the Brookings Beacon

Midway point

Jacks volleyball team hitting stride during conference play.
Page 20



Volume 2, Edition 41 | Wednesday, October 14, 2026 | Onward!



Courtesy photo

Five candidates are vying for two spots on the Brookings City Council, with early voting now ongoing.

City Council race

Compiled By Josh Linehan & Jay Roe
The Brookings Beacon/Brookings Radio

Editor's note: As part of our public service mandate, the Beacon and Brookings Radio offered interviews with all candidates for local office. Their answers are reproduced faithfully here, edited and condensed for style. Full audio of these interviews is also available on the Brookings Radio website. The following is our interviews with five candidates for two spots on the Brookings City Council: Incumbents Brianna Doran and Lisa Hager and challengers Al Austreim, Shawn Hostler and Wade Wantoch.

Can you tell us about your background and why you're running for office?

Austreim: I am running for office because I have a passion for Brookings. I've lived here for over 30 years. I raised my family here. I'm a small business owner. Graduated from SDSU. And I just felt it was time — we had too many unopposed elections, or maybe we only had one candidate vying for challenging two spots. I felt it was time. I've been working on this for about four years now. I've been on the ballot the last three times, and it's something that, like I said, I'm passionate about it, and I'm willing to stick it out.

Doran: Absolutely. Thank you so much for this opportunity. I grew up in Rapid and found my way to Brookings via SDSU, like a lot of our residents do. After graduation, I found an opportuni-

See **COUNCIL,** page 4

Live like JD

Do a good deed this weekend in his memory.



Step Out on Your Porch

Stories are how we remember. Telling each other — that's how we create the world in our own minds, and how we share that world with others.

That's a big reason this column is called Step Out On Your Porch. The soft parade of life rambles past us, daily, but it can sometimes feel like we're all inside — inside our homes, inside our heads, inside our phones. But you cannot petition the lord in prayer, and you cannot become anything you weren't the day before without stepping outside and making yourself a

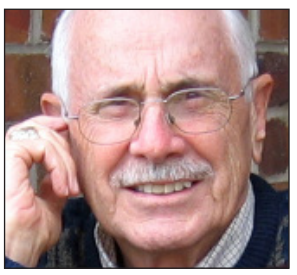
See **PORCH,** page 7

Krogman & Company
Real Estate
New name, Same great agents, Same great service
www.SellingBrookings.com
323 22nd Avenue, Brookings | 605-692-2100

Scan me to subscribe!
$2.50
7 52259 52332 7

Promoting free land in Dakota Territory

Stubble Mulch



Chuck Cecil



South Dakota Historical Society photo

As the rush for homesteads in Dakota Territory peaked in the late 1890s, it was common for land agents to arrange land excursions, giving potential settlers tours of available lands. Railroads interested in settling the land helped the excursions by offering reduced fares. Businessmen and others in excursion-sponsored towns provided the transportation to show off unsettled land. One especially successful venture was called the Nebraska Excursion. It required the use of more than 50 buggies and wagons, shown here touring the Pierre area.

The South Dakota Department of Tourism spends millions each year to entice tourists to visit our state. It's a good investment.

State officials estimate that about 15 million people visit South Dakota annually, spending in excess of five billion bucks. As an example, the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally this summer attracted nearly half a million souls and probably a dozen or so heels, all of whom paid nearly $1.5 million in South Dakota's sales tax.

In the very early days before motorcycles, however, the upper Midwest was looking for residents, not tourists. Dakota Territory needed people with gumption to settle here on free land, not just drive through with a stop for coffee and pie at Al's Oasis in Oacoma and a slug of free ice water at Wall Drug.

Years ago, while many pioneers decided on their own to make a new life for themselves in Dakota Territory, others had to be talked into it by territorial officials and railroads chugging westward.

Promotions sponsored by railroads and the Territorial government wanted to increase the number of settlers needed to bring the population level up to qualify this area for North Dakota and South Dakota statehood—and to help business.

Very often, what prospective settlers heard and read about this area were figments of early promoters' imaginations with a pinch of chutzpah and some flimflam added to the mix.

Dakota Territory was established in 1861, and the first official effort to bring new residents to Dakota Territory was made in 1865 just after the Civil War ended. The Territorial Legislature in Yankton appointed an immigration agent.

Lawmakers paid the expenses of Immigration Agent Carl Meyer of Yankton to spend two months in his native Denmark working to convince Danes to emigrate to Dakota Territory. He convinced about 40 to make the trip and settle here.

Soon, three members of a newly formed Immigration Board were assigned the job of recruiting residents. They handed out and mailed books and pamphlets extolling Dakota Territory's virtues and discounting the rumors of cold winters and hot, dry Dakota summers.

Railroads, looking for passengers and freight, also advertised. The free land and opportunities in agriculture were the big selling points. One railroad advertisement extolled: "Vegetables of all kinds can be raised with little labor and the size they attain is almost marvelous." Photos of sod houses labeled "1880" and of three-story brick mansions labeled "1885" were included in immigration flyers, books and posters. Dakota had an exhilarating atmosphere in all seasons, making it a favorite for invalids, the advertisements said.

Often, communities and their commercial clubs (today's Chambers of Commerce) who were interested in attracting settlers to nearby available homestead farmlands, coordinated with the Chicago and North Western's Dakota Central Railroad, which had a business interest in encouraging homesteaders and offered reduced rail fares to land seekers. Arriving at a host community, land agents and other local businessmen met the train, probably treated the land seekers to a free meal and provided horse and buggy transportation to the nearby acreages of yet unclaimed homestead land.

Dakota's Immigration Board had no qualms about referring to the "barren wastes of Iowa" and the "desolate plains of Nebraska." Omaha was described as the "Sodom of Nebraska." Sioux City was said to be a "den of thieves."

Whether any of that falderal convinced settlers to come here or go there is difficult to judge. But the Sodom of Nebraska and Iowa's Den of Thieves did become very large cities.

So Omaha and Sioux City couldn't have been all that bad. And Deadwood at that time wasn't exactly the territory's Heaven on Earth.





Pheasant opener: What you need to know

By Scott Waltman
South Dakota News Watch



Photo courtesy HuntFishSD

The opening day of the traditional pheasant hunting season in South Dakota is Saturday, Oct. 17, and outdoors officials are optimistic about this year's pheasant population.

Optimism abounds as one of the biggest annual events in Eastern South Dakota arrives this weekend.

The first day of the traditional pheasant hunting season is Saturday, Oct. 17, and fields across the region are expected to be packed with both pheasants and those hoping to bag them.

Hotels, motels, restaurants and bars will be just as full as thousands of out-of-state hunters will be in the area for what's something akin to a state holiday across much of South Dakota. Hunting is the state's No. 2 industry behind agriculture, and the orange carpet will be rolled out accordingly.

It's expected the number of pheasants will be high after a couple of years of mostly excellent nesting conditions across the state, including around Aberdeen. That has outdoors and tourism-related officials excited, and circumstantial evidence seems to support their optimism. A drive into rural areas during the sunrise and dusk hours usually reveals birds along roadsides gathering food.

Best of luck not only to the many visitors, but also to local residents and landowners, many of whom are responsible for conservation efforts that benefit outdoor activities, as they seek the Chinese ring-necked pheasant, South Dakota's state bird.

Below is The Insider's 2026 pheasant hunting primer with just about everything folks need to know about the season — from the cost of licenses to the weekend's projected weather to entertainment options.

Have fun, be smart, follow all laws and regulations and have a great hunt!

How much are licenses and where can I get them?

Small game licenses that allow pheasant hunting are $36 for South Dakota residents. A residential one-day small game license is $16. A resident youth small game license for hunters 12 to 17 is $5. A $10 habitat stamp is also required for hunters 18 and older.

Nonresident small game licenses are $142 and are good for two five-day periods. Those stretches can be nonconsecutive. A nonresident youth license is $10. A habitat stamp is $25 out-of-staters.

Combination small game and fishing licenses for residents, which are also good for pheasant hunting, are $60 for adults and $44 for senior citizens 65 or older. There are lower fees for people with disabilities and veterans who qualify and are approved.

Licenses can be purchased online or at businesses across South Dakota. Agent fees are charged on some of the licenses.

To purchase a license online, visit gfp.sd.gov/hunt-fish-license/. There are also roughly 280 registered license dealers across South Dakota, including at Wal Mart, Dunham's and Running's in Brookings

Electronic small game licenses are accepted. To use one, log in to your South Dakota Department of Game, Fish & Parks licensing account and take a screenshot.

When can pheasant hunting start and what's the limit on birds?

The pheasant season opens Saturday and runs through Jan. 31, 2027. Shooting is allowed from 10 a.m. until sunset for the entire season.

Three rooster pheasants are allowed each day, with a possession limit of 15 total roosters. It is illegal to shoot hens.

There are more than 5 million acres of private and government land open to public hunting in South Dakota. The overwhelming majority is open to pheasant hunting starting Saturday, though there are a few exceptions in the region.

The state's Turn In Poachers hotline is 1-888-683-7224. Reports can be made anonymously. Informants are sometimes eligible for rewards. Help sustain the South Dakota pheasant population for years to come by reporting offenders.

Where are the birds?

While GFP doesn't do brood surveys like it used to, bird numbers are expected to be excellent this fall as the result of excellent nesting conditions across much of the state.

The four counties with the highest reported pheasant harvests a year ago were Brown (75,333), Beadle (69,923), Brule (64,152) and Spink (61,833), according to GFP statistics. Spink is directly south of Brown County.

Last year, 139,641 resident and nonresident hunters bagged an estimated 1.35 million pheasants in South Dakota. That's roughly 282,500 more than in 2024, according to GFP data.

What about the weather?

It appears the weather for the opening weekend will be pleasant. The high temperature for Saturday is projected to be around 65, and it will likely be breezy. The high on Sunday, Oct. 18 should be around 70, according to the National Weather Service office in Aberdeen. There's no rain in the forecast, though the South Dakota weather is always changing.

Hunters should make sure they have sufficient water for not only themselves, but for their dogs. Dogs can get overheated when running through fields for much of the day, especially when the weather is warmer than usual for this time of year.

Longest tail feather contest

For fun, the Aberdeen Area Convention & Visitors Bureau has a longest pheasant tail feather contest that runs through season's end.

Executive Director Casey Weismantel said hunters are limited to one entry per week. They need to take their feathers to the Convention & Visitors Bureau office at 506 S. Main St. to get them measured. There will be a weekly award for longest feather, he said, with each weekly winner entered into an end-of-season drawing to determine an overall winner.

He said the contest is another way his office hopes to connect with hunters.

More information about the contest can be found online at huntfishsd.com/longest-tail-feather-contest/.

Maps and apps show public hunting areas

Maps showing public access hunting areas are available on the GFP website at gfp.sd.gov/maps. Smartphone apps are also available for both Androids and iPhones. Search for "Go Outdoors SD" in the respective stores to download the app.

Blaze orange recommended, but not required

There is no law requiring hunters to wear orange or blaze orange, however it is recommended for safety and so they can be spotted in the fields.

Trespassing on private land not allowed

It is illegal to hunt on private land without permission. Violators could be charged with trespassing. Hunters are allowed to shoot pheasants in most road rights of way. Right-of-way hunters must be on foot. Birds must have taken flight from within or be flying over the right of way. A pheasant shot in a right of way that lands on private land can be retrieved on foot. Hunters are not allowed to discharge firearms from vehicles.

the Brookings Beacon

Your LOCAL news source
Shining a light in Brookings

The Brookings Beacon (USPS #25-921) is published weekly by Linehan, LLC dba Brookings Beacon, 1804 Edgebrook Circle, Brookings, S.D. 57006-5004. APeriodicals Postage Paid at Brookings, S.D.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to:
The Brookings Beacon, 1804 Edgebrook Circle, Brookings SD 57006.

Josh Linehan
Managing Editor
BrookingsBeacon@gmail.com
(612) 220-8319

Andrew Holtan
Sports Editor
Sports@BrookingsBeacon.com
(651) 245-1844

Nichole Hammond Linehan
Business Manager
Info@BrookingsBeacon.com
(605) 651-0447

www.BrookingsBeacon.com

Council: Flock cameras, biggest priorities

Continued from page 1

ty with a career in our nonprofits, and it's led me to my current occupation as Executive Director of Margot's Place, which is our emergency shelter and crisis hotline that we offer in this county. And staying with Brookings, I held a number of leadership roles with the Brookings Council of Nonprofits, the Mental Health Coalition, the Brookings Disability Awareness Committee. I've grown to hold leadership positions with the Brookings Backpack Project Board, as well as the BATA Board, And I heard a lot from individuals in town, kind of the top three dreams that they have brought to this community: I want a place to live. I want to afford to live in Brookings. I want to enjoy my job and focus on work here, and I want to have fun. So we look at the three categories of live, work, and play, and how the city has an integral role in that, and that's led me to my personal commitments on City Council for the last four years.

Hager: I've lived in Brookings now for a little over 11 years. I moved here for my day job at SDSU as a political science professor, where I teach classes on American politics and constitutional law. During my course of time here in Brookings, I've gotten involved in the community in a variety of different ways. I quickly got involved with the young professional committees through the chamber and the Economic Development Corporation, I joined Rotary. I was asked to serve on the city charter review commission, and so that was really my introduction to all things with the city because I got to look at reviewing what is essentially the city's constitution And then there was a vacancy on the Brookings City Council, and I thought this was a really good opportunity to continue my service to the city, and I decided to throw my hat in the ring because I thought I had a variety of skills that would be beneficial to City Council. I didn't go in with any sort of real agenda per se, other than just to continue making Brookings a place where you can really bring your dreams and thrive.

Hostler: I've been a Brookings resident for 26 years. Started working at the sheriff's office and putting myself through college. Met my wife Tracy. We've been married for 19 years, and I have a 18-year-old son Tristan, who is a senior this year. So that's kind of my background. I currently serve on the Brookings County Commission in my fourth year, but I am, like you said, a candidate for the Brookings County City Council this year, and my city council belief is you know government should be responsible for taxpayer dollars, open to the public, willing to listen, and focus on serving the people in Brookings, and and I feel that with my history, this past four years on the commission, I have that, and I can bring that to the city.

Wantoch: Thank you, and I appreciate this opportunity. I have lived here in Brookings now for about 29 years. Not a native-born Brookings resident. I grew up in Pierre. Spent about 10 years after high school in the United States Army. After the Army, went to college to get that piece of paper that certifies how smart I am, and to pay the bills, ended up working in manufacturing temporarily. Well, temporarily turned into 27 years, and I started working on the floor, an assembly line at Larson Manufacturing for a few years, and then I went to 3M, as we now know as Solventum, and there I started as a machine operator for a few years. Got in the quality department, worked in the labs for a while. Spent the last 10 years as the site document administrator, which is every bit as exciting as it sounds. Kind of a boring job sometimes, but important, has to do with regulatory control. I recently retired this last February, and I thought, you know, I've lived here in Brookings a long time. I do volunteer work. I help with Sleep in Heavenly Peace, which, if you give me time, I will go on at length about because I think it's an amazing charity. I help teach fifth grade religious education at my church. I visit nursing home residents on every other Sunday to help remind them that there are people that do care about them. And I thought, you know, what else can I do? Well, to be honest, like many people, I tend to complain a lot about my government's decisions — federal government, state government, city government. Well, if I'm going to complain, I should be willing to do something. So I thought, let me step up. Let me make myself available, run for city council, and see if I can help make a community that I have really fallen in love with make it just a little nicer.

