

**THE YEARS**

**2010**

**2019**

**DECADE RECAP**

**JAN 2020**

The Huron Daily  
**PLAINSMAN**



# Looking back . . . 2010

Three major building projects and a flooded campground were among highlights for 2010, including the \$3.1 million new gymnasium and six classrooms at Wolsey, a \$2.5 million gymnasium at Highmore and a \$5.5 million hospital addition at Miller.

The Highmore School project included a new gymnasium, cafeteria, lunchroom and two additional classrooms. Interest free bonds through the federal stimulus program helped the project move along.

Flooding was a major problem once again in the Huron area when dams on two lakes were breached. Rose Hill Lake, south of Wessington, emptied in late July after an earthen dam washed out. Two campers were rescued after hanging onto tree branches and were treated for hypothermia.

The dam failed when six to 10 inches of rain fell.

Iroquois Lake Dam was breached in March after rain and melting snow put too much pressure on it.

The dam washed out from the bottom because the water level did not come close to going over the top of the dam. Heavy rains started to wash it out in the same place in 1995.

Iroquois made plans for a sewer improvement project. The \$900,000 project relined all of the sewer pipes in town, with the exception of one line that was so deteriorated it had to be excavated and replaced. They also replaced 13 manholes.

- Friends and relatives paid final respects to SSG. Shane Barnard, who was killed while serving in Afghanistan. Barnard died of wounds on May 19 when he stepped on a secondary improvised explosive device in Afghanistan. His family lived in De Smet where his father, the Rev. Gail Arnold, served the Methodist and First Congregational churches.

Another 113 soldiers from the South Dakota Army National Guard's 211st Engineer Company (Sapper) were welcomed home to De Smet and Madison after serving in Afghanistan. The unit had been stationed in Afghanistan for one year in support

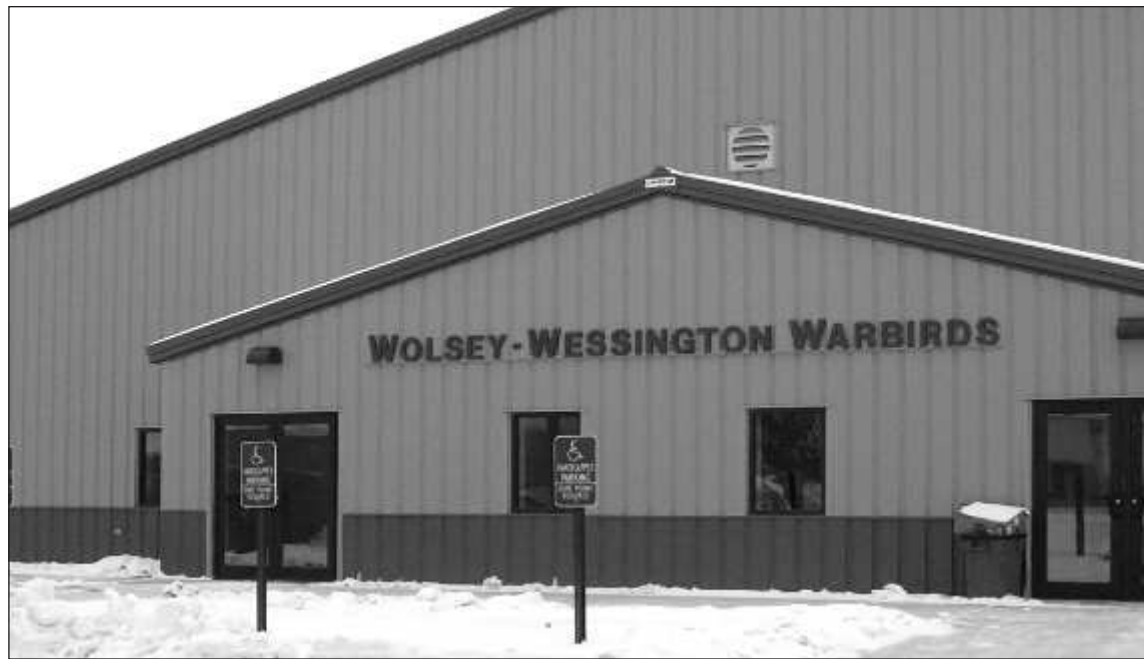


**Above:** This photo, taken in April 2010, shows flooding at Ravine Lake Park and the former municipal swimming pool.

**Below:** The new gymnasium built at Wolsey-Wessington School.

of Operation Enduring Freedom.

