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Veterans Day is an important day for our country

Veterans Day is Wednesday, Nov. 11, 2020. As the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic has affected so many events and activities, Veterans Day is also being changed, at Clark, to an evening event on the computer.

We, at the *Clark County Courier* are starting a Veterans Day tradition, writing about three local veterans and what Veterans Day really is all about - those who have served to keep our country free.

We interviewed three local veterans in the community to get their experiences during the time they served and asked them what it means to them to be a veteran.

Following are the experiences and responses of Milo Kolden, Tony Palluck and Jerry Olson.



Milo Kolden

1954. The youngest in his family, he grew up on a farm west of Naples. He had three older brothers who also served in the military. Arlo and Lee were in the Army and Merle served in the Navy and all of them were drafted.

"At the time, there was no work around to make a living, so I thought I might as well go into the service," he said.

"I also think it's important to



Tony Palluck

serve your country."

In March of 1954 is when Milo began his service. He went to basic training in Fort Leonardwood, Mo. From there he went to Fort Bragg, N.C. for paratrooper training and then to a base in Georgia for teletype and Morse Code training to work with the Communications Signal Corp or Radio Corp.

Kolden learned paratrooper training and would have to jump out



Jerry Olson

of an airplane every so often to keep his qualification up. He became a paratrooper with the 82nd Airborne Division which is an active airborne infantry division of the U.S. Army specializing in joint forcible entry operations. Based in Fort Bragg, this division is the primary fighting arm of the XVIII Airborne Corps. It

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Finance officer Luttrell submits resignation

City finance officer Jackie Luttrell submitted her resignation at Monday's November meeting of the Clark City Council. Luttrell has been the finance officer since 2004. She will be done at the end of November.

The city council met in executive session for 35 minutes and then accepted Luttrell's resignation. Finding a finance officer replacement by the council has already begun.

The department updates portion of Monday's meeting began with city lead employee Darin Altfillisch asking the council if the storm drainage problem south of the city should be finished at this time.

The consensus of the council is to finish this drainage project but before funds could be allocated for this there are more immediate drainage situations within city limits that need to be done first. The council decided not to move forward at this time with this storm drainage field work.

Altfillisch then told the city council that the dump is full. "I'd be surprised if we make it through next summer," he commented and that led to talk of what options will be available for residential refuse options.

A new dump site is not an easy option as state department guidelines are very stringent and not an easy direction for the city to pursue.

The city has also put out bids for the painting of the water tower. Luttrell stated that she has received several calls from interested parties and water tower painting bids will be opened at the December council meeting.

The spread of coronavirus is a very serious topic and Luttrell and Mayor Kerry Kline talked about the who, what and when of pandemic issues. The city library is closed at this time because of COVID-19.

With federal COVID-19 CARES money going to cities, Luttrell suggested to the council that this could be an opportunity to pay off TIF #1 loan with approximately a \$36,000 price tag. This TIF was connected to the Holbeck addition, which took place 17 years ago. A resolution on this matter will be voted upon at the December council meeting. City attorney Chad Fjelland said

he wanted to look at this contract agreement regarding the pay off, by resolution.

The first reading was given to the 2021 salary ordinance. Mayor Kline stated that employees will receive a 1.3 percent cost of living raise.

Council discussion dealt with changes to swimming pool manager raise from \$12.00 an hour to \$12.50 an hour and summer recreation coaches to be paid \$1,000 for the season rather than \$1,060.

In other business:

▲ The council approved the 2019 audit report.

▲ Resolution #854 Capital Outlay for police vehicle replacement was approved.

▲ The council approved to renew Wellmark BCBS insurance, January 2, 2021.

▲ Liquor licenses for Dakota Butcher, Golf Course, Sportsmans, Look Out, Clark Lanes, Heather's Bistro, Ken's Food Fair and Big C Travel Plaza were approved.

▲ Budget supplements were approved for: Council \$1,953 for COVID Cares for tablets; Library \$1,000 by SD Community Foundation grant.

▲ The council approved a Sewer Restricted Funds transfer for Sharp Electric bill of \$15,251.02 for two generators.

▲ A contingency transfer was approved to the Clubhouse for \$35,000.

▲ All councilmen were present, including Dennis Larson, Shane Hagstrom, Nick Dalton, Terry Schlager, Derrick Dohmann and Andrew Zemlicka. Also present were Mayor Kline, city finance officer Luttrell and attorney Fjelland.

Tianna Tschetter is 2021 Snow Queen

▲ Emma Peterson crowned Junior Snow Queen

Tianna Tschetter was crowned the 2021 Clark Area Snow Queen at Sunday evening's 52nd annual Snow Queen Festival. Retiring Senior Snow Queen, Saylor Burke passed on the crown to this year's winner. Tschetter will represent the Clark area at the upcoming State Snow Queen Festival in January at Aberdeen.

Tschetter is the daughter of Stacey and Teena Tschetter. Tschetter was also named Senior Miss Congeniality.

