

Sports News

STATE A BOYS GOLF TOURNAMENT

By Deb Leesch

On October 5th and 6th the Redfield Pheasant Boys golf competitors went to Hot Springs to participate in the State A Boys Golf Tournament. The Pheasant team was represented by seniors Isaac Suchor and Jaxson Frankenstein who had both qualified a week earlier at the Region 3A Meet in Mitchell where Isaac took second place and Jaxson 11th. Micah Dohrer from Aberdeen Roncalli took 1st place with a two day score of

152 which was 12 over par for the tournament.

“On a very tough Southern Hills Golf Course, the boys competed well. Both boys shot 96 on Monday. Jaxson improved to shoot 92 on Tuesday and placed 57th and Isaac improved to shoot 91 which placed him 53rd.” Coach Schaffer commented.

Coach Schaffer added, “I am so proud of both Isaac and Jaxson. They competed to the finish and showed class throughout the tournament! I am



honored to have been their coach.”

Above, left, Jaxson Frankenstein hitting his approach shot to the 9th hole. Above, middle Jaxson making his last putt of the tournament.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

At right, above, Isaac Suchor making his last putt of the tournament.

At immediate right, Isaac Suchor getting ready to hit his tee shot on hole #3.



SENIOR LEAGUE GOLF RESULTS

FGCC Senior League results from October 6th

1st Darrell Ronnfeldt, Doug Dangel, Frank Podraza 69

2nd Vern Evans, Jim Beckrich, Bob Stroud 70

3rd Dave Bourassa Terry Mason, Galen Campbell 70

Closest to the Pin: Reed Bixler

Longest Putt: Galen Campbell

FGCC Senior League results from October 8th

1st Vern Evans, Galen Campbell 73

2nd Dan Duenwald, Frank Podraza 76

3rd Doug Dangel, Bob Stroud 77

Longest Putt: Dan Duenwald

Closest to Pin: Bob Stroud

Frank Podraza, head of the Senior League commented, “I want to thank all of the Seniors for their loyalty and for coming out each week. It has been a very successful season. We met 23 times with an average of 15 players each week. I am looking forward to next year and I would encourage FGCC members and non members to come out next spring to join in 20 holes of pure frustration. Weather permitting.....we will began in May 2021. Watch for the announcement in the paper or with the coffee group you meet with. Stay safe.”

H/T LADY PATRIOT VOLLEYBALL

By Deb Leesch

The Hitchcock-Tulare Patriots (10-2) varsity volleyball team lost Tuesday’s, October 6th, away non-conference match against Warner Monarchs (10-1) by a 3-0 match sweep. The scores were 16-25, 20-25, and 14-25. The Lady Patriots were led by Cassidy Johnson with 2 aces and 4

kills, Madison Hofer with 4 kills and 9 digs, and Katelyn Schroeder with 3 kills and 6 digs. The Monarchs as a team had 38 kills compared to 16 for the Patriots and also 9 aces compared to 3 for Hitchcock/Tulare.

The Hitchcock/Tulare Lady Patriots upped their record to 11-3 with a win against the Miller Rustlers

on October 8th in Miller by scores of 25-10, 25-20, and 25-18. The balance attack for Hitchcock/Tulare was led by Danyln Peterson, Katelyn Schroeder, and Cassidy Johnson with 7 kills each. Cassidy also recorded 12 digs along with Kenidee Enander. Madison Hofer and Kaitlyn Rathjen each had three aces for the

Lady Patriots.

The Lady Patriots (11-3) will next see action on October 15th in Tulare against the Ipswich Tigers (15-2) and at Sanborn Central/Woonsocket Blackhawks (6-8) in Woonsocket on Tuesday October 20th.

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Sports News

AREA CROSS-COUNTRY RUNNERS COMPETE AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS

By Deb Leesch

The Redfield Pheasants, Northwestern Wildcats and Iroquois/Doland Chiefs cross country teams all competed at different locations this past week. It is getting near the end of the season for these runners and this coming week will see them all at their Region Meets.