- In sports, the Hitchcock-Tulare Patriots made their third straight trip to the Class 9B football finals. Meanwhile, the James Valley Christian Vikings soccer team won the state championship during the tourney held in Mitchell.





# Looking back . . . 2011

A slowly rebounding national economy remained the focus of Americans throughout 2011, and although Huron has not been immune from the slow down there are encouraging signs of even more improvement as the year comes to a close.

One of the most exciting redevelopment projects to come the city's way in a long time took shape throughout the year with a spring start of construction.

The \$12.6 million Central Park project will bring Huron a state-of-the-art aquatic center while resolving the six-year-old dilemma of what to do with deteriorating buildings on the former Huron University campus in the central part of town. The Campus Center has been retained and is being renovated as a learning center in conjunction with the Huron Community Campus and other educational pursuits for children and adults.

Area communities moved forward as well with significant construction projects.

A new health clinic opened its doors and the community came together to dedicate a law enforcement memorial.

- Construction began on the Central Park project, with substantial completion of the aquatic center expected in mid November.

After a number of public meetings to explain components of the project and to answer questions, the public showed its



This artist rendition shows the Central Park area with the Splash Central Waterpark which was built in 2011 and completed in the spring of 2012. The \$12.6 million project brought this state-of-the-art aquatic center to Huron, resolving the six-year-old dilemma of what to do with deteriorating buildings on the former Huron University Campus.

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# Looking back . . . 2012

It was a year that saw the gradual and continuing transformation of a university campus in a central residential neighborhood from an academic past to a recreational future.

The year ended, however, with the dual problems of insufficient housing and workers, and 2013 begins with a renewed effort to meet those challenges.

However, it must be said that the overwhelming story of 2012 has to be Huron's emerging Central Park project at the site of the former Huron University/Si Tanka University campus.

The community came together to celebrate the groundbreaking of Central Park, a multi-faceted outdoor recreation hub at the former site of the university campus. The facility opened in June.

A \$12.6 million enterprise that gained widespread local support as the details emerged at several public meetings, the park's signature aquatic center has been named Splash Central. Emma Smith won a new iPad for winning a naming contest.

Two of the key funding mechanisms were the \$4.5 million donated by 800 contributors and more than \$4 million in New Market Tax Credit money.

• Those who can't seem to get along without their cell phones will have to make one major change soon. As in a growing number of other South Dakota cities, texting while driving will now be against the law in Huron.

An alarming number of incidents have occurred in which people have been killed or injured, and property has been damaged, because of drivers who have been texting on their phones. Officers can pull a driver over and cite the individual for a primary offense regardless of any other infractions.

However, in another change, distracted driving will be a secondary offense if an officer sees someone driving dangerously.

• In a program applauded by a number of residents, the City Com-



**Law enforcement personnel present a program on the dangers of using cell phones and texting while driving to a large crowd in April 2012 at Huron High School.**

mission voted to once again launch a recycling effort in Huron. Several tries at recycling in past years have not panned out for one reason or another.

A Green Energy Task Force laid out a plan to establish a single-stream recycling program that is expected to begin in March or April, 2013.

Separate, blue and yellow containers where residents have deposited tin cans, aluminum, mixed plastic, office paper, newsprint, magazines and junk mail will be collected curbside.

• Gains were made in the medical community with the establishment of Horizon Health Care's James Valley Community Health Center at the Huron Mall and Huron Regional Medical Center's start of construction of a 24,000-square-foot clinic near the hospital on the former site of St. Martin School.

After opening a small, temporary clinic in downtown Huron, Horizon began offering health care in a 12,000-square-foot facility in the remodeled space that once housed Osco Drug in the mall.

It has 12 exam rooms, a procedure room, laboratory and X-ray and telemedicine services.

HRMC's clinic building project planned to house up to 10 physicians. Specialty physicians include those in the fields of orthopaedic, general surgery, ear, nose and throat; dermatology, family medicine, internal medicine and pediatrics.

• The South Dakota Farmers Union is also in building mode.

Headquartered in Huron for decades, the Farmers Union is constructing an 8,400-square-foot state office building adjacent to the existing one.

The new building houses Farmers

Union staff along with the state office staff of the Farmers Union Insurance Agency and the Farmers Union Foundation.

