

# Clark County Courier

The voice of Clark County since 1880

# Happy New Year! 2024

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The hometown newspaper of Mikel Pommer, Stillwater, Minn.

## South Dakotans First announces addition of new advocacy group

South Dakotans First, statewide grassroots coalition committed to protecting property rights against private companies exploiting eminent domain laws, is proud to announce the addition of Neighbors Opposing Prison Expansion (NOPE), a grassroots advocacy group focused on local control to its coalition.

NOPE's decision to join the South Dakotans First campaign reflects a growing concern among local communities about preserving their autonomy in the face of decisions that may impact their way of life. With a shared commitment to safeguarding local control and a common distrust of top-down decisions, this collaboration marks a significant milestone in the campaign's efforts to amplify the voices of South Dakotans.

The South Dakotans First campaign, which has been gaining momentum across the state, is focused on empowering communities and ensuring that decisions affecting the region are made with the input and consent of those directly affected. NOPE's alignment with these core principles strengthens the coalition's ability to advocate for policies that prioritize the needs and concerns of South Dakotans over eroding property rights.

and former state legislator Craig Schaunaman, a spokesperson for South Dakotans First, expressed enthusiasm about the new alliance. Schaunaman said, "We are thrilled to welcome NOPE to our coalition. Their dedication to defending local control aligns seamlessly with our mission. Together, we will continue to champion the values of transparency, community engagement, and the right of South Dakotans to determine their own future."

The addition of NOPE to the coalition reinforces the diverse and united front that South Dakotans First represents, sending a clear message that local communities stand together in the face of challenges. The coalition is committed to fostering a process that puts the power back in the hands of the people.

In a statement, farmer



## Clark Elementary School Christmas Concert held last Monday

By Tara Knutson

Christmas season is a time of joyful music programs as everyone celebrates the holidays. The performance is more than the lyrics sang or the notes played.

"Music is the universal language – it brings everyone together," explained Clark Elementary music instructor Alicia Turnquist. "My goal is for the kids to enjoy and experience music of all kinds during their school years."

Music is a way to tell a story, communicate feelings, inspire movement and create connections and interactions with others. Throughout history, music has been used to intensify life's moments such as celebrations or gatherings.

Music has always been an important part of Turnquist's life. Her parents were active in band and choir throughout their high school years and laid the musical foundation for their daughter at an early age. Turnquist took piano lessons from first grade through college and played the flute through her high school and college years. She graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Music Education from the University of South Dakota.

"There are so many things that we talk about in music class; different rhythm and different instruments," third grade student Alayna Reppe reported. She is the daughter of Ashley and Alex Reppe. "Lots of songs. Sometimes, it gets tricky to remember it all, but Ms. Turnquist helps us get it right. If we make a mistake, we just do it again – that helps."

Turnquist starts working with the students and getting them familiar with the Christmas material

by the end of October. "I slowly ease them into the songs. We may focus on one song for a few weeks and then, as we get closer to the concert, we will focus on them more intensely," she said. "I choose a theme for the concert; something that will be appealing to the students and the audience. Then, I choose songs that match that theme. The songs need to be fun and yet challenging for the students," she continued. "For the upper grades, especially, I want to prepare them for middle school music."

With approximately 215 students in elementary choir ages four through twelve, the main trial with preparation is memorizing the lyrics of the selected songs. "I incorporate fun ways to help the children memorize the songs. Sometimes, we will use different voices with our repetition. For example, the younger grades really like to sing in a monster voice or with a whisper voice."

In addition to time spent singing, Turnquist also spends a great deal of time working on various instruments. As early as second and third grade, xylophones and other bar instruments are introduced into the music curriculum. Fourth graders practice with recorders and world drums, and fifth graders work with ukuleles and world drums.

The exposure to instruments early on is an effective way to introduce the students to the concepts related to concert band. These tactics have proven to be effective, as every single student in the fifth grade has joined the band.