Here is how the individuals did

NORTHEAST CONFERENCE MEET—OCTOBER 8TH – WEBSTER GOLF COURSE
 Redfield Pheasants
 ***5K Boys Varsity
 Run---Derrek Rothacker--27th
 ***5K Girls Varsity

Run---Kyra Utecht—24th
HOWARD INVITATIONAL MEET---OCTOBER 5TH---HOWARD
 Iroquois/Doland Chiefs--
 --Boys 5K 10th Place,
 Girls 5K 6th Place
 ***Boys 5K Varsity
 Run---Tobias Arbeiter
 18th---Dominic Froke
 42nd ---Patrick Decker
 50th ----Logan Pekron
 51st ---Colton Nelson
 55th ---Braxton Stroud
 56th
 ***Girls 5K Varsity
 Run---Shelby Pekron
 24th ---Reganne Miles
 28th ---Briera Torguson
 33rd
 ***Boys 4K Jr. Varsity
 Run---Deegan Moes 20th
 ***Girls 4K Jr. Varsity
 Run---Skyla Harris 14th



PHOTO BY HEIDI NELSON BOEKELHEIDE

Above, the 2020 Boys Lake Region Conference champs: Northwestern. Pictured are: Jacob Olson, Quintin Fischbach, Jace Haven, Justin Haven, Ethan Boekelheide, Aaron Blachford, Nathan Melius, Lincoln Woodring.

LAKE REGION CONFERENCE MEET--OCTOBER 7TH--IPSWICH

Northwestern Wildcats--
 Boys 5K 1st Place, Boys 4K 2nd Place, Girls Middle School 1st Place
 ***Boys 5K Varsity

Run---Justin Haven 3rd
 ---Nathan Melius 6th
 ---Lincoln Woodring
 9th ---Jace Haven 12th
 ---Ethan Boekelheide
 14th ---Quintin
 Fischbach 17th ---Aaron
 Blachford 18th ---Jacob

Olson 24th
 ***Girls 5K Varsity
 Run---Ella Boekelheide
 1st ---Jessica Boekelheide
 8th
 ***Boys 4K Jr. Varsity
 Run---Carson Ewalt 3rd
 ---Josh Thorson 4th ---

Sam Groft 7th ---Ricky
 Larson 8th
 ***Boys Middle School
 Run---Ty Boekelheide
 2nd
 ***Girls Middle School
 Run---Tara Blachford 1st
 ---Sophia Troske 7th ---
 Abby Schnell 8th ---Teresa
 Melius 9th

Upcoming Regional Meets for the area teams are:

October 14th --Region 1B Meet at Webster Golf Course for Hitchcock/Tulare Patriots, Iroquois/Doland Chiefs and Northwestern Wildcats

October 15th--Region 1A Meet at Webster Golf Course for Redfield Pheasants

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Sports News

IROQUOIS/DOLAND LADY CHIEFS VOLLEYBALL

By Deb Leesch

The Iroquois/Doland Lady Chiefs (2-11) were dominated by the Wolsey-Wessington Lady Warbirds (5-5) on October 6th in Wolsey in 281 Conference volleyball action with set scores of 7-25, 13-25, and 19-25. This was the fifth straight win for the Warbirds. For the Lady Chiefs, Lily Blue, Becca Bich, Hayley Geyer and Jorja Huls each had an ace. Harley Nelson recorded 3 kills while Jorja Huls added 2. Jorja also had 11 kills and Kaitlyn Maas had 9. Hayley Geyer recorded 1 solo block.

In a 281 Conference

match up, it took all 5 sets for a winner to be decided when the Iroquois/Doland Lady Chiefs (2-12) traveled to Miller to take on the Sunshine Bible Academy Crusaders (3-8). The Lady Chiefs won the opening set 25-23 and the Lady Crusaders answered with set wins of 25-20 and 25-15. The Lady Chiefs then forced the fifth set with a 25-22 win. The Crusaders came away with a fifth set win of 15-10.

