

Clark County Courier

Wednesday, January 16, 2013

Hometown Newspaper of Maureen Wallace, Sugar Land, Tx.

\$1.00 Includes Tax

Clark, South Dakota 57225

For 132 years, The Voice of Clark County

Vol. 132, No. 29

www.clarkcountypublishing.com

Clark School Board is moving forward with plans to opt out

It really isn't a news flash stunner, but the Clark School District 12-2 is preparing to opt out in 2013. This means that the school district cannot operate on the revenues generated by the maximum levy for the school's general fund, in the opinion of the administration and the school board, and will choose to opt out of the tax limitation freeze.

At the January meeting of the Clark School Board, superintendent Brian Heupel and business manager Heidi Sigdestad detailed the gloomy financial future of the district. The administration outlined the financials: month-to-month expenditures, the month-to-month revenues, projection, scenario, cash flow and timeline.

The bottom line is that the projected fund balance at the end of the 2013-14 school term would be \$82,670, if all variables remain the same. A financial figure of this amount is not enough to carry forward into the following school year, causing the opt out progression discussion at a very serious level.

Heupel explained and reiterated that this situation did not happen overnight, it has been ongoing the entire millennium, and at this point, all future cuts will involve programs, not just personnel.

As Clark School deficit spends at a rate of \$297,000, already hav-

ing cut \$500,000 in cuts the past decade, "we are staring an opt out down," said Heupel, and he continued that over the last five years his budget targeted with high expectations for expenditures and low expectations for revenues has always teetered on an opt out situation, but never come to the actual point of having to declare and prepare for an opt out.

Because the reserve fund numbers are so dire, and all cuts have been made, and everything money-wise is down to 'brass tacks', Heupel and Sigdestad feel this direction is necessary for the well being of the school's finances.

Heupel went through the timeline process with the school board. In the near future an advisory committee will be set up to help plan strategy, followed by a public meeting, followed by a board decision.

This advisory committee was asked for by the superintendent, and will be a small group of those who have worked with school finance in the school community to aid on the grassroots level.

If an opt out is declared by the school board it must be done by July 15, so the board must act accordingly in the next six months.

"We've started the ball rolling and the next two board meetings will decide the future of this opt

out," said Heupel.

In other business:

▲ An hour-long executive session was held regarding superintendent evaluation. No motion was made following the closed session.

▲ A half-hour executive session was held early in the meeting for student issues regarding attendance hearings.

▲ Teacher Tammie Paulson is the lead educator in the AdvancED accreditation review taking place this spring at Clark School. She shared with the board this self-assessment with standards process. She also reviewed the new Clark School website format.

▲ The school, with the aid of a local attorney, will put together a 'hold harmless' clause for liability purposes on land by the Clark County Farmers Elevator property.

▲ The Clark-Willow Lake Cyclone volleyball team is on probation for one year. This arose out of a student issue with the SDHSAA, as a student moved into the school district and played volleyball. Her parents were divorced, and when a student athlete moves from one district to another, and lives with a parent who isn't named first for custody purposes, they must open

School board (continued on page 3)

Vacancies are listed on local governing boards

Several notice of vacancies for positions on local governing boards will appear this week and next week in the *Clark County Courier*. In addition to area town board seats, registered resident voters may file petitions for the Henry School Board. The municipal elections this year fall on Tuesday April 9, 2013.

Petitions for any of these boards may be obtained from the town finance officer or in the case of the Henry School, from the business manager at the school office.

Petitions may be circulated beginning Friday, January 25 and need to be filed by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, February 22, 2013.

Position openings include: **Clark:** This is a year off for Clark. No municipal positions come open in 2013. Jackie Luttrell is the City of Clark Finance Officer.

Henry School: Henry School District #14-2 holds their election the same time as city elections. One three-year term is open with the incumbent being John Rider. Dianne Easthouse is the business manager at Henry School. Clark and Willow Lake schools hold their school board elections in June.

Garden City: One council position will become vacant due to the expiration of the present term. David Waples is the incumbent for this three-year council position. Jeanette Warkentien is the finance officer for Garden City.

Bradley: One three-year term position presently held by Ramsey Knutson will become vacant due to the expiration of the present term.

Vacancies (continued on page 3)



Sledding down the big hill for winter fun

It's the middle of January, so winter is embraced with open arms rather than feared or abhorred. Hunter Lee and Aaron Zemlicka, sled down the big hill in north Clark, just west of Smith Street. These youngsters, left to right, Diedrich McGowan,

City of Clark approves operating agreements

The Clark City Council met briefly in special session, Monday over the lunch hour to decide upon operating liquor license agreements.

The city council approved year-round liquor licenses for both Clark Lanes and the Clark Golf Club.

The Playhouse Restaurant and Press Box no longer has a liquor license and the establishment has closed. They do however still maintain a malt beverage/wine license, when and if a re-opening occurs.

