the Brookings Beacon

Volume 2, Edition 47 | Wednesday, November 25, 2026 | Onward!

Ranger Report
Pee Wees win home tournament

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Josh Linehan/Brookings Beacon

Sam McMacken bags up a purchase for a young customer at the soft opening of The Local Card Shop in Brookings.

A shop of their own

Local Card Shop opens to serve Brookings collectors.

By Josh Linehan
The Brookings Beacon

BROOKINGS — The sports, trading and gaming card industry has been gaining steam the last couple years nationally, and collectors in Brookings now have a shop of their own.

Partners Tyler Schneider and Sam McMacken held a soft opening for The Local Card Shop on Thursday, drawing a crowd to their location in the Eastside Commons of the old mall.

The pair have been partners buying and selling cards for years and finally decided the time was right to open their own space.

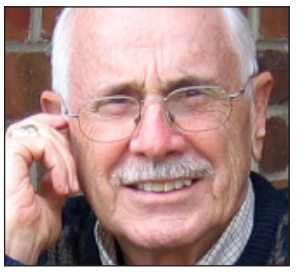
"It's been growing, and several aspects are super popular now," Schneider said. "The popularity has exploded, especially with Pokemon and some of the manga-type stuff, and sports as well."

While cards exist in several different eras in the collective consciousness — think Mickey Mantle cards in bike spokes in the 1950s or early 60s, or the mass popularity of the 1980s into the early 1990s — it has widened its scope considerably. Now it's not just baseball

See **SHOP,** page 4

Lost WWII pilot found

Stubble Mulch



Chuck Cecil

Two Air Force pilot flying P-47 Thunderbolts were on an April 17, 1945, mission near Lonnewitz, Germany.

Squadron Leader lst Lt. Hobart Albright and his wingman, Lt. Donald Beals, a 1941 Brookings High School graduate, were looking for targets of opportunity. They hoped to find German aircraft in the air or parked below on grass runways, railroad traffic, German vehicles on the roads, troop emplacements and other war-related equipment or activity.

Their massive, powerful eight-ton

See **MULCH,** page 4

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High gas prices begin to drop for Turkey Day

By David Lightman
States Newsroom



Bart Pfankuch/South Dakota News Watch

These out-of-state motorists fueled up Nov. 18, 2026, at the Pilot station in Murdo.

WASHINGTON — $3.62 a gallon.

That's the predicted national average price of regular gasoline on Thanksgiving Day, according to GasBuddy, which tracks prices at the pump.

That would continue the steady glide path down that gasoline prices have followed for roughly the past month. Oversupply, worried consumers and seasonal driving trends have all contributed to the drop.

The price still would be high — in fact, a Thanksgiving record — by most standards. The highest Thanksgiving Day price average was reported in 2022, $3.56 a gallon.

But by any measure, what's happening now is good news for consumers. AAA reported Friday a gallon of regular gasoline cost an average $3.69, down 18 cents from a week ago and 58 cents from a month earlier.

"For most holiday travelers, driving remains the cheapest and easiest way to get around" this Thanksgiving, said an AAA analysis. About 90% of travelers during the holiday are expected to drive.

Anywhere they go, they should find prices lower than a few weeks ago. Prices tumbled in all 50 states over the past week.

A dozen states' averages fell more than 25 cents a gallon, according to GasBuddy. It found the biggest week-to-week drops in Montana, by 38.8 cents a gallon; Ohio, by 33.3 cents; Michigan, by 32.1 cents; Colorado, by 29.2 cents; and New Mexico, by 28.4 cents.

The $4-a-gallon gasoline is also becoming less frequent. Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy, found 43 states' prices for regular gasoline have fallen under that level.

There are outliers, notably in states where the infrastructure makes it more difficult to get products. Hawaii had the highest gasoline prices Friday, at $5.60 a gallon for regular, followed by California at $5.50. The lowest price was in North Carolina at $3.03 per gallon

The averages, though, don't reflect highs and lows within states, which can vary.

Why are prices down?

Oil prices are down roughly $25 a barrel over the past month.

Part of the explanation is hope that the U.S.-Iran war will soon end, or at least cool.

"Markets bet on a de-escalation between the U.S. and Iran following the midterm elections," said Grace Zwemmer, an economist at Oxford Economics.

Each change of a dollar for a barrel of oil is estimated to mean about 2.5 cents per gallon at the retail level.

Prior to the war, about 20% of the world's oil passed through the Strait of Hormuz, a narrow passageway between Oman and Iran. Despite occasional skirmishes, that oil is mostly proceeding through the strait.

The change in outlook is partly due to reduced demand and partly an expectation that the war's impact will wane.

"Expectations of a coming supply surplus outweighed fresh security incidents around the Strait of Hormuz," De Haan said.

The November report from the International Energy Agency saw the oil market engaged in "tentative signs of rebalancing, with global oil supplies surpassing demand for the first time since the outbreak of the war in Iran."

The IEA predicted that the global oil market could return to a surplus in this quarter, "with a more substantial build in 2027."

The U.S. Energy Information Administration had similar forecasts. It predicted per-barrel oil prices averaging $84 next year, about the same as the current level, with gasoline prices averaging $3.56 a gallon.

The prediction assumes 2027 will proceed "as oil flows recover and inventories rebuild."

Goldman Sachs echoed that forecast, saying this week in an analysis that "oil is forecast to ease gradually in 2027 as suppliers in the Middle East adapt to disruption from the war in Iran."

Worried consumers

Some causes of the price drop are seasonal. Americans tend to drive less in colder months, which means a drop in demand.

And, said De Haan in an X post, "After Sept 15, stations can sell winter blend, which is cheaper to make. Summer gas has to meet tighter evaporation rules, and that costs refiners more."

At the same time, consumers have become more cautious about spending. The cost of living "continues to be at the forefront of consumers' minds across the population," said Joanne Hsu, director of the University of Michigan Survey of Consumers.

The survey's November report found that about 57% of consumers "spontaneously mentioned that their living standards have been eroded by high prices." That's the highest level since May, and higher than the 46% who felt that way in February before the war began.

In the U.S., the cooling demand is reflected in AAA's projection that 72.9 million people are projected to drive somewhere during the holiday, down 200,000 from last year's Thanksgiving season.

An asterisk to all this cautious optimism: Oil prices are always hard to predict. A year ago no one saw the price spike that gripped the country this year.



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Wild turkeys a key part of SD story



Chuck Berry has worked for 58 years as a fishery scientist.



Chuck Berry photo

A wild turkey tom and and a hen wander along Lake Campbell shoreline in 2024.

Thanksgiving is a time of family and community togetherness and gratitude.

As I hear the usual thankful prayers, I always listen for some mention of The Creation. After all, we all depend, really depend, on natural resources and our environment. If the thanks-givings don't mention The Creation, I add silently, but sometimes aloud, "Thanks for the good Earth that God has given us and the wisdom and will to conserve it."

After this spiritual thought, I admit that my next thoughts turn to the Thanksgiving meal — it is the only holiday where we eat the mascot! But I think of the wild turkey, not the butterball. The wild turkey is the subject of a big chapter in South Dakota's wildlife history book.

The wild turkey is native to most of North America. It was one of the wild animals that pioneers and settlers hunted for food and commerce. Our nation's founders briefly debated its merits as a national symbol instead of the Bald Eagle. According to the National Wildlife Federation, Ben Franklin argued that the turkey was "a respectable bird, a bird of courage that would not hesitate to attack a British soldier who invaded the farm yard." However, in comparison to the mighty Bald Eagle, Franklin conceded that the turkey was "a little vain and silly." He must have been thinking of the strutting and gobbling and feather displays of the Tom.

Our nation grew, but the turkey population didn't. As happened to most wildlife, unregulated substance hunting, market hunting and habitat loss caused its demise. Turkeys roost in trees and the timber harvest and deforestation of eastern states is well documented. Market hunters used traps, baits and guns to supply meat markets and restaurants. New refrigerated railroad cars allowed year-round market hunting in the late 1800s.

The wild turkey disappeared entirely in South Dakota by 1920, so wrote Dr. Les Flake of SDSU, in his book titled The Wild Turkey of South Dakota (2006), Dr Flake (and coauthors) wrote "... by 1920, no wild turkeys existed in South Dakota. Consequently, all populations of wild turkeys in South Dakota today are the result of introductions." Restoring the wild turkey is one of the great success stories of wildlife science and management. The restoration efforts benefited greatly from the support of a hunter advocacy group – the National Wild Turkey Federation (founded in 1973).