Kaitlyn Maas had 7 kills, 3 blocks, and three aces for the Lady Chiefs while Becca Bich and Katie Dubro had 6 and 5 kills, respectively. Becca Bich

and Harley Nelson each had 7 assists, and Nelson had 16 digs with Bich recording 14 digs, and two blocks.

The Centerville Tornadoes were in Iroquois on Saturday the 10th and swept the Lady Chiefs with scores of 25-18, 25-16, and 25-15.

Upcoming matches for the Lady Chiefs (2-14) are in Waverly on Thursday, the 15th, against the Waverly/South Shore Coyotes (10-3) and at home in Iroquois against the Mitchell Christian Golden Eagles (2-9) on Tuesday, October 20th.

NORTHWESTERN WILDCATS VOLLEYBALL

By Deb Leesch

The Aberdeen Christian Knights (9-4) hosted the Northwestern Wildcats (14-1) in a Region 1B match between the number 1 and number 3 teams from that region. The Wildcats upped their record to 15-1 with a 3-0 sweep of the Knights. For the Wildcats, Hannah Schentzel led with 3 aces, 12 kills, 9 digs, and 3 assisted blocks. Sydney Schell recorded 24 kills and 14 digs. Ella Haven had 3 aces, 5 kills, and 6

assisted blocks.

On Thursday October 8th, the Wildcats of Northwestern (15-1) handed the Faulkton Area Trojans (10-2) their third loss of the season. The 3-0 set victory included scores of 25-19, 25-10, and 25-17. The Northwestern team had 8 aces, 45 kills, and 45 digs. Hannah Schentzel had 3 aces and 17 kills while Sydney Schell had 2 aces and 19 kills. Joclyn Haven led with 11 digs and both Brooklinn Halvorson

and Sydney Schell added 9 kills each.

Upcoming action for the Wildcats (16-1) will be at Hoven against the Potter County Lady Battlers (5-5) on October 15th. The Wildcats will be hosting a Tournament on the 17th with Hill City Rangers (18-1), Rapid City Christian Lady Comets (18-2), and Ethan Rustlers (6-6).

Next Tuesday, October 20th, will be a home match with Groton Area Tigers (1-11)

REDFIELD PHEASANT VOLLEYBALL

By Deb Leesch

The Redfield Lady Pheasants (6-5) claimed a 3-0 victory against the Mobridge-Pollock Lady Tigers (15-1) on Monday October 5th. This was just the second loss this season for the Lady Tigers. The Lady Pheasants improved their record to 7-5 with the

scores of 28-26, 25-20, and 25-14. Leading the way in offense was Gracie Fast serving 17/19 with 3 aces and Camryn Rohlfs in setting—78/79 with 25 assists. In attacking, Courtney Turck went 36/42 with 12 kills and Addison Rozell had 31/32 with 9 kills. Addison also added 4 solo

blocks and Courtney had 16 digs.

On October 8th, the Redfield Pheasants traveled to Hamlin for a match with the number 1 team in Region 2A—The Hamlin Chargers (12-4). It was a 3-0 win for the Chargers with scores of 25-20, 25-15, and 25-21. **REDFIELD VB/pg.4**

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Sports and Letter to the Editor

WEEKEND FOOTBALL REVIEW

Northwestern Wildcats---8
North Border Titans-----28

Hitchcock/Tulare Patriots---34
Potter County Battlers-----14

Iroquois/Doland Chiefs JV---32
Sunshine Bible Academy JV—0 Game
was called in 3rd quarter due to I/D
injury

UPCOMING ACTION FOR OCTOBER
16th

Northwestern Wildcats (2-4) vs. Herrid/
Selby Area Wolverines (6-1) at 7:00 in
Mellette

Redfield Pheasants (3-4) vs. McCook
Central/Montrose Fighting Cougars (4-3)
at Redfield

Hitchcock/Tulare Patriots (3-4) vs. North
Border Titans (2-5) in Hitchcock at 7:00
pm

REDFIELD VB/ from pg.3

As a team, the Pheasants went 53/55 in serving with 6 aces, 85/104 in attacking with 28 kills, and 93/95 in setting with 26 assists. The Pheasants also had 2 blocks and 38 digs. Individually, Camryn Rohlf led the Pheasants with 15/15 in serving with 2 aces, 70/70 in setting with 21 assists, and 9 digs. Courtney Turck was 21/27 in attacking with 12 kills. Addison Rozell and Gracie Fast each had 1 assist in blocking.