The existing building, constructed in 1951 when the state office was moved to Huron, will be demolished.

• Officer Cody joined the Huron Police Department in November.

Trained to work with K-9 Officer Derek Layer, he is a three-year-old Belgian Malinois who can detect marijuana, cocaine, heroine, methamphetamine, ecstasy and illegal mushrooms. City budget funds and many local donations made the K-9 drug dog program possible in Huron.

• In a year that began with staff and students settled in and enjoying an expanded school at Madison Elementary, it ended with the school still bursting at the seams and the Huron Board of Education voting to issue capital outlay certificates for \$1.9 million to fund another addition.

Phase one will include the addition of eight classrooms and a set of bathrooms.

The expansion is necessary to accommodate the huge growth in enrollment in the district, particularly at the Buchanan Kindergarten Center.

The district had anticipated a projected increase of 50 students for the 2012-2013 school year, but instead it has grown by more than 125 children. Classes and teachers had to be added at Buchanan, Madison and Jefferson schools just days before they opened in August.

Much of the growth has been in immigrant and refugee families. More than 30 percent of Huron's student population is now comprised of English as a second language learners, making the school district the most diverse in the state.



# Looking back . . . 2013

The city elected new leaders. Voters decided it was time to focus on the elementary schools and passed a major bond issue.

The unemployment rate remained low, but the number of housing units did not keep pace with the demand.

Huron closed a chapter at its university location, but started a new one on the same spot with a unique, popular water park with architectural features that will keep the school alive and in memories for generations to come.

- As taxpayers were preparing to retire the bond issue that built Huron Middle School, they agreed it made sense to finally address the needs of the city's elementary schools and approved \$22 million in bonds so that work could move forward.

- Huron got into the recycling business in 2013 and participat-

es, schools and others quickly realized that tossing eligible items into the new yellow and blue containers meant it would take much longer to fill up the brown solid waste ones.

Whether a household recycles or not, all now pay a couple bucks more each month to fund the program, but city officials are hopeful that as more people and entities join the effort, future city utility rates can stabilize or even decline.

More than half of what Huron residents throw away for burial in the Pierre landfill is recyclable and can be trucked to Sioux Falls for sorting and eventual re-use.

- The community came together and supported a project spearheaded by Leadership Huron and the Beadle County Veteran's Council to enhance the downtown veteran's memorial.

Engraved names of veterans who have served their country



Splash Central at Huron's new Central Park opened in June to a throng of eager people of all ages.

since World War I are now on display. Huron has the singular honor of displaying a statue of Congressional Medal of Honor recipient Mike Fitzmaurice, a native of the Huron area, who was awarded the prestigious medal for heroic actions while serving in Vietnam.

Beadle County has

done its share in sending its men and women into military service, with some 1,600 to 1,800 veterans.

- Greater Huron Development Corporation is working with local employers to find people to fill hundreds of job openings.

- In a somewhat related issue, the City

Commission adopted a new rental ordinance after more than a year of study and review, including the input of a number of landlords. The City Planning Commission was instrumental in putting the language together for final consideration and passage.

The ordinance is

designed to protect tenants and landlords while providing healthy and safe living conditions for renters.

- Dakota Provisions made headlines in 2013 when it was announced that it was the first South Dakota firm to partner with the federal

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# Looking back . . . 2014

The year 2014 in Huron had its ups and downs. But with a few notable exceptions, it was a time when the city collectively stepped up to begin developing some of the necessary building blocks for a more successful tomorrow.

Major businesses changed hands as new owners have begun looking to the future. Progress was made on school buildings as the local enrollment continues to soar.

The community set in motion a plan to expand its workforce, and to develop its water recreation assets that many cities cannot boast about having.

An international celebration was a highlight of a successful season of outdoor events, and Huron began looking within itself as it planned for new building and expansion projects.

The James River Recreation Master Plan is a comprehensive look at what the community can do to better utilize its natural resources at the James River and Ravine Lake.

In a beginning project, the city is asking the state to pay



**Huron hosted the 25th annual Red Power Roundup in June 2014 at the State Fairgrounds. More than 200,000 from around the United States and a number of foreign countries participated in the event, staged by the International Harvester Collectors Club. The club also donated \$50,000 to the building of the Nordby Exhibit Hall for 4-H, which was then near its goal of raising \$4 million for construction.**

to assess the asbestos levels in the former water treatment plant near the river on Third Street Southeast. Closed for 10 years, the plant could be demolished to make way for some kind of new commercial use at the site.