At first, wildlifers tried to raise turkeys in pens and stock them into the wild. However, these captive-reared birds lacked the survival instincts needed to establish self-sustaining populations. So, conservationists tried trapping wild turkeys and releasing them elsewhere, called "trap and transfer." South Dakota also traded birds with other states – their turkeys for our pheasants and sage grouse. Our first release was eight birds from New Mexico in 1948. But there was more to learn to make trap and transfer a success.

(Stay with me) There are three major subspecies (Eastern, Merriam's, Rio Grande) of turkeys in North America; their ranges overlap in South Dakota. The science literature is flush

with genetic analysis, but the upshot is that each subspecies likes a certain type of habitat. Dr Flake and his graduate students, supported by GFP funds and personnel, researched details of turkey ecology and trap and transfer. Today the state supports a robust population of two subspecies, the thriving Merriam's populations in the Black Hills and the Eastern strain in East River counties. Turkeys were first stocked in Brookings County around Oak Lake in 1992, and again in 2002 in Oakwood Lakes State Park. Today, seeing wild turkeys is fairly common. I frequently have to slow down to let a flock cross from field to roost along 469 Street South near Lake Campbell.

The bird: Males older than 2 years are called "toms;" the younger males are "jakes." Both gobble to attract a hen or warn other males. An adult gobbler weighs 16 to 22 pounds, has spurs for fighting, a beard of modified breast feathers, and that iconic fan of tail feathers. A hen is smaller and has no beard or spurs. Turkeys can run at speeds of up to 25 mph and fly as fast as 55 mph. Baby turkeys, called poults, eat berries, seeds, leaves and insects, as do adults.

The hunter: Most hunters use a hen decoy and a turkey call while sitting very still in camouflage clothes. Calling is an art form; you need to know turkey language and the meaning of a yelp, cluck, purr, cutt, kee-kee, and putt. Hunters use shotguns, so the quarry has to be close, and even closer if the hunter really challenges themselves by archery hunting, about 9% do so.

I heard about an unusual turkey hunting technique when I interviewed Jackrabbit footballer Brayden Delahoyde (#10) from Spearfish. Brayden said that he really likes

See **BERRY,** page 11

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Mulch: Buried at Arlington National in 2016

Continued from page 1

Thunderbolts, nicknamed "the Jug" by pilots (because of its milk jug or milk bottle appearance), was the largest single engine fighter plane in WW II. It was loaded for bear, with four .50 caliber machine guns in each wing, each primed with more than 400 rounds of ammo. With that plus bombs under its wings, the "Jug" packed a lethal wallop. It was an ideal WW II fighter plane for-air-to air combat or for ground strafing runs.

Of course, the two Jug pilots flying over Lonnewitz didn't know the war with Nazi Germany would end on May 8, 1945, just three weeks after their mid-April search and destroy mission.

Cruising at about 5,000 feet, Lt. Beals spotted parked Luftwaffe airplanes below. He radioed squadron leader Albright, who gave the order to dive and attack. As the 22-year-old Brookings pilot winged over and started his descent, German antiaircraft guns opened fire. Albright, who was maneuvering his Thunderbolt to follow Beals in the low level run, noticed



Don Beals

the winking white muzzle discharges of the many Nazi guns firing from below.

"Pull up, Beals," Lt. Albright radioed. "It isn't worth it."

The young Brookings pilot likely never heard the order, or by the time he did, it was too late. His Thunderbolt was struck and barreled into the ground amid a massive roiling, expanding fireball.

Two weeks later, on May 2, 1945, Brookings newspapers carried this item: "Lt. Donald Beals, son of Daniel W. and Clara Eberlain Beals of Brookings, has been reported missing in action in Germany since April 17, according to word received by his parents."

It would be more than 70 years before the Department of Defense found and identified Lt. Beals' remains.

All three Beals children served their country during WW II. Donald's younger brother, Charles, was in the Army, and their daughter, Meryl, was an Army nurse serving in Europe.

In earlier times before the war, the Beals family lived in a stately house at 1302 Sixth Avenue, on the corner of 13th Avenue where today's First Interstate Bank is part of the 6th Street Centre. At that time, the Beals family owned the land and a greenhouse on the south side of the entire 1300 block of Sixth Street.

In Brooking schools, the Beals children were all excellent students. After graduation, Don Beals enrolled in the State College mechanical engineering program. But after his freshman year, he decided to enlist in the Air Force with the hope of becoming a fighter pilot.

The wartime loss in Germany of Lt. Beals in April of 1945 was well documented in a series of reports issued by the Department of Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, a unit responsible for researching and locating missing service men and women.

Where Lt. Beals and his Thunderbolt fighter went down was never much of a mystery. The crash site was first assumed to have to been found in 1947 by the American Graves Registration Command.

At that assumed site near Lonnewitz, investigators reported finding wreckage and "small fragments of human remains."

Investigators concluded that the lieutenant's remains had been "completely disintegrated in the explosion." The remains were considered "nonrecoverable." In December of 1949, the Air Force officially declared that Lt. Beals had been killed in action.

In 2004, another investigations team revisited the site, and the puzzle pieces about Lt. Beals' remains began to align.

Beals' sister Meryl, the former Army nurse, was subsequently asked by the military to provide a cheek swab—a DNA sample—that officials would entered into a database in the event any remains were ever recovered.

A decade later, in March of 2014, after four archaeological digs at the site, Lt. Beals" remains, along with the parts of his Thunderbolt, and personal belongings, were found and positively identified.

Along with plane wreckage and the lieutenant's remains, members of the POW/MIA Account Agency found wire-framed sun glasses, an aircrew emblem, coins, a button, boot fragments, a key, comb, pocketknife and other fragments of uniform materials. There was no record his dog tags were recovered.

Fighter Pilot Lt. Don Beals' remains were returned to the U.S., and on Oct. 17, 2016, and he was buried with honor in Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, D.C.

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Has the president pardoned SD turkeys?

Yes

In 2018, President Donald Trump pardoned turkeys that were raised in South Dakota.

It was the first time turkeys from the Rushmore State were given a presidential pardon during the Thanksgiving tradition.

The turkeys, named Peas and Carrots, were raised at the Riverside Hutterite Colony near Huron.

"Peas and Carrots were raised by a wonderful farmer from Riverside Hutterville Colony, and this is something that he's very proud of, Ruben Waldner," Trump said at the ceremony.

Waldner is the Riverside turkey barn boss.

The South Dakota governor doesn't pardon a turkey, but the ceremony is performed in other parts of the state. A turkey has been pardoned in Rapid City since 2021, a tradition that started with former Mayor Steve Allender. Mayor Jason Salamun has continued the tradition for the past three years.

This year's presidential turkeys are coming from Deans Gap Farm in Pendleton County, West Virginia.

9 deaths raise questions about seat belt use

By Bart Pfankuch
South Dakota News Watch



Bart Pfankuch/South Dakota News Watch

Vehicles travel on I-90 east of Wall on Nov. 18. Traffic is expected to rise significantly during the Thanksgiving holiday.

A rash of fatal vehicle crashes in one week last month in South Dakota had more in common than just death and injury.

Law enforcement investigations found that all nine people killed were not wearing seat belts, despite a state law requiring it:

— Four youths from Flandreau and an elderly man from Minnesota were all unbelted when they were killed in an Oct. 26 crash on Interstate 29 between Brookings and Sioux Falls, according to the South Dakota Department of Public Safety.

— A 43-year-old Yankton man was unbelted in an Oct. 24 rollover crash that took his life.

— Two men from Corsica in separate vehicles were not wearing seat belts when they were killed on Oct. 24, DPS said.

— And in Rapid City, an unbelted 19-year-old woman was killed on Oct. 23 in an alcohol-related rollover on Skyline Drive in which the driver and another passenger who wore seat belts survived, Rapid City police spokesman Brendyn Medina told News Watch.

The recent wrecks, combined with years of state and national crash data showing the safety benefits of buckling up, should provide motivation for more motorists to consistently use seat belts, said Kristi Frohreich, communications director for the South Dakota Department of Public Safety.

"Wearing a seat belt is one of the most effective ways to protect yourself in a crash, and we encourage every driver and passenger to buckle up every trip, every time," Frohreich said.

State law enforcement officials and national advocacy groups often push seat belt use during peak travel periods, including the upcoming extended Thanksgiving holiday, which a News Watch analysis shows has the highest crash rate among all holiday periods in South Dakota.

The American Automobile Association said that about 73 million Americans, including an estimated 274,000 South Dakotans, will drive more than 50 miles on trips during the 2026 Thanksgiving holiday period.

Seat belt use in the U.S. has been on a steady increase in recent decades, and South Dakota has also seen a recent uptick after years of being well below the national average.