The Lady Pheasants (7-6) will see their next action on October 13th when they travel to Warner to face the Warner Monarchs (12-1). And then on October 15th at home against the Clark/ Willow Lake Cyclones (10-7). The Pheasants will again be at home on October 19th when the Aberdeen Roncalli Lady Cavaliers (13-3) come to Redfield.

Bowling League

<i>Week of 10-5-2020</i>	13	High series
PRAIRIE LEAGUE	The Gutter Gang 6	Lori Wager 563
Roosters 16	14	Stacey Marlow 536
4	High games	Cathy Fink 483
Bundy's Angels 12	Robin Schmitt 244	THUNDER ROLLERS
8	Korey Beardemphl 234	Johnson Oil 16 4
Starters 12	Jordan Zens 225	V-Gals 11 9
8	Scott Dawson 225	Appel Oil 10 10
Who gives a split 12	High series	High games
8	Robert Schmitt 638	Cathy Fink 211
RDO 8	Jordan Zens 607	Cathy Bales 185
12	Scott Dawson 587	Lisa Young 175
Bebo Livestock 7	Pheasant League	Stacey Marlow 175
	Starters 15 5	High series
	Dakotaland 13 7	Cathy Bales 504
	American Bank 6 14	Cathy Fink 504
	Farmers Union 6 14	Dotti Heaton 481
	High games	
	Stacey Marlow 214	
	Lori Wager 202	
	Cathy Bales 190	

LETTER TO THE EDITOR: On President Trump...

President Trump, you have had almost four years to lead the United States and have failed us by your own choosing. Whether it be in foreign policy and domestic policy you have not protected the United States as

Commander-in Chief. Now comes the latest news about your complete disrespect for our military and total disregard for the Covid 19 virus. We the American people have finally borne witness to what happens when they

place an incompetent business leader into the Oval Office. Quality of life is not a business decision sir but rather it is a humane choice to be empathetic to those who cannot help themselves. Joe Biden has that empathy and will return the United States to the era when we were respected internationally because of how we treat our citizens domestically. This election is a clear choice between those who have never had it so good

and those of us who know we can do better. Joe Biden will lead us there. Fellow citizens, exercise your right to vote to preserve your sacred heritage, promote your children's future and obtain the blessings of liberty we all cherish. To restore a sense of decency to the United States rise and vote!

— Joe Bialek

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Local Columns

Pastor's Column: Temptation

By Pastor Adrian Timmons, Redfield Wesleyan Church

I Corinthians 10 is in general a warning against idolatry and an encouragement to live our lives for God's glory. In that context Paul writes some powerful things about temptation in verses 12 and 13.

First, it is never wise to become arrogant about our spiritual position. Proverbs 16:18 says "Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall." That is true regarding temptation. If we think we are too good to be tempted—or to yield

to temptation, we are already in trouble. I Peter 5:8 says "Be alert and of a sober mind. Your enemy, the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour." When we are spiritually proud, we are no longer sober and alert.

In verses 6-10, three examples of temptation include idolatry, immorality, and ... wait for it... grumbling! Now we all have our own ways of evaluating temptation and sin. The way it usually works is that the worst temptations and sins are those with which we don't struggle. In other

words, we might not put grumbling in the same classification as idolatry or immorality. But God did. No temptation has overtaken us but what is common to man.

