

Clark County Courier

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GROUNDHOG
DAY IS FRIDAY!

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The hometown newspaper of Monty Torper, Elk River, Minn.

Law enforcement, county statistics released for the year 2023

Statistics from the Clark County Sheriff's office, Clark Police Department, Clark County Clerk of Courts and Clark County Register of Deeds have been tallied for the year 2023 in Clark County.

Clark County Sheriff's Office

The Clark County Sheriff's office received approximately 2,022 calls for service in 2023. Those calls included: 326 abandon nuisance 911 calls, 123 animal complaints, 195 citizen assists, 138 civil, 15 family disputes, 21 parking complaints, 15 suspicious activity, 10 theft, 146 traffic complaints and 17 welfare checks.

There were 142 accidents that occurred in the county in 2023. Traffic stops topped out at 433. Thirteen warrants were served and 19 transports were done. Thirty-four people were fingerprinted.

Clark Police Department

The City of Clark Police Department traveled 16,430 miles, had 205 total stops and 30 accidents along with 22 ambulance calls to respond to. Forty-seven traffic complaints, and 59 animal complaints were investigated. One kidnapping occurred. Citations written in 2023 tallied 110 compared to 36 in 2022, 117

warnings given in 2023 compared to 21 in 2022, and cases referred to the states attorney totaled 62 compared to 39 in 2022. Seventeen welfare checks were completed. Total calls for service was at 963, compared to 597 in 2022.

Clerk of Courts

There were an increased number of court cases for Clark County in 2023 when compared to 2022. The number of cases in 2022 totaled out at 570; whereas 797 cases were opened last year, nearly a 40 percent increase.

The following number of cases were opened in Clark County for 2023: magistrate cases, 14; criminal cases, 57; civil cases, 37; and small claims, 63; probate, 7; divorce, 7. There were 16 juvenile cases, five guardian cases and no adoptions in the county last year.

Twenty-six warrants, as well as 26 search warrants and 11 protection orders were issued, along with two involuntary commitments. There were also 526 Provincial Offence (POA) tickets issued in the county last year; a 46 percent increase from 2022, where 359 POA tickets were issued.

These statistics, however, do not include the number of

background checks run and the process of jury management. A background check is a process people can use to verify that an individual is who they claim to be. It provides information on an individual's criminal record, education, employment history, and other past activities.

"We are seeing an increase in background checks in all areas, as well as men and women having background checks done on potential dating prospects or someone potentially getting married," reported Clark County Clerk of Courts Tracy Nickels-Aguayo.

Jury duty plays a crucial in America's justice system, but few realize the larger process that goes on behind the scenes. "This is an involved process," said Aguayo. "Clark County pulls 500 potential jurors every year, vets them, determines if a juror is disqualified or excused and ends up with a qualified group of jurors for the year," Aguayo explained.

Register of Deeds

Thirteen marriage licenses were completed in 2023 compared to 15 in 2022. Burial permits totaled 74 in 2023 compared to 71 burial records in 2022.

Nearly 50 building permits were issued in Clark County for the year 2023

Forty-seven building permits were issued in Clark County during 2023. Houses were the most requested permit types, with eight in total. Storage facilities were next in line with seven. There were also five shops, four grain bins, three sheds and three garages built in 2023. The total estimated cost of the 47 building permits was a whopping \$45,678,500.00.

Eight new houses were built, totaling \$3,198,000 in estimated costs, averaging \$399,750 per house. Those taking out building permits in 2023 for houses in Clark County were Chris Arthur, Riley Schmidt, Bruce Nelson, Philip Warkentien, Justin Seivert, Brook Begeman, Shawn Homola and Steve Barber.

Seven storage facilities were built, totaling \$1,677,600, averaging about \$239,657 per building. Those issued permits for storage in Clark County were Christine Tarbox, Thomas Lamb, Kevin Ortberg, Community Oil, Alfred Fryslie and two permits for Kyle Gaikowski.

Five permits for shop buildings were issued, totaling \$1,150,000 in estimated costs, averaging \$230,000 per shop. Residents who received building permits for shops were Andrew Wookey, Dwight Warkentien, Jim Green, Zane Tellinghuisen and Nicholas Huber.

Four grain bins were erected, totaling \$930,000 in estimated costs, averaging \$232,500 per bin. These permits were taken out by: Madsen Farms, Arthur Farms, Bruce Nelson and Steven Wendling.

Three sheds were built, totaling \$469,500 in estimated costs, averaging \$156,500 per shed. Doug Schoepf, Windy Ridge and Jarred Lamb were issued the shed building permits.

Three garages were built, totaling \$126,000 in estimated costs, averaging \$42,000 per garage. Those taking out building permits in 2023 for garages in Clark County were Richard Rasmussen, Lonnie Schorg and Kimberly Harrington.

Other big construction proj-

ects in Clark County for 2023 included a hog building for Hillcrest Colony with an estimated cost of \$3,000,000; an agricultural building for Washington Dairy with an estimated cost of \$16,000,000; a church for Apostolic Lutheran Church with an estimated cost of \$6,100,000; a tower for Precision Communications with an estimated cost of \$7,793,000; a kitchen for Collins Colony with an estimated cost of \$1,000,000; a manufacturing facility for Mayfield Colony with an estimated cost of \$3,000,000; a butcher house at Silverlake Colony with an estimated cost of \$500,000; remodeling work for Tony Werdel with estimated costs at \$125,000; a calving barn for Gregory Kopriva with an estimated cost of \$75,000; a bin system at Madsen Farms with an estimated cost of \$290,000; an addition for Marlowe Lamb at an estimated cost of \$150,000; and a pool for Jody Peterson with an estimated cost of \$80,000.