According to data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the national average for seat belt use was estimated at 91.3% in 2024, with California the highest at 97.5% and Wyoming the lowest at 73.4%. South Dakota's usage rate was 88.6% that year, but recent estimates show it has ticked up closer to the national average since then.

State crash data show that in the six years from 2020 to 2025, there were 577 fatalities on South Dakota roads, with 179 of those deaths (31%) coming among fully belted drivers. Of the remainder, 342 occupants killed (59%) were unbelted, and seat belt use could not be determined in 50 of the fatalities (9%).

The state sees a noticeable increase in crashes, injuries and deaths on roadways during Thanksgiving and other holiday periods. In the 10-year period from 2015-2024, the state saw 2,423 crashes involving 431 injuries and 19 deaths during the four-day Thanksgiving holiday period.

The per-day crash rate was highest during Thanksgiving, followed by the New Year's, Christmas, Memorial Day, Independence Day and Labor Day holidays.

Nearly a third of all fatalities in South Dakota in 2025 resulted from rollover wrecks, the type of crash in which seat belts are highly protective because they prevent occupants from being ejected from the vehicle, Frohreich said.

Despite the data, a crash investigator for the South Dakota Highway Patrol said he regularly encounters drivers, passengers and crash victims who were unbelted.

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SDHP trooper Jordan Rentschler works patrol out of the agency's Sioux Falls headquarters and is also an experienced accident investigator. As of early November, Rentschler has responded to 75 accidents and was the primary investigator on 50 so far this year.

For him, there is no question about the value of seat belt use by drivers and passengers.

"Using a seat belt is a really simple decision that can have an absolutely monumental impact, and not using one could affect you for the rest of your life," he said. "The passenger compartments are the safest place for an occupant of a vehicle because they keep you where you are."

Rentschler said departmental policy is to ticket anyone who is found to violate state seat belt laws, with warnings not an option.

Rentschler said he has seen motorists go to great lengths to disable indicators within their car or truck that beep or ding when a seat belt is not being used.

"What's really frustrating in my job is the great lengths people will go to trick the car," he said.

One argument Rentschler hears is from people who believe they are safe because most cars now provide some airbag protection, ignoring the fact that air bags are far less effective when seat belts aren't used.

"Air bags are an awesome tool, but if you're moving around in the car, you can be moved away from the airbag protection area," he said.

After seeing many fatalities and serious injuries among unbelted motorists, Rentschler said he is still surprised that some people are adamant against wearing a seat belt.

"I've heard a million different reasons that people are not wearing seat belts, like 'What if my vehicle catches on fire or what if I get plunged into a river or creek or lake?'" he said. "In over four years of investigating crashes, there were only two where it was critical to get out of the vehicle, and only one in which they used a seat belt."

Rentschler suggested that drivers equip their car with inexpensive tools that can both cut a seat belt or break a window in the case of a crash.

While his experiences have provided him some emotional strength while working accident scenes with a fatality, Rentschler said he will always dread informing family members about a lost loved one.

"For me it's very difficult when I have to speak with a family member about a mistake that was made that caused a death," he said. "There's no good way to break that news."

****

Seat belt use by driv-

See BELTS, page 7

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Giving thanks, even for the unknown



Teri Johnson is a long-time Methodist minister and teacher.

Thanksgiving week reminds us once again to count our blessings. It sounds simple enough, doesn't it? We gather around tables filled with food, spend time with family and friends, share stories, and perhaps take a moment to say what we are thankful for. Yet do we remember the little things God has surprised and blessed us with over the years?

It was Thanksgiving Day thirty-seven years ago when my husband I welcomed our second child into the world. At the time, I was attending seminary in Denver and we already had a two-year-old at home. My in-laws had driven from Brookings to visit for Thanksgiving, which got me thinking. Wouldn't it be wonderful if this baby decided to make an appearance while they were in town? We would have someone to stay with our toddler, and everyone would be together for the big event. It seemed like a perfectly reasonable plan to me!

Deciding not to leave anything to chance, I began working on my plan. I gathered up all my books on pregnancy as it was in the days before Google or AI and looked up ways to induce labor when overdue. I then made a trip to the local drugstore, which thankfully was open on the holiday, and purchased a bottle of castor oil. Now, before anyone gets any ideas, I am not offering medical advice or suggesting this method for inducing labor. I was simply a very pregnant woman, a week past her due date — with a plan.

After a full day of Thanksgiving turkey and all the trimmings, followed by a beautiful walk around the local park, I settled in for the evening. I mixed one half teaspoon of castor oil into a glass of orange juice and quickly drank it.



Pete Markham/Wikimedia Commons

I had barely finished my juice when I thought I might have felt a contraction. With the contractions growing stronger and closer together, my in-laws encouraged us to leave for the hospital. Along the way I made my husband promise not to tell anyone at the hospital about my castor oil in the fear I may be scolded.

An hour later, we welcomed our beautiful baby into our family.

I have always wondered about that Thanksgiving evening. Was it that tiny half- teaspoon of castor oil? Was the baby simply ready to make an appearance? Or was there perhaps a little divine intervention involved which prevented me from having to drink more of the awful tasting oil? I will never know for sure.

What I do know is that Thanksgiving took on a whole new meaning for our little family that year. I learned that some of life's most wonderful moments don't always happen according to our carefully laid plans. Sometimes they arrive unexpectedly, sometimes they arrive right on time, and sometimes they arrive just hours after you finish your orange juice!

We spend a lot of time trying to organize, plan, and manage the details of our lives. We make lists, establish timelines, and convince ourselves that things will go much smoother if everyone follows our schedule. But life has a way of reminding us that we aren't always in charge of the timing.

That is where faith comes in. I believe God has a way of showing up in the middle of our ordinary days, sometimes in ways we never anticipated. And sometimes the greatest blessings come wrapped in surprises we couldn't have possibly planned.

So this week while many of us will be counting our blessings around dinner tables, I'll be celebrating a very special one who arrived 37 years ago. And I'll smile once again at the memory of that little bottle of castor oil.

I will never know if it was science, coincidence, or divine intervention. I do know Thanksgiving has never been quite the same since. And for that, I'm especially thankful.

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Shop: Open after school, weekends for now

Continued from page 1

cards, but all the major sports. And a generation raised on Pokemon and other Japanese anime has the disposable income to indulge their childhood hobby.

"And it used to be kind of that thing that you did by yourself that you didn't tell your friends about because you didn't want them to make fun of you," Schenider said with a grin. "And now I think it's just so popular. Kids are doing it on YouTube. You know, people are breaking all these boxes, selling million-dollar cards. It's just mainstream."

Baseball cards hit a peak in the late 1980s across the United States — also the last time Brookings had a card shop, run by the Magnuses downtown. Back then, five major companies were cranking out millions of each card per year, leading to what's now called the Junk Wax Era. The cards are still great and there are plenty of them available to this day.

"There was a pretty big boom around COVID, too." Schneider said. "And then it kind of dropped off a little bit, and now we're sort of on the way up, and sort of leveling off now, too."



Josh Linehan/The Brookings Beacon

Card collectors check out the wares at the soft opening of The Local Card Shop in Brookings on Thursday.

Now, with a broader audience and fewer cards being printed, they've become collectible again, and The Local Card Shop aims to be a place for locals to buy and sell as well as a hub for collectors to connect.

Schneider and McMacken met on the baseball diamond and admitted to each other they each collected cards — something they want to pass on to today's collectors.

"I think with social media, it's become a lot easier to connect that way, but we're kind of missing the connections in life," Schneider said. "And has this has come together, it's been everyone —kids, older people, adults, whatever. The more people we talk to, they're like, 'Oh, I collect cards.'"

And rather than the insularity of any one fan base, they want their shop to be a spot where any collector will feel at home.

"We'll have all the major sports, Pokemon, another one called One Piece, which is a manga. And I mean, we'll buy, we'll sell, we'll trade, and hopefully do all the things," Schneider said.

The shop will be open after school on weekdays for now, in deference to Schneider's full-time job — he's a teacher at Brookings High School. In addition to the weekdays from 4 or 5 to 8 p.m. — doublecheck their Facebook page to be sure — they'll be open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturdays and noon to 4 p.m. on Sundays.

Schneider said the idea to open a card shop in Brookings is an old one, but one he was spurred into undertaking after he had sudden health troubles.

In August of 2025, Schneider suffered a sudden stroke at a young age — one serious enough he was hospitalized for 10 days and had a lengthy rehab stint to regain the use of his left side.