Second, there is no new or unique temptation with which we struggle. When I struggle with a temptation, there are many others that have that same struggle. When I think I am struggling with a temptation that is unique to me, I may tend to use that as an excuse for giving into the temptation. When I look outside myself, I find others who make the temptations I

face seem small and petty. This is where that dreaded accountability comes in. Accountability keeps me from being deceived by my own sinful thought patterns.

Third, God is for us in the face of temptation. He's not there in the heavens just hoping we will screw up! God is faithful. He will not let us be tempted beyond our ability. Notice that word beyond. He will allow us to be tempted right up to the edge of our ability. That is how God builds strength and stamina into our spiritual lives. When we are being tempted,

we need to recognize that God is still at work in us and He is still working to strengthen us to stand strong.

God's faithfulness is expressed by providing a way of escape. If we are sensitive to God's Spirit, God will provide something else we can do rather than give in to the temptation. But promptness is key. I speak from experience. The longer I meditate on the pleasure of the temptation, the less likely I am to desire an escape!

Fourth, temptation is not easy. The last phrase we encounter is "so that you

may be able to endure it." The King James Version reads "that you may be able to bear it." Sometimes we must readjust our expectations. We imagine that other people are living lives free from strong temptations. We reason that it is not fair that we must endure our temptations. But all of us have at least one Achilles' heel—a point of weakness where we are easily tempted. God help us endure and run the race of life well to the glory of God.

Dental health affects overall wellness



By Debra Johnston, M.D.

I remember feeling jealous of my grandparents as a child. During one of our summer visits, I realized that while my siblings and I were told to brush our teeth, my grandparents would simply pop their teeth out and drop them into a glass. That seemed like a lot less work!

Besides, I thought that no teeth would mean no trips to the dentist, and thus no poking and prodding of sharp instruments in my mouth. Although our dentist and his team were unfailingly caring and gentle, I was always nervous.

As I recall, when I expressed my newfound enthusiasm for the convenience of false teeth, Grandma informed me that wearing dentures would mean giving up fresh corn on the cob. That was all the incentive I needed. I kept brushing.

Soon, I realized that a healthy smile meant something more than the ability to enjoy garden

bounty. I sensed my tough-as-nails mother and grandmother each were ashamed of their smiles. Without understanding why, I could see that people were judged by the condition of their teeth. Dental health seemed to be an indication of a person's place in society.

With the benefit of age, and medical training, I learned that the impact of dental disease goes well beyond dietary inconvenience and social embarrassment. People with unhealthy mouths may suffer from malnutrition, which can be both a cause and an effect of their dental problems. Others may

unfairly perceive them as less trustworthy, and less employable.

Emergency rooms and medical clinics see the consequences of delayed or absent dental care. Patients seek antibiotics and pain medicines to "get them by" until they can see a dentist. These treatments may convert a raging infection to a smoldering, but temporarily bearable, one. However, they don't fix the underlying problems.

There is another layer to the interplay between dental and physical health: many medical diseases and their treatments may cause or worsen dental problems. *HEALTH/pg. 6*

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Local Columns

DENTAL HEALTH/ from pg. 5

The antidepressant I give a patient might cause dry mouth, which worsens tooth decay. The medicine to prevent a broken hip may severely damage the bone of the jaw. Diabetes

increases the risk for dental disease which in turn, can worsen a person's diabetes management. Additionally, research shows that poor dental health increases our risk

for heart attacks and could possibly lead to premature births. All in all, there are myriad reasons to take care of our teeth and gums, no matter our age. So, thanks,

Grandma, for convincing an impatient child to keep brushing. Debra Johnston, M.D. is part of The Prairie Doc® team of physicians and currently practices family

medicine in Brookings, South Dakota. For free and easy access to the entire Prairie Doc® library, visit www.prairiedoc.org and follow Prairie Doc® on Facebook featuring

On Call with the Prairie Doc® a medical Q&A show streaming on Facebook and broadcast on SDPB most Thursdays at 7 p.m. central.

