

## 'Big Mike' Bethke is a friend to one and all!

Michael Bethke, once Homecoming King at Clark High School, nowadays can be described as "King of the Dairy" at Ken's Food Fair in Clark.

The paragraph above is how the story started in the *Possibilities* magazine recently in which Clark's Michael Bethke was featured on his accomplishments and work history since he began working at the Clark store.

Known as 'Big Mike' to many in the area, including those at the Wookey Assisted Living Center where he calls bingo every Tuesday and Friday, Bethke enjoys working with people.

"I like working with people and helping people," states Bethke. "I really like that part of my job."

### The early years

Bethke began at Clark's grocery store when he was still in high school as a sophomore. He was helped out by special education teacher Susan Schmit who got him into the Project Skills program - a paid work experience program in South Dakota for high school students with disabilities.

Michael has a cognitive disability that means he learns differently than most people.

The Project Skills program is a cooperative arrangement between the state vocational rehabilitation agencies and the local school districts.

Paraprofessional Sherry Swanson helped coach Bethke with his position and her words still stick with him - "Ladies first, customers first and safety first" he recalls.

These rules still guide him at his job which some days may begin as early as 4:30 a.m. when the delivery trucks arrive.

When Michael's 250 hours worth of Project Skills work experience was finished, Ken's hired him on the spot.

When he first began, he bagged customer's groceries, carried the sacks out to the car for them, stocked shelves and unloaded delivery trucks. His job coach reported almost immediately that he was successful at this job and the employees and customers enjoyed the interaction.

"He has a heart of gold, he is upbeat and always smiling," states retired high school principal at Clark, Jerry 'Sam' Hartley. Michael lived with the Hartleys for a time during high school and Sam and Robin Hartley continue to help him. Gary

and Betsy Kolden have also helped out Michael according to Drexler.

"He's been a great help to me and helps me a lot in the store," added store manager Drexler. "We all have certain departments here, I help him but he does all of the work and ordering. You have to be really on top of it in this department. Milk only has a two week shelf life, so there's always that to worry about and not ordering too much or too little so we run out. We order more around holidays to keep up. Rotating product is an ongoing job."

Bethke has enjoyed the challenges and says "he likes a challenge". He also stated he loves his work and working with Scott, who has helped him and tutored him along the way.

### Dairy Manager

Last fall in 2020 is when Bethke was promoted to Dairy Manager at Ken's. "He wanted to grow with the company and he has," stated Drexler. "He's moved from part-time high school kid to dairy manager. Plus, his personality has just bloomed since he started working. He enjoys talking with our customers."

**Bethke**  
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Michael Bethke at left, is shown on the left with Ken's Food Fair store manager Scott Drexler at the Clark location. On the right he is shown with District 2 Rep. Lana Greenfield. Bethke holds his copy of *Possibilities* magazine in which SD governor Kristi Noem autographed for him.



Bethke was featured in an article in the magazine on his journey from high school carryout to the dairy manager at the Clark Ken's location. Bethke, a Clark High School 2015 graduate has worked at Ken's since 2013.



Triplet bull calves showed up this year in the Black Angus herd belonging to brothers James and Ryan Caulfield, who farm northwest of Bradley. Welcoming the three young bulls are the cattlemen, Ryan Caulfield and James Caulfield in back and in front are, left to right, Emma, Alayna, Collyns and Madelyn Caulfield. In the front are the new arrivals 'Dudley', 'Ricky' and 'Bruce'.

## Triplet bull calves at the Caulfield farm

With odds at about one birth in 700,000, three healthy bull calves were recently born on the farm of James and Ann Caulfield, who farm northwest of Bradley.

James Caulfield and Ryan Caulfield have cattle together and this

was their first stock cow of the season to give birth on March 30, 2021.

"It was an exciting day for our girls," added Ann Caulfield of their new arrivals by the barn at the end of March. "Two are bottle calves

and the girls had them both on a

bottle that first day. The other is on his mother. They were named Bruce, Ricky and Dudley with Dudley earning his name by being slow-

**Triplets**  
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## Jennifer Heggelund hired as the new middle/high school principal

### ▲ Fifth grade - back to elementary building

A four-hour Clark School Board meeting produced many newsworthy and important decisions.