"I don't like to get too deep into the stroke stuff — but that's what it was. I had a little, you know, life-changing event there, and so it was kind of like, well, do you want to chase your dreams and be able to tell your boys that dad went after what he wanted to do. Yeah, and that sounds a little deep, maybe, but that's what it was," he said.

"It was just time to go for it and try it. Timing seemed right, and man, why not chase your dream, right?"

That's an awfully adult lesson, but Schneider still smiles like a kid when he talks about what got him into collecting cards, way back when.

"Randy Moss, man, he was my dude. So I would drag my dad to card shows and stuff. We'd be searching for Randy Moss cards and all that, and he would begrudgingly buy me packs and boxes and stuff. But secretly, secretly, I think he liked it, but yeah, that was kind of our thing for a while," Schenider said.

And now, kids in Brookings have a place to drag their dads. Or dads have a place to drag their kids. You never can tell.

"We really hope this can be a place everybody can come and play or collect or just have a place to be," Schneider said. "And you don't have to whisper about it. They don't have to hide in the background and whisper quietly about it. Just come on in, be a nerd with us."

Linehan is the Beacon's managing editor and dragged his dad all over the Upper Midwest hunting Ken Griffey Jr. rookie cards in the early 1990s. He welcomes story tips and comments at BrookingsBeacon@gmail.com

Belts: Hawley pressed bill with legislature

Continued from page 5

ers, front-seat occupants and anyone under 18 in a car or truck has been required by South Dakota law since 1995, with some exceptions for agricultural and postal vehicles.

But the violation remains a secondary offense for adults, meaning officers cannot stop drivers over 18 solely for being unbuckled. South Dakota is one of 13 states where belt use is a secondary offense for some or all motorists.

Former state Rep. Spencer Hawley, a Brookings insurance agent, brought a bill in 2018 to make adult seat belt use a primary offense and to increase the fine for violations from $25 to a low-level misdemeanor with fines closer to a speeding ticket.

"We need to toughen this up," Hawley said during a 2018 meeting of the House Judiciary Committee discussion of House Bill 1229.

Hawley said he hoped to strengthen the law so young drivers in their formative years get accustomed to using their seat belts regularly.

"The argument (against) is from the old dogs: 'Well, I haven't worn a seat belt, and I don't need to wear a seat belt and I agree with that,'" Hawley said. "You haven't had a problem, fine, (but) I'm aiming this at the kids."

The bill was supported by lobbyists for the insurance and health care industries as well as by a rural emergency medical technician.

The measure was opposed by a Milbank man whose unbelted wife survived a wreck after she was thrown from the vehicle and by Flandreau attorney Bob Pesall, who said some statistics do not support primary enforcement as improving safety. He also argued the bill was unnecessary and a government overreach.

"I have been passionately opposed to it all of my adult life because, primarily, I do not believe that it is at all the appropriate role of government to reach into a car and tell an otherwise law-abiding adult what they have to do and when it's appropriate to wear their seat belt," Pesall said.

The committee voted 7-6 to kill the bill, and no similar measure has been considered by the Legislature since then. Violating the seat belt law in South Dakota remains a secondary petty offense with a $25 fine.

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Are parties at another evolution point?

During my years of teaching political science courses at SDSU, I attempted to explain the political spectrum that existed in U.S. politics ranging from a radical left to a reactionary right and all political left, center left, center right and political right beliefs that fall between the extremes.

I explained that certain ideological beliefs regarding desired political means and policy ends combined with more specific political positions on a host of domestic and foreign issues determined one's position on the political spectrum. My SDSU tenure ended 18 years ago and much has changed over those years regarding political left and political right posturing.

Even certain political "axioms" used to distinguish liberal from conservative or left from right have lost some of their credibility.

Conservative Republicans were identified with low taxes and limited government and the notion that "the government which governs the least governs the best." Fiscal conservatism stood for fiscal responsibility or restricting government spending to the limited tax revenue generated during times of peace.



Bob Burns is a professor emeritus at SDSU.

Liberals were associated with a belief in a positive and active state and an equalitarian commitment to leveling the playing field for Americans between and within the various states. Tax and spend liberals also embraced fiscal responsibility but they were committed to higher taxes to finance expanded government infrastructure and public welfare spending. In the area of foreign affairs, conservatives were isolationists until Vietnam when they became military interventionists, and conversely, liberals were interventionists until Vietnam when they became military isolationists. However, in the realm of foreign humanitarian aid, liberals remained interventionists and conservatives remained isolationists.

Historically, liberals and conservatives appear to fluctuate between being advocates of international free trade vs domestic industry protectionism in response to the populist demands of the time.

Fiscal responsibility began to fade as a firm belief of both conservatives and liberals during the Reagan Era (1981-1989) when taxes were lowered and spending increased, leading to a tripling of the peacetime national debt from approximately $1 trillion to approximately $3 trillion dollars. Budget surpluses appeared during the Clinton Era (1993-2001) because of a strong growing economy but have returned with no interruption since the George W Bush Era (2001-2009).

There is an explanation for the demise of fiscal responsibility. It is easier to get elected and stay elected when supporting low taxes versus a tax increase. The annual deficits increased and added to a growing national debt year after year until the Reagan Era $3 trillion national debt grew to a Trump Era $40 trillion national debt with approximately 30% of the total national debt traceable to the six years of the split Trump Administration.

The long pattern of fiscal irresponsibility happened because liberals lost their courage to defend higher taxes as a means of financing increased federal government spending and conservatives lost their courage to resist increased government activities and overall spending while insisting on lower taxes. The conservative supply side theory that our nation can generate more tax revenue with lower tax rates and the accompanying growth that theoretically will follow has failed numerous times since the Reagan Administration.

Today we read about traditional moderate Democrats versus the progressive left and MAGA Republicans versus traditional Republicans. The traditional moderate Democrats favor the use of current institutions and procedures in approaching our nation's challenges in an incremental manner, while the progressive left favors more rapid leaps to bold new policy and a change in some of our governing institutions and processes to achieve the change in policy. The MAGA Republicans embrace whatever means and ends President Trump might favor at the time while the traditional Republicans would like to restore the GOP to its days of true fiscal conservatism and limited government, particularly with respect to the business and industry sector.

When the 120th Congress convenes on January 3, 2027, we can anticipate that the Democrats will use their 12-seat majority in the Senate and 80-plus seat majority in the House to move quickly on both an ambitious legislative agenda and a far-reaching oversight agenda. Both initiatives can be slowed and perhaps defeated with Senate filibusters, Trump vetoes and Trump Administration noncompliance in response to Congressional committee subpoenas.

More Republican cooperation and more success is likely if a pragmatic and high-priority approach, including cost of living, health care and immigration reforms is embraced by the majority party as opposed to an overly broad, hardline ideological endeavor. Considering the huge swing in voter party support between 2024 and 2026, it is clear voter preferences have less to do with ideological beliefs and party loyalty and more to do with who they believe can solve the problems that challenge them today.

The Democratic and Republican members of Congress cannot afford to paralyze Congress with intraparty and interparty ideological sideshows if they hope to have the voters' support in 2028.

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Christmas Kids & Cops returns for season

Local Law Enforcement is once again gearing up for the 19th annual Christmas Kids and Cops Program.

On Wednesday, Dec. 16, Officers from across the area will gather at Wal-mart in Brookings to bring a little extra holiday magic to local families.

This year, 38 kids from the Brookings, Arlington, Elkton, Deubrook and Sioux Valley School Districts will enjoy a Subway dinner, a visit from Santa, and a fun night of shopping with a law enforcement officer. Each child will also receive gift cards to the Brookings Movie Theater and local restaurants, along with a food basket to help make Christmas extra special.

What started 18 years ago by helping just 8 kids has grown into a wonderful tradition that brightens the holidays for dozens of families. Best of all, every dollar donated stays right here in our local communities.

This program would not be possible without all the generous donations from our amazing community. If you may be interested in donating to help make someone's Christmas magical, donations can be dropped off or mailed to the Brookings County Sheriff's Office or the Brookings Police Department.

Thank you for your continued generosity and support in keeping this tradition alive and making Christmas brighter for local kids and families!



Courtesy photo

The annual Christmas Kids & Cops event organized by Brookings Police and the Brookings Sheirff's Office returns this year.