Two long-time Huron businesses changed hands in 2014.

Kim Ulmer of Moberge became the new primary owner of Bales Continental Commission Co., and Iverson Chrysler Center Inc. of Mitchell purchased Sibley Motor Inc. The Bales family had owned and operated the company since 1939.

Local dealership Sibley Motors had been a part of the

Huron business community since 1969, when Eugene Sibley bought out Urquhart & Sons. In 1972, he moved the dealership from 363 Wisconsin Ave. S.W. to 450 Fourth St. N.E. along Highway 14.

Iverson Motors owner John Iverson plans to build a new facility along Highway 37 south of Coborn's in the

new year.

As 2014 came to a close, a new Huron Workforce Development Council submitted a six-point plan of work to locally address what is a statewide problem — a critical shortage of people to fill an alarming number of job openings.

The South Dakota State Fair had another successful five-day run, topping a goal of 200,000 visitors by about 10,000. There is also growing excitement as the effort to raise \$4 million for the new Nordby Exhibit Hall for 4-H, Youth and Community comes closer to the goal.

Also, as the year came to a close, Peggy Woolridge was named State Fair manager to succeed Jerome Hertel, who left to become general manager of the Alaska State Fair. Woolridge had served as president and chief executive officer of the Huron Chamber & Visitors Bureau.

One of Huron's most popular restaurants remained closed late in the year after a tumultuous year of uncertainty.

2014 / Page 8



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# Looking back . . . 2015

Expansion of two elementary centers was completed, three dozen properties were sold in the city's newest neighborhood and a major effort to develop the local workforce got under way.

- After a spring groundbreaking ceremony that brought a statewide audience together on the South Dakota State Fairgrounds, work began in the fall for the \$4.7 million Nordby Exhibit Hall for 4-H, Youth and Community.

Philanthropist Earl Nordby got the fundraising ball rolling and 4-H chapters, individuals, families and businesses contributed to bring the donated total to about \$4.2 million by year's end.

- Washington and Madison schools, like Buchanan School earlier, were transformed into much larger attendance centers that will serve school children for generations to come.

In April 2013, voters approved a bond issue to spend \$22 million to address modern needs and accommodate much higher enrollments at the elementary schools.

Students are enjoying well-lit, efficient classrooms, comfortable and attractive libraries and large multi-use gymnasiums.

- A decision by the Beadle County Commission to raise the wheel tax was defeated by voters in a fall referendum that saw only a 19 percent turnout at the polls.

Commissioners had adopted a revised ordinance during the summer that would have raised the tax from \$2 per wheel to the maximum \$5 per wheel. It also would have increased the number of wheels to be taxed from four to a



**Election workers assist voters wishing to cast a ballot in the wheel-tax referral election. Turnout was light for the special election, in which an increase in the wheel tax was overturned.**

maximum of 12.

After the defeat of the tax increase, commissioners said they were still planning to apply for state assistance to address a backlog of bridge work.

- Eleven of the 43 growers supplying turkeys to Dakota Provisions in Huron were impacted by the avian influenza outbreak. It caused a significant loss in revenue, but by the end of October plant employees were back to a five-day work week.

Two colonies in North Dakota, eight in South Dakota and one in Minnesota were affected.

- South Town Addition is on the verge of more good things to come. In March, the city sold 36 lots in the mostly undeveloped addition between Coborn's and First United Methodist Church.

The lots vary in size and zoning to accommodate single-family homes, duplexes and apartment complexes. The ones sold by the city are on paved streets and have no assessments or tax liens. Many have water and sewer lines in place.

At the auction, the lots sold for a total of \$335,000.

The city had been deeded the southeast Huron development by Beadle County after it had been taken for nonpayment of property taxes.

- In November, Jefferson School and the grounds were sold to the Huron Church of the Open Bible for \$20,000.

The property had been declared surplus earlier in the fall after serving as an elementary school since 1927.

Church leaders were looking at options to address a growing membership. The church got its start in the 1980s when people began meeting in homes. The church was chartered in 1988 and four years later the Moose Lodge was purchased for services.

- Workforce development has become a buzz phrase around South Dakota and Huron is no exception.