What is the single biggest priority you hope to accomplish if elected this November?

Austreim: My number one priority is transparency and representing the community as a whole. I believe that every citizen should be listened to. My motto is listen, learn, lead. Everybody should be listened to. I've met with a lot of people one on one, and I encourage anybody to get a hold of me if they want to have a conversation. I could care less what it's about, and even if we're on opposing sides of it, that makes for a much better conversation.

Doran: I will actually mention two priorities because one, I think I have direct control over as an individual, and the other is kind of a team effort on council. So, as an individual, a top priority has consistently been public engagement and transparency. I've tried a number of different ways to really meet the community where they're at. We've tried some fun videos of how to engage with council and how to reach us. We've tried community coffee opportunities. We've tried virtual community hours. We've been very intentional at more quorum notices. We've had record numbers year after year, and really seen how we can adequately engage the community in the way that they want to be engaged with city operations. So continuing that priority of having that personal responsibility that I can't expect individuals to just reach out to me. I need to be available locally, and that's why I'm as engaged as I am because I want to overlap with as many demographics as I can. The second priority would be as a team, and I would say the biggest project that we're working on is our public safety center.

Hager: I'd like to see some of our major projects seen through. So, the repurposing of the Dacotah Bank Center. So, in particular, trying to figure out how to make sure that that facility meets community needs, but also is using taxpayer dollars effectively. The repurposing of the Old Armory downtown, I'd like to see that through as well. One of the things I want to continue to be able to influence moving forward is what I see as a challenge for Brookings, which is really land use moving forward because we are landlocked, and so we can't just continue to creep outward as we're developing Brookings, and we are poised to become the third biggest city in South Dakota.

Hostler: It's really transparency, making sure that our city residents know what's going on in our city government, have a voice, and ultimately, you know, they're not going to agree with every decision. But it is really bringing our decisions to make sure that they know what's going on.

Wantoch: For me, actually making Brookings in reality nicer, not just creating a facade of being a welcoming place — changing the first letter of our name to a lowercase b because it makes it seem friendly, or trying to install decorative islands in the middle, you know, of a turning lane on a road because it looks nice. We don't need to look nice or create an image, we can do things. Things like, and this a lot of people don't like the idea of it, but Brookings does not have a homeless shelter. There are people that, for whatever reason, are sleeping in their cars, maybe on the street somewhere. Well, that's unacceptable, and we can do better. We can maybe create some kind of shelter. Right now, my understanding is that they're bussed down to Sioux Falls. They're just kind of pushed off on someone else. Well, we can take a little responsibility for our fellow human beings and care for them a little bit. The Brookings Humane Society, their shelter is wildly overpopulated with animals that need homes. The land has been procured for a larger facility. We can work toward that. I hear people talk about Brookings is a university town, and in some ways, we are. But I believe, first and foremost, we are a manufacturing center. We are filled with working-class people that go to work in a factory, they do a good job, they work hard, and they should be able to go home to a home, not an apartment that is woefully in need of renovation. We don't really have a lot of affordable housing in Brookings. There's tons of new housing construction, but let's be honest, these houses are not what we would traditionally call affordable. You know, looking at $400,000 or $500,000 for a lot of these houses, and the reason they do that is because, being a manufacturing center, we have thousands of engineers, and I appreciate these engineers. They help those factories be successful. Well, they also make a great deal of money, which allows them to buy these very expensive homes, which is why the builders build them because they can sell them. But there must be something we can do to allow the people that aren't highly paid engineers to have a house for their family with maybe a yard for their kids. That's a huge concern for me. I'm not so much worried about creating more jobs. I know for a fact that pretty much every manufacturing business in Brookings is hiring continuously. So the jobs are there. We just need to get people here, and they won't come here if they're not going to have a decent place to live.

The adoption of Flock cameras by the Brookings Police Department has generated a debate about privacy rights and mass surveillance. Where do you draw the line between crime prevention and personal privacy — and what type of city-level oversight would you support to ensure these systems aren't misused?

Austreim: I have visited with Chief Drake in person, and I do understand his point of view. I also can kind of understand citizens' point of view. We are in the technology age where you know everything is — once it's online, it's out there forever. So there needs to be safeguards in place. You know, I'm on the Brookings Police Department Foundation, so I support our police and I support what they do and what they need to do to do their job. The only thing I would say is I would like to have a little bit more conversation and a little more in-depth knowledge of just exactly where the information is, where it goes, what happens to it after that, just to try to ease citizens' concerns.

Doran: I try to be pretty engaged with our first responders and try to understand their operations and get to know our officers better too to be more informed. So, with Flock, this has been a conversation that I had probably eight months ago with a constituent, and we've been trying to figure out, really digging down into the conversation. What are the concerns? What is like an operational decision with city staff? What is council's oversight? And then what is the community's appetite with this conversation too? So this has been a multi-month conversation and process. ... From all of those conversations, I will say that I am still in that conversation. Truly, I want to be really mindful of this because, like I said,

See COUNCIL, page 5

Council: Public art and grain elevators

Continued from page 4

there have been so many cases that have been solved with this investigative tool, and the police department is at a time where we can't have a lot of overtime. We're limited on staff.

Hager: In early 2026, we started getting questions not only in public forum but also in emails about this. My initial approach was to try to make sure that we're getting those questions answered from our chief of police because he's the one who's more intimately knowledgeable about what's actually going on with that. And so, what I've noticed is as we brought those answers back, there were more questions that the citizens were having — so ultimately we got to the point where we needed to have Chief Drake come in and give a presentation about the police department's use of Flock cameras. So at our most recent council meeting, the five and a half hours marathon which you can go and watch it on YouTube, so you get a better sense of just this particular topic. If if that's something you're interested in. After his presentation, we still had citizens who expressed concerns. Chief Drake has made a variety of strides to ensure that there is some information available to the public about what's happening with the use of Flock in our community. And so, my hope, as some of these developments are discussed more, that we'll get even more feedback and see if some of these changes that we made have been sufficient.

Hostler: I kind of have a unique perspective on this, as I was in law enforcement for 16 years and 14 years right here in Brookings. The automated license plate readers are a great tool to help solve crimes, locate vehicles, and all that. I don't necessarily think that they are big preventers of crime, but you know there are some concerns that have been brought up about the privacy issues, and I know the last city council meeting they were talking about the tracking and everything. The biggest thing I see is having policies in place at the police department level to make sure that the officers are using them in the correct way. I was told one time that law enforcement is the hardest job to get and it's the easiest one to lose, and we have to trust our law enforcement officers are using those tools to the best of their ability and in the correct way, but if they aren't, and it is discovered that they aren't, to take swift, appropriate action to either reprimand or terminate, so that that information is utilized in the right way. As for the tracking, there are only seven of them in use. Honestly, I think we need to be more concerned about the tracking and the stuff with our cell phones and things like that. So we really need to look at the tools and who has access to that information.

Wantoch: I've talked with a lot of people about this, and a lot of the knee jerk reaction is, oh, this is unconstitutional. Well, I don't think that it is. I'm not an expert on constitutional law, nor did I stay at a Holiday Inn Express last night. But in reality, when we're out driving in our cars, we don't really have an expectation of privacy, and these cameras are being used to help solve crimes. I don't have the details of those crimes, but I know the various law enforcement agencies are using them to great effect. That being said, we're also seeing evidence that they're being misused. Not necessarily here in Brookings. I haven't heard of anything in Brookings, but nationwide, it's in the news. People are using them to stalk ex-girlfriends or boyfriends or what have you. So that's a concern. Now I know that here in Brookings there are safeguards put in place. They have rules for its use. They only share it with I don't know the numbers like 1200 or 1500 organizations, so that's fairly significant. I don't know what those organizations have for policies, because my concern isn't so much that oh hey they're scanning my my license plate. It's okay they store that data. Who has access to it? How is it used? Now, I see the benefit of these cameras, and I think that it's something we're going to have — I don't think they're going away, but I think we can have common sense measures put in place. It's usable, but we have a little safety net to make sure it's not being misused.

The Public Art Commission's $250,000 purchase of a sculpture for Dakota Nature Park generated debate about both the size of the investment and the selection of an out-of-state artist. What is your position on the role of city government in promoting public art?

Austreim: I believe that art and all things like that have a place. I would be a little bit hesitant about tax dollars if they are being spent on things like that. I think that's something that more the private sector should be funding. If tax dollars are going to be used, it should have been a very transparent bid process as to evaluating where the art is coming from. The renderings that I've seen of the art, they look very nice. I'm not sure they're quarter million dollars nice, but the other thing is with my background and whatnot in the nature park. I mean, I'm outside every day. If we're going to invest in art like that, I would put it somewhere else besides the nature park.

Doran: Sure. So we do have a public arts commission, and that's a volunteer board that I am very supportive of with their work. They've done a lot of great work, like the Bob Shelden baseball glove. They also just partner with different opportunities around town for murals, and when you look at public arts as a concept and a topic, it beautifies our community. So to fund it, we have a couple of different funding mechanisms. One is we put 1 percent away every year to fund public art. That was a decision that previous city councils made years ago, so there are always reserve funds. And then when the funds get to a certain point, that's when the public arts commission, as a volunteer board, takes it upon itself to see what is a gap in the community to add public art. They use that funding that's already there in the reserve funds. They go through a national bid process, and they just bring it to final approval and promotion at City Council, so that they can receive public input. They can talk about all the work that they've done and kind of their projects for the future.

Hager: So that's an issue that occurred while I've been on council, and I did vote in favor of that appropriation, and so I can walk you through exactly why I approve that from my standpoint. So we do have a city council policy that devotes a small amount of funds every year to our public art commission, and so with that they focus their dollars that they receive on ongoing maintenance of existing public art projects, then also ensuring that they're pursuing other smaller art projects, so some of the utility box wraps that you'll see around town, and then larger art installations, so like the baseball bats and the mitt that we have in Brookings. And so in order to fund those larger art installations, they have to save a lot of their money in their reserves, they start identifying locations where they think that would be beneficial. So they had identified the Dakota Nature Park, and so they went out for a national call for a project that would really highlight the entrance to the Dakota Nature Park. So our main entrance, while visible, could be little bit more attention grabbing. So they went out with this call for proposals. They had some finalists come in and give a presentation, and then they ultimately selected the project with artists out in Oregon, so at that point is when it got brought to us as council, And we had some questions from the community about why it wasn't a South Dakota artist selected, and so we asked that question, and they said only two had even applied. And so, from that standpoint, I felt confident in the fact that they were using that rubric to ensure that all applicants were being treated equitably. I understand where people would want a South Dakota artist to be selected, but at the same time, there's not a lot that we can do in terms of ensuring that there are additional applicants when they are going out on that nationwide call.

Hostler: I think public art in Brookings is a great idea. We see a lot of it down on Main with the crosswalks and the wraps on all of the electric boxes and the outdoor adventure center about a year or two back put some art up there. If you've been out there, it looks like there's three or four arrows stuck in the ground out in front of there. I think that responsible spending is the way to go. Now that was through an artist, a local artist, and I think the county paid maybe up to $10,000. I don't know how much it was. It was less than $10,000 for that. I would have liked to have seen that art for the nature park stay to a local or in-state artist, and I believe there was one — there weren't very many proposals brought forth. Was it a little excessive in spending? I haven't seen what they're going to put out, but 250,000 seems like it was a little expensive for some art to go out there. But I would have really liked to have seen it stay local, if not in state, for local artists to really showcase their talents.

Wantoch: I think the city government does have a role in helping to support local artists. We're a city government. We should support people, artists here in Brookings. They're the ones that need the help the most. Somebody who is a name. at a higher level? Well, they're on their way. They're getting support elsewhere. So supporting local artists, I am all for that. This specific one, honestly, I think it was a poor purchase. It's a lot of money, and as my understanding is, it's a sculpture of flowers, I think, on the edge of a nature park. Are we seeing the irony here? Could we not have taken that money and hired some horticultural students from the university and had them actually create a real flower display — again, not a facade, not an image, but a real thing. Have local artists come in and create something. Have local artists compete for the right to create a sculpture if we're really dead set on a sculpture. But yeah, keep the money local.

This summer, the city purchased the former grain elevator property at 210 Front Street for $450 thousand. What do you envision as the best long-term use for this site — and what role should city government play in future downtown development?

Austreim: I think that that site never should have been purchased by the city. Government does not belong in real estate transactions. I'm not afraid to say it, and I'll say it right now: that Target and Aldi being in Brookings is great. I feel that they would have been here earlier if the city hadn't been involved in the marketplace. When the city purchased the marketplace, they basically took it away from private developers. If a private developer had purchased that property, they would have been paying property taxes from day one. A private developer would not have been able to have it sit idle for 20 years. Grain elevator, same way. I wasn't at the auction, so I don't know who else was bidding on it. But I'm going to assume that it was not another government entity. So if a private person would have purchased that, it would have stayed on the tax rolls, same way with the Dakota service buildings and all those properties along there. Anytime the city buys property, it takes it off the tax rolls. So not only are we buying it and spending the money, but we're also reducing the income through our property tax streams. I believe that that property has a lot of liability in it, with that elevator being

See COUNCIL, page 9

Don’t let routine close eyes to friends

I am a person who loves routine. I like knowing what to expect, where I’m going, and how my day will unfold.

For me, any deviation from the plan isn’t an adventure and to say I don’t like surprises is an understatement.



Teri Johnson is a longtime Methodist minister and teacher.

However, on a recent Wednesday afternoon, my scheduled routine was interrupted. It was late afternoon and I was on my way home from an appointment, driving the familiar streets when a surprise caught my eye. There, wandering aimlessly in the middle of the road, was a small, seemingly lost individual. I slowed down and pulled over, concerned for their safety. Before I could even fully open my door, my unexpected visitor made her way toward me with an eagerness that suggested we had known each other for years. Her tiny stature was matched by a massive personality. In a world where many keep their distance, she was disarmingly friendly, radiating an intense eagerness to get to know me. Within seconds, she was completely focused on learning everything she could about who I was. She leaned in close, treating me not like a stranger on a local street, but like an old, deeply missed friend. Her curiosity about me was relentless and despite the appearance of being rude, she invited herself into my car and I found myself having no choice but to drive home. I quickly discovered she loved car rides.

Just like that, my carefully planned afternoon took an entirely different turn and in full transparency my initial reaction was not a positive one.

I had no idea who this individual was, where they belonged, or how they had come to be alone on the street. It didn’t take long to discover a vital clue. A small identification tag held the information I needed, including a telephone number for someone who would surely be relieved to hear from me.

I made the call, grateful that what has begun as a potentially troubling situation might soon have a happy ending.

As I waited for everything to be sorted out, I thought about how easily I could have driven past. I could have convinced myself that someone else would stop because I was in a hurry to finally get home after a long day. After all, I like routine. I like predictability. I like my days to unfold without surprises. But life, as it often does, has other plans.

Sometimes we become so accustomed to following our own schedules we forget to notice the needs of those around us. We move from one obligation to the next, rarely considering that a brief pause, a small act of kindness, or a willingness to change direction might make all the difference to someone else and ourselves.

And who was this stranger who so enthusiastically climbed into my car, accepted a helping hand, and turned my ordinary drive home into a memorable afternoon?