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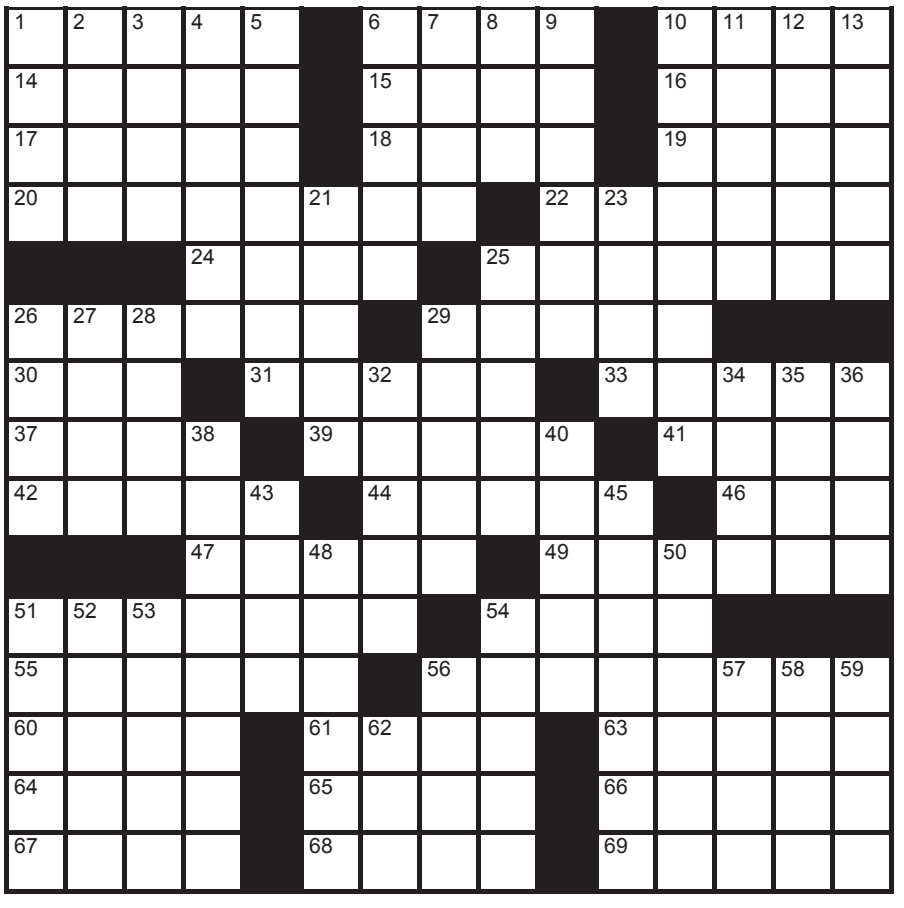

Across

1 Mogul empire governor in India
6 Bivalve
10 Throat-clearing sound
14 Cheer up
15 Eastern royal
16 Drill
17 Major artery
18 Hydroxyl compound
19 Tans
20 Commented
22 Spain and Portugal
24 Object of devotion
25 Small skullcaps
26 Earn
29 Tennis place
30 French friend
31 Dry out, informally
33 Manet contemporary
37 Repair
39 Pointed
41 Canal of song
42 Terminated
44 Challenges
46 Tribute, of sorts
47 Priests of the East
49 Fell back
51 Senate's spot
54 Numbers to crunch
55 Dickens character
56 Laundry instruction
60 Ready to pluck
61 Others, to Ovid
63 Throw with effort
64 Allege as fact
65 Ballet move
66 Computer key
67 Reduced by
68 Seafood selection
69 Rodeo rope

Down

1 Close
2 African flower
3 Affectionate
4 Reach
5 Unshaven
6 Angler's basket
7 Touch down
8 "Wheel of Fortune" buy
9 Surroundings
10 Type of ballot
11 Nymph
12 "Sesame Street" regular
13 Tablelands
21 Where Hawkeye served
23 Lyric poet
25 Working dog
26 Ready and willing
27 "You got that right!"
28 Drink garnish
29 Deep sleeps
32 Kind of wave
34 Hot rum drink
35 Glorified gofer
36 Lawn starter
38 Forks over
40 Filibuster
43 Watch feature, perhaps
45 Small bag
48 Ethics
50 Soft blue-gray mineral
51 Reef material
52 Breathing
53 Water carriers
54 Cover, in a way
56 Radio tuner
57 Consumes
58 Ancient greetings
59 Stepson of Claudius
62 Denebola's constellation

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the Brookings Beacon

Crossword answers, see page 13

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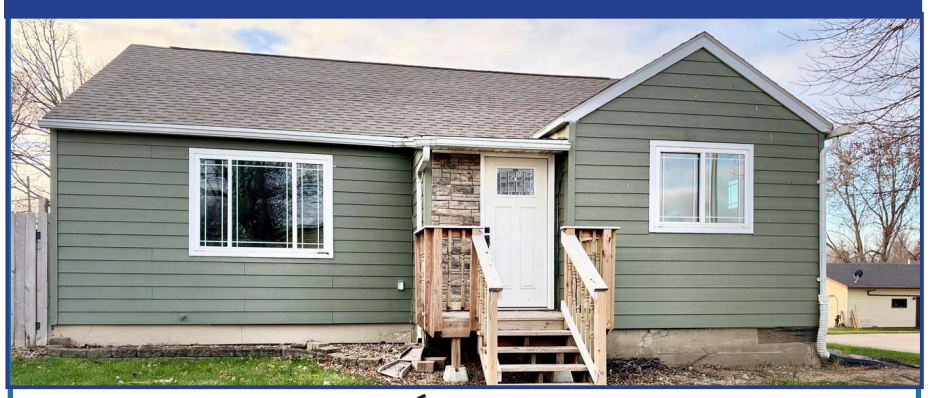

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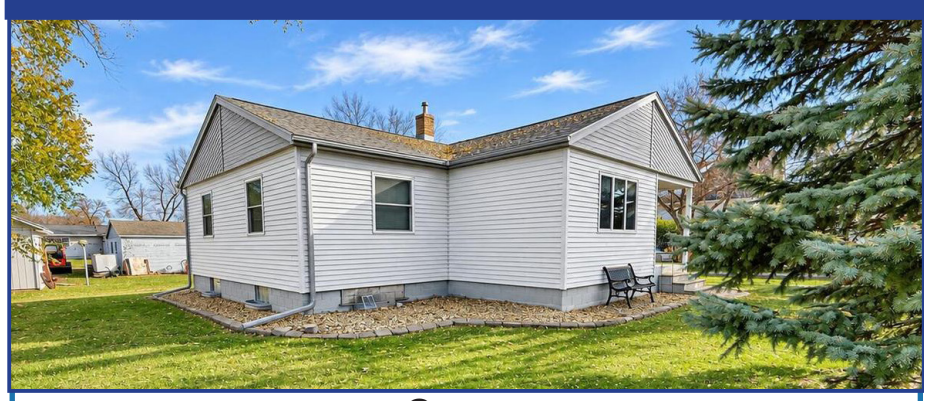

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Berry: Giving thanks

Continued from page 3

"creeping" turkeys. He explained that turkey creeping is when a hunter stalks a tom turkey by crawling toward it while hiding behind a turkey decoy. They hope to trigger an aggressive charge from a mature male gobbler. Now, that's hunting close and personal!

The hunting season: South Dakota has gobbler-only turkey hunting seasons in spring and fall. The harvest is closely managed by limiting the number of hunters and days. Some licenses are reserved for landowners. Hunters apply for a specific hunting area. Brookings County is Unit 06A on the map. In Brookings County, last year, seven landowners and 13 resident hunters received tags, compared to hundreds of tags issued for some Black Hills hunting units.

As I looked over the turkey decoys at Runnings, two turkey-hunting salesmen (both SDSU students) said that the spring season is the most popular because that's when the gobblers are most active, and outdoors enthusiasts want to get out there! Indeed, license sales agree. Of the 22,000 licenses sold, 90% were for the spring season. South Dakota turkey hunters generate about $20 million annually (the figure is $300 million for pheasant hunting).

The GFP gets youth interested by offering "mentored" hunts, where an unarmed adult accompanies a youth hunter at least 15 years-old. About 2,000 mentored turkey hunting licenses are sold annually.

The meal: Wild turkeys are leaner and tougher than store-bought. Cooking the whole bird usually begins with brining to tenderize and add moisture, then slow roasting while basting with butter or oil. One turkey hunter at Runnings said "I don't have time for all of that, I cut the breast into nuggets, coated with shore lunch (a fish batter) and fried them up."

Whatever turkey is on your table this Thanksgiving, I say eat up! The Bible says "Go, eat your food with gladness, and drink your wine with a joyful heart, for God has already approved what you do." (Eccl. 9:7).

I'd like to suggest a couple of practical ways to practice Creation Care. Reduce food waste, buy locally grown produce, and use real cloth and silverware, or use compostable table settings and trash bags. Take a Thanksgiving walk or drive to connect with nature. Finally, say a table grace that ends in "Thanks for the good Earth that God has given us and the wisdom and will to conserve it."