"We have 27 students in the fifth grade band this year," Turnquist said. "By starting the students ear-



Opening the Clark Elementary Christmas Concert last Monday was the fifth grade band performing "Good King Wenceslas," "Dreydl, Dreydl!" and "Merry Kisimusi." The preschool through first grade students, left, sang "A Hat for My Snowman," "What's in That Stocking?" "If I Could Fly Like a Snowflake" and "Sparkly" during their portion of the concert.

Photos by Trudi Galkowski

ly with instruments, they are able to practice reading music and make connections between the recorders to their new instruments. They learn to work in their instrument group families to succeed at a particular piece of music," she continued. "As they progress to concert band, it is a little different as they learn to be an individual instrument as well as a group," Turnquist explained.

The fifth graders started on their instrument of choice in the middle of September and played four songs for the Christmas concert last Monday.

The concerts are the students' opportunity to display all their hard work. "I love the finale piece when you can see all the students work together. The smiles on their faces is so touching. It is wonderful to see them enjoy the success of all their hard work," said Turnquist.

Preparation for the successful concert performance begins early for the instructor also. "I did help with concerts during my student teaching, but there are a lot of background tasks that you don't discover until you do the whole process on your own," she explained. "Tasks like organizing the high school homeroom schedule so the students have a place to keep their winter clothing during the concert and sending home notes to parents and guardians communicating pertinent information are things you learn along with way."

During rehearsal, timing the transitions of the presentation are practiced, like moving grades between the stage and the bleachers. "Chad (Thomas) is so great at bringing in and setting up the risers

in my room early so we are able to have lots of practice with the little kids," added Turnquist, speaking of the elementary custodian.

Upon further investigation, it was discovered that practice does not always stop within the classroom. "I search up the songs at home on YouTube," reported Hadley Rosenau, second grade student and daughter of Shelby Rosenau. "Then, I practice the songs at home to get it just perfect. I don't mess up very much anymore. My favorite part of this concert was when we held the lights up by our faces," she explained. That happened during the combined performance of "Peaceful Night" at the finale of the concert Monday night.

The night of the performance, nerves can run high for the children. "Ms. Turnquist says to be confident and remember what we practiced in the classroom. She reminds us that there are a bunch of other kids standing next to us so we shouldn't be nervous," explained Hadley Rosenau.

Even with all the practice and preparation, there are occasionally mistakes and mishaps during the concert. "There are hiccups here and there, but they are usually nothing that is noticeable by the audience," Turnquist admitted. "The kids are really good at noticing when they are off key with the music."

"My goal is to continue to challenge the students to grow and explore music. One way I am doing this is with competitions, like festival and honor choir." The kids and Turnquist were excited to share their progress with the large crowd that came to see them perform.

WEATHER			
Robert Cole - Official Weather Observer			
	HI	LO	PR
Dec. 19.....	31	11	0
Dec. 20.....	43	22	0
Dec. 21.....	43	22	0
Dec. 22.....	48	27	0
Dec. 23.....	46	25	0
Dec. 24.....	52	31	0.47
Dec. 25.....	35	21	0.34
2023 precipitation to date	19.97"		
2022 precipitation to date	20.29"		

## The Clark County Courier office will be closed on Monday in observance of the holiday.

If you have news stories, legals or advertising for next week's edition of the Clark County Courier, please email us at [clarkcountycourier@gmail.com](mailto:clarkcountycourier@gmail.com) or call us at (605) 532-3654

by Friday of this week. Mailed items may not reach us in time for the next publication.

It's easier for us on Tuesday, if we can get the bulk of the work done by Friday night. News correspondents can send their info on Tuesday morning or call Tuesday morning.

Thank you and Happy Holidays!

# 2023 in review, the first six months

How will 2023 in Clark County be remembered? Let's reflect on the first six months of 2023.

## January

After 27.5 years, there is a new owner of the *Clark County Courier*. Karli Paulson purchased the *Courier* from Bill Krikac. The January 4 edition was Paulson's first as publisher.

New faces were among those sworn in at the Clark County Courthouse. Clark County Treasurer Kay Mahlen swore in commissioners for 2023, including new commissioner Sara Gjerde, who replaced Richard Reints. Clark County Sheriff Tad Heaton was also sworn in, replacing Rob McGraw, who retired at the end of 2022.

