

“We’re all in this together”: Supt. Chris Lee as Willow Lake School begins the new year

A life-long goal of Chris Lee’s was to become a school superintendent. Now as Lee begins his third year as Willow Lake School superintendent, it is more like ‘be careful what you wish for’.

In Lee’s first year as a superintendent, it was ‘the winter of the century’. Last year COVID-19 hit at the end of the third quarter.

This year begins with COVID-19 and case numbers have really taken off in South Dakota as schools, pre-college have begun.

“We are all in this together and everybody (has to) understand(s) this and it is something we have to constantly be dealing with,” Lee said as he talked about how Willow Lake is dealing with coronavirus two weeks into the school year.

The Clark-Willow Lake athletic co-op is only allowing parents to go to athletic events at this time, as Tier 3 has been enacted. It is unclear as to when an ‘all-clear’ will be given for sports.

“The state put out tiers to help us (schools) mitigate the virus and currently the host team sets the standard.

“With Tier 3 we are trying to keep everyone as safe as possible by limiting attendance,” he said. “Fortunately, with the ability to live stream through our website, one has the option to see the contest without being there in person.”

Working together with the community to stop virus spread is an important role, Lee emphasized and without being able to control students outside of the school there are no guarantees.

“Willow Lake is like all schools, Lee stated and said currently no Willow Lake School student has tested positive, but some students are in quarantine due to being a close contact to a positive case due to the coronavirus.

(This interview was held last week and things could change by the time this article is published.)

A story about COVID-19 was done with Mr. Lee about a month



Melissa Terhark, Colleen Hohm and Emily Koenig assisted with lunchroom detail last week as the Willow Lake School got under way. Extra condiments such as ketchup, salt and pepper, etc. are no longer put out for the students to handle. The staff does it for them to cut down on the surfaces touched in pandemic times.

The students no longer touch keypads either, Ter-

ago and he said that nothing has changed regarding COVID-19 and Willow Lake School since that article.

“We have deemed the employees as essential employees regarding infrastructure as to giving ourselves some options or flexibility regarding classifications.”

The school is trying to do as many proactive procedures as possible, as coronavirus is mainly a reactive thing.

Sneeze guards are up on every table. 4x4 plexiglass is a common sight. “The biggest things with all of these mitigations is that it creates more of everything. The clean

up. More set up. More man hours. More money is needed to pay for all of this.”

Lee praised and thanked the teachers and staff for going above and beyond, doing things they weren’t hired to do. “They’ve been

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Soybean harvest is soon - if not already

Crops are looking good in Clark County heading into the end of September.

“The soybean harvest has already started in some parts of the county,” stated SDSU Extension Agronomist David Karki of the Watertown Regional Center. “Those who planted an early maturing soybean to help stretch out their harvest times, are combining now. Those mature fields that missed the rains last week were ready to go. One likes to shoot for 13 percent or less moisture in the bean fields.”

“Most beans are at their physiological maturity and the drying down now is the process they are waiting for,” continued Karki. “Within the next week or 10 days I’m guessing the soybean harvest will be going on throughout the county.”

About three weeks from now is when the agronomist estimates it is safe to say that we will be seeing a lot of corn being harvested.

Most corn in the area is very close if not at its black layer/physiological maturity stage.

Wheat fields

With the winter and spring wheat harvests completed, Karki estimated the winter wheat aver-

age coming in at the low to mid 70s per bushel, per acre.

The spring wheat was a little lower with numbers more like 60 to 65 bushels per acre.

For those planting oats, the numbers in the middle came to 130 bushels per acre with some big variations on the high number and low number yields. Some great yields came in from Hamlin and Kingsbury counties this year he reported.

“There was a bit of a dry spell in August in some parts of the county with less rain, but the precipitation we had before that helped to carry the crops through,” added Karki.