The city was awarded \$125,000 in state funds to find workers to fill job openings in many sectors of the economy. Grant funds are being matched with locally committed funding for a total of \$250,000.

A 13-member Huron Workforce Development Council, representing agriculture, manufacturing, human services and a number of other fields, drafted the plan.

The five-point strategy zeroes in on the diversity of the population while also emphasizing student-business engagement, an upward mobility initiative, alumni retention and recruitment, new resident networking and a real-time web link for available housing.

- The South Dakota State Fair continues to grow.

This year, attendance was 210,893, or just over 400 more people than 2014.

Revenue projections showed a 6 percent increase. The fair hosted 1,811 campers, an increase of 1 percent over the previous year.

GoldStar Amusements experienced a record year with a 5 percent increase in revenue.

- With land and building purchase agreements between owners and the city nearly finished, Huron is set to see a major airport runway extension project either in 2016 or 2017.

In response to an accident at Midway Airport in Chicago in the mid-1990s, Congress ordered all airports to own their runway protection zones (RPZ) and clear them of structures.

Huron's RPZ is located at the southeast end of the runway near Dakota Avenue North where there are houses and businesses.

To comply with the order, the city is adding to the northwest end of the runway where it's on airport property. Federal money is paying for the lion's share of the project.

- The Huron School Dis-

trict, which has seen major renovations and expansions to its learning centers, turned its attention to its on-campus sports facilities.

A group of concerned parents spearheaded the early efforts to have new tennis courts constructed in the city. By fall, the idea to construct eight new courts, with the space to add up to four more courts in the future, had been incorporated with a proposal to replace the existing natural grass at Tiger Stadium with artificial turf.

Included in the plan recommended by the school district administration would be the paving of two parking lots at Tiger Stadium, renovation of additional practice area where the old tennis courts were located and improvements to the watering and drainage systems at all practice fields.

At Tiger Stadium, the existing turf would be removed and repurposed to the new practice areas and a new drainage system would be installed below the turf, allowing for greater use by not only the football teams, but also would lead to high school soccer matches moving to the facility as well as being a venue where the marching band can practice.

## 2013:

government in a program designed to ensure a legal and more secure work force.

Representatives of the U.S. Immigration and Custom Enforcement's (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations were in town to present Dakota Provisions officials with a certificate of completion.

- A major fundraising effort began

across the state to replace the 4-H Clover Hall building. By the end of October, 25 percent of the \$4 million needed to build a new 47,000-square-foot 4-H exhibit hall had been secured.

Before winter set in, Clover Hall was razed.

- The community heard the unfortunate news that Raven Aerostar would be closing its doors, mean-

ing the loss of 75 employees. Raven Aerostar cited the end of its government contracts for products it made to support military forces in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as uncertainty with defense spending in general. Raven Industries of Sioux Falls, the parent company of Aerostar International, had had a presence in Huron since the 1960s when it became the first

manufacturing company to locate in the city's new industrial park.

In other significant business news, Olsen Implement, one of the area's oldest businesses, was sold to Premier Equipment LLC, a family operation in north central South Dakota. Olsen Implement had been part of the area business community since 1922, when it was started in Hitchcock.

From Page 5

## 2014:

A fire that was deliberately set caused thousands of dollars of damage to the building and its contents. Two women were arrested and prosecuted.

• In June, the 25th annual National Red Power Round Up — described by many as a mini State Fair — came to Huron and the

South Dakota State Fairgrounds.

More than 20,000 people from around the United States and a number of foreign countries participated in the event, staged by the International Harvester Collectors Club. Huron was the farthest north and west the Red Power Round Up had

ever been in the U.S., although it was hosted by Madison in 1997.

Organization leaders said there is not another traveling show of its size in the country.

• Huron welcomed its newest medical clinic with the opening of HRMC's facility near the hospital.

The 24,000-square-

foot clinic can house up to 10 HRMC physicians, as well as laboratory, EKG and X-ray services. The HRMC Physicians Clinic provides state-of-the-art medical services for the entire family.

• The Buchanan K-1 Center opened this fall and all the final details were finished before 2014 ended. The school

nearly doubled in size adding a new wing and a new gymnasium while getting technical and ascetic upgrades

Madison school, which houses second and third graders, is getting a new wing, gym and upgrades throughout.