From Heroin to Hope

By Rep. Dusty Johnson

We all know 2020 has been a year filled with adversity. While the majority of this year has been tough for most, it's not been all bad. I was reminded of the good still happening in this world last week when I overheard my wife talking about the story of Mitchell resident, Samantha Schaefer.

For years, Samantha was addicted to drugs and spent time in and out of jail. During her last stint in jail, she was interviewed by Detective Joel Reinesch. Samantha was withdrawing from meth and heroin, hadn't showered in days, and frankly didn't care much to talk to the detective. All she wanted from him was a cigarette.

She never got that cigarette. Instead, she found Jesus in jail and never looked back – she got a new life. Samantha told herself when she got out of jail, she would focus on giving back to the community that helped her sober up and get her life on track.

At thirty-five years old, newly sober, and fresh out of jail, Samantha stepped foot in a classroom. She received an associate degree in human services, but quickly decided she wanted to take her education to the next level. She enrolled at Dakota Wesleyan University to pursue a bachelor's degree in criminal justice.

Would you believe me if I told you on her first day she was assigned an advisor and that advisor turned out to be none other than the detective that processed her jail paper work years prior? Samantha said both her and Detective Reinesch felt awkward at first. She credits God's grace and ability to change hearts

and minds for where their friendship is today.

When I asked Detective Reinesch what he thought about her story, he responded with this:

“We all have either been personally touched by addiction or have known someone or a family that has. As a police officer, I saw it daily and saw how debilitating it can be on the individual, but especially their family as well. I'm in awe of Sam's journey and the strength she has shown through all of this and continues to show today. The pride you could see in her eyes, on her face and in her voice when she received her diploma from Dakota Wesleyan was immeasurable.

“Addicts fight that addiction every single day. She did it as a single mother to two, working to pay the bills to provide for them on top of attending college full-time with students half her age. She had every reason to throw in the towel and give in.



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Above, left, Samantha Schaefer in jail. Above, right, Schaefer sober and receiving her diploma for a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Detective Joel Reinesch.

Instead, she showed up every single day, turned in every single assignment and never once offered excuses when things got hard or uncomfortable and finished as an Honor Graduate. I saw Sam at her lowest of lows and am incredibly blessed to see her at the best of her best.”

Samantha walked across the graduation stage this year – and Detec-

tive Reinesch presented her with her academic hood. She credits him for playing a significant role in her development and success at DWU.

Like Detective Reinesch said, her belief and determination are a blueprint forward for all of us. I hope her story reminds you good things are happening, even in 2020.

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Local Columns

The Postscript: “Animal office mates”

By Carrie Classon

Today I will get Blue again. Blue is the anxious Italian mastiff that I dog-sit on Wednesdays while his owner, Bill, works in the office. The new procedure is that I walk down to Bill's house, fetch Blue, and bring him back to my home. This seems to work better than having Bill drop him off. When Bill does that, Blue hangs onto Bills legs and tries to avoid coming in my house like a petulant four-year-old trying to avoid daycare—which is exactly what he is. When I go to Blue's house, Bill has already left, but he's not been gone so long that Blue is tempted to eat any of the furniture. The first time I went there, I was a little concerned. Blue is a very large dog with massive jaws and a loud bark. I didn't want to open Bill's door if Blue thought I was an intruder. So, as soon as I got into Blue's backyard, I started singing, “Blue! Oh, Blue!” in my most endearing singsong voice. By the time I got to the door, Blue was waiting, tail wagging. When I reached for his leash, Blue was over the moon. “She's come to rescue

me!” I went from evil babysitter to emancipator just like that. Once Blue gets to my house, it's a nonevent. Blue lies on his bed and sleeps most of the day. His eyes flicker open when I walk around the room and every so often, he sighs loudly. I imagine he's letting me know that I'm a little dull, but my company is better than nothing. I like having an animal with me when I work. For several years I had a cat named Lucy. Lucy was with me during my divorce, when I lived alone and cried a lot, and we became very close. Lucy was deaf, which made a lot of folks pass her by at the animal shelter. I didn't mind that Lucy couldn't hear. I talked to her anyway and when I wanted her attention from another room, I just flashed the lights and she came running. Lucy was my constant companion but, like office mates everywhere, she could be troublesome. I distinctly remember the morning I left my computer on overnight. I came downstairs and saw Lucy, at my computer. She had managed to open Excel and had a document populated with strange symbols and numbers.