Emma Peterson, daughter of Kyle and Jody Peterson was crowned Junior Snow Queen by retiring queen Avery Miles. Peterson will represent the Clark area at the Junior Snow Queen Festival in January. First runner-up was Neveah Rusher, daughter of Tammy Rusher. Rusher was also named Junior Snow Queen Miss Congeniality.

The emcee for the night was Melissa Mudgett and Scott Drexler



Junior Snow Queen Emma Peterson, left and Senior Snow Queen Tianna Tschetter right, are all smiles after being crowned at the 52nd annual Clark Area Snow Queen Festival on Sunday. Peterson and Tschetter will now compete in their respective South Dakota Snow Queen Festivals in January in Aberdeen.

Snow Queen
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Clark Veterans Day program will be in the evening

Veterans Day Program in Clark will be held virtually, at 7:00 p.m. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the morning program in the gym, on Veterans Day, Nov. 11, will not happen.

What will happen is that the program will be presented on ITC Channel 153 or on the YouTube station through a link on the Clark School Home webpage. This virtual program will begin at 7:00 p.m. on Veterans Day.

The military slide presentation of Clark area veterans will be highlighted along with musical patriotic songs by both the Clark high school band and chorus.

The White Table Setting will take place.

All vets will be honored through Veterans Day program
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S.D. election officials take new approaches to voting amid pandemic

Nick Lowrey and Bart Pfankuch

Editor's note: This article was produced through a partnership between South Dakota News Watch and the Solutions Journalism Network, a national non-profit group that supports rigorous journalism about responses to problems.

South Dakota election officials are taking a wide range of steps — and implementing some creative measures — to ensure easy access to voting and provide for an accurate ballot count during a time of unprecedented electoral challenges. The 2020 general election is being held amid a deadly pandemic, is attracting record numbers of absentee and early votes and is drawing high voter turnout.

County election officials who run ground-level electoral operations in South Dakota have been working for months to manage early voting and prepare for safe, orderly in-person voting on Election Day on Nov. 3.

Many strategies have focused on processing absentee ballots, which by law cannot be counted until Election Day.

Election officials have recruited more poll workers as some older

workers sought to avoid the risk of COVID-19. Some counties have formed absentee ballot review panels to sort and certify ballots and created new, absentee-only voting precincts to simplify the vote-counting process. Temporary ballot boxes have been installed in some areas so voters do not have to send in their ballots by mail. The state has also held several mock elections to test its voting systems and prepare county auditors for a long, busy Election Day.

Auditors have also found ingenious ways to overcome electoral challenges. One auditor held a voter education session through the windows of a nursing home to reach elderly voters who could not leave the facility. Another bought and erected a surplus military tent to create a safe, socially distanced early voting site. And a few auditors have taken advantage of a rarely used state law that allows high school students to get excused absences to fill in as temporary poll workers on Election Day.

As with any vote, the stakes are high, but may be higher this election, especially for those tasked with running them. Electoral pro-

cesses, especially mail-in voting, have come under scrutiny by President Donald Trump. The U.S. Postal Service has battled to keep up with a nationwide flood of mail-in ballots. Record numbers of voters are casting absentee ballots, many for the first time. Some polling locations have been shut down due to the pandemic, and many in-person polling sites will be partially staffed with first-time workers and must focus on maintaining cleanliness and social distancing. Many South Dakota counties are using new ballot-counting machines and technology.

The number of polling locations in South Dakota will be down in 2020. The state had 508 polling sites during the 2016 general election, and as of mid-October, the state had only 474 polling sites secured for the 2020 general election at a time when voter turnout could be as high as 70%, according to Kea Warne, elections director in the Secretary of State's Office.

"Every election cycle brings its own challenges, but this cycle has definitely been unique in the challenges being faced by election officials," Warne said. "This has led to

most likely the busiest election cycle I have been a part of."

In the 2020 general election, South Dakota voters can vote for president, seats in the U.S. Senate and U.S. House, a spot on the Public Utilities Commission, three statewide ballot measures on legalizing medical and recreation marijuana and sports betting in Deadwood, and numerous local legislative offices.

The chance for human or mechanical error is present in every election, and may be higher than normal during the 2020 election cycle. Voter errors on absentee ballots cast in the June primary election in South Dakota resulted in 1.4% of the ballots being rejected, about 1,200 of the roughly 88,000 cast. In the 2018 general election, only 307 of about 90,000 absentee ballots were rejected, and only 378 of about 102,000 absentee ballots cast in the 2016 general election were rejected. Errors in processing of absentee ballots led to different final results in two primary races in South Dakota, with one mistake in Douglas County changing the reported out-

Election officials
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Election Day 2020 is here! Tuesday, November 3 was Election Day across the United States with many key political positions up for election including president.

On the local level, 2020 Election Day had city of Clark and Ward III voters at the American Legion Hall, so there would be more 'social distancing'.

Above, Anita Vos casts her ballot with election worker Dianna Overby directing. Notice all the plexi-glass and coronavirus precautions.

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