Clark High School's One Act Play cast and crew qualified for the State One-Act Festival, February 1-3 at the Brandon Valley Performing Arts Center in Brandon. They competed at region competition last week in Watertown at Great Plains Lutheran High School.

Actresses Leah Nelson, Brianna Dale, Madison Pickrel and Nevaeh Rusher were recognized as Superior Actors during the region competition as well.

Florence School students Aleah and Mia Jaeger also received Superior Actor recognition.

In the back row, from left to right, are Aleisha Naze, Kaden Janisch, Westen Olson, Waylan Olson and Logan Parker. Kneeling in the front row, from left to right, are Leah Nelson, Brianna Dale, Madison Pickrel, Nevaeh Rusher and Olivia Fuller.

Submitted photo

CHS's One Act Play *The Candidate* advances to state festival in Brandon

By: Carolyn Olson

The Clark High School One Act Play students competed at Region 6B last Wednesday, January 24, at Great Plains Lutheran High School in Watertown where they competed for one of the two spots available in the region and qualified for state.

"This will be Clark's third trip to the State One-Act Festival in a row after an eight year dry spell. So, that speaks well of the high cali-

ber of actors we have at our school," stated play director Amy Nelson. "I really appreciate the support of our administrators also. They have been so encouraging by providing us with what we needed to compete," she added.

The One-Act cast and crew members will be performing *The Candidate* Friday, February 2, 2024 at Brandon Valley High School. The performance starts at 11:00 a.m.

and is free and open to the public. Clark High School is competing in hopes of earning a superior rating from the judges. Individual actors can also earn superior acting awards.

The Candidate will be performed on Wednesday, January 31 (today) at 2:30 p.m. in the Clark High School gym. The performance is open to the public.

National FFA Week is February 17 - 24

The 110 chapters and 6,142 members that make up South Dakota FFA will celebrate National FFA Week February 17-24, 2024. It's a time to share what FFA is and the impact it has on members every day.

National FFA Week embraces more than 95 years of FFA traditions while looking forward to the organization's future. More than 945,000 members with a passion for agriculture will participate in activities at local, state and national levels.

Designated a national week in 1947, the week of George Washington's birthday, National FFA Week runs from Saturday to Saturday and gives FFA members an opportunity to educate the public about agriculture. During the week, chapters conduct a variety of activities to help others in their schools and communities learn about FFA and agricultural education.

Members of the S.D. FFA will

celebrate National FFA Week by participating in activities including themed dress-up days, fundraisers, banquets and educational activities within their school and community. "National FFA week is a special time for our organization and something we look forward to all year," says Gerri Ann Eide, Executive Director of the South Dakota FFA Foundation. "We enjoy any time when we can help educate the public about agriculture, so having a week designated to that cause is very valuable to us."

Through agricultural education and hands-on learning, FFA members across the state and nation are preparing for over 300 unique career opportunities in the food, fiber and natural resource industries.

About South Dakota FFA Foundation

The S.D. FFA Foundation is a 501c3 nonprofit whose mission is to support the leadership opportunities and activities of the S.D. FFA

and agricultural education. They do this by building partnerships with industry, education, government other foundations and individuals to secure financial resources which allow scholarships, financial assistance and sponsorship of the S.D. FFA State Association's activities in order to help grow leaders, build communities and strengthen agriculture.

WEATHER

Robert Cole - Official Weather Observer

	HI	LO	PR
Jan. 23.....	28	20	0
Jan. 24.....	28	23	0
Jan. 25.....	30	28	0
Jan. 26.....	31	25	0
Jan. 27.....	28	20	0
Jan. 28.....	38	23	0
Jan. 29.....	40	29	0
2024 precipitation to date	0.29"		
2023 precipitation to date	0.52"		

Yexley sentenced to 10 years in state penitentiary

By: Carolyn Olson

Jefferey Yexley, age 49, of Bradley, S.D., appeared before Circuit Judge Carmen A. Means in Clark on Monday January 22, 2024, for sentencing on the charge of kidnapping a nine-year-old girl.

According to Clark County States Attorney Chad Fjelland, the Grand Jury indicted Yexley on March 30, 2023 for one count of kidnapping in the second degree. The case was initially scheduled to go to jury trial on December 7, 2023. Yexley entered a guilty plea on November 17, 2023 and was sentenced in Clark by Circuit Court Judge Carmen A. Means

on January 22, 2024.

According to the Clark County Sheriff Tad Heaton, Judge Means sentenced Yexley to 15 years in the South Dakota State Penitentiary, with five years suspended. Yexley is considered a habitual offender and therefore has to serve 60 percent of his sentenced time. After that time is served, he will be eligible for parole.

The charges stem from the kidnapping of a nine-year-old girl from a Bradley school in January of 2023. Yexley is currently serving his 10-year sentence at the state penitentiary in Sioux Falls.



Roetell residents celebrate National Puzzle Day with a public party

National Puzzle Day was on Monday, January 29, 2024. To celebrate, Sandi Sippel of Roetell's Senior Housing in Clark hosted a puzzle party. It was open to the public to come and enjoy putting puzzles together with some of the residents. A few of Clark High School's National Honor Society members joined in on the fun.



Above on the left, from left to right, are NHS members Madison Pickrel and Nevaeh Rusher piecing puzzles together with Roetell residents Mary Hurlburt and Clara Foster. On the right, resident Tina Bierman is pictured with NHS members Valley Roebke, Katelynn Merkel and Sara Thonvold. Photos by Carolyn Olson