She had opened Word and somehow made it so that if I opened any document in a file every other document in that file also opened. Finally, she had a Google search going and was looking up the meaning of the word, “Itgy.” I am not making any of this up. Of course, the last action is the easiest to explain. It is said that every cat has three names: a familiar name, a fancy name, and a secret name that only the cat knows. I could only conclude that by sneaking up on her as I had, I had uncovered Lucy's secret name—and it was Itgy. Blue doesn't seem likely to mess with my computer and, even if he's sleeping most of the day, I can tell he likes having me talk to him. The truth is, I'd be talking whether he was there or not. But it's good to have some company while I work. Every so often, I write something that surprises me or that I like. I read it aloud and say, “Blue! What do you think?” Blue heaves an enormous sigh. And he's right. It still needs work. Till next time, Carrie *Carrie Classon's memoir is called, “Blue Yarn.” Learn more at CarrieClasson.com.*

“Your community's pivot toward thriving”



By Paula Jensen

When I started marching band as a sixth grader in my rural public school, the most difficult thing I had to learn was to pivot. The instructions went something like this -- on beat two of the third measure, you will pivot on your right foot and turn toward the left. By the next downbeat, you will have turned ninety degrees to the left, with the left foot out and ready to make the step off on one. If I overstepped or pivoted too soon, then the entire column of musicians behind me would be off and everything could fall apart. I know this because it happened. Panic ensued. But thankfully, someone was looking ahead, saw the error and picked up the pace to right the wrong.

During the pandemic, people are using the word pivot as a reference to how we must change the direction of our day-to-day activities to manage our new ways of living. Communities are also needing to pivot due to

economic shifts, remote work, school and business closures, increased demand for housing and more. To thrive rather than just survive, our communities must plan to pivot and claim their own success.

These efforts to pivot and create a thriving community can be accomplished by gathering a small group of engaged residents that are guided by this four step process: 1) start by assessing the current community conditions 2) create a purpose with three to five pivot strategies 3) layout an implementation plan 4) celebrate, evaluate, then repeat the steps every

three years, or so.

The first step of assessment is a general one—carry out a preliminary investigation of the current community condition to help in the selection of the pivot strategies. Start by gathering some numerical facts and demographics that provide a snapshot of the community. A core group of local leaders should also capture people's perceptions and priorities for the community over the next two or three years through conversations. A good question to begin with is, “What would our community look like if it were thriving?”

PIVOT/pg. 8

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Dakota at Home is the State of South Dakota's free information source for aging individuals and people with disabilities who want to remain living at home.

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The second step after analyzing the assessment (and taking a good look at the community's strengths), is to write a one-sentence purpose statement that will guide the work.

Next, choose three to five pivot strategies that align with the purpose and the assessment. Choose pivot strategies that satisfy both of the following conditions:

- The strategy addresses a major community problem, and
- The community has some available assets to make substantial progress on this strategy. (For example, a main street rich with impressive buildings ready for rehab, a pas-

sionate group wanting to start a local foods co-op, a thriving culture of micro-businesses ripe for development, or an empty lot available for new housing)

During step three, gather a group of passionate community shareholders. Ask the group to narrow down the pivot strategies to one or two. Then work collaboratively to layout an implementation plan. This plan can be broken down into 90-day increments laying out the actions, deliverables, expected outcomes, responsible parties, budget, and deadlines needed to accomplish the prioritized strategies over the next 12 months.

Step four recognizes that

learning along the way is essential and conditions are constantly changing. So first and foremost, celebrate your successes as they happen. Then, evaluate and improve on the implementation plan making sure to monitor your outcomes and inform the community of your progress.