Suzy. Suzy the dog. An adorable dog in fact. Her collar led me to her kind owner, who also became a new acquaintance. I learned Suzy hadn’t been lost at all but rather liked to roam the neighborhood while her owner was outside.

In fact, as I placed Suzy on the sidewalk outside her house, she ran down the street to greet the neighbors who were raking. Her owner laughed explaining Suzy had countless friends in town.

I may love my routine, but that beautiful fall afternoon reminded me that some of life’s most meaningful moments happen when we step outside of it.

Earlier this month many celebrated St. Francis of Assisi Day. St. Francis is often remembered as the patron saint of animals and the natural world.

His life reflected a deep reverence for all God’s creation and a belief that kindness should extend beyond our own human circle. He referred to all animals as brothers and sisters in a shared family under our Creator.

I set out one afternoon expecting nothing more than an ordinary drive home.

Instead, I was reminded that compassion sometimes arrives on four legs, wears a collar, and has absolutely no respect for carefully planned schedules.

I’m not sure who was lost that afternoon, me or Suzy, but I have a pretty good idea.

Support local. Grow local.
Advertise with the Beacon

Local businesses are the heartbeat of Brookings, and *The Beacon* is proud join the ranks of outstanding local businesses in our community.

Why advertise with us?
- Affordable rates for small businesses
- Full-color on all pages
- Flexible sizes and placement
- Keep your advertising dollars 100% in Brookings
- Boost visibility where it matters most - right here at home

The Beacon is committed to delivering a local independent news source worthy of the Brookings community.

From the news that shapes our city to the stories that shape your lives, we intend to shine a light in our hometown and highlight both what’s truly important and what’s truly good.

Contact us to find out more!

Nichole Hammond Linehan, Business Manager
Info@BrookingsBeacon.com
(605) 651-0447

Support LOCAL Business

the Brookings Beacon



Porch: Put some good into the world for JD

Continued from page 1

part of something you don't control.

When we laid our friend Jeremy Deutsch to rest in May, we told the stories. And, it turns out, everyone in town has a JD story. He was my first boss, and I'll never have a better one, I heard. He used to pick me up when I didn't have a car. He listened to me when nobody else did.

Here's how his aunt Kim Vig says it:

"As I was trying to come up with the best ways to honor Jeremy, my mind kept going back to all of the stories we heard, both while he was sick and after he passed. Whether it was people messaging us, stopping us on the street or even in cards the family received, we heard so many stories of so many great things — big and small — Jeremy had done for people that we never heard about. Jeremy never did anything for attention or an attaboy, he did it because he truly cared about people."

So Kim and Jeremy's sister Kendra decided to try to take something awful and make something good out of it. To try and take the good he put in the world and multiply it, push it further, add another ripple in still waters. It will never cover the hole he left, but that doesn't mean it cannot be used for good.

This weekend marks a year since Jeremy got his diagnosis: an aggressive brain tumor in an inoperable location. Everyone who loved him felt helpless.

And what better way to fight the feeling of helplessness than by helping others — and honoring Deutsch in the process.

Kim and Kendra came up with the idea of Live Like Jeremy Kindness Days. And the ask is simple: This weekend, do something kind for someone. It can be big or small. Buy a coffee for the car behind you in line. Cut a neighbor's grass. Buy a stranger a beer, and toast to absent friends.



Here's how Kendra and Kim put it:

"Jeremy spent his life helping others. He was generous, compassionate and always willing to lend a hand, often without seeking recognition.

"In his memory, we have chosen to transform those difficult days into something different."

****

JD story.

Late one night, long ago, we were having a few after-bar libations at the place JD shared with Dave Schliessmann. Deutsch was playing late night DJ, like he often did. And I'll never forget — he always tried to include everyone, in the conversation and even in the music. He and I had a shared affinity for Johnny Cash, off-kilter 70s country rock, 90s rap and hip-hop. He would slide in one of those tunes and give me a wink. On this night, the later it got, the weirder the music got, as always — with a heavy emphasis on album-track Doors tunes.

At some point Deutsch disappeared, and it was approaching daylight when he finally re-emerged from the back bedroom.

He arrived shirtless, wearing only black leather pants, his long hair gelled into a wet look and falling past his shoulders.

"You guys, I finally decided. I am gonna quit everything else. I am just gonna focus on being a rock star."

The assembled tipsy were too stunned to speak.

Then, from the couch, Mike Risch chimed in: "Oh yeah? What's your stage name going to be? Drugs 3000?"

Nobody laughed any harder than Deutsch. He was saved as "D3K" in my phone for a decade.

One more JD story. I told you there were a lot.

The last time I saw him, a big group of us went over to see him at his house. His face lit up when he saw us, but you could also see he was tired. It was hard.

We made it to the car after and my wife, Nichole, finally let herself cry.

"He's laying there on that bed and he's still trying to take care of everyone," she said. And she was right. He was checking on everyone, even if just with his eyes. Offering drinks. Making sure people had a place to sit. Making sure we were included in the conversation. Making sure we knew we were loved and appreciated. His fight was over, and JD didn't change a bit about who he was.

Deutsch's cousin — brother, really — James Sigaty said, in his beautiful eulogy for Jeremy, that if Deutsch pulled off an all-time upset, one of his plans was going back to the Mayo Clinic in Rochester and just being available to sit and talk with people who didn't have visitors.

I promise you, that wasn't BS.

****

Can you do that for Deutsch?

Go and sit with someone who doesn't have any visitors? Have a catch with a kid? Write a letter to an old friend? Buy a stranger a drink and cheer for the 49ers, if you can stomach it?

"Early on in his battle, Jeremy and I had a great talk about how his fight taught the rest of us to live life with more purpose and intention," Vig said. "That's what I hope these two days will help people focus on."

There are cards available, too, if you'd like to do your good deed anonymously, but still challenge the recipient to pay it forward. Or just let them know about JD. You can pick them up at Cubby's, the Beacon office, Brookings Radio and Cleanslate Design.

A year ago we all truly did feel helpless. It's honestly still hard to think about it without feeling it, again.

But we are not helpless — not any of us. We can't do a lot of things, but we can push JD's light out into the world. We can make sure it's as bright as a South Dakota summer afternoon, and we can keep him in our hearts and we can help other people, like he did.

And we can tell the stories. We can step out on our porch and engage with the whole world, not just the parts an algorithm feeds us. We can do what he asked us to do, with his last few months:

"Take a step back and try to take in all the beauty of life. Never take any day for granted. Don't take your loved ones for granted. Love your friends harder. Do your best to be a good person."

Linehan is the Beacon's managing editor and welcomes story tips and comments at BrookingsBeacon@gmail.com





State, local races vital to our democracy



Bob Burns is a professor emeritus of political science at SDSU.

While the national media attention is on 2026 U.S. House and Senate races, vitally important races are occurring at the state and local level as voters choose their governors, state legislators and local municipal and county officials. Indeed, our day-to-day affairs are impacted more by state and local laws, ordinances and policies than by national laws and policies.

Across our nation, state governance has increasingly become a dominant party affair. Currently a single party controls both chambers of the state legislature (Nebraska exception with Unicameral control) and the governor's office in 39 of our 50 states. Twenty-three states are controlled by a Republican Party trifecta and a Republican triplex meaning party control of governor's office, secretary of state, and the attorney general positions. South Dakota is among the Republican trifecta and triplex states. Sixteen states are controlled by a Democratic Party trifecta and triplex. The states that continue to have some level of divided party control are AK, AZ, KS, KY, MN, MI, NV, NC, PA, VT, and WI.

The partisan landscape may be altered because of the 2026 Midterm state legislative and gubernatorial elections. There are 36 gubernatorial elections scheduled in 2026 with each party defending 18 gubernatorial offices. There are nineteen open governor seats being contested including nine open Democratic positions and 10 open Republican positions. Republican were optimistic about picking up gubernatorial positions in 2025 and very early 2026 because Democrats must defend the governor's mansion in five states including Arizona, Kansas, Wisconsin, Michigan and Pennsylvania that Trump carried in 2024. That optimism is waning as Trump's popularity plummets. In the latest polling, Arizona is leaning Democrat, Kansas is leaning Republican, Wisconsin is a tossup, Michigan leans Democratic and Pennsylvania is solid Democratic. Republicans face their own challenges in defending their gubernatorial positions in Alaska (Tossup), Florida (Lean Republican), Georgia (Tossup), Iowa (Lean Democratic), Nevada (Tossup), New Hampshire (Likely Republican), Ohio (Tossup), Texas (Lean Republican). Cooks Political Report in early October identified 13 states as solid Democrat, and four states leaning Democrat. In the same report, 10 states were identified as solid Republican, one state as likely Republican and three states leaning Republican. Six states including five Republican states were identified as tossup states. South Dakota is included in the solid Republican category although Trump's 47% approval rating in South Dakota may make for a closer margin in the race pitting Republican incumbent Larry Rhoden against Democratic candidate Dan Ahlers. Nationwide, there is an expectation of change favoring Democrats in the distribution of state party control of state gubernatorial offices after the 2026 midterm election.

Assessing state legislative races across the nation is a particularly challenging task. Eighty eight of the 99 state legislative chambers are scheduled for elections. That includes the Republican super majority 70 member South Dakota House and 35 member Senate. The Republicans hold a significant edge in control of the 88 chambers scheduled for election with majority control of 57 of the chambers compared to just 39 chambers controlled by Democrats. The majority control of 30 chambers is less than five percent. Larry Sabato's University of Virginia Crystal Ball research center assesses the current state legislative races as 12 states solid Democratic and another three likely Democratic compared to 15 states solid Republican, six states likely Republican and another two states leaning Republican. South Dakota is among the solid Republican states before the election is held as the SD Democratic Party has failed to field candidates for 22 of 35 Senate seats and 38 of 70 House seats. Four states including Arizona, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan are assessed as tossup states.

Republicans control both chambers in Arizona and Wisconsin; Minnesota has a shared House and Democratic Senate; Michigan has a Republican controlled House and Democratic controlled Senate.

In addition to state level gubernatorial and legislative races, voters across the nation will be voting on countless additional state and local offices.

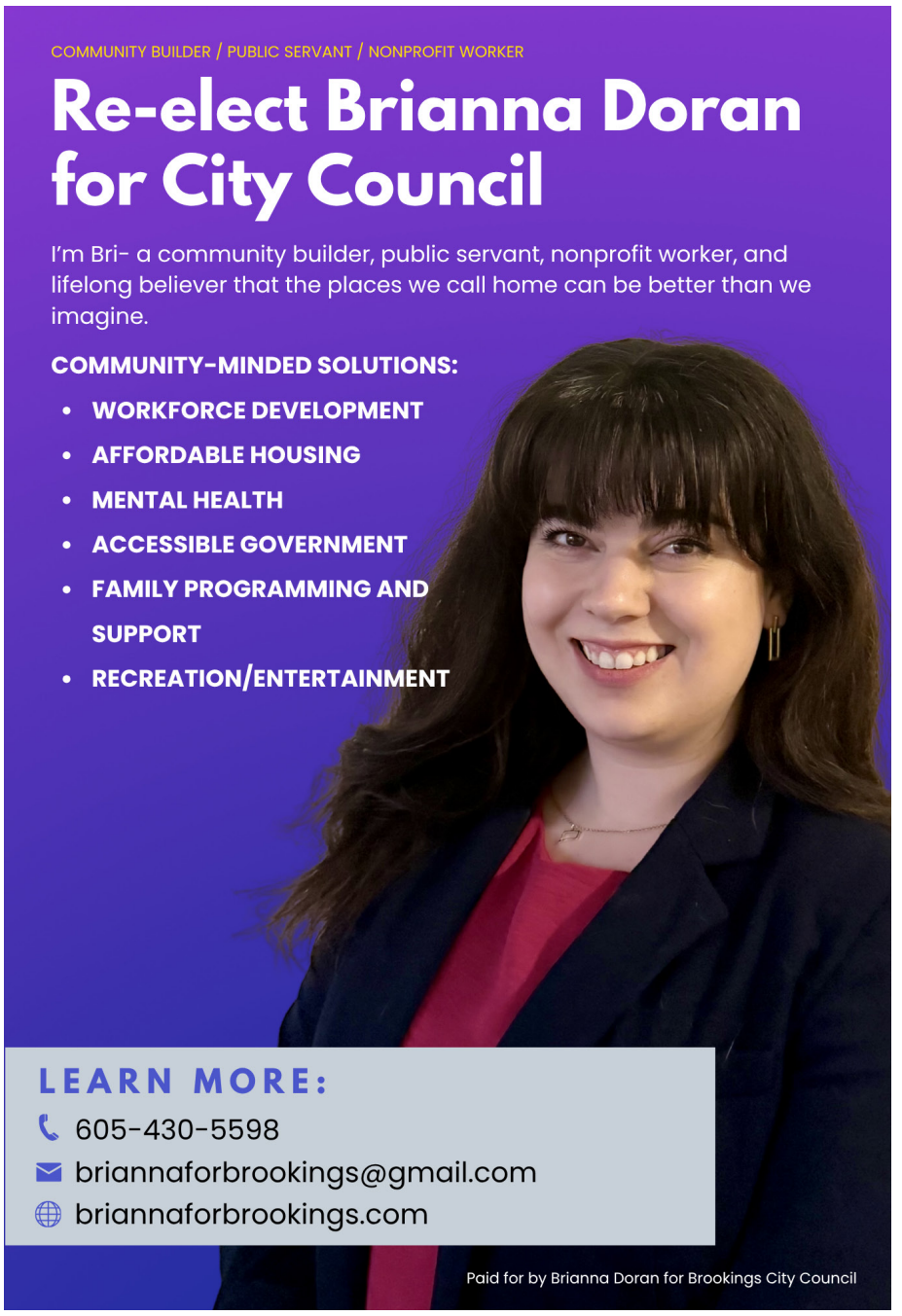
In South Dakota voters will decide who will fill the four-year terms for Secretary of State, Attorney General (uncontested), State Auditor, State Treasurer, Commissioner of School and Public Lands and Public Utilities Commissioner. Republicans are expected to prevail in each of the South Dakota statewide races although again unhappiness with Trump among South Dakota voters may make some of the races closer than usual.

At the local level, voters will be selecting County Commissioners and, depending on the jurisdiction, city council members or school board members as a result of state law that requires school districts and municipalities to schedule their elections with either the state primary election or state general election.

Voting is perhaps the most important right that we as US citizens enjoy. Our nation boasts of universal suffrage, but we must recall our long history of struggle, sometimes violent, to achieve that recognition.

Currently, efforts are underway to make voting more difficult for our citizens under the pretense of eliminating voter fraud although study after study reveals very few examples of non-qualified individuals voting. As you cast your vote now or on Nov. 3, remember the struggle for your voting rights and dedicate yourself to preserving it for you and others.





Council: Downtown and development

Continued from page 5

there, removing it will be a tremendous cost. Painting a mural on it will be a tremendous cost, and what kind of return on that investment will we get? I think anything like that should be looked at from a business sense, because essentially that's what city government is doing — they're spending the taxpayers' money to give them a return on their investment, and that investment in particular, I don't think, was a good one.