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News Briefs

Rotary hears from Multicultural Center

The Brookings Rotary Club heard an overview of the Brookings Multicultural Center from Marilyn Hildreth, president, who has lived in Brookings for almost 40 years and worked with international students, faculty, and community members for about 35 years. She introduced Ali Kashani, a board member of the Brookings Multicultural Center, who led much of the presentation. The center, located at 506 3rd Avenue, operates three core programs built around building trust, connecting people, and supporting families. Though named "multicultural," the center is described as a community-based organization open to all, not just the international community.

Among the services highlighted were English language classes held every Monday that are run entirely by volunteers, citizenship classes when needed, and a coffee conversation group meeting every Friday from 10 a.m. to noon that is open to the whole community. The center also offers STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) programming for children from kindergarten through 6th grade, as well as Friday night gym activities at the 5th Street Gym, which have grown significantly, including use by single mothers and their children, with children now requesting to hold birthday parties there. Additional involvement includes participation in the farmer's market, an ice cream social, and support for a Thanksgiving dinner usually held the day after Thanksgiving, with facilities support from the city's Parks and Recreation department.

A family-friendly New Year's Eve celebration, held for the past six to seven years, will run from 7 p.m. to 12:30 a.m., featuring pizza, apple cider, international dancing (including dances from Iran, Iraq, and India), games for children, and a bubble performer. The event is alcohol free. Last year's event had more international families than American families in attendance, and organizers expressed hope for more American family participation.

Kashani described help provided to immigrants and vulnerable community members, including immigration legal services, transportation to immigration court, medical needs, housing, food, and household essentials, as well as assistance for families facing grief, crisis, or unsafe situations. Specific examples included helping a Yemeni family seek surgery for their son, providing food and a month of housing for a 67-year-old stroke survivor with no income or family support, and helping raise funds to support a family member remaining in Mexico. The center's annual operating budget is only about $5,000–$6,000 and relies on volunteers and donations.

During questions and answers, Hildreth noted the center was incorporated in June 2019, following a 2018 conversation with a woman from South Korea who suggested starting a cultural center in Brookings. In response to a question about citizenship assistance, Hildreth described building relationships of trust, offering English and citizenship classes, and working with an organization of immigration lawyers for referrals, with a long-term goal of having a Department of Justice-accredited representative trained locally in Brookings; the two-year program costs $7,000 from the individual and $30,000 from the group, but a candidate has not yet been found.

Hildreth shared that obtaining citizenship is expensive and lengthy, citing an example of a young woman who arrived at age 14 and incurred costs including $600 for a physician's health exam, an estimated $2,000 for blood work, and $1,800 to file forms with the government — with total costs often estimated between $12,000 and $20,000 depending on legal fees. The group's immigration lawyer contact, described as a pastor from Mankato doing Department of Justice-accredited work, reportedly will not take clients seeking sibling-based immigration cases due to a 30-year waiting backlog.

Hildreth stated that two or three workers are still being deported from the community every week, often leaving mothers and children without income, and described one specific case involving a mother whose baby was transported to Sioux Falls, whose husband was deported the week prior and was being held in a facility in Sioux City (described by Hildreth as meeting "every definition of a concentration camp"), complicating efforts to obtain a passport for the newborn to return to Mexico.

Kashani shared personal history, having first come to Brookings in 1973 after studying Animal Science in Texas, later earning a master's and PhD (graduating in 1978), briefly returning to Iran before the revolution, and eventually working 38 years for the Washington State Department of Agriculture as a regulator before retiring. Hildreth closed by encouraging attendees to visit Walmart, especially on weekends or after payday, to greet immigrants in the community with kindness, noting an increase over the past three to four years in reports of people directing hostile comments toward immigrants in the area.



Courtesy photo

Lynne O'Neil (BAC Board Treasurer), Angi Strohfus (BAC Senior Services Supervisor), Amanada Runia (Volunteer of the Month), Meridith Weiland (First Bank & Trust), Brynn Olverson (Brookings Area United Way).

Wixon honored by SDSU

BROOKINGS — Austin Wixon, a custodial services supervisor for Facilities and Services, was named South Dakota State University's Civil Service Employee of the Month for November.

Wixon has been employed at SDSU since 2013, starting as a student worker with the custodial team and working his way up to custodial services supervisor II. His role involves managing 20 staff members, overseeing 45 buildings and supporting events across campus, including in the Oscar Larson Performing Arts Center and First Bank & Trust Arena.

Wixon's positivity, mentorship and strong work ethic are recognized by his coworkers. He leads by example and lends a hand wherever it is needed.

"Austin is always cheerful and respectful, with extraordinary customer service skills and a 'can-do' attitude," said Sean Larson, equipment mechanic for SDSU custodial services. "He's willing to help any employee with whatever project might come up, including rolling up his sleeves and cleaning when the need arises."

Wixon's dedication to his team creates a supportive environment, and his generosity doesn't go unnoticed.

"He is always helpful," said Jessica Hendricks, custodial services supervisor I. "Every time I have a question, either he has the right answer, or he will say that he will figure it out, and he does in a timely manner."

Wixon's accountability helps operations run smoothly, Hendricks said. He not only goes above and beyond for customers but also for his team wherever support is needed.

Wixon expressed his gratitude toward his coworkers. "My work would be impossible without the hard work and trust of everyone around campus." He highlighted the importance of everyone working together and supporting each other to keep campus standing tall.

Runia named volunteer of month

BROOKINGS — The Brookings Area United Way's Volunteer United program proudly recognizes Amanda Runia as the November 2026 Volunteer of the Month.

Amanda has been a dedicated volunteer with the Brookings Activity Center for the past year, generously giving her time every Tuesday and Thursday. She opens the 5th Street Gym for the 9:00 a.m. walking group, participates alongside members, and then helps with the 10 a.m. pickleball program.

As pickleball has grown over the past year, Amanda has played an important role in creating new opportunities for members to stay active and connected.

Through organizing tournaments, creating outdoor playing opportunities, and welcoming new participants, Amanda has helped foster an environment where members can build friendships and feel a sense of belonging. Her dedication extends beyond the gym, as she also helps serve lunch at the Activity Center by delivering meals to members and clearing tables. Her kindness and dependable presence have made her an important part of the BAC family.

"Amanda is a wonderful example of how one person's willingness to give their time can make a lasting difference in the lives of others," said Angi Strohfus, Brookings Activity Center Senior Services Supervisor. "Her enthusiasm, kindness, and commitment to the members of the Brookings Activity Center have helped create meaningful connections and strengthen our community."

The Volunteers of the Month program celebrates individuals who give their time to strengthen the foundation of the Brookings area. To learn more about volunteer opportunities or to nominate a volunteer, visit https://brookingsunitedway.org/volunteer-united/.

— From staff reports

Ranger Report: PeeWee A wins home tournament

By Josh Linehan
The Brookings Beacon

The PeeWee A Rangers opened their season by winning their home tournament in a thrilling shootout on Sunday afternoon.

■ **Brookings 5, Luverne 2**

Colton Hendricks scored twice, Callen Fogelson had a goal and an assist and Beau Uckert and Elliott Ahmann each found the net for Brookings. Jaxx McClemans added an assist.

Drake Foerster made 16 saves in net to earn the win.

■ **Brookings 7, Winona 3**

The Rangers poured in four goals in the first and cruised to their second win of the day on Friday night.

Hendricks had 2 goals and 2 assists and Fogelson chipped in a goal and a helper.

Also scoring for Brookings: Avery Swisher with a pair, Finn Konechne and Evan Krogman. Credit assists to Henry Konechne, Ahmann and Bennett Honkomp.

Sarantis Theodosopoulos was in goal and made nine saves to earn the win for the Rangers.

■ **Brookings 7, Lincoln 3**

Honkomp had a hat trick and Ahmann added a goal and three assists in the Rangers win.

Also scoring were Henry Konechne and Finn Konechne. Assists went to Uckert, Swisher and Finn Konechne.

Foerster was back in goal to earn the victory.

■ **Minnesota River 4, Brookings 3**

The Rangers dropped their first of the season in a tight one.

Henry Konechne, Ahmann and McClemans scored for Brookings. Assists went to McClemans, Uckert, Swisher and Hendricks.

Theordosopoulos was between the pipes for the Rangers.

■ **Brookings 3, Winona 2 (SO)**

Foerster was the hero for the Rangers in the championship rematch with the Winhawks, making four of five saves in a shootout to keep the trophy home in Brookings.