Currently unoccupied for this school

year is Washington Elementary. The school which was built with an identical floor plan as Madison, should be ready for the start of the 2015-2016 school year. All three schools also received upgraded kitchens and the former gyms have been turned into a commons area.

From Page 6

## 2011:

significant support for redeveloping the blighted area that once was the stately Huron University campus by contributing more than \$4 million in a six-week fundraising campaign. More than 800 people donated to the project.

The effort was started with a \$510,000 donation from the Nordby Family Foundation to purchase the property. All but the Campus Center building were demolished. In December, the City Commission awarded a nearly \$10 million contract to Sheehy Construction of St. Paul, Minn., to build the aquatic center.

• The South Dakota State Fair enjoyed an 8 percent jump in attendance over the previous year.

• Howard-based Horizon Health Care opened its latest facility in November 2011 in temporary quarters

downtown, but in the spring planned to relocate the James Valley Community Health Center to renovated space in the former Osco Drug portion of the Huron Mall.

• As the year came to an end, residents were once again following several high-profile criminal cases. Two have been resolved and two others are heading for spring trials.

Although the homicide occurred in his Highmore home in October 2008, Ken Huber's retrial for first-degree murder in the shooting death of his wife, Pam, was moved to Huron. Jurors found him guilty and the former law enforcement officer was again sentenced to life in prison without parole.

In an historic move, TV and still cameras were allowed in the courtroom for the first time in South Dako-

ta. Viewers outside the courtroom were able to watch the attorneys present their closing arguments to the jury.

• Law enforcement officers from Huron and around the state were on hand for a new police officer memorial was dedicated.

Memorialized that day and forever were Sgt. Tom Callies, stabbed during a domestic disturbance call in 1982; Deputy Police Chief Virgil Deyo, shot to death during a manhunt near Woonsocket in 1966 and Officer Clifford Hawley, who died of injuries suffered in 1909 in downtown Huron when he was shot trying to break up a fight. His assailant got away and was never apprehended.

The memorial, adjacent to the veterans memorial near the municipal building, was dedicated as a crowd of friends and family members

of the fallen officers looked on.

• The struggling economy didn't stop the start of a number of major construction projects in Huron in 2011. Construction of a Butler Machinery facility in the northwest part of town is under way, while Farm Credit Services of America is building a new office building south of Runnings Farm & Fleet.

Horizontal Machining and Manufacturing added a 70-by-140-foot addition for steel storage. Pheasant Run, a 38-unit apartment complex in southeast Huron is well under way and down the road from that new housing development is the new Huron Christian Church.

In Woonsocket, construction is progressing on a \$3.3 million addition to the Prairie View Care Center.

- Two other notable proj-

ects in Huron are a major addition to Welter Funeral Home and DAPRO, a by-products plant one mile south of Dakota Provisions.

• In Huron, a \$1 million addition to Madison Elementary was under way. When finished, the school became a first- and second-grade center.

Wessington Springs celebrated the completion of its "wind for school" turbine, located southwest of the elementary school. In Miller, the school district is moving forward with construction of a new elementary school, while at the Highmore-Harrold a new \$2.7 million school gymnasium and lunchroom facility is being built.

Sadly, the former St. Lawrence school, which closed in 1983, was destroyed by fire in August.

From Page 2



# Looking back . . . 2016

The eyes of all South Dakotans were on Huron in late summer as the nearly \$5 million new home of the popular 4-H program in the state was dedicated in an upbeat State Fair ceremony.

- Built on the former site of the Clover Hall 4-H dormitory, the \$4.7 million Nordby Exhibit Hall for 4-H, Youth and Community was dedicated during the State Fair.

Hundreds of 4-H families, donors, volunteers and supporters attended the ceremony to thank the late Earl Nordby of Huron, the major benefactor, and the thousands of South Dakotans who raised money for the hall.

Before and after the program, people toured the facility, where all of the 4-H exhibits will now be displayed under one roof. Other features of the 48,000-square-foot hall are classrooms, kitchen, a performance stage and office space for State Fair staff.

- In late September, the City Commission voted unanimously to approve a conditional use permit to allow Dakota Provisions to op-



The Pizza Hut was destroyed by fire in the spring of 2016.

erate a food processing plant in an existing building in the West Industrial Park.

When the \$30 million facility is operational, likely by the end of 2017, it will employ about 250 new workers. Dakota Gobblers, meanwhile, has expanded its flash-freezing plant in the Huron Industrial Park in a \$10 million project that will mean up to 20 new jobs.