Doran: So we have a downtown master plan that was put into place a couple of years ago, and with that master plan, that really led the guiding vision for the green space, maximizing the space, assisting with programs, and maximizing opportunities with local business owners, and really leading the vision long term for downtown. Part of that was with connectivity and green space, and with land in our community, it's kind of you got to take advantage of it when the opportunity arises. You can't really wait on it because it is not a well-kept secret anymore that we are landlocked. ... And we want to be really strategic and intentional in development and bring the best services that we can to our community. We have to to jump on those opportunities. So I went and with a couple other council members, and we actually walked through before it even went up for bid, and we toured the space and we talked about different ideas. Right now we haven't finalized anything. We've talked about keeping the silos up and putting a big mural on it and having that be a public art piece. But the ground itself we could use for green space. I always say, if downtown parking — and I understand it's a big conversation — but if that is the highest need, I want to match what the highest need is.

Hager: So we acquired that property on auction, and really the reasoning behind even trying to pursue that in the first place has been this idea of the downtown master plan, where, like I talked about with the Old Armory, there's been this desire by citizens when that master plan was being created to ensure there was some sort of third space, public square down there. So our initial thought was that can help us try to pursue that, and then of course with this armory project, I think that is very beneficial. The other thing is we already own other city property down there, so even if it just ended up being more of a parking lot, I don't think people would have you know disagreed too much on that, given some of the challenges there. But long term, I would say with respect to that project is now that we have this armory proposal coming forward, I think that space can be brought into this. One thing I talked about was if there's a way that we could envision a way to show more of a pathway to Pioneer Park in some shape or form, so if you're thinking, you know, when we have the Arts Festival, here's how you can actually get from downtown to the Arts Festival and back, and I think that would be a really nice way because I know some of our downtown businesses are trying to capitalize on that as well. So I could see it as that you know we've seen other communities where they've been very creative with the grain elevators. They've been able to turn them into boutiques inside, but at the very least do like public art on the outside. So tearing them down doesn't necessarily have to be what do. But I really envision it moving forward as something we can hook into the armory project and just continue to pursue what citizens have said that they desire moving forward.

Hostler: I think the city really needs to partner with our regional growth alliance in when it comes to local development because with our economic development, they're the experts in that, and those are the partnerships we need to really foster. That purchase seemed like it came out of left field, and it wasn't on anybody's radar. And all of a sudden, it was there on auction. And they were the high bidder. And we had a local company that was bidding up to I think it was four 400,000 for that property. And the city outbid them. Well, I don't know for sure what the idea behind that was? If they were wanting to turn it into parking, I haven't seen what the city thought that they needed to purchase that property for.. But that is the whole reason. One of the reasons that I'm running is I want to make sure that our public knows what's going on before it happens, and we get that information out there sooner. But I think the city does have their master plan. Of course, it's a living, growing document. But we really need to partner with our our economic development and our developers in our community to find out what's what's best for Brookings moving forward.

Wantoch: To be honest, I don't know enough about this issue. I don't know the regulations concerning the use of land next to a railroad. I have heard some things. I would have to look into this more deeply. I suspect that our options are limited on what we can do with this land because of where it is next to the railroad track. I think there may have been a lack of contingency planning, which I've seen before. There's the jump into a project and boom, let's spend this money because we can do a thing, and maybe not enough research is done to find out if we can actually do a thing with that. And now we're we're stuck with this that we're going to also have to pay to have the old elevators torn down, because I'm sure there's a safety issue there. So that's more money, and then there'll have to be additional discussion and research and try and find out what, if anything, can be done with that land. I mean, did we just buy some really expensive grass that needs to be cut? I don't know for sure.

After public-private partnership efforts to convert the Old Armory fell through, city leadership proposed shifting the site into an outdoor gathering place for events like the Farmers Market and Downtown at Sundown — a plan that requires demolishing the old armory. What are your thoughts on this vision?

Austreim: I am not opposed to parks. My take on that is lack of transparency. That deal falling through was just announced a couple weeks ago, but yet at the meeting two nights ago, we had an engineering firm with architectural drawings. There's no way that happens in that short a time, so the city had obviously already pivoted away before they made it known to the public. I'm not opposed to parks. The closing of Front Street, if that's going to happen, then I think we made a poor choice in where we're locating our new fire department. You close Front Street; those fire trucks have no way to make it to South Main without going through a very dangerous intersection at Third and Main. A, they can't make that corner. B, we put street lights in there because of the amount of foot traffic. So I think there's a real lack of foresight there.

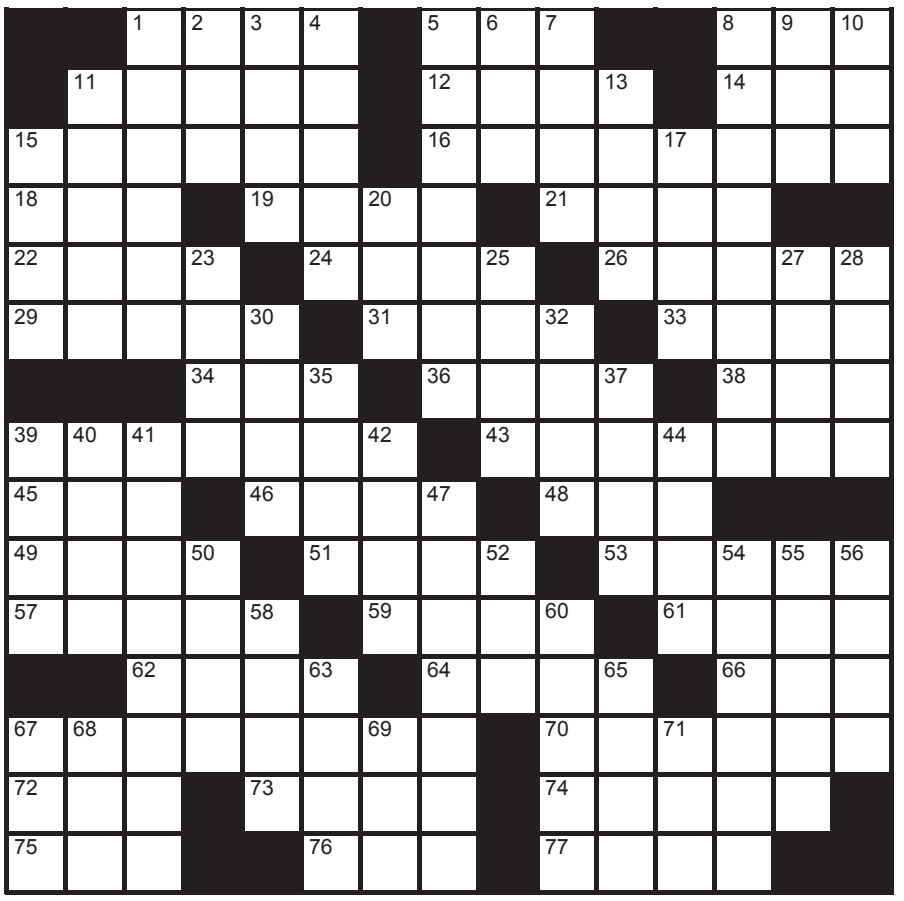
Doran: The Old Armory has gone through a number of evolutions throughout the years. It has been a park before, years ago.I recognize just the nostalgic effect that it has with this community. And it's central in our downtown. It's the soul of our community, and so it's evolved to match the need of Brookings. Before I came on council, I listened to the conversations of what projects they could do moving forward, and that's where the concept of a boutique hotel with a cocktail lounge and a restaurant really came forward. I was very excited about that project. I think everyone was. The conversations we've had publicly is recognizing that costs have just gone up. I think we saw as a nation that after 2020, that changed the market for a lot of different things. ... So a third space, it has to be accessible. It has to have maximized green space and be affordable for all demographics and all income levels. It has to have some sort of connectivity with other surrounding businesses and places. Essentially. It's a place you can go that's not your home or your work. It's that third space that you can visit, and when we looked at the next step of the armory, and we thought maybe this is his place to have that third space to to really have a unique concept of having that green space open and having that programming space. Part of that is preserving the legacy of the armory and the historical aspect of it. That's when we really lean on the historic preservation commission to lead those ideas and how we can preserve the history and legacy of the Old Armory while still responding to today's needs of the community and being sustainable in our decisions. That we are creating space for the next generation, not just what we need today.

Hager: It's been no secret the city has tried multiple times to privately redevelop the armory site, and unfortunately, the downtown hotel project with Linchpin wasn't able to get the investments that were needed in order to move forward. So we were, of course, disappointed with that. But knowing that was going on, city staff was working on trying to find some other alternatives that would align with the downtown master plan. So we were presented with an option at our last meeting, and I'm really excited about that project. I think we all were stretching into probably what hour four, four and a half of that meeting. So I think some of the excitement maybe wasn't quite there at the moment because we were all focused on questions that we had about this particular project. But I am really excited to see that moving forward. I know it's disappointing to see such a historical structure getting torn down, but what I really appreciated from the presentation we received were all of these ways in which the history of the armory could still be incorporated. So that logo in the concrete of the walkways, for instance, even some of the stages that they had proposed, where they were trying to recreate the internal structure of the ceiling and the armory. So I think that, along with some of your more traditional ways of having plaques and whatnot, can ensure that the history of the armory and more importantly the history of Brookings isn't lost in this particular project.

Hostler: I hate to bring Fargo in because of course they're kind of our nemesis to the north with NDSU, but Fargo has an awesome outdoor square. Rapid City has a really nice one. Even Deadwood, I really think that we need something like that downtown. And with the transition to this, I think it's a good start. Now, does it need to be outdoor park space in that? You know, that's yet to be determined. But I am such in favor of an outdoor square type area — for summertime, winter activities, and the farmers market, so that they have a home. I would have liked to have seen, you know, probably a little bit more forethought. It can seem like we're chasing bad money with good money, and that all comes back to the finance, the fiscal responsibility. We can't jump into stuff just on a whim and and spend that money. But I do like the idea of an outdoor square, and I think it, once done right, it'll really attract a lot of people and and things to the our downtown area.

Wantoch: Let's revisit the phrase I used a little bit ago: contingency planning. It wasn't used. They jumped into a plan. Hey, we're going to do this thing. This guy is going to do this magic trick, and it's going to become a hotel and a bar and a disco, and who knows what else. And apparently, no real thought was given to well, what if it doesn't? What do we do? And there was money spent by the developers, and then the decision was made to reimburse the

See **COUNCIL,** page 10



Across

1 Business division (Abbr.)
5 Same old, same old
8 Bean counter, for short
11 Yo-Yo Ma's instrument
12 Prima donna problems
14 Furnace fuel
15 Hit hard
16 Some war wounds
18 Bit of binary code
19 Elusive creature
21 No-win situations?
22 Post-it message
24 Exhale audibly
26 Splines
29 Parenting challenges
31 Kind of appeal
33 Stumble
34 ___ Appia
36 Lampblack
38 Tabloid topic
39 Long-horned grasshopper
43 Surrender
45 Phrase of commitment
46 Computer menu option
48 Bag thickness
49 Catches red-handed
51 Spanish liqueur
53 Flick
57 Falls
59 Kind of alert
61 Canal zones?
62 Swallow quickly
64 Combustible heap
66 Séance sound
67 Flowering tree
70 Sharpness of vision
72 Egg cells
73 Burg
74 Losing come-out roll in craps
75 Mark of perfection
76 Polynesian paste
77 Geologic periods

Down

1 Erase
2 Building add-on
3 Ruse
4 Dome-shaped shrines erected by Buddhists
5 Abdicates
6 "That's disgusting!"
7 Civil wrong
8 Interpret
9 Pandowdy, e.g.
10 Completely
11 Camp craft
13 Spinnaker, e.g.
15 Custom
17 Kind of moss
20 Woody Herman's "___ Autumn"
23 A deadly sin
25 Ungulate's foot
27 Old 45 player
28 Kind of check
30 Fries, maybe
32 Kind of box
35 Slave girl of opera
37 Quick haircut
39 Giving
40 Shevat follower
41 Luge
42 Rackets
44 Ice sheet
47 Kettledrum
50 Revolved quickly
52 Kind of sauce
54 Diversifies
55 Boiling mad
56 Glimpse
58 Coin opening
60 Rub the wrong way
63 Alka-Seltzer sound
65 Audio effect
67 Bon ___ (witticism)
68 Map abbr.
69 ___ Jima
71 Ornamental vase

2026 PuzzleJunction.com

Crossword answers, see page 13

Council: Large retailers and leakage

Continued from page 9

developer for their expenses. And my experience is that's not the way things normally work. If a developer spends money trying to develop a property they want to make money from, that's on them. That shouldn't have been on the city taxpayers. Now, for future use, they have the property and we've paid for the mitigation of the asbestos, which had to be done. Do we try to make use of it as it is? I mean, it is a structure. I don't know how structurally sound it is without further work. That would be up to city engineers to inspect and determine if that's the case. To tear it down, I would. I like the idea of a gathering space, a space dedicated for like the farmers market or other small events, because right now those events are held in parking areas. So that would be really nice, and it would be a good location for that. I would first though want to make sure that that building can't be used as it is with maybe some minor repairs or such, because it is a building. It's already built. I mean, maybe the farmers market could be inside the building. Maybe we could use that as a social gathering space indoors. But I like the idea of using it either way for that purpose because there is not enough space in downtown for small gatherings.

Brookings has seen major retailers Target and Aldi open their doors this year, alongside industrial expansions at Bel Brands and Solventum. How do you feel about the economic development direction Brookings is taking — and what kind of retail, industrial and residential development do you want to see in the future?

Austreim: My stance on economic development is that government needs to stay out of it altogether. City government and county government should create good policies. If you create good policies, that will attract industry. Once you attract the industry, the industry will create jobs. Once the jobs are there, that will spur housing, that will increase our population, and that in turn will drive retail. Trust me, I have had enough conversations with people in regional retail, even up to national retail. They don't drive through a town and say, "Hey, this looks like a nice community. Let's build here." They look at spreadsheets. They look at population. They look at tax dollars. They look at how far of a draw you're going to get for people to come into town, they are numbers people. So if we can increase the population, we will get the retail. But right now we have a housing problem that people cannot afford to live here because they can't buy property here. So we're pushing people to smaller communities and more of a commute. Well, when they have to commute to get to work, guess what? They might buy their groceries and gas in another community as well. So, for Brookings' best interest, the city needs to create good policy and let the private developers and everything else handle it and let it play out on its own.

Doran: First, I'm really excited about the progress that the economic development merger has made with our Brookings Growth Alliance. When we look at the marketplace, that was a very intentional piece of development to kind of spring-load the development on that side of the Interstate, and that has been a project in the work for decades. So I think it's really exciting to stop and take a moment to celebrate the big win of having those major companies come. I'm really bad at that. I'm used to just jumping to the next project, but I do want to take a moment and celebrate that we got those doors opened. ... We have surrounding land that people are interested in now because that development has finally started and taken off, and that's really benefiting people that are just driving on the interstate. It's covering that gap, that leakage that we had for groceries and retail, and we brought in the companies the community has been asking for for years. So that is really exciting.