Ahmann, Swisher and Hendricks all converted their shots for the Rangers.

The game was 2-2 after two periods and remained scoreless through the third period and overtime.

McClemans and Honkomp had the tallies in regulation, with assists going to Henry Konechne, Swisher and Uckert.

Pee Wee B

■ **Brookings 5, West Fargo 3**

Cannon Fogelson scored twice and Nash Zweber, Oscar Gross and Jase Minett scored for Brookings. Assist go to Graham Itterman (2), Lyle Prusmann, Zweber and Maddox Chandler.

Henry Dangel earned the win in net for the Rangers.

■ **Fremont 5, Brookings 2**

Bauer Kruse and Zweber scored for the Rangers with Fogelson credited with an assist.

Emmett Gustafson made 34 saves in goal for Brookings.

■ **Brookings 2, Kansas City 2**

Gross and Itterman scored for the Rangers, with the lone assist credited to Zweber.

Dangel made 24 saves in net for Brookings.

■ **Brandon Valley 5, Brookings 4 (OT)**

The Ice Cats scored with 10 seconds remaining to send the game to overtime and then won the title over the hosts.

Minnet and Chandler scored for the Rangers, with Itterman chipping in a pair. Zweber had two assists, with Kruse, Fogelson and Chandler recording one each.

Gustafson made 18 saves between the pipes.

Pee Wee C

The PWC Rangers split four games at the tournament.



Adrian Amiotte/Brookings Beacon

Brookings' Drake Foerster prepares to make a save during a 3-2 shootout win over Winona in the championship game of a tournament in Brookings on Sunday.

■ **Brookings 8, Brandon Valley 1**

Linkin Harris had a hat trick, Aldo Zwart had a goal and two assists and the Rangers thumped Brandon Valley.

Also on the scoresheet for Brookings were: River Anderson, Xander Reeser with a goal and two helpers, Evan Rounds and Tate Heiberger.

Kolby Kirkham and Ellis See split time in goal.

■ **Delano 4, Brookings 1**

Reeser had the Rangers lone goal off a feed from Harris. Kirkham and See again split the game in goal.

■ **Fremont 6, Brookings 2**

Reeser scored twice, Harris had a helper and the tendies again split time.

■ **Brookings 8, Yankton 1**

Reeser scored twice, Ledger Hasselhorst added a pair, Harris had two and Zwart and Cox each chipped in a goal in a Sunday win for the Rangers.

Kirkham and See again split duties in net.

Junior varsity

■ **Mitchell 3, Brookings 1**

The junior varsity Rangers dropped their first league game of the season on the road on Friday night.

Maxx Anderson had the lone tally for Brookings on the power play in the first period off a feed from Un-Hyeng Keay.

■ **Brookings 1, Sioux Falls East 1**

Isaac Haufschild was stellar in net, making 31 saves to secure a tie for the JV Rangers on Saturday in Sioux Falls.

Beau Luvaas had the goal for the Rangers with Carter Nielsen credited with the assist.

Bantam B

■ **Mitchell 7, Brookings 4**

The Rangers dropped their season opener in a back and forth affair at Mitchell on Sunday morning.

Jacob Myhre, Joey Francisco, Max Harris and Adrian Almhjeld scored goals that were recorded as unassisted in Mitchell.

Nash Billings was in net for the Rangers, making 25 stops.

Ranger varsity boys top Mitchell, Sioux Falls East to start season

By Andrew Holtan
The Brookings Beacon

The Brookings Rangers boys' varsity team started the season 2-0 over the weekend as the Rangers beat Mitchell 4-0 on Friday night and then topped Sioux Falls East 3-2 in overtime on Saturday.

Both games were on the road this past weekend and the Rangers will return home this weekend with a game against Aberdeen on Saturday at 8 p.m.

Friday

■ **Brookings 4, Mitchell 0**

MITCHELL — The Rangers scored in each period on Friday night with one goal in the first, two in the second and one in the third.

Nolan Krogman got Brookings on the board with 3:32 left in the opening period. His goal was assisted by Caleb Johnson and the Rangers led 1-0 going into the second.

Cade Zweber pushed the lead to 2-0 with 12:48 left in the second and his goal came on the power play. He was assisted by Parker Nielsen and Krogman. Jason Ready then scored on the power play as well with 8:20 left in the period to make it 3-0. He was assisted by Zweber and Nielsen.

Brookings final goal of the night came with 8:19 left in the game. Zweber found the back of the net again and was assisted by Ready and Krogman.

Saturday

■ **Brookings 3, Sioux Falls East 2 (F/OT)**

SIOUX FALLS — Brookings got down 2-0 in the first period and Nielsen completed the comeback for the Rangers with a goal that was 12 minutes into overtime. He was assisted by Ready and Johnson.

Anthony Rigolizzo gave the Flyers a 1-0 lead just under two minutes into the game and he was assisted by Hayden Hansen. Ryan Fenton then gave Sioux Falls East a 2-0 lead with eight minutes to go in the opening period and he was assisted by Henrik Kortan and Jaxson Roesler.

Two minutes later, Maxten Jensen cut that lead in half with a goal and he was assisted by Mauer Bartley and Krogman. That made it 2-1 going into the second.

Jack Lovseth tied the game with 12:43 remaining in the second period and he was assisted by Kallen Serfling. Neither team scored until Nielsen's game winner in overtime.

SPORTS CALENDAR

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 25
Men's College Basketball
Abilene Christian at SDSU, 1 p.m.

College Wrestling
Northern State at SDSU, 4 p.m.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20
Women's College Basketball
Daytona Beach Classic
SDSU vs. Rutgers, 6 p.m.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 21
Women's College Basketball
Daytona Beach Classic
SDSU vs. Kentucky, 2:30 p.m.

Men's College Basketball
Second Line Showcase in New Orleans
SDSU vs. South Alabama, 5 p.m.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 22
Men's College Basketball
Second Line Showcase in New Orleans
SDSU vs. Fresno State, 5 p.m.

N	A	W	A	B	■	C	L	A	M	■	A	H	E	M
E	L	A	T	E	■	R	A	N	I	■	B	O	R	E
A	O	R	T	A	■	E	N	O	L	■	S	U	N	S
R	E	M	A	R	K	E	D	■	I	B	E	R	I	A
■	■	■	I	D	O	L	■	B	E	A	N	I	E	S
G	A	R	N	E	R	■	C	O	U	R	T	■	■	■
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M	E	N	D	■	A	I	M	E	D	■	E	R	I	E
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SDSU looks to reset, get healthy during bye week

By Andrew Holtan
The Brookings Beacon

BROOKINGS — South Dakota State will have a bye this week before the Jackrabbits embark on their postseason journey.

SDSU, who is the No. 3 seed in this year's FCS Playoffs, did not have a bye last season as the Jacks were seeded 14th. It's a unique week for the team with the Thanksgiving holiday in the middle of it. SDSU head coach Dan Jackson broke down what the week will look like for the Jacks, including a tradition on Tuesday night.

"This week is all about us," Jackson said. "... We're going to deep dive ourselves [on Monday] as a staff to see where we need to make tweaks and adjustments, and self scout where we have tendencies that our opponents that are in the playoffs may see. ... We'll have practice [on Monday] with our developmental players and let veterans have the day off.

"Tuesday we'll get some good work in and a lot of recruiting. Wednesday morning we'll lift them and have a light practice and get them out of here for the holidays. My favorite thing about this week though is on Tuesday night. The [Jackrabbit Former Players Association] and [Fellowship of Christian Athletes] will have a big Thanksgiving meal for the team, so we feed the entire team Thanksgiving and having that together is always a special time."

SDSU had three players out in its win over Indiana State to close out the regular season as safety Dontay Johnson, cornerback Paul Kim and tight end Coleman Kuntz all missed action. The bye week will allow these players an extra week to get healthy and senior linebacker Cullen McShane said a lot of guys are going to feel fresh going into the Jacks' first playoff game.

"This week is so important," McShane said. "I mean, you get your body back and you get a whole week to do it. Having a Saturday with no contact is huge. That's so big, just for your body in total. We should be feeling really, really good."

SDSU's regular season bye was right in the middle of the 12 games. Coming off of that bye, the Jacks lost to North Dakota, their only loss to an FCS team this season. Despite that loss, sixth-year quarterback Chase Mason said he looks at this postseason bye as perfect timing again because it begins the third part of SDSU's season.