At the food processing plant, no live turkeys will be processed. Raw meat delivered to the facility will be processed and packaged for distribution to customers such as Panera Bread, Firehouse

Subs, Denny's and Disney.

- Projects to build eight new tennis courts and replace the existing natural grass at Tiger Stadium and improve water and drainage systems at all school practice fields were completed.

At the stadium, existing turf was removed and repurposed to the new practice areas and a new drainage system was installed.

Huron Church of the Open Bible purchased the former Jefferson School and members plan to hold their first worship services in January.

The property had been declared surplus after serving

as an elementary school since 1927. The school district sold it for \$20,000.

- Sears Holdings closed Huron's Kmart store, along with 67 other Kmart and 10 Sears stores, drawing to a close the presence of one of two anchor retailers of the Huron Mall after 38 years.

In the mid-1990s, the Huron Kmart was expanded to a Big K format, doubling in size and adding grocery items to its shelves.

- Two men face first-degree murder charges in the beating death of a man in rural Huron in the spring of 2016.

Kevin Krueger of Huron and Jose Vega of Montevideo, Minn., are accused in the death of Keith Houck of Huron.

- After a fire gutted the Pizza Hut Restaurant in the spring, the future of the business remained unclear at year's end.

The news was much brighter with two other local restaurants.

Ryan's Hangar Restaurant and Lounge, long a popular eatery at the airport, relocated to the former Verto's spot

in the Crossroads in downtown Huron.

And a Mitchell man has indicated he is purchasing and plans to reopen the Tailgate Restaurant, also downtown, early in the new year.

- In July, the city of Huron began laying the groundwork for what is expected to be a significant development in 2017 in the area south of Coborn's known as the South Town Addition.

Commissioners approved a tax increment financing plan that will provide incentives to lead to the private sector development of the open land. It's the third so-called TIF district in Huron in the past 30 years. It means the taxes on the 41 acres will be fixed at predevelopment levels.

Increases in taxes after development occurs will be used to repay a \$3.4 million debt incurred by Greater Huron Development Corporation for new infrastructure and site development improvements.

Roads, water and sewer and storm drainage have

2016 / Page 10



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# Looking back . . . 2017

Not since 2005 has Huron seen such a resurgence in local economic development as it did in 2017.

With well over \$3 million in building permits issued, the city enjoyed a year in which new housing and commercial enterprises sprouted up in two areas of town.

Huron's industrial parks also saw increased activity with new and expanded industrial facilities and the start of a long-awaited public works building.

• Visitors arriving at city limits at the southern entrance to town have been marveling at all of the construction going on between Coborn's and the First United Methodist Church.

Known as the Southtown Addition, it is home to single- and multi-family homes, already built or under construction. Three businesses, including Dakotaland Federal Credit Union's administrative offices and drive-up bank, a new Ground Round Grill and Bar are already under construction, while ELO Prof. LLC accounting office announced plans in December to build new offices, which it will share with Huron Title Company.

• One of the major projects under construction in

Southtown is known as WheatGrass Village.

Owned by Eagle Construction of Sioux Falls, it includes a three-story, 69-unit apartment building and two six-unit town homes on 10 acres. Apartments will be available at non-subsidized, market rate rents.

Initial work also began in the fall to develop 24th Street Southeast that will run along the south side of WheatGrass Village.

• A second apartment complex under construction in Southtown is called Jefferson Village, a 40-unit, senior-living apartment complex located at 21st Street and Idaho Avenue Southeast.

Apartment units in the three-story complex will be offered to qualifying tenants who earn up to 60 percent of the area's median income.

• One of the major projects in another part of Huron – in the West Industrial Park – is under way as well. After being on the city's wish list for a number of years, construction has begun on a new public works building for the street, traffic and water-sewer departments.

Funding for the \$5.5 million project has already been secured through reserves and



Southtown Addition

second penny sales tax revenues that have accumulated for the project.

• Dakota Provisions is nearing completion and the opening of a new facility in the West Industrial Park as well that will increase its cooked, ready-to-eat production capacity.

Called DP West, it will begin production with close to 100 employees, eventually expanding to 250 total workers.

Since 2005, Dakota Provisions has invested more than \$130 million in equipment and infrastructure in the city.

• It was a joyous day when the men and women of the 153rd Engineer Battalion returned home to a huge community celebration at the Huron Arena.