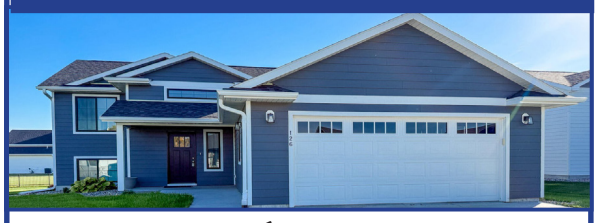
Hager: Adding Kwik Star, Target and Aldi — that has been extremely exciting for our community, and I think that there's just bigger and better things to continue coming to that marketplace. I think it's important that we continue to work to attract those major retailers that our citizens want to see, both from a standpoint of obviously there's a need, but also we want to avoid folks leaving Brookings and spending their dollars elsewhere because we're losing that sales tax. It's specifically called sales tax leakage. So we don't want that happening. But we also don't want to forget our small businesses too, because those are also important. While I've been on council, for instance, we've continued with the downtown improvement grants, so helping our downtown businesses improve the facade of their physical space. For instance, there's also opportunities to improve things inside and increase your security. We made it easier for citizens to operate their businesses at home. So I think just continuing to have an eye on small business is also important from the standpoint of housing. I think that's really important as we move forward with Brookings growing. Like I mentioned, Brookings will become the third biggest city most likely in South Dakota, and so we have to make sure that we have the housing that will retain our workforce, and especially if we do see more growth in the industrial community as well. So we've seen expansions with, you know, Solentum and Bell brands, for instance. And so we want to make sure that we're a community that we can continue to attract that kind of expansion or that kind of economic growth, but at the same time, ensure that those workers can actually live here.

Hostler: Aldi and Target coming to town is great, because we saw a lot of leakage going to Watertown and Sioux Falls with shopping. I think that was a great addition. I would love to see some more

See **COUNCIL,** page 13

Best Choice REAL ESTATE
It's the sign of success!
www.BrookingsHomes.com

NEW LISTING



$369,900
126 Wedgewood Circle, Brookings
2 bed | 2 bath
Listed by Anita Thomas, 605-690-3127 & Paul Thomas, 605-690-5627

NEW LISTING



$429,900
1203 Eagle Avenue, Brookings
5 bed | 3 bath
Listed by RaeAnn Thompson, 605-695-8495 & David Kneip, 605-691-9200

NEW LISTING



$525,000
207 Hickory Street, Brookings
4 bed | 3 bath
Listed by Kari Westlund, 605-690-9200 & Jena Werpy, 605-222-5144

PRICE CHANGE



$289,900
317 Audra Drive, Aurora
2 bed | 1 bath
Listed by Kelan Bludorn, 605-690-7772

PRICE CHANGE



$339,900
313 Audra Drive, Aurora
2 bed | 2 bath
Listed by Kelan Bludorn, 605-690-7772

PRICE CHANGE



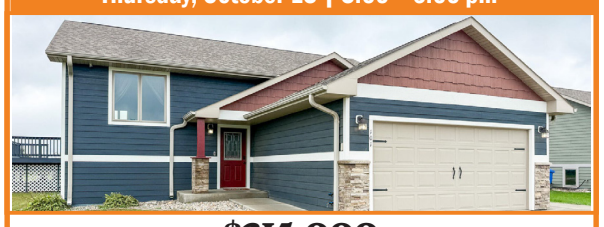
$349,000
1108 10th Street S., Brookings
5 bed | 3 bath
Listed by Colleen Vukovich, 605-695-0255

OPEN HOUSE
Thursday, October 15 | 5:00 - 6:00 pm



$259,900
2501 Oak Branch Avenue, Brookings
2 bed | 1.5 bath
Listed & Hosted by Kari Westlund, 605-690-9200 & Jena Werpy, 605-222-5144

OPEN HOUSE
Thursday, October 15 | 5:00 - 6:00 pm



$315,000
101 Santema Street, Aurora
4 bed | 2 bath
Listed & Hosted by Kelly Odegaard, 605-690-0942

OPEN HOUSE
Thursday, October 15 | 5:00 - 6:00 pm



$324,900
2412 Oak Branch Avenue, Brookings
3 bed | 2.5 bath
Listed & Hosted by Kari Westlund, 605-690-9200 & Jena Werpy, 605-222-5144

OPEN HOUSE
Thursday, October 15 | 5:00 - 6:00 pm



$324,900
2414 Oak Branch Avenue, Brookings
3 bed | 2.5 bath
Listed & Hosted by Kari Westlund, 605-690-9200 & Jena Werpy, 605-222-5144

OPEN HOUSE
Thursday, October 15 | 5:00 - 6:00 pm



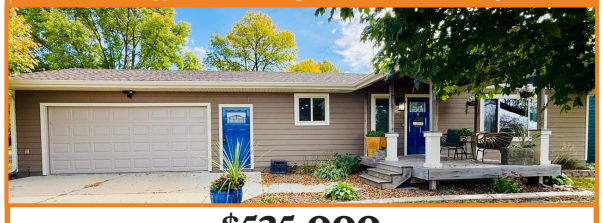
$337,900
2417 Oak Branch Avenue, Brookings
3 bed | 2.5 bath
Listed & Hosted by Kari Westlund, 605-690-9200 & Jena Werpy, 605-222-5144

OPEN HOUSE
Thursday, October 15 | 5:00 - 6:00 pm



$359,900
2434 Oak Branch Avenue, Brookings
3 bed | 2.5 bath
Listed & Hosted by Kari Westlund, 605-690-9200 & Jena Werpy, 605-222-5144

OPEN HOUSE
Saturday, October 17 | 10:30 am - 12:00 pm



$525,000
207 Hickory Street, Brookings
4 bed | 3 bath
Listed & Hosted by Kari Westlund, 605-690-9200 & Jena Werpy, 605-222-5144



Work with our agents to find YOUR new home
www.BrookingsHomes.com

www.BrookingsHomes.com 605-692-9200 611 6th Street, Brookings

News Briefs

Neubauer wins library award

BROOKINGS — The Brookings Public Library is proud to announce that Mikaela Neubauer, Community Services Coordinator, has been named the 2026 Support Staff of the Year by the South Dakota Library Association.

Instituted in 2000, this award recognizes outstanding library support staff who make a contribution to advance and strengthen the role of support staff in the library community by demonstrating leadership, initiative and creativity in providing essential library services to their communities.

Neubauer has served as the Community Services Coordinator at BPL since 2019. In that time, she has grown the number of creative, educational, and engaging events and programs for adults in the Brookings community, while also partnering with area organizations to further share the Library's offerings.

"Mikaela demonstrates excellence in everything she does at the Library," said Ashia Gustafson, Director of Library Services at the Brookings Public Library. "She brings an energy to her work and strives to make all members of our community feel welcome at the Library."

During her time at BPL, Neubauer has focused on building community through events such as speakers and documentaries for Native American Heritage Month, Black History Month, and Pride, as well as programs developed for those with disabilities in mind, with many of the events covered by grant funding she has secured. She has also carved out a niche for programs focused on socializing, including Bring Your Own Craft Night, Silent Book Club, and Speed Friending.

"I appreciate the curiosity and creativity Mikaela brings to her role," said Nancy Swenson, Technology Services Librarian and Programming Supervisor for the Brookings Public Library. "She keeps our community needs and interests in mind while exploring program options, and is always interested in trying something new."

While working full-time, Neubauer began coursework for a Master's in Library Science from Emporia State University, graduating in May 2025. She was awarded the South Dakota Humanities Council's Distinguished Achievement in the Humanities award in 2024 for her work bringing humanities-centered events to the community.



Courtesy photo

Brookings Public Library Community Services Coordinator Mikaela Neubauer won the 2026 Support Staff of the Year award from the South Dakota Library Association.

Trick-or-treat at The Neighborhoods

BROOKINGS — Children 12 years old and younger are invited to trick-or-treat at The Neighborhoods at Brookview skilled nursing home on Friday, Oct. 30. Doors will open at 3:45 p.m. Trick-or-treating will continue through 5:15 p.m.

Residents in all three neighborhoods will hand out candy to children. For more information or to donate bagged candy or cash for candy, please contact Activities Coordinator Amanda Uecker at (605) 696-8716.

The Neighborhoods at Brookview skilled nursing home offers short and long-term care to residents. The facility embraces the household model of care which aims to create a homelike, social setting for residents. Staff incorporates the five person-directed values in care: Choice, Dignity, Respect, Self-Determination and Purposeful Living. For more information, please visit brookingshealth.org/Neighborhoods.

Rotary hears about dairy industry

BROOKINGS — Brookings Rotary recently welcomed Dr. Maristela Rovai of the Dairy and Food Science Department at South Dakota State University.

Dr. Rovai is a native of Brazil who has lived in Brookings for about 12 years and has a veterinary and animal science background. Her presentation covered the status of the dairy industry in South Dakota, including the dramatic decline in the number of U.S. dairy farms since 1980 alongside a near-doubling of total milk production.

In South Dakota, farm consolidation has meant a reduction from over 6,000 dairy farms in 1980 to roughly 125 today. This change in farm numbers is paired with doubled milk production. Other factors include the economic pressures dairy producers face given rising land and corn costs versus relatively low milk prices.

Dr. Rovai discussed the history of European immigration into South Dakota's dairy industry. Current producers are from countries such as the Netherlands, Ireland, England, and Switzerland, as well as recent arrivals from California. The concentration of dairy farms has increased along the I-29 corridor. Farm size classifications range from small to XXL. On the larger farms, roughly 98% of the workforce employees identify as Hispanic or Latino.

Additional topics included milking technology and procedures (including carousel and robotic milking systems), sustainability practices, and the broader social and economic context of the dairy industry's reliance on immigrant labor.

The meeting also acknowledged Dr. Londa Nwadike, head of the department, and it closed with an invitation for members to visit the department and its facilities, including an ice cream social event.

The Brookings Rotary Club is part of Rotary International, a global network of volunteers dedicated to service above self. The club meets weekly, supporting community projects that advance education, environmental beautification, and humanitarian aid locally and abroad.

Craft show set for this weekend

The General Federation of Women's Clubs will be hosting their 11th annual Uptown Girls Craft Show on Saturday, October 17th, at the First Lutheran Church Gym, 337 8th Street, Brookings, SD, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Entrance is by the north parking lot of the church through the Mission Coffee House.

The public is invited to an all-encompassing event full of creative hand-made items to view and purchase. This will be a one-day collaboration of nineteen different artisans and crafters from Arlington, Aurora, Brookings, Pierre, Volga, Watertown, White, along with Canby, Minnesota and Columbus, Nebraska. Don't miss this opportunity to purchase a variety of exceptional handcrafted items for yourself or as gifts from these multi-talented vendors.

New Vendors

SilverLeaf Acres, Aurora, is a family-run business that produces handmade skincare products using locally sourced, organic ingredients and is hand-poured and quality tested.

From the Heart by Randi, Brookings, will have a variety of whimsical handmade beaded suncatchers in various styles for sale.

Faith and Stitch by Izzie, Volga, will be bringing their quilted and sewn items along with plaster painting kits for kids.

Show Features

The Uptown Girls Craft Show guests will have an opportunity to win door prizes. Be sure to get your ticket so you won't miss out on a chance to be a winner.

In keeping with the tradition of the Uptown Girls Craft Show, the proceeds from vendor booth space fees will be used to support Brookings community charities and other international charities.

For the public's dining pleasure and convenience, the Mission Coffee House will be open for lunch from 9 am – 2 pm. Also available, and Uptown Girls' favorite comfort food, will be the Belize Mission glazed cinnamon rolls and other sweet treats.

County grass fire contained

BROOKINGS COUNTY — The Brookings County Sheriff's Office, Brookings Fire Department and Aurora Fire Department responded to a grass fire at 473rd Ave and near 218th Street on Oct. 7.

The field there just south and east of the Elkton exit on I-29 was burning when first responders arrived.

Investigation revealed the owner was burning a pile of trees when the fire spread to nearby tall grass where it quickly spread.

The total area burned was less than an acre and damage is still being estimated.

This incident also serves as an important reminder to call Dispatch at 605-692-2113 and to speak with the local fire chief about current burning conditions prior to any planned burning.

Parenting classes

BROOKINGS — The Child and Family Resource Network at South Dakota State University is hosting its next "Common-Sense Parenting" class series starting Nov. 2.

The free, six-class series is designed for parents and individuals who engage with school-age children (5-16 years old), kindergarten into high school.

Classes will be from 6-8 p.m. Mondays at the Pugsley Center on the SDSU campus. Sessions are planned from early November to early December:

Session 1: Nov. 2
Session 2: Nov. 9
Session 3: Nov. 16
Session 4: Nov. 23
Session 5: Nov. 30
Session 6: Dec. 7

Parents who have accurate information about development, temperament and social and emotional growth are more likely to experience increased satisfaction and enjoyment in parenting their school-age children.

Class participants will learn how to reduce family stress, support success in school, diminish yelling and fighting and reduce problem behavior. Parents can also enrich their relationship with their child and increase their and their child's confidence.

Council: Dacotah Bank Center remodel

Continued from page 10

grocery type places, especially down in the southwest corner, because everything is over here on the east side. I would really like to see some more fine dining restaurants come to town. You know, we've had a couple open up in the last year, year and a half, which is awesome. It really fosters local and local businesses and entrepreneurs to have those mom and pop shops. I love those mom and pop shops. But with the economic development, you know, we do need to really tap into our resources that we have with SDSU. What can we do to keep the students here to create their businesses here, and that's where the Brookings Regional Growth Alliance and even the Research Park at SDSU need to be our main partners. And unfortunately, we've seen in the past two years we've kind of started cutting the one of the legs out of the stool on the research park, with the city cutting their funding, so we need to invest in that. And of course, economic development doesn't happen overnight, as we saw with Target in that area. But if we invest in our community, invest in the people here, we're going to bring in those larger businesses.

Wantoch: I like that we are finally welcoming the larger businesses to Brookings. In the past, some certain businesses were turned away. For instance, we're all aware of Cabela's. They wanted to come to Brookings. Whoever was in power at the time decided no, and gosh, wasn't that a good decision? I think we need to continue. Obviously, we need to continue developing, offering incentives to business is good. However, we can't over promise. I don't think we should overstep that because you can offer incentives to the point where the city essentially doesn't benefit anymore. We're expanding to the east. We're expanding to the south. That's great. I love that. Could we expand in other directions? I know there's an issue with some of the areas are marshy. Could that be mitigated? Could that be worked through? I think we're going in the right direction in that respect.

A committee recommended shifting the Dacotah Bank Center to a hybrid live event and recreational facility. Has the center been a good investment — and what specific changes would you like to see to improve efficiency and utility at Dacotah Bank Center?

Austreim: Well, if the Dacotah Bank Center, whether or not it's a good investment, we could probably debate that for a long time. It's kind of been a thorn in the side of taxpayers ever since it was built, as to how much should it be subsidized versus quality of life, those things. I heard the new plan the other night, the city council meeting. The one thing that bothers me the most is the city entered into a 99-year agreement with 4-H. They have not answered the question: What happens to 4-H? ... And the number one event was rodeo, so I think it's a little short-sighted to be pushing that out. If our agreement with the current management needed to end, that is one thing. But I think we're jumping a little bit too fast into the next phase. I think we need to play it out a year or so. Get our 4-H stuff figured out. Figure out a long-range plan, much like the Armory. We don't need to rush into it. Let's take our time. Let's make the best decisions.

Doran: When I look at public facilities, I look at the service that it offers the community, and the city's role is that we make the decisions that there are some public facilities that we are going to continue to subsidize because of the value that it brings to Brookings. But when we look at that value, we have to look at: Are we meeting that community need? Are we being responsive to the public? I think it's going to take a big transition and a lot of community patience and trust and teamwork while we figure this out over the next year. But I am excited about the direction because we've seen since 2020, the market changed. We couldn't bring in and sustain the acts that we were used to before that time. And so the pivot was that we wanted it to be a community-centered building. We're still going to have those galas, those fundraisers, those conferences. We're going to see how we can bring in those tournaments and those youth programming to expand it a little bit more, but I see the Dacotah Bank Center as really being that community building and being even more accessible to our our public with the programming that we can bring in.