This work requires tenacity and a foundation of sustained leadership, strong partnerships, and resident engagement. By involving a multitude of people in this process—the community will claim its own success and pivot toward thriving.

Having a passion for community leadership and development is what drives Paula Jensen's personal and professional life. Paula resides in her hometown of Langford, South Dakota, population 318+. She serves as a Strategic Doing practitioner, grant writer and community coach with Dakota Resources based in Renner, South Dakota. Dakota Resources is a mission-driven 501c3 Community Development Financial Institution working to connect capital and capacity to empower rural communities. Contact her at paula@dakotaresources.org.

Communications Cooperatives connect students without internet

By Lura Roti for South Dakota Farmers Union

March 13, 2020 School Districts across South Dakota went remote to slow the spread of COVID-19. Instantly, Wessington Springs Superintendent Pandi Pittman was helping 63 staff and the families of 265 students navigate learning from home.

"It was a very shocking situation. You're sitting there thinking, 'Oh my gosh, I'm alone,'" Pittman recalled. "I was making moment-by-moment decisions. I had no idea if I was doing the right thing. It was nice to have resources suddenly step in to help."

Local communications cooperatives were among the resources Pittman says played a vital role in ensuring Wessington Springs students were able to continue learning. Right away, Santel Communications Cooperative Inc. and Venture Communications Cooperative reached out to Pittman offering to connect students without internet to their broadband services.

"We have this fiber-to-the-home network that has a limitless supply of bandwidth, and because that is what educators needed to continue teaching, we saw no reason not to make it available to students," explained Randy Houdek, General Manager of Venture Communications Cooperative.

"These are the families and kids we are trying to empower to larger and bigger opportunities - even more so when times get tough and families are up against a unique challenge like this," added Ryan Thompson, General Manager of Santel Communications Cooperative Inc. Partnering with Wessington

Springs Schools and other schools throughout their coverage area, the cooperatives ensured every student was connected.

In some cases, this was as simple as turning on services to their homes. In other situations, getting broadband to a student's home was not quite so simple.

It was a neat experience how our employees brainstormed and developed ingenious processes to get amazing stuff done, yet remain socially distanced," Houdek said.

Houdek explained due to the time of year, digging in lines was not an option. So, crews would find the nearest point to connect. They would lay wire across the top of the ground to a home's window. "Then we would ask the customer to open the window and slide the fiber through. Our team would then place the other necessary equipment on their front step and walk them through the connection and activation process."

Pittman says the speed at which the cooperatives connected students was impressive and meaningful. "Because they are our local cooperatives, they know us personally," she said. "Their employees had kids going through this. They know our teachers and staff."

And, like all South Dakotans, the COVID-19 pandemic changed how cooperative employees worked as well. Pam Kopfmann, Customer Service manager for Santel explains that all employees who had jobs that allowed them to, began working from home. "We felt like we were all

in this together," she said. "In the Midwest, we are all neighbors and neighbors help each other out."

Serving their communities aligns with the cooperative mission.

"As a cooperative, we are owned by our members and the communities we serve," Thompson explained.

"We are all about community," Houdek added. "We want to be part of our community. When our schools suffer, the community suffers and by extension we suffer. Keeping our small towns and schools healthy and vibrant serves all of us."

In addition to providing internet to students free of charge, throughout the first few months of the COVID-19 pandemic, the cooperatives did not turn off services to any patrons who were unwilling or unable to pay.

"Our board was willing to allow us to align with the FCC's Keep America Connected Pledge, even though this was likely going to result in some uncollectible bills," Houdek said. "As a cooperative, our mission is to serve our members, not necessarily watch the bottom line."

In the end, Houdek said that with the help of payment plans, most patrons did continue to pay for their connectivity. "This just speaks to the honesty of South Dakotans."

To learn more about Santel Communications Cooperative Inc. and Venture Communications Cooperative and the extensive products and services they provide, visit their websites: <https://www.santel.coop/> and <https://venturecomm.net/>.

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