commitment to fostering thoughtful dialogue across communities and perspectives.

Yankton was Davis' first stop on his One



KELLY HERTZ/P&D

Matthew Davis gives a presentation on his book, "A Biography of a Mountain: The Making and Meaning of Mount Rushmore," on Thursday at the Mead Museum in Yankton.

Book South Dakota author tour across the state, which also includes visits to Sioux Falls, Eagle Butte, Pierre, Custer, Rapid City and Kyle.

"The book is in many ways not just

BOOK | PAGE 9

PUC OKs Black Hills Energy, NorthWestern Merger

BY JOSHUA HAIAR
© 2026, South Dakota Searchlight

South Dakota utility regulators unanimously approved the merger of Black Hills Energy and NorthWestern Energy on Wednesday in Pierre.

The new utility will be named Bright Horizon Energy, with an estimated total value of \$15.4 billion and 2.1 million customers in eight states.

Public Utilities Commission Chairman Chris Nelson said state law makes the approval of mergers the default unless there's a serious problem discovered.

"It says you shall approve these kinds of mergers, unless there's a likelihood of significant adverse impacts to customers in this state," Nelson said. "And I would submit that's probably a fairly low bar. But that's the bar that the Legislature has established. It's not something we establish."

Along with the merger, regulators approved two negotiated settlements addressing customer protections and labor concerns.

One settlement bars charging South Dakota customers for costs stemming from executive "golden parachutes" and

MERGER | PAGE 9

LUXURY LIVING WITHOUT COMPROMISE

Welcome to 101 Quarry Pines Drive, where exceptional design meets everyday comfort. Offering over 6,600 sq. ft., 5 bedrooms, 6 baths, a dream kitchen, home theater, oversized 4-stall garage, and multiple entertaining spaces, this remarkable estate is designed for the way you live today. Situated on 2.16 acres with views of Lewis & Clark Lake, this is luxury living at its finest.

\$1,995,000

Lewis & Clark Realty, Inc. **Kami Guthmiller**
Broker/Owner
605-660-2147