Hager: I think the Dacotah Bank Center has been a good investment for the community. The issue has been that the use of that facility and how it can be used is changing. So, really, since COVID, what we've seen is that those larger concerts, larger types of events, are not interested in coming to a smaller market like Brookings. So what Brookings used to get now will only go to places like the Denny Premier Center in Sioux Falls. So then, what does that mean for Brookings? Well, we're getting more of what you would see for concerts on like the casino tour route, and so what we found is with some of those events that we've brought to Brookings, they're just not making money, and so the ticket sales aren't quite there, and then the concessions and everything else just isn't keeping up with the cost of that event. I think it just shows that we needed to pivot and so with the Oakview Group's contract being up for renewal, that was a good time to determine what other options are there for us, and let's actually dig into the data. So, the first approach we took was to survey the public. What do you want to see? So, the survey, you know, about a third wanted it to stay the way it was. About a third needed more information, and then another third really wanted something recreation focused. So we did some listening sessions at the Dakota Bank Center, and we still kind of got that same response. And so we just kept hearing though more of this recreation, especially in light of we knew the big concerts weren't working, and that was confirmed through some analysis that the Dakota Institute did for us, where they were looking at here's the events that have been hosted, and here's what tends to generate funds, and here's the ones that don't, and then the large concerts were the ones that just weren't keeping pace. But things like the dart tournaments, the banquets, the weddings, those were doing better, and so their recommendation was try to move away from that. Also, youth sports seems to be promising because for what you're losing from concerts, you have a tournament; those bring people in. They're eating at your restaurants. They're staying in your hotels. And so I'm excited about that transition and being able to ensure that we do have more of a draw to the Dacotah Bank Center than maybe what we've currently had.

Hostler: You know, the Dacotah Bank Center has been here since I've been here, and I'm not a big concert goer, but I have attended concerts and things like that. There's always been a shift on when acts get larger and they move to larger venues, but I think there still is a want for things like that. Now that survey that they put out the beginning of the year was very, very focus-driven to a recreational area, which I think you know showed where the city wanted to take that. I feel a lot of our regional partners weren't consulted on that. I did go as Brookings County Commissioner, went in and visited with Paul and reminded him of the agreement that the county has with the city for the use of the Dakota Bank Center and asked to be a part of those conversations. Unfortunately, the county has not been part of those conversations. In the presentation at the last city council meeting in September, they talked and it was mentioned that extension and 4-H had had talked with them. That's not really the case. What happened is is during our achievement days, a member of the city staff went out there and walked through and talked to extension and 4-H and said, "This is what we plan." And this is what we're going to do to shift 4-H from inside the Dacotah Bank Center to possibly over to Larson Ice Arena, and a tent was even mentioned. That building was designed to have basketball sports, but also it held monster truck shows and and motocross and rodeos and everything else that was designed for that. The Larson Ice Center — three years ago they just put $7 million into that building to redo the chillers and and make this more sustainable for ice. That air handling system was not designed for dirt, and I'm just concerned, you know, that it's we're gonna again chase good money after bad money if we start using those buildings not the way that they're intended. And maybe it's just me. I don't like to see SDSU sports teams go to Sioux Falls. You know, volleyball has been down there. Now, are they drawing good crowds, absolutely, and if there's one or two games down there, that's fine. But if they transition away from the way it's used right now, the SDSU rodeo is going to leave town. There is no place in Brookings to house that rodeo. It's either going to be in Sioux Falls or it's going to be over in Huron. That is going to take away tax dollars. All of those students that come to town and their families, as well as the 4-H. So it needs to be studied more, and the partners needed to be talked with.

Wantoch: That has been a contentious subject since it was built. Does it cost the city money every year? Yes. Does it bring in tax revenue? Yes. Brings in people to Brookings to visit. Yes. I don't think it's big enough to bring in really big events, and in some ways, it's too big for the events we do have. I would like to see it continue to be used for the original purpose that it was meant for: For rodeos, for 4-H shows, FFA. I mean, we could still fill that place. These organizations have massive events. I mean, we get 4-H, and we get the rodeos. Some important rodeos. Could we entice the FFA to bring some of their big events? They have massive national gatherings. Could we maybe get some of those up here? I think that is something we should focus on a little more. Concerts? Well, we're most likely not big enough to get the really exciting groups. People are still going to drive to Sioux Falls. As another candidate said, we're not going to be able to compete with that. We're not big enough. So down the road, will it be bigger? Maybe. But right now, I think we need to focus on what we can get in there, and what the people that live in this area want. Do they want some small concerts? Maybe, I haven't seen the numbers. Do they want the rodeos and the animal shows? Absolutely. That's what

See **COUNCIL,** page 14

		D	E	P	T		R	U	T			C	P	A
	C	E	L	L	O		E	G	O	S		O	I	L
W	A	L	L	O	P		S	H	R	A	P	N	E	L
O	N	E		Y	E	T	I		T	I	E	S		
N	O	T	E		S	I	G	H		L	A	T	H	S
T	E	E	N	S		S	N	O	B		T	R	I	P
			V	I	A		S	O	O	T		U	F	O
K	A	T	Y	D	I	D		F	O	R	F	E	I	T
I	D	O		E	D	I	T		M	I	L			
N	A	B	S		A	N	I	S		M	O	V	I	E
D	R	O	P	S		S	M	O	G		E	A	R	S
		G	U	L	P		P	Y	R	E		R	A	P
M	A	G	N	O	L	I	A		A	C	U	I	T	Y
O	V	A		T	O	W	N		T	H	R	E	E	
T	E	N			P	O	I		E	O	N	S		

COUNCIL from page 13

that's what this part of the country is all about.

The City Council rejected the County Commission's recent nominee for a seat on the Human Rights Commission. What does this situation reveal about the balance between ideological diversity and the core mission of city boards — and how should the city handle future appointments to volunteer boards?

Austreim: I think that all openings on volunteer boards need to be filled. You need to take all applicants, go through them, and decide who will best represent the community as a whole. Human Rights Commission, especially the fact that the county was unanimous, and the city was unanimous in opposite direction, tells me that there's a disconnect. My question would be: Was the candidate interviewed individually by the council, or were they basing their decision off of what they heard about the individual. Every committee, every group should have a very diverse set of experiences and opinions. Like I said before, if you have a conversation with somebody you don't agree with, you're going to have a much better conversation.

Doran: I am very appreciative of our volunteer boards. When I say everyone has a role in impacting their community, I really mean it. Coming from the nonprofit world, we rely on volunteers. We rely on a diverse group of thoughts and perspectives and lived experience. In the process as it is, the council actually steps in last because it's the mayor who makes the recommendation. We are that final step of approval, and that's at a public board meeting. When we talk about something as delicate as like diversity, equity, inclusion in our human rights commission, this is a non-negotiable value of Brookings. It's in our city's vision, our city's mission. This is something that we're very proud of. We have a 100 MEI score with the HRC nationally, and we're one of the few cities in the nation to have that score. We want to look at projects and people and work that can continue to progress that forward. I think with society, things that shouldn't get politicized have the chance to get politicized, and that creates fatigue, that creates burnout, and that creates disruption in work, and that can be across the board.

Hager: So one thing that I do think got a little missed in this conversation is with the change to the charter, we have it where all of the city boards and commissions should have nominations coming from the mayor with a confirmation from council. So, when I was on the Charter Review Commission, we talked a lot about mimicking this to like what we see with the president and the U.S. Senate. And so, one thing that this situation brought up was that we have some ordinances that don't reflect that. So currently, we have a couple of boards. The Human Rights Commission was one where the issue was the county in the past had been able to make a recommendation. So how we navigated that in the meantime is to have the mayor bring that to us as courtesy. And so mayor brought it to us, and then at that point was when we had to make a decision about whether to move forward with that particular nomination. At the end of that meeting, I made a motion where I said we needed to identify those particular boards and commissions where the ordinances are out of date, and I made the recommendation that we should be determining whether we want there to be a seat reserved for the county, and what does that look like? Does that look like it's for a county resident, or does it actually mean that there's input from the county commission on this particular board? And so we're still working through that. I think that will come here soon. From my standpoint, the county has their own boards and commissions, and then of course we have ours. I think, from the standpoint of the human rights commission, I think it makes sense that that one is just squarely within the confines of the city.

Hostler: I think those volunteer boards, and I've said this before, those volunteer boards are important, but they need to have a diverse makeup. We need to have people on those boards that, of course, will listen, but will ask the hard questions and ultimately come together or you know have good quality discussions. I think the way that it is set up now and with a little bit of the change, there's recommendations, and it's a recommendation by the mayor and approval by the city council. Those boards are with the city. So I don't know if they really do a lot of work in the county and in our rural areas. So that'll have to be some deeper discussions. That's really going to have to be probably looked at moving forward.

Wantoch: I'm glad you asked that because it's something that bothers me when I look at the voting records. It's unanimous. It's unanimous. It's unanimous. Like, how is this possible? I mean, do we have six people that they grow up together and they go to the same school and they seem to be lockstep? Is what we need in there is we need some dissenting opinions, and if there are dissenting opinions, well, we need that. We need that scene. We need that in the voting record. I don't know if they're trying to show that well every idea is perfect by having unanimous decisions every time, but it almost seems like there's a lot of backroom deal making, and maybe that's part of the process. But I still think we need to see some sort of indication of dissenting opinions, and if they're not existing, then by gosh, we need to get somebody in those offices to get some other opinions, other perspectives, maybe someone with a manufacturing background who doesn't have their own business to drive them. As far as future volunteers. I love volunteers. I think everyone should volunteer for so much more than they do. It's an obligation we carry.

Why should voters choose you for City Council?

Austreim: Well, I think if you are following it at all, you will realize that I am an independent voice. I'm a small business owner who works throughout the community. I have been working in this community for 30 years, and I have seen the community develop. I have seen these neighborhoods go in. I know the problems. I know the struggles and what citizens are faced with, and through my job. I'm a full-time problem solver. Whether it's a commercial project, residential project, a lot of times in our work, people have a problem. They're looking for a solution. I like to find solutions, but I like to get input because not everybody knows everything. So you need to be able to go out, find the information and then use that information to make the best decision possible. And if your decision or your opinion is not the popular one, it's still yours. You need to stick with it and own it. And I am ready to work for the citizens of Brookings from day one.

Doran: I have been very privileged to serve on the city council over the years, and my philosophy was I always wanted to be where the work was. I am a worker bee. I have worked multiple jobs. I am on multiple nonprofit boards. I work 12 to 16 hours a day because I just care about this community and I want to be part of really successful teams that progress Brookings forward. With my my time on City Council, I've had those personal initiatives of that transparency and public engagement, creating those direct opportunities for the public, as well as really, I've been proud of rallying the team together with city staff and council to create opportunities like the Speakers Bureau to go directly to businesses and social service agencies and nonprofits to present to them directly about city projects and our vision moving forward to make sure that we're always responsive to the public. I have been really excited to be a part of the work that has launched economic development in our community, as well as still recognizing that we have a lot of work to do to uplift the rest of the community. Coming from the nonprofit world, I see perspectives that maybe we don't see every day. That there are families that are still living paycheck to paycheck. We still have food instability. We have food insecurity. We have housing instability, and the city has a small role in that of supporting our nonprofits, supporting those quality of life initiatives, making sure that we're being really intentional with our development of housing and retail, and supporting everyone's dream that they bring to Brookings. So I want to thank the community for trusting me for the last four years with this role, and I'm very excited to continue that work because we have a lot of things on the horizon that are even going to progress Brookings forward.

Hager: I will just take that time to tell everyone a little bit about what I bring to council. And so, one is proven leadership. I have over 10 years of public and community service, even before everything I talked about that I've done here in Brookings. I worked in Congress for former Congressman Dan Lipinski on the House side, and so I've just seen and had firsthand experience in seeing the importance of serving your community at every different level, and so I just want to be given that chance to continue that work that I've started here in Brookings. I also bring those creative solutions, so like I've talked about, making sure that I'm using my skills as a teacher and a researcher to talk to citizens about issues and look into best practices, whether it's you know what's worked well or what hasn't for similarly sized communities, but also to just hopefully find compromise, much like what we talked about with respect to the Flock cameras, and then I do bring responsive governance. I respond to every text, email, phone call. You know, if somebody comments on my social media, you know, I respond to all of those. I want to make sure that our citizens are feeling heard and that their input is guiding our decision-making process, and then last but not least, fiscal responsibility. I take being a steward of your tax dollars very seriously, and with that, I want to use your input in order to make sure that I'm making those decisions. And so if you do use one of your two votes to vote for me, which I would of course love. I will continue to focus on economic growth. So we talked about that rather extensively for what that means for me with our large retailers, our small businesses, and housing. But I also just want to keep working on issues of community vitality and public safety.

Hostler: My commitment to Brookings is really to listen, be transparent, spend responsibly and serve. Those aren't simply campaign themes, and I don't have a set agenda. Those are my standards that I use when considering issues, and that will come before the city council. I don't promise that everybody's going to agree with everything that I decide, but what I do promise is that I will listen to everybody. I will respond. I will make informed decisions, and at the end of the day, be accountable to our city and our residents.

Wantoch: There are a lot of great candidates. They have a lot of good things to say. A lot of them have been in the council for a number of years. I bring a different perspective. As I said before, I do not own a business. I don't have a personal agenda other than hoping to help make Brookings nicer and a better place to live for everyone. I don't have any ties to the university, so I'm not going to be a proponent of funneling Brookings City tax revenue to the university for special construction projects that, quote unquote, local residents can use. Because let's be honest, you tried to navigate around campus and try to use any of those facilities? Yeah, that's not happening. I'm not afraid to disagree. Not afraid to make a few waves. I'm not going to flip the boat, obviously. But one of the things I've learned after being in the army as a noncommissioned officer, being the regulatory administrator at the plant: If you're right and you know you're right, stick to your guns. If you got to say no, and it makes you unpopular, well, that is what it is.

Cossacks, Elks get back in win column on the gridiron

By Andrew Holtan
The Brookings Beacon

The Sioux Valley football team bounced back from a loss to Elk Point-Jefferson and beat Parker/Marion in overtime on Friday night. Elkton-Lake Benton also snapped a three-game losing streak and beat Alcester-Hudson, while Brookings lost to Yankton on the road.

■ Sioux Valley 20, Parker Marion 18 (F/OT)

VOLGA – Sioux Valley stopped Parker-Marion on a two-point conversion in overtime to seal the victory and move them to 3-4 on the season.

The Pheasants broke a 0-0 tie with 11:08 left in the second quarter as Caleb Christiansen threw a 60-yard touchdown pass to Luke Travnicek. Parker-Marion missed the extra point so the score was 6-0.

The Cossacks would tie things up with 6:31 left in the third as Trey Wyman ran into the end zone from 15 yards out. Sioux Valley failed on the two-point conversion.

It didn't take long for the Pheasants to respond as Christiansen ran back the ensuing kickoff 71 yards for a touchdown. Parker-Marion failed on the two-point conversion and it was 12-6 with 6:20 to go in the third.

Sioux Valley would tie the game again with 2:23 to play in regulation. Wyatt Hardt powered his way over the goal line from a yard out but the Cossacks failed on the two-point conversion, sending the game to overtime.