Harvest

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WEATHER

Robert Cole - Official Weather Observer

	HI	LO	PR
Sept. 15	82	50	0
Sept. 16	79	53	0
Sept. 17	62	45	0
Sept. 18	66	44	0
Sept. 19	67	45	0
Sept. 20	76	54	0
Sept. 21	76	54	0
2020 precipitation to date	16.73		
2019 precipitation to date	32.19		

Certified youth hunting program area is located south of Clark



Clark Rural Water Systems employee Jeff Hoffman, left and Clark County Game, Fish and Parks Conservation Officer Zach Thomsen visit about the youth hunting opportunities, approximately six miles south of Clark. The Clark Rural Water Controlled Hunting Access Program (CHAP) is open to all youth hunters, 15 and younger, accompanied by an adult, 18 and older.

Clark Rural Water Systems (CRW) land, near the CRW plant six miles south of Clark has been available for youth hunting for some time. Recently, this 373 total deeded acres has been put into

a certified youth hunting program, the first in Clark County, the Clark Rural Water Controlled Hunting Access Program(CHAP).

This property, located on both sides of 424th Street, the highway

running south out of Clark, will be open to all youth hunters, 15 and younger, as long as they are accompanied by an adult. It will be open for pheasant, duck and deer hunting.

Said Clark Rural Water manager Terry Kaufman, “The CRW board set this up some time ago, several years back, with the intent to have a place for younger hunters. Now, the legalities, signs and controls are in place. Plus, 10 acres of CRP has been replanted and will be there for the next 10 years.”

Clark County G, F & P Conservation Officer Zach Thomsen has done much of the leg work in this certification process and is excited for the youth to have a place to hunt.

Thomsen explained that all interested youth must register at the kiosk (mailbox) pictured with the story, at the property. There also is a map showing where youth may hunt. This is located on the west side of 424th St.

“We ask for everybody to be cognizant of the homesteads around the property and abide by the boundaries,” said Thomsen. He repeated that this area is open to small game, big game and waterfowl hunting, with all state hunting regulations applying.

“This is kind of cool,” Thomsen ended and he added that the first two weekends in October will be for the youth season.

Clark Rural Water employee Jeff Hoffman, an avid hunter, has been involved in this program for many years and he has been spearheading the CRW side in this new program relationship.

“CRW, with this available property, has been interested in allowing youth who don’t have a place to hunt, that ability. This CHAP set up will allow youth a place to hunt.”

Kelly and Swedeen reign over Henry Homecoming

The Henry School had their Homecoming festivities last week. Chosen from the members of their senior class as Homecoming Royalty last Monday at coronation were Queen DesiAnne Swedeen and King Charlie Kelly.

The King and Queen had the honor of riding in the Homecoming parade in the back of a red convertible driven by Charlie’s grandfather, Steve Solum.

DesiAnne is the daughter of Lesa Swedeen and Lindy Swedeen and Charlie is the son of Angie and Tom Kelly. The Homecoming parade theme was ‘Games’.

Coronavirus continues to rise in South Dakota

▲ Schools are a main reason

Coronavirus cases continue to increase in South Dakota according to the South Dakota Department of Health (DOH). Coronavirus cases are also increasing in S.D. K-12 and colleges and universities according to the DOH numbers.

As of Monday, Sept. 21, there were 173 new cases, bringing the total to 18,869 total cases. On Sunday there were 18,696. The death total is 202. There are 161 people currently hospitalized. On Sunday, 1,132 people were tested.

The DOH updates the K-12 and college COVID-19 cases each Monday. There were 261 more new cases during the week of Sept. 13-19.

The state has a 963 COVID-19 cases with 678 individuals who have recovered. Of the 963, 674 are students and 289 are staff.

There are 737 schools with no active cases, 122 with 1 to 2 active cases and 28 with three or more active cases.

There were 85 new cases at uni-

versities and colleges. There are 1,172 COVID-19 cases which includes 1,115 in students and 57 staff cases.

The state has three campuses with no active cases, two campuses with 1 to 2 active cases and 10 campuses with three or more active cases. The DOH reported that there are 1,043 recovered cases.

Recovered means persons no longer able to transmit the virus, according to the DOH.

The DOH says on its website that all numbers are provisional.

Due to a high number of COVID-19 cases and close contacts, Watertown High School students and staff have moved to online learning for the remainder of this week, school district officials announced Monday.

All Watertown middle school and high school extracurricular activities scheduled for this week have

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