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Clark School opt-out public meeting to be Monday, March 4

The Clark School Board is scheduling a public meeting for Monday at 7:00 p.m. in the high school gym. The purpose of this meeting will be to inform the residents of Clark School District 12-2 that plans are going forward with an opt-out to the tax freeze for 2013-2014.

The February meeting of the Clark School Board lasted almost three hours last Monday, and the majority of this meeting dealt with information, strategy and a plan going forward for this aforementioned

opt-out public meeting scheduled stated Heupel, as he wants to be for March 4.

Superintendent Brian Heupel and business manager Heidi Sigdestad had a Power Point presentation for the school board at the Monday meeting regarding facts and figures which have led to this point, requesting an opt-out.

"One of my biggest challenges, as I work with this budget constantly, is to break it down into layman's terms and try to uncomplicate the various funds in a school budget,"

very clear and precise with his numbers and presentation at the upcoming public meeting.

Anytime an opt-out is called for, Heupel noted that one and all must realize that it is the general fund of the school budget that needs assistance, and 85 percent of the general fund deals with salaries and ben-

Earlier this month, a financial advisory committee met to begin this opt-out journey. Members of the committee included Michelle, Mehlberg, Supt. Heupel, Mr. Hartley, Heidi Sigdestad, Kim Seefeldt, Bob Bauman, Julie Foster, John Arthur, Greg Janisch, Luanne Warren, Andy Wookey, Tom LaBrie, Mike Waldner and Bruce Paulson.

Heupel and Sigdestad presented to this committee the current financial situation and also what has led the school to get to this point as well as past financial situations and explaining what has been done to offset an opt-out.

John Arthur and Julie Foster, past board members at this committee meeting, stated that these cuts of \$500,000 in a ten-year period are really a savings of \$500,000 each year, as the savings in one year from current cuts is savings in future years, as well. Arthur noted that the board has always been as proactive as they can be to retain good teachers and hire the best new

As Heupel went through the highlights of the financial advisory committee meeting, he expressed to the school board his desire of board input. "We have many tough questions that need answers and the success of this meeting (March 4) and the eventual outcome will be determined by our united ability and our presentation of this opt-

The board then went over 'general fund 101', a crash course on the difference between the general fund

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Blaze Fischer and Brady Atherton work on smoothing out the rough edges of a project that just came off the plasma cutting table. This table and the computeraided design (CAD) computers that operate it are new

curriculum this school year. Paul Streff teaches this class at his P-4 Manufacturing business in the industrial park, east of Clark.

Plasma cutter enhances classroom activities

Students at Clark High School who take Paul Streff's project-based geometry class now get to work with a HyperTherm plasma cutter.

New to the class this year, projects are going a lot faster with the new plasma cutter and table set-up which is all run by computer.

"We had a hand-held plasma cutter before. This cutter and the computers that go with it are a wonderful addition to the machine tool class. The project-based geometry

is step one. Then, learning on the CAD (computer-aided design) computers is essential, as the computers tell the machine what to do in cutting and designing the parts,"

The plasma cutter was obtained in July and a grant helped in the purchase of the CAD computers and a storage unit that holds them.

The CAD computer class is taught by Mr. Jenkins at P-4 Manufacturing. Machine tool technology is

taught by Streff with ten students in the class and four of them also take the geometry course.

This is the first year for the project-based geometry class. Sophomores make up the majority of this class. Students have the option to take this class or a geometry class taught by Miss Sprouse.

"This is an enjoyable class," commented student Josh Callahan.

Plasma cutter (continued on page 3)



Rep. Burt Tulson, Rep. Brock Greenfield and Sen. Farm Bureau made introductions, starting with Sen. Chuck Welke - were in Clark Monday to meet with their Welke.

The three legislators from District 2 - left to right, local constituents. Jim Kopriva, left, of Clark County

Voters discuss legislative issues at Cracker Barrel

Cracker Barrel was held Monday, President's Day, at the Ullyot Building. The crowd wasn't huge, with probably thirty or so in attendance, but there was a great deal of discussion of substantive issues and the group was informed of the goings on in Pierre this session.

The three District 2 legislators Rep. Burt Tulson. The weather on Monday wasn't very cooperative, probably hurting the attendance and causing the question/answer dialogue to start a little tardy.

Anumber of issues were discussed in a pleasantly informal setting, keying on drainage problems to the proposed school sentinel program to school funding and northeast rural economic development.

Drainage

Rep. Greenfield brought up HB

The Clark Area 2013 Legislative 1135, a bill dealing with drainage and public/private flooding. "I spent 10 hours researching, planning testimony and after three amendments it passed with 37 votes in the House and now goes to the Senate."

Water access and drainage discussion monopolized much of the Cracker Barrel with several proposed bills talked about including were in attendance: Sen. Chuck SB 179, a bill to create a "uniform Welke, Rep. Brock Greenfield and county drainage permit application

> Rep. Tulson talked about hunting and fishing on flooded land, commenting, "The way law reads now if someone is fishing and the bait hits bottom, it's trespassing. If land isn't posted. It's open for fishing."