The Cossacks got the ball first in OT and Hardt scored on another one-yard run. This time he ran in the two-point conversion to make it 20-12.

Brady Beyer scored from a yard out for the Pheasants when they had the ball in OT. However, the Cossacks kept Parker-Marion out of the end zone on the two-point try and secured the win.

Hardt had 182 yards on the ground on 37 carries. Logan Mohn had 49 yards on 15 carries.

The Sioux Valley defense held Parker-Marion to 139 total yards of offense. The Cossacks were led by Johnnie Vermeulen who had seven tackles. Patrick Quale had six tackles and Westin Pitts had five tackles and a fumble recovery.

The Cossacks will close out the regular season this Friday at Flandreau at 7 p.m.

■ Elkton-Lake Benton 46, Alcester-Hudson 13

ELTKON – The Elks finished the regular season on a positive note as they outscored Alcester-Hudson 26-0 in the final two quarters.

Alcester-Hudson got the scoring going in the first quarter with a four-yard touchdown run from Jackson Meyer. The extra point was good to make it 7-0. ELB answered with a six-yard touchdown run from Brock Johson. The Elks missed the extra point so it was 7-6 going into the second quarter.

The Cubs extended the lead to 13-6 with a 41-yard touchdown pass from Jaxon Sommervold to Meyer in the second quarter. ELB would then score back-to-back touchdowns to gain the lead going into halftime.

The first touchdown was a 14-yard run from Johnson and the Elks failed on the two-point conversion. Caden Crofutt then found the end zone from 17 yards out and he threw the two-point conversion to Joseph Nibbe to give ELB a 20-13 lead at halftime.

Crofutt extended the lead for the Elks in the third quarter with a 10-yard touchdown run but they failed on the two-point conversion. Johnson then ran into the end zone from 13 yards out and another failed two-point conversion made it 32-13 going into the fourth.

Crofutt scored for a third time in the fourth as he ran in from five yards out. Alec Aguilar kicked the extra point to make it 39-13. Francisco Campos then got in the scoring, running in from six yards out. Aguilar added the extra point to make the final 46-13.

The Elks finished the regular season with a record of 3-5. Right now, ELB sits in 14th place in the Class 9A standings but almost every other team has one more game to play.

■ Yankton 35, Brookings 14

YANKTON – The Bobcats were outscored 14-0 in the final quarter and are still in search of their first win of the season.

The Bucks scored first and it came on a punt. Tegan LaCroix fielded the punt on a hop at his own 24 yard line and took it to the left side and was untouched on his way to the end zone. That made it 7-0 with 4:40 to play in the first quarter.

Yankton extended the lead to 14-0 with 3:25 to go in the first half as Karson Kral ran into the end zone from 10 yards out.

Brookings was able to cut the lead in half just before halftime. Briggs Archer threw a 13-yard pass to Hayden Jones in the back right corner of the end zone and Jones went up and caught it for the score. Baker Hanson added the extra point to make it 14-7 going into the locker room.

LeCroix then scored on offense in the third quarter to extend the Bucks' lead. He took a direct snap from five yards out and beat the defense to the corner of the end zone to make it 21-7 with 5:42 left in the third.

The Bobcats hit on a big play before the end of the third as Cooper Drawdy connected with Ezra Eidem for a 36-yard touchdown. Hanson added the extra point and it was 21-14 with 1:08 left in the third.

Yankton answered quickly as Kral scored from two yards out and the Bucks led 28-14 with 11:03 to play. Emmett Hirschman then made it a three-score game with just over five minutes to go as he scored from a yard out to make it 35-14. That would end up being the final.

Brookings dropped to 0-7 on the season. The Bobcats will return home for the final two games of the year. They'll take on No. 1 ranked Pierre this upcoming Friday at 7 p.m. and then will host winless Aberdeen Central on Oct. 22 at 7 p.m.

SDSU women picked second in Summit League Preseason Poll

From SDSU Sports Information

SIOUX FALLS – The South Dakota State women's basketball team was picked to finish second in the Summit League regular season and three Jackrabbits were named to the preseason teams, as released by the conference office Tuesday.

SDSU finished second in the regular season in 2025-26 before winning a fourth consecutive tournament title. The Jackrabbits received 429 points and eight first-place votes in the poll.

Jackrabbit returners Emilee Fox, Hadley Thul and Katie Vasecka were all named to the Preseason All-League Second Team.

Fox was an All-Summit honorable mention last season. She started all 27 of her appearances as a sophomore and averaged 8.4 points, 2.7 rebounds and 2.6 assists for the Jacks. Fox was the No. 1 3-point shooter in the nation a season ago with a .491 mark from deep.

Thul returns for her sophomore season following an all-freshman team nod in 2025-26. She played in 33 games with 11 starts last season, averaging 8.6 points, 4.1 rebounds and 2.3 assists per game while shooting .481 while in the starting lineup for the Jacks.

Vasecka battled injuries in 2025-26, but played in 20 games and averaged 8.5 points, 3.1 rebounds and 2.0 assists per contest. She is the Jackrabbits' top returning scorer and was also an all-freshman team selection in 2024-25.

North Dakota State was tabbed to repeat as the Summit League's regular season champions. The Bison's Avery Koenen was selected as the Preseason Player of the Year. The voting panel included the League's eight head coaches, sports information directors, and select media members.

SPORTS CALENDAR

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15

College Soccer
SDSU at St. Thomas, 3 p.m.

High School Cross Country
Brookings at Roger Loecker Invitational in Huron, 4 p.m.

High School Volleyball
Pierre at Brookings, 6:30 p.m.

High School Competitive Cheer & Dance
Eastern South Dakota Conference Meet in Harrisburg, 5 p.m.

College Volleyball
SDSU at North Dakota State, 7 p.m.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16

High School Football
Pierre at Brookings, 7 p.m.

College Cross Country
SDSU at Under Armour Pre-National Invitational in Terre Haute, Ind., 10 a.m.
SDSU at Platte River Rumble in Ashland, Neb., 1 p.m.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17

College Volleyball
SDSU at North Dakota, 11 a.m.

College Football
SDSU at North Dakota, 1 p.m.

College Swimming & Diving
SDSU at Omaha

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 18

College Soccer
SDSU at Omaha, 1 p.m.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 19

Men's College Golf
SDSU at Zach Johnson Invitational in Des Moines, Iowa

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20

High School Volleyball
Sioux Falls Roosevelt at Brookings, 6:30 p.m.

Men's College Golf
SDSU at Zach Johnson Invitational in Des Moines, Iowa



How do the SDSU men compare with the rest of the country?

By Andrew Holtan
The Brookings Beacon

Believe it or not, college basketball begins in less than a month. On Sunday, Ken Pomeroy came out with his first rankings and I thought it would be a good idea to take a look at where the South Dakota State men's team is slated not only compared to the rest of the country, but also in the Summit League.

If you don't know what the kenpom rankings are, here is an explanation. It ranks teams on an adjusted efficiency margin, which is how many net points a team would be expected to beat or lose to an average Division I team over 100 possessions on a neutral court.

Pomeroy figures that out by figuring out each team's adjusted offensive efficiency (how many points a team would score over 100 possessions) and a teams adjusted defensive efficiency (how many points a team would allow over 100 possessions). He then subtracts the adjusted defensive efficiency from the offensive efficiency to get the adjusted efficiency margin.

Pomeroy also ranks things like tempo (estimated possessions per a 40-minute game) and luck (the deviation between a team's win-loss record and what their efficiency stats predict). The four factors that explain why a team's offensive or defensive efficiency are low are effective field goal percentage, which accounts for 3-pointers being worth 50% more than two's, turnover percentage, offensive rebound percentage and free throw rate.

The first rankings of the season incorporate preseason projections based on historical program performance, returning production and recruiting. As the season moves along, the rankings become more concrete and are a good way of looking at where your team ranks among the rest of the country.

So, with that in mind, South Dakota State begins the season at 232 out of 365 Division I teams. That puts the Jackrabbits at third in the Summit League as St. Thomas and North Dakota State are 172nd and 173rd, respectively.

SDSU's adjusted efficiency rating is set at -8.01, meaning that they would lose to the average Division I team by that margin. The Jackrabbits offensive efficiency is ranked 214th as they are expected to score 103.3 points per 100 possessions. SDSU's defensive efficiency is ranked 301st, expected to give up 111.3 points per 100 possessions. The Jacks have a tempo ranking of 214th with a projected 71.1 possessions per game.

The rest of the summit League is below 250 and they go in this order: South Dakota (256), Oral Roberts (264), Omaha (271), Kansas City (293) and North Dakota (331). There is a discrepancy between that and the Summit League Preseason Poll, which was released last week. The media had NDSU as the predicted champion and St. Thomas second. SDSU was third, Omaha was fourth, USD was fifth, UND was sixth, ORU was seventh and Kansas City was last.

Grand Canyon is the highest mid-major in the country at 44th. The Antelopes are in the Mountain West. Utah State out of the Pac-12 is 51st and St. Louis out of the Atlantic 10 is 54th. The other mid-major teams in the top 65 include VCU (55), Boise State (59), High Point (61) and Dayton (63).

There are 27 conferences in Division I that are considered mid-major's. If you rank the highest ranked team in each conference, St. Thomas is 18th out of 27.

St. Thomas finished the 2025-26 season as the top rated Summit League team in the kenpom rankings at 115. NDSU was not far behind at 118 and the Bison were a No. 14 seed in the NCAA Tournament after winning the Summit League Tournament. The Jacks finished last season at 221st.

The Summit League has suffered recently in the transfer portal era. In 2023 and 2022, Oral Roberts and SDSU went 30-5 in their respective seasons. The Golden Eagles finished the year 72nd in kenpom in 2023 and the Jacks were 81st in 2022. The past three seasons the Summit League representative in the NCAA Tournament has been a 15, 15 and 14 seed. If you go back even further, SDSU and USD were 78th and 81st in kenpom in 2018.

Many of the top players in the conference have transferred out over the past four or five years. SDSU had its top player in Damon Wilkinson transfer to Nebraska this offseason.

The Jacks are looking to get back to their winning ways after having their first losing season since 2010 last year. White River native Joe Sayler was named Summit League Preseason Player of the Year as he enters his junior season. Senior Kalen Garry will also be back and he was named Preseason Second Team All-Summit League, along with newcomer Jesse Van Kalsbeek who comes from Northwestern College of the NAIA ranks.

SDSU also added transfers in EJ Ryans from Western Michigan, Myles Thompson from SIU-Edwardsville and Jon Mekonnen from Colorado State. The Jacks return Alec Squires, Trey Buchanan, Alec Squires, Jaden Rogers, Davis Kern and Jadyn Cascio Jensen. The freshmen on this year's team include Semaj Stampley, Youssouf Yatabare, Cam Swearengen and Blake Ellwein.

The Jacks will begin the 2026-27 season on Nov. 3 at Kansas State. SDSU's home opener is slated for Nov. 6 against Valparaiso.



Dave Eggen/Inertia

South Dakota State's Kalen Garry drives towards the basket during a game against Omaha on Jan. 1, 2026 at First Bank & Trust Arena in Brookings.



SDSU equestrian defeats Crookston

From SDSU Sports Information

Isabelle Malick was a two-time winner in the jumping seat events and South Dakota State scored four points in horsemanship to lift the Jackrabbits to a home-opening 11-9 victory over Minnesota Crookston on Saturday at the DeHaan Equestrian Center.

Malick earned Most Outstanding Performer honors in fences after defeating Maggie Lawler of UMC, 82-69, in their head-to-head matchup. Malick came back later in the day to record a 77-67 victory over Lawler in flat.

Heidi White had a score of 66 in fences to win her matchup with Belle Syrett by 11 points. In flat, White posted a 78, but fell to UMC's Julianne Lurie.

Sarah Gould, Lucy Puhalla, Brooke Borges, Sydney Chmel, Kayla Scherer, and Sierra Elliot made up the rest of the jumping seat team, with Gould and Chmel scoring points for the team in their respective events of fences and flat.

Avery Bergan led the Jackrabbit advantage in horsemanship by earning MOP honors after winning her matchup against Addison Pike, 76-73.5. Hailey Hanson and Anna Minnich each tallied victories with respective scores of 76.5 and 75.5, while Hannah Dutton posted a head-to-head win with a score of 73.

SDSU claimed two of the five points in reining and was led by Hanson with a score of 70.5 points in a winning effort against Crookston's Micah Fohrman. Emma Riggs also turned in a winning ride with the score of 68.

Bobcat girls fall in quarters, after winning first playoff game

By Andrew Holtan
The Brookings Beacon

PIERRE – The Brookings girls' soccer season came to an end on Saturday evening as the Bobcats lost 4-2 to top-seeded Pierre in the quarterfinals of the State Playoffs.

The loss came five days after the Bobcats won their first playoff game in program history, beating Brandon Valley in penalty kicks on Oct. 6. Brookings finished the season with a record of 8-7-1.

Brookings head coach Adam Juba said despite the loss, he was proud of the season because the girls achieved what they had set out to do at the beginning of the year.

"We had a team meeting before the season and we asked the girls what their goal was, and they said win a playoff game. ... We ended up achieving that. The goals were achieved there and they were achieved through [getting a home playoff game and working hard. Working together as a team and understanding that we're all in this for one goal, and I think the girls knocked it out of the park," Juba said.

Neither team scored in the first 80 minutes of play and then the Bobcats and the Governors were kept off the scoreboard in the two 10-minute extra time periods.

Brookings had the first kick in each round of the penalty shootout. Lexi Erp shot for the Bobcats in the first round and she made her kick. Cameron Larson then stepped up for the Govs and tied things up.



Andrew Holtan/Brookings Beacon

The Brookings girls' soccer team celebrates after beating Brandon Valley in penalty kicks in the first round of the Class AA State Playoffs on Oct. 6 at Fishback Soccer Park in Brookings.

Josie Hegerfeld was up next for the 'Cats and hammered one past the goalkeeper on the right side of the net. Josephine Wurtz took the next kick for Pierre and put one past Ramsie Hinricher to make it 2-2.

Abbi Poppinga shot then went over the crossbar for the Bobcats, giving the Governors the advantage. Ivy Flottmeyer then shot it past Hinricher on the left side to give Pierre a 3-2 lead.

Rylee Briggs' shot was then saved by Emelyn Swanson and Myah Fravel made her shot, giving Pierre the quarterfinal victory.

Juba said his team felt confident going into the penalty kicks because they had won less than a week earlier, but they came up short, and that's part of competing.

"I mean, penalties are hard, regardless," Juba said. "We felt confident going into it, and you know, it didn't shake down in our favor, but that's okay. That's sports, right? Sometimes there's heartbreak in sports, and you just have to know that you did your best in that moment. We took it to penalties and gave Pierre a run for their money. We showed them that yeah, we're the No. 8 seed, but we're going to come in here and we're going to do everything we can to beat you guys."

The Bobcats came back to force extra time in the first round win over Brandon Valley as Erp tied the game with 13:20 left in regulation. Erp, Hegerfeld, Poppinga and Briggs all made their shots in the shootout and then a Brandon Valley player shot hers over the net. That set up the game-winning kick from Berkley Stoltenberg.

Erp, Briggs and Poppinga are part of a senior class that also includes Aubrey Girard and Hannah Schrieber. Juba said the senior class all had different roles, but set a good example for the younger players.