Cyclone head basketball coach Jerome Nesheim notches 500th career win with victory over Webster

Area. Nesheim's coaching career being in Clark (now Clark-Willow Lake) in 1996.

Clark Area Snow Queen Festival's senior talent winner, Kaylynn Hofer was awarded third place at the South Dakota Junior Snow Queen Festival in Aberdeen. Junior Miss Clark Area Zoey Helkenn competed in the state festival.

The South Dakota Snow Queen Festival took place in Aberdeen. Avery Miles, Miss Clark Area, was named Princess of Autumn.

Diane Spieker retires after 35 years at Clark Rural Water. Spieker began her employment with Clark Rural Water as Office Manager in 1988. She recently attended the South Dakota Association of Rural Water Systems Awards Banquet in Pierre, where she was selected as the recipient of the 2023 Spirit of Rural Water award.

Amber Nickeson, Staff Sergeant with the U.S. Army, was honored with a send-off at the Clark Elementary School as she prepares for a 400-plus day deployment. Nickeson is a nurse at Sanford Clinic in Clark, is married to Clark City Police Officer Nate Nickeson and is mom to Tyler and Kaden, who attend Clark Elementary.

The white house on the corner of Fourth Avenue Northwest and Idaho Street, situated on the southeast corner of the golf course in Clark was torn down. The 138-year-old home was most recently owned by James Holm, Karen Ceisel and Kerin Wurmser.

At the Clark Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting, Clark Family Dental Center was awarded Business of the Year, and the Hustling Homemakers were named

Volunteers of the Year.

Cyclone wrestler Danielle Batchelor is 113 lb. champion at the 2023 Girls Lee Wolf Invitational in Aberdeen.

Florence-Henry Falcon junior Caylin Kelly scores her 1,000th high school basketball point during a win over Great Plains Lutheran.

## February

Over 200 youth compete in the Clark-Willow Lake youth wrestling tournament.

Nine-year-old Brooklyn Ford was found after being missing for two weeks. She was first reported missing January 13.

Four Clark High School students earn Superior Acting awards for their performances during the South Dakota State One Act Festival held in Sioux Falls, including Aleisha Naze, Olivia Fuller, Brianna Dale and Leah Nelson. The One

Act play cast performed *How to Kill a Mockingbird*. Cast and crew members include Maddy Pickrel, Nevaeh Rusher, Fuller, Nelson, Naze, Kaden Janisch, Alivia Gehrke, Raigan Flatten, Marlee Bowers, Dale, Lily Ingraham, Abigail Reil, Logan Parker, Waylan Olson, Cooper Rahm and Matthew Batchelor. The group was directed by Jill Rathe, and they all wore "One Act of Zack" shirts in memory of their friend and classmate, Zackery Weber, who passed away in late January.

Senior Florence-Henry basketball standout Trinity Watson signs her letter of intent to attend Dordt University in Sioux Center, Iowa to continue her basketball career with the Defenders.

Clark Ambulance Service receives an EMS Telemedicine in Motion grant. Clark has been con-

tracted for this service through May of 2023.

Clark FCCLA receives donation to buy official FCCLA red jackets from the Lee Schlagel Memorial.

Construction has begun on the 86 ft. x 64 ft. outer shell of the new Garden City Fire Department. The building will also have a community room for local meetings and department trainings.

Three Clark High School band members been named to the SDSU Honor Band. Waylan Olson will play bass clarinet, Leah Nelson will be first chair alto saxophone, and Jarrett Maynard will play trombone at the performance on the campus of South Dakota State University.

The eleventh annual Lee Year in Review (continued on page 3)

**CLARK AREA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION**  
LEAVING A LEGACY

**HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM THE CLARK AREA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION!**

Members: Gayle Wookey, Tom LaBrie, Chad Fjelland, Susan Fjelland, Diane Varilek, Greg Furness, David Warkenthien, Nicole Nelson and student members Conner Mudgett, Nevaeh Rusher, Raigan Flatten and Lauren Luvaas.