All three legislators felt that this drainage/flooded land issue is very emotional, but the legislature is doing a great service by bringing this discussion to the forefront.

School Sentinel The school sentinel bill, HB 1087. proposes armed 'sentinels' at schools in the state, if the local boards so choose. The bill has passed the House and now has gone to the Sen-

"I don't think most school people are in favor of this," said Sen. Welke, a retired educator. "It would be up to the local boards."

The pros and cons of a "sentinel" were then discussed. "I understand superintendents are looking for safe and secure schools, but it looks like a solution looking for a problem," said Rep. Tulson.

Rep. Greenfield added, "Nobody assumes a situation like Newtown would ever happen. This bill was brought because of these (school shootings) happenings. If we can save only one life - it's worth it. Do

> **Cracker Barrel** (continued on page 9)

Ag land valuations continue to be on the rise in Clark County

The 2013 Clark County assessment valuations will be mailed out by March 1, 2013 and the value of your property is dependent upon what type of property you own and where it is located.

"Ag land will be increasing again, which is really no big surprise," stated Clark County Director of Equalization David Paulson. Paulson noted that land is assessed on the average agriculture income per acre for the county using an eightyear average, from 2004 to 2011, excluding the highest and lowest

"As commodity prices have increased significantly over the last few years, the crop revenue per acre has also gone from \$206 per acre in 2010 to \$306 per acre in 2013," continued Paulson. "This (increase) has a direct effect on the assessment of ag land."

South Dakota State University along with the United States Department of Agriculture and the National Agriculture Statistics Service provide the data to establish the crop revenue. Sales of land are no longer used in valuing ag land.

"Using the data, the income from the major crops grown is used, as is cash rent, to determine valuation," said the Clark County Director of Equalization.

office's total valuation for 2013 is \$730,000,000, up from \$631,000,000

"Our average assessed value will go from \$875.00 per acre in 2012 to approximately \$1,050.00 per acre in 2013," said Paulson, and he noted that ag land in Clark County is still only being assessed at 25 percent of the average sales price.

The Director of Equalization reminds all that the assessments are factored to 85 percent each year, meaning the value on one's assessment notice is higher than what the taxable value will be.

"We will know that taxable value by April 1, 2013," said Paulson. House Bill 1003 passed by the 2012 South Dakota State Legislature revised the limitations on adjustments of ag land values. "This was done so that the productivity value could be reached sooner-by removing the ten percent limit on increases and allowing up to a 25 percent increase in valuations on cropland and 20 percent increase of non-cropland.

The county assessor reported that the State Legislature enacted this method of valuing ag land starting in 2010 and at that time the use of comparable sales was removed from

valuing land. "Using sales of ag land would, for

The Director of Equalization example, mean increasing ag land values about three to four times." he said. "The amount of increase in valuation does not mean the tax will increase that same percentage. Factors such as levies, budgets, current level of assessments all enter in to the valuation equation."

Concerning non-ag property, sales are continuing to be used at looking at the assessment to sale price, said Paulson, and he stated that this past year's sales of residential and commercial property showed assessments at 95 percent of market prices. "One exception to this would be small acreages and those properties will have an increase in land

Ag land valuations (continued on page 3

WEATHER

Ryan Eggleston - Official Weather Observer

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Feb.	12	27	13	0
Feb.	13	34	20	0
Feb.	14	27	4	0
Feb.	15	.17	2	0
Feb.	16	23	13	0
Feb.	17	34	18	0
Feb.	18	27	-11	tr
2013	precipitation	to	date	1.15'
2012	precipitation	to	date	0.59'



Six wrestling Cyclones State 'B' bound!

These Cyclones and their coaches will represent Clark-Willow Lake at the South Dakota State 'B' Wrestling Tournament this Friday and Saturday, at

In order to qualify for the State 'B', the wrestler had to place in the top four in his division at Region 1 B, at Redfield, Saturday.

The Cyclones had two Region 1 B champions, Jakob Weisbrod, left and Logan Tonak, right, in the back row. They both pinned their way to the cham-

pionship! In the third row are, left to right, Kane LaPlante (4th) and Kevin Schuelke (4th). In the second row are, left, Wyatt Burke (3rd) and Jess Karber (4th). (For more on Region 1 B finishes, turn to page 9.)

In the front row are the cheerleaders and managers, including left to right, Megan Schuelke, Nicolette Schmidt, Hannah Knock, Sioux Schuelke, Michaela Johnson, Jennifer Tonak and Megan Warkenthien.

Clark-Willow Lake co-head wrestling coaches are Cord Glanzer and Chad Smidt. Rory Burke is the assistant. Marlene Schuelke is the cheer coach.

Photo by Renae Burke