"Lexi Erp was our junior captain last year and automatically was a captain this year. ... I think she showed all the girls on the field that working hard and pushing hard is who we are. She had that effort piece and showed the girls that if we're going to go out and believe that we can win every game and compete in every game. ... Riley Briggs was selected to all-conference. I mean, she as a holding midfielder is one of the best in the state.

"Abbi Poppinga at centerback. She's tall, she's strong, she very rarely gets knocked off the ball. ... Aubrey Girard, she's in the back line as an outside back. She's just so intelligent, tall and strong. ... Hannah Schrieber, she had not played a ton of varsity minutes until this year and she absolutely stepped up and understood that her role in the midfield was to just be solid every game."

The Bobcats will have six seniors next year in Stoltenberg, Hinricher, Grace Romsa, Tori Deming, Pasley te Velde and Lindsey Walker.

Juba said the Bobcats will look to build off the success they had this season and will come in with confidence next year and will be ready to compete.

"I think the big thing is really preaching the fact that we're here to compete and we're not going to give up. There's no moment we're going to give up in any single game and any single practice. We're going to fight as hard as we can every single time. I think a lot of our girls have bought into that idea and they own that idea and say that's our identity," Juba said.

CUBBY'S
SPORTS
BAR & GRILL
Brookings, SD
FOLLOW US ON
696-7978
307 MAIN AVE
cubbyssportsbarandgrill.com



Andrew Holtan/Brookings Beacon

Brookings' Berkley Stoltenberg shoots the game-winning penalty kick during a playoff game against Brandon Valley on Oct. 6 in Brookings.

Football: Mason back at quarterback for SDSU

Continued from page 20

Jackrabbit defense will have to prepare well, even if there's not a lot of film on him.

"We need to study their backup. We need to see what he does well, where he struggles. There's not a lot of film to be able to do that, but he's there for a reason. I mean, he came from San Diego State and you don't become a head coach and bring a quarterback with you if you don't expect him to compete to be your starter. So, I know their coaching staff is going to believe in him. We're not going to necessarily change a lot schematically, but you can have some variance and some tweaks within your base," Jackson said.

Both the Fighting Hawks and the Jackrabbits expect Preseason All-American edge rusher Lance Rucker to make his season debut for UND on Saturday. Now in his senior season, the Omaha native had 14.5 sacks, 20 tackles for a loss and 51 tackles in his junior year. On the other side of the defensive line, senior Braden Mohr has racked up 7.5 sacks so far this season.

Rucker joins a defensive unit that is second in the Missouri Valley in total defense, giving up 301.29 yards per game. The Fighting Hawks are sixth in scoring defense in the country, giving up 27.3 points per game.

Jackson said going up against the UND defensive line will be tough and with Rucker back in the lineup, they are as good as anyone.

"I see a defense that plays really hard and is getting its best player back. I think their defensive line is really impressive. They're active and disruptive. They've got a player with seven and a half sacks, which is pretty amazing to have at this point in the season. ... When I've watched them, and they're playing, they're as good as any defense in the country," Jackson said.

A big reason the Jacks went 2-0 in Mason's absence was the way they ran the ball. SDSU has the top rushing offense in the FCS so far this season, averaging 291.8 yards per game on the ground. Sophomore Josiah Johnson is sixth in the country in rush yards per game at 113.3 and another sophomore, James Basinger, has come on over the past two games with multiple long touchdown runs.

The SDSU passing game has been spotty at times this season as the Jacks are averaging 211.8 yards per game. Jackson said defenses may try to load up to stop SDSU's run game the rest of the season and then the Jacks have to take advantage of that through the air.

"At some point, people are going to really load the box and get their safeties up there, or do different blitzes, or have different alignments and bring different personnel to stop the run game. We need to have the right answers, and we need to have them right now and not wait for the game. I think our offensive staff has done a great job of that so far. With Chase back in command of the offense, you could see us open it up more," Jackson said.

Saturday's game is scheduled to kickoff at 1 p.m. You can watch the game on Midco Sports or ESPN+. You can listen to the game on AM 910 KJJQ.



Dave Eggen/Inertia

South Dakota State's Chase Mason runs with the ball during a win over Youngstown State on Sept. 19 at Dana J. Dykhouse Stadium in Brookings.

Exhaust and Complete Auto Care

OPEN:
M-F
8 a.m. to
5 p.m.

SERVICES INCLUDE:

Dual Exhaust Specialist
Tune Ups
Batteries
Starters
Alternators
Struts and Shocks
Transmission Flushes
Coolant Flushes
Brake Service
Scanner
Trailer Hitches
Mufflers
Pipes
Certified Catalytic Converter Testing and Replacement
Custom Pipe Bending
Oil Changes
Shuttle Service

We honor most aftermarket warranties!
ALL WORK IS GUARANTEED!



EXHAUST PROS AUTO CARE

52 years experience — Family owned in Brookings since 1993

Scott, Cindy and Tom Sroufe

302 FOURTH STREET BROOKINGS 692-5010

SDSU soccer shuts out Kansas City

From SDSU Sports Information

BROOKINGS — A Katelyn Beulke goal in the 54th minute broke a defensive deadlock, eventually leading to two more second-half South Dakota State goals, as the Jackrabbits completed a 3-0 victory over Kansas City in Summit League play on Sunday at Fishback Soccer Park.

SDSU is now 7-3-3 on the season and 2-1-2 in Summit League play.

The Jackrabbits were unable to capitalize during a first half that featured the Yellow and Blue primarily on the attack. SDSU outshot Kansas City by a 16-0 margin in the opening 45 minutes, but went into halftime scoreless.

SDSU finally found the back of the net nine minutes into the second half. The Jackrabbits took possession away from the Roos just past midfield, with Stella Braddock passing the ball along to teammate Ellie Gusman. The SDSU midfielder booted the ball past the Kansas City back line. Senior forward Katelyn Beulke raced past the Roos defenders and gained possession at the top of the box. She swiftly struck a left-footed shot past the Kansas City goalkeeper, giving the Jacks a 1-0 lead.

The Jackrabbits extended their edge to 2-0 in the 62nd minute. A free kick opportunity led to Mia Bosch connecting with Hannah Langstaff who sent a cross into the box. Her ball found Jenna Maloy who headed it into the net with ease.

Kansas City attempted to rally over the next 26 minutes. The second half saw South Dakota State goalkeeper Mallorie Benhart make three saves as she the Jackrabbits kept the clean sheet intact.

SDSU's Peyton Held put a cap to the scoring in the 88th minute. Langstaff pushed the ball ahead to Adrianne Agbayani at midfield who led a counter attack opportunity. She found Held who gained control of the ball on the left side of the box. She worked to her right and hit a right-footed shot that found the inside of the opposite post to propel the Jackrabbits to a final 3-0 score.

South Dakota State improved to 7-3-3 on the season and 2-1-2 in Summit League competition following the victory. Kansas City dropped to 2-8-3 (1-2-2).

The Jackrabbits finished the meeting with a 26-5 edge in shots and 11-3 advantage in shots on goal. The shot total was SDSU's highest of the season. They also finished with a 7-1 margin in corner kicks.

Maloy improved her team-lead in goals to six on the season. Beulke picked up her fourth goal of the year while Held tallied her third. Braddock, Bosch and Gusman were all credited with assists as Langstaff led the way with two. Langstaff appeared for a team-high 78 minutes. Gentry Williams led SDSU's defenders playing 72 minutes on the pitch as the Jacks completed the shutout performance.

South Dakota State improved to 9-2-2 all-time versus Kansas City and 6-0-0 at home against the Roos.

UP NEXT

South Dakota State goes on the road for its next two matches. The Jackrabbits first face St. Thomas on Thursday at 3 p.m. in St. Paul.

Volleyball: Zgonc closing in on third POY Award

Continued from page 20

all. For us to win six sets in convincing fashion throughout the weekend, I think that builds our momentum up."

NCAA volleyball has RPI (rating percentage index) rankings and it ranks teams based on their win-loss record and strength of schedule. As of Tuesday morning, SDSU is 91st in the RPI. USD is the top Summit League team at 79.

North Dakota State is third in the Summit League at 94. The rest of the league includes Kansas City (159), Omaha (186), St. Thomas (220), North Dakota (268) and Oral Roberts (270).

Since beating SDSU, Omaha was swept by both South Dakota and St. Thomas. Georgalas said as impressive as it was to sweep USD, falling to Omaha was disappointing for the Jacks. However, he liked his team's response against St. Thomas.

"The sweep in Vermillion was awesome," Georgalas said. "We really won in dominating fashion and we've never really opened with them to start league play. I think that gave our group a ton of confidence that we could play that way, you know, against our rival to open the league when it was really important.

"The Omaha match was definitely a setback. We didn't play well that day. They've got some size and a faster offensive system that certainly can stress anybody. But for our group to lose 15-13 [in the final set] to Omaha and then win 15-13 [in the final set] against St. Thomas, that says a lot about how strong our group is, how mentally strong we are, how physically resistant we are to play 10 sets over three days."

SDSU has been led again by senior outside hitter Sylvie Zgonc. She was named to the American Volleyball Coaches Association Player of the Year Award Watch List last week.

Zgonc is in the top 10 in the country in both total kills and kills per set. She leads both categories in the Summit League with 286 total kills and 4.69 kills per set.

Zgonc is the back-to-back Summit League Player of the Year and Georgalas said she's hit another gear in her senior season and is primed to three-peat.

"She's on another level," Georgalas said. "... She spends so much energy to compete at that level that she's capable of. Recovery and taking care of her body post match has been really important, and she's been great about that. When you look at her stats and her performances against the power four [teams] and the top 50 teams that we've played. I mean, it's not like she's not showing up in those games.

"That's when she's at her best, and for sure, she's elevated her game to another level. I mean, she's just by far, in my opinion, the [Summit League] Player of the Year again. She's always working on being consistent and low error, but her high end is so much higher than anybody else in the league right now, and it's really fun to watch."

The Jackrabbits had two players go down early in the year with season-ending injuries in junior outside hitters Madison Burr and Katelyn Van Kirk. With those two going down, Georgalas has had to rely on some underclassmen to step up in freshman Mallory Hartwig and sophomores Brooke Larsen and Anna Johannson.



Dave Eggen/Inertia

South Dakota State's Sylvie Zgonc hits the ball during a match against Nebraska on Sept. 2 at First Bank & Trust Arena in Brookings.

"Mallory Hartwig is the next outside hitter off the bench, and she knows her role is super important if Hannah [Klein] and Sylvie [Zgonc] need a break, but in the back row as well. ... Anna Johannson has been a really good defensive specialist for us. Brooke Larson, I would call her a swiss army knife. You know, she's set and hit and she got a triple-double," Georgalas said.

Brooklyn Meyer, who was a star on the women's basketball team in her first four years at SDSU, joined the volleyball team this past summer, but is now no longer on the roster. Due to the NCAA's new five-for-five rule, Meyer could play a fifth season for the basketball team, but would have to go through certain legal hoops to do so.

SDSU has nine matches remaining in the regular season. The Jacks will play at North Dakota State on Thursday at 7 p.m. and then take on North Dakota on the road on Saturday at 11 a.m. Five of SDSU's final seven matches are in Brookings. SDSU will also host the Summit League Tournament in Brookings Nov. 22-24.

Fall into local community stories
Don't miss out on a single issue of The Beacon

The Brookings Beacon prints weekly on Wednesdays. To ensure you don't miss any great local stories, subscribe now at www.BrookingsBeacon.com or by completing and returning this form with your payment.

We stand committed to delivering a local, independent news source worthy of the Brookings community. From the news that shapes our city to the stories that shape our lives, we shine a light in our hometown and highlight both what's truly important and what's truly good.

Subscription rates:
Print only, includes tax. Visit our website for digital subscription rates

Annual: $106.20
3-months: $53.10

Mail with payment to:
The Brookings Beacon
1804 Edgebrook Circle
Brookings SD 57006

Subscriber Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

the Brookings Beacon
Your LOCAL news source
Shining a light in Brookings



Dave Eggen/Inertia

South Dakota State's Brooke Larsen hits the ball during a match against Minnesota on Sept. 19 at the Sanford Pentagon in Sioux Falls. The Jackrabbits have won four of their first five games in Summit League play. They will play at North Dakota State and North Dakota this weekend.

Finding A Rhythm

Jackrabbit volleyball winners of four of past five in conference play

By Andrew Holtan
The Brookings Beacon

BROOKINGS – The South Dakota State volleyball team is near the midway point of the conference season and the Jackrabbits have won four of their first five matches in Summit League play.

SDSU went 4-7 with a tough non-conference schedule but then swept South Dakota in Vermillion in its opening Summit League match. The Jacks then slipped up in Omaha nearly a week later, losing to the Mavericks in five sets. Since then, they beat St. Thomas in five sets, topped Kansas City in four sets and swept Oral Roberts.

The Kansas City and Oral Roberts wins came at home this past weekend and it was the first time the Jacks played in Brookings since Sept. 5. Head coach Dan Georgalas said it was nice to be back at First Bank & Trust Arena and get back on the right track.

"It was our first home game in 30 days, even though we had a tournament at the pentagon [in Sioux Falls], that still does involve some travel and not being in your home facility in front of your home fans," Georgalas said. "So it was fun [to be back in Brookings]. We had a great week of practice and I definitely thought we played really well.

"Kansas City, I think, is going to be a team that surprises some people. When they're good, they're really good, and so them taking a set off of us doesn't really concern me at

See **VOLLEYBALL,** page 19

Jackrabbit football hits the road after bye week

By Andrew Holtan
The Brookings Beacon

BROOKINGS – South Dakota State football is back in action this Saturday after a bye week and the Jackrabbits will head north to take on No. 11 ranked North Dakota.

Top-ranked SDSU (5-1) is expected to get starting quarterback Chase Mason back after he missed the past two games with a knee injury. The Jacks went 2-0 without Mason as Josh Holst led SDSU to victories over Eastern Illinois and Illinois State.

SDSU head coach Dan Jackson said the way Mason handled being injured helped the rest of his team win the two games in his absence.

"I think Chase did an awesome job with handling this [injury]," Jackson said. "He never hung his head. I know he was disappointed, but you could never tell. He stayed positive. He always had a bounce in his step. He's found ways to improve and be a leader. I just couldn't be more proud of how he handled it. Which then affects the rest of the team too. ... I think his positivity allowed the rest of the team to remain confident too."

While the Jacks will be getting their starting quarterback back on Saturday, the Fighting Hawks (4-2) will likely be without their leader of the offense. Senior Jerry Kaminski injured his ankle in a loss to Northern Iowa this past weekend.

Kaminski is considered one of the best quarterbacks in the FCS and had thrown for 1,626 yards with 19 touchdowns and four interceptions this season.

UND will have a senior come in to replace him as Javance Tupou'ata-Johnson will be the new man under center for the Fighting Hawks. Against UNI, Tupou'ata-Johnson went 2-for-9 with 29 yards. For the season, he's played in six games and is 5-for-17 with 94 yards and no touchdowns and two interceptions. He's run for 99 yards and three touchdowns as well.

Tupou'ata-Johnson began his career at San Diego State and spent two seasons with the Aztecs. He did not play in 2023 and in 2024 he played in four games, including one start.

Tupou'ata-Johnson came with UND head coach Eric Schmidt, who was the defensive coordinator at San Diego State in 2024. Jackson said the Fighting Hawk's coaching staff obviously believes in Tupou'ata-Johnson and the

See **FOOTBALL,** page 18