The April meeting of the school board was highlighted by: fifth grade classes will be back at the elementary; a new principal was hired; certified and classified negotiations were completed; approved the Clark-Willow Lake amended cop handbook for the 2021-22 school year; Map testing was discussed; capital outlay plans were reviewed as well as other key actions.

### New principal

Jennifer Heggelund's middle school/high school principal/special education director contract for the 2021-22 school year was approved. Heggelund currently is the Special

Services Director of the Watertown School District.

### Fifth grade at elementary

Because of growing enrollment, starting next fall with the 2021-22 school term, Clark School fifth grade students will be in the Voss Building at the elementary.

Said superintendent Luanne Warren, "We're running out of space up here at the middle school. Curriculum for fifth grade follows elementary guidelines, so this should be a seamless move." One middle school teacher will follow the fifth grade class to the elementary and one new fifth grade teaching position will be hired by the district.

### Negotiations

During the public portion of Mon-

day's meeting, the school board approved the negotiated agreement with certified staff for next year. Teachers will receive \$750 in salary increase and \$56 toward insurance.

After an hour and 10 minute executive session, classified staff will receive \$.75 per hour increase, plus some insurance stipend aid.

### Map testing

Superintendent-elect Travis Ahrens presented Measure of Academic Progress. This is a three-time a year math, science, reading and language test to help measure the student's growth.

Said Ahrens, "It is an educational

**School board**  
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## Government Day is Monday, April 19

Clark County Legion Commander Darin Lewis will coordinate the Clark County Government Day for all senior county government students.

Willow Lake, Henry and Clark High School seniors will check in at the Clark County Courthouse by 9:00 a.m., Monday, April 19. The morning will consist of Clark County Legion members directing small groups to each of the various courthouse offices.

The Clark Cagley-Smith Post No.

60 Legion and Legion Auxiliary will host the students for lunch at the Clark American Legion Hall.

The afternoon session will consist of observing the Circuit Court in action. The Court will begin at 1:30 p.m. Various law enforcement and county and city officials will speak to the government students.

The Clark County Board of Commissioners will be meeting in the morning as well, so students may observe county government first hand.

## WEATHER

**Robert Cole - Official Weather Observer**

	HI	LO	PR
April 6.....	75	42	0
April 7.....	47	40	1.20
April 8.....	47	40	.50
April 9.....	42	38	.56
April 10.....	56	32	.01
April 11.....	58	33	0
April 12.....	59	34	.03
2021 precipitation to date	4.65		
2020 precipitation to date	2.61		

## Mandatory 10-digit dialing set to being in South Dakota

Beginning on April 24, South Dakotans are encouraged to start using 10-digit dialing (605 area code + phone number) to make all local phone calls. This transition is a necessary first step in the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) move to establish 988 as a new three-digit dialing code for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline and will be required beginning as early as October 24, 2021, and no later than July 15, 2022, depending on your telephone provider.

In addition to changing your dialing patterns, the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission recommends you take steps to update all contact lists ahead of the upcoming deadlines.

"An unfortunate byproduct of the

FCC's efforts to establish an easy-to-use suicide prevention hotline number is the upcoming requirement for all of us to use the full 10 digits including area code when dialing a phone number. Whenever possible, preprogram frequently used numbers into your phone to make this conversion easier," recommended PUC Chairman Chris Nelson.

The PUC also suggests you take the time to update or reprogram all services, automatic dialing equipment or other types of equipment that may be programmed to complete calls using only seven-digit phone numbers.

"If you take a look at the technology you use on a daily basis or have in your home or office, you

may find many devices or services with programmed call settings that will need to be updated. These can include smart home devices, home security systems, medical monitoring devices, calling networks within companies and call forwarding or voicemail services, just to name a few," Vice Chairperson Kristie Fiegen explained. "Taking the time to update these systems now will help ensure they continue working properly long past the required implementation deadlines," she continued.

The North American Numbering Plan Administrator (NANPA) established the set implementation

**10-digit dialing**  
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