WEATHER

Ryan Eggleston - Official Weather Observer

	HI	LO	PR
Jan. 8	31	21	0
Jan. 9	37	12	0
Jan. 10	38	31	.02
Jan. 11	32	0	.06
Jan. 12	4	-6	0
Jan. 13	6	-4	0
Jan. 14	10	-8	0
2013 precipitation to date			0.08"
2012 precipitation to date			0.00"

Something for everyone at 2013 Farm and Home Show

Final preparations are underway for this year's annual Clark County Farm and Home Show to be held on Saturday, January 19 at the Willow Lake auditorium. The event is sponsored by the Clark County Crop Improvement Association, Clark County Homemakers Club and the Willow Lake Lions. There will be commercial exhibits, crop and home exhibits, demonstrators, various programs geared toward people of all ages.

Make sure you put it on your calendar for Saturday, January 19, as it continues to be a one-day affair this year.

The show will be open from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Willow Lake

School Auditorium.

The lunch stand will be run by the Willow Lake junior class. There is no admission charge to the Farm and Home Show and pre-registration for exhibits is not necessary.

Entries can be made in several classes including foods, canned foods, homecrafts, needlecrafts, clothing, photography and crops. Only Clark County residents will be allowed to enter home economics exhibits. All crops entered must have been grown in Clark County in 2012.

Youth exhibits are open to school-aged children from kindergarten through 12th grade and exhibitors need not be in 4-H to enter. Young-

sters are also reminded of the Farm Safety Poster contest being held for children aged kindergarten on up to fourth grade in the Clark and Willow Lake Schools.

Home economic and crop exhibits to be judged may be dropped off January 16 to 18 at the Clark County Extension Office during regular office hours. Entries will be accepted at the Farm and Home Show until 10:00 a.m. on Saturday. Rules, classes and lot numbers can be picked up at the Extension Office.

Saturday Activities

At 1:00 p.m., South Dakota State University Extension State Agrono-

mist Nathan Mueller will present 'Residue and Roots', a program dealing with residue in the fields and its effect.

"Nathan will discuss how residue management, crop rotations and hybrid selection can help manage your fields, especially during weather extremes," said Clark County 4-H Youth Program Advisor Kim McGraw.

Mueller, the new SDSU Extension Agronomist brings with him applied agricultural experience from Nebraska, Kansas and Indiana to help producers in South Dakota.

Farm Show (continued on page 3)

Flocks in need of shepherds:

Finding ministers can be a challenge for rural congregations

A story by Dakotafire dakotafire.net

By Heidi Marttila-Losure, Dakotafire Media Reporting by Doug Card, Britton Journal; Bill Krikac, Clark County Courier; Garrick Moritz, Faulk County Record; Melody Owen, Tri-County News

Don't come to St. John's Lutheran Church in Britton, S.D., on Sunday morning for worship—you will be about half a day late.

The church recently lost its full-time pastor, so the pastor of a joint parish in Andover and Ferney is leading services for them. There are not enough hours on Sunday morning to get to all the churches, so St. John's is worshipping at 6 p.m. Saturday instead.

Alternating church times may remain into the future. They had a joint parish with Peace Lutheran in Hecla, but that country church is considering closing. St. John's won't close, but it is struggling also. The church has come to the difficult conclusion that they can no longer support a full-time pastor.

"Ten years ago our average church attendance was in the 90s,

and now it's in the mid-40s and -50s," explained Kent Zuehlke, council president at St. John's. "In the meantime, wages have gone up, and costs for retirement plans and health benefits have increased."

Zuehlke said that getting a seminary-trained pastor is a \$70,000 expense for churches, which would require about 90 to 100 people in regular attendance. They don't see numbers going in that direction.

"Our goal is to keep the door open as long as we possibly can, and we will find a way to do that," Zuehlke said.

As mainline churches across America struggle with declining membership, rural churches often face an additional problem: The difficulty of calling and keeping a pastor. Cost is a significant concern, as health care costs and the amount of debt seminary graduates bring with them have both skyrocketed at the same time that membership numbers have declined. But making the math work is just part of the challenge.

Pastors not growing up in Lake Wobegon anymore

In 1918, author Edwin L. Earp argued that it was important to develop good candidates for rural ministry, even though it might not seem necessary, since "the countryside is still furnishing about eighty-five

per cent of the ministerial leadership of the churches, including the cities, and when many of the leading laymen were born and reared in the farm home or in the manse of the country parish."

Today, the urban apartment or the "manse" of the suburbs might be more accurate descriptions of where pastors grow up, as the statistic has nearly exactly flipped. For example, between 80 and 85 percent of students going to Luther Seminary are from urban or suburban backgrounds, according to Alvin Luedke, professor of rural ministry at Luther.

But as the background of ministers has changed, the location of most churches has not changed much: 47 percent of churches that are part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA) are still in rural places, Luedke said. The statistics for other mainline churches are similar.

This means that somewhere around 60 percent of new pastors will have their first call in a rural congregation—unfamiliar terrain for many of them. "Many of them remember going to a farm or a small town to visit grandparents, but they've never actually lived

Ministers (continued on page 3)



Pastor Keith Garness, along with Pastor Dave Larson (not pictured), serves the Prairie Star Lutheran Parish, consisting of Grace Lutheran Church in Willow Lake, Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Vienna and Good Hope Church in rural Willow Lake. Garness was installed in September of 2011.

He has been a pastor for thirty years and also served as an assistant to the bishop in western North Dakota. Pastor Keith and wife, Sue, have two children and one grandchild. They reside in Willow Lake, where they enjoy being a part of the community and all that small-town life has to offer.