"[The first bye] was kind of set up perfectly right in the middle of the season, and then now it's pretty much another halfway checkpoint, I guess you could say. It's just, the biggest thing is like mentally and physically, just having the week off of strenuous things. I mean, we're gonna practice this week until we go home for Thanksgiving, and then guys are kind of able to almost hit a rest button. Go back and see their family if they choose to, and it's good mentally for sure for the guys that go back for the bye week," Mason said.

Spending time with family is another reason getting a bye in the FCS Playoffs is so important. Thanksgiving is known as a day where families get together and the bye allows players that live in this part of the country to go home for the weekend and spend time with their family.

Senior offensive tackle Quinten Christensen, whose family owns a ranch in Wessington Springs, said he is going to go hunting with his brothers over the weekend and it will be good to get away from football for a few days.

"[It's just nice to] spend time with our families over Thanksgiving. I think a bunch of us are going to go deer hunting because we have the weekend off, and it's just good to kind of get a break from football. Then once you get a little break, then you want to go 110%. It's a good way that it's set up," Christensen said.

SDSU will play either No. 14 seeded Weber State or Western Illinois in the second round of the playoffs on Dec. 5. The Wildcats and Leathernecks will play at 2 p.m. Central time on Saturday.



Dave Bordewyk/South Dakota NewsMedia Association

South Dakota State's Chase Mason surveys the field during a 52-13 win over Indiana State on Saturday at Dana J. Dykhouse Stadium in Brookings.

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Jackrabbit women top Kansas in Kansas City, 77-70

By Andrew Holtan
The Brookings Beacon

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — The South Dakota State women's basketball team picked up its first win over a power conference opponent on Sunday as the Jackrabbits beat Kansas 77-70 at the T-Mobile Center.

The Jacks built a lead in the second quarter and staved off the Jayhawks in the fourth quarter to move to 3-3 on the season.

The two teams went back-and-forth in the first quarter and SDSU held a 16-14 lead after the opening frame. The Jacks then went on a 9-0 run to start the second quarter and led 25-14 three minutes into the quarter. Kansas would cut the lead to 28-25 with three minutes left in the first half and the Jacks outscored the Jayhawks 6-1 in the rest of the half.

SDSU kept Kansas at arms length in the third and led 46-36 with 3:32 remaining in the quarter. The Jacks then led 54-44 going into the fourth.

The Jacks pushed their lead to 67-55 with 3:40 left in the game. The Jayhawks did not go away though as they went on a 10-2 run to cut the lead to 70-65 with 1:06 to play. Emilee Fox was then fouled and made two free throws with 53 seconds left. SDSU got a stop on the other end to seal the victory as Mahli Abdouch and Fox combined to make five free throws the rest of the way.

SDSU shot 41.3% from the field and was 8-of-32 from three. Fox and Brooklyn Meyer each had 21 points. Meyer had nine rebounds and Fox had six rebounds. Abdouch had 11 points.

Kansas shot 41% from the field and was 5-of-17 from deep. S'Mya Nichols had 18 points to lead the Jayhawks. Jailya Davis had 17 points and seven rebounds. Brooklyn Renn had 12 points and Mariyah Noel had 10 points.

The Jacks held a 43-25 advantage in rebounds. Kansas outscored SDSU 38-32 in the paint. The Jacks had 16 turnovers and the Jayhawks had 13.

SDSU will head south to Dayton Beach, Fla., this weekend. The Jacks will play Rutgers (7-0) on Friday at 6 p.m. The Scarlet Knights have only played mid-majors so far this season. SDSU will then take on No. 12 Kentucky (6-0) on Saturday at 2:30 p.m.



SDSU Athletics

South Dakota State's Mahli Abdouch looks ahead with the ball during a 77-70 win over Kansas on Sunday at the T-Mobile Center in Kansas City, Mo.

Playoffs: Jackrabbits highly motivated to win title

Continued from page 16

This will be the 15th consecutive playoff appearance for SDSU and the eighth time in the past 10 seasons that the Jacks earned a first round bye. The Jacks were last seeded third in the 2024 FCS Playoffs and they lost in the semifinals.

Last year, SDSU was the No. 14 seed. Senior offensive lineman Quinten Christensen said the team feels different going into the playoffs this year because things have been more consistent this season.

"It's cool to see our work over the season come to fruition. ... I think we're trending in the right direction. Compared to last year, it was pretty bumpy and it was kind of a roller coaster. As of late, especially the last five weeks, I think everybody has been playing well," Christensen said.

SDSU's two losses this season came to Northwestern of the FBS and the Big Ten, and to North Dakota. The loss to the Fighting Hawks on Oct. 17 has been described as a bit of a wake up call for the team and Mason said the loss was good for the Jackrabbits because they learned a lot about themselves.

"Obviosuly nobody wants to lose, but we learned a lot about ourselves after that loss. Sometimes something like that needs to happen to a team. Never feels [good] to lose, and you don't ever want it to happen. But we've learned a lot about ourselves from that loss, so it's been good," Mason said.

The Jacks are looking to win their third national title in the past five seasons. A lot of the seniors on this year's team were members of the national title teams in 2022 and 2023, but they did not play major roles. Senior linebacker Cullen McShane said the senior class is highly motivated to finish the season as the top team in the FCS.

"I'm really motivated," McShane said. "It's do or die now. It's win or go home and then you're done with football and you have to take off the SDSU logo and never put it back on. That means a lot to me, and I know it means a lot to everybody else. I mean, this senior class, a lot of stayed through and through, and a lot of us have been here for five years. ... It means a lot to us and I wish I could play at SDSU forever, but that's not how it works."



Adrian Amiotte/Brookings Beacon

South Dakota State's Brayden Delahoyde hurdles over a defender during a 52-13 win over Indiana State on Saturday afternoon at Dana J. Dykhouse Stadium in Brookings.

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Adrian Amiotte/Brookings Beacon

South Dakota State's James Basinger (23) and Quinten Christensen (69) celebrate a first down during a 52-13 win over Indiana State on Saturday afternoon at Dana J. Dykhouse Stadium in Brookings. SDSU was awarded the No. 3 seed in the FCS Playoffs and will have a first-round bye.

Let the Playoffs Begin

Jackrabbits earn first-round bye, No. 3 seed

By Andrew Holtan
The Brookings Beacon

BROOKINGS — South Dakota State found out on Sunday that it will be the No. 3 seed in the FCS Playoffs. The Jackrabbits will play the winner of No. 14 seeded Weber State and Western Illinois on Dec. 5.

The Jacks (10-2) won the Missouri Valley Football Conference championship outright on Saturday with a 52-13 win over Indiana State. They have been ranked No. 3 in the polls over the past three weeks and the two teams ahead of them were Montana State (11-1) and Tarleton State (12-0). Those rankings reflected the top three in the bracket as the Bobcats got the No. 1 seed and the Texans were the No. 2 seed.

SDSU head coach Dan Jackson said he thought the Jacks should have been a top-two seed and felt like SDSU was slighted. He added that will motivate his team in the postseason.

"We came into this season with a bit of a chip on our shoulder, with something to prove throughout the season. ... We're really motivated, and for the committee to slight us the way they did, and to ignore every single metric put in front of them, that's going to do nothing but motivate us even more," Jackson said.

Weber State finished the season with a record of 8-4. The Wildcats went 7-2 in the Big Sky and finished second in the conference. Weber State's losses came to Southern Utah, Colorado, Portland State and Montana State. The Wildcats beat No. 10 seeded Northern Arizona 25-21 on Nov. 14 and beat Idaho State, who is also in the playoff

Western Illinois, a former Missouri Valley Football Conference member, was also 8-4 on the season. The Leathernecks were the champions of the Ohio Valley Conference. Their losses came to Illinois State, Wisconsin, North Alabama and Southeast Missouri State. WIU did not have a win against the playoff field.

Quarterback Chase Mason said the coaching staff will put together a game plan for both of those teams, but the Jacks will focus on themselves during the bye week.

"[We'll talk about those teams] a little bit. I mean, the coaching staff will game plan for both, I'm guessing. We'll definitely be watching the game on Saturday as well, but you can't really [prepare] before you know who you're playing," Mason said.

The other top eight seeds included No. 4 Lamar, No. 5 Stephen F. Austin, No. 6 Youngstown State, No. 7 South Dakota and No. 8 Mercer.

Should the top eight seeds hold suit in the second round, the Jackrabbits would have a rematch with Youngstown State in the quarterfinals. The Jacks beat the Penguins 27-20 on Sept. 19.

Also, if that happened, South Dakota would play at Tarleton State and could set up a semifinal matchup between the Coyotes and the Jackrabbits. SDSU jumped out to a 28-0 lead against USD on Oct. 31 and eventually beat the 'Yotes 31-21.

See **PLAYOFFS,** page 15