City and state leaders addressed the soldiers, their

families and friends after their nearly one-year deployment to several Middle East countries.

• When funding can be secured, the city of Huron plans to move forward with a project to improve safety at the Third Street dam by eliminating the deadly undertow and placing large boulders below the dam to create rapids, all while maintaining public access for fishing.

Two earlier projects included demolition of the former municipal swimming pool and water treatment plant after alternative uses for those facilities could not be found.

• While it didn't attract a lot of attention, a multi-party land swap led by the School and Public Lands commissioner in the fall was important to the State Fair because it ensured that property it uses

to temporarily park livestock and carnival trailers will be available for years to come. Nearly 60 acres of public lands owned by the state in rural Hand and Spink counties were traded for 7.5 acres of private property listed for sale in Huron not far from the state fairgrounds.

The land in Huron includes the former Huron University practice football field along Ninth Street Southwest and the south half of the former cement plant property at Ninth Street and Nevada Avenue Southwest.

• A partnership announced in November that will involve Southeast Technical Institute of Sioux Falls, the Huron Regional Medical Center Foundation and other Huron healthcare facilities will enable nurses to continue their education without leaving their homes and jobs.

Huron area licensed practical nurses (LPNs) will be given the opportunity to obtain their registered nurse (RN) degrees while continuing to work in the area.

• A change in the Beadle County Courthouse has begun with the hiring of Taylor Jans as the first individual to serve as both the veterans service officer and the emergency management director.

## 2016:

been installed in the commercial area of the addition.

Some housing units have been built and a senior living apartment complex is scheduled for construction.

• Two Northern State University leaders were in town in September to meet with the Huron Community Campus advisory board and to

tour the Huron education facilities.

Dr. Timothy Downs, NSU's new president, and Dr. Alan LaFave, NSU provost and vice president for academic affairs, were impressed by what they heard and saw.

The higher education partnership between HCC and NSU is growing with a strong

enrollment and an evolving focus on how students can best be served, the NSU leaders said in a meeting with the media.

Huron Community Campus was founded following the closing of Huron University in 2005. It offers associate's degree programs as well as master's degrees in

education for traditional and non-traditional students.

• Commercial air service dubbed unreliable at best came to an end in the fall when Great Lakes Airlines stopped flying in and out of Huron. The move was tied to an industry shortage of pilots, but also a drastic reduction in boarding numbers.

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The government is requiring all airlines – regional and major carriers alike – to have pilots with at least 1,500 flight hours. As of the end of September, Huron lost its Essential Air Service eligibility.



# Looking back . . . 2018

Huron took steps forward in its nursing and master's degree programs, launched the forward-thinking "Huron Rising" initiative and witnessed the early stages of what will finally eliminate a deadly situation at the city's dam.

• Dilapidated housing and downtown and economic development were chosen as key areas needing the community's attention in the coming years after about 70 residents spent hours brainstorming ideas as part of a "Huron Rising: Re-imagine Our Future" event.

• A dozen years after Dakota Provisions began operations in a state-of-the-art processing plant east of town, the company is now running at full speed in its newest facility in the West Industrial Park.

The company is owned by 43 Hutterite colonies in the Dakotas and Minnesota. The new plant was originally a 50,000-square-foot speculative building constructed by Greater Huron Development Corporation. Dakota Provisions purchased it and added 20,000 square feet.



**Fans welcome home the Huron Tiger football team after it played at the DakotaDome in Vermillion.**

• In a related story, two gobblers — named Peas and Carrots — raised at Riverside Colony north of Huron made the trip to Washington, D.C., in November to be pardoned by President Trump. They are now enjoying their pardon at Virginia Tech University, where they will live the remainder of their lives.

• Construction work that began in 2017 in the Southtown area of Huron continued into 2018. Wheatgrass Village, the apartment and townhouse project is completed. Additional housing — the Jefferson Village Apartments — for older residents is completed.

The Dakotaland Credit

Union Administration Building is nearing completion, and will house a realty office and physical therapy office as well. Further to the east, a building that will house the Huron Title Company, as well as an accounting office is completed. Street work throughout the area is completed and other lots are poised for construction.

• For the first time in many years, the city of Huron imposed lawn watering restrictions to ensure an adequate water supply in the hot summer months. The schedule will be in place each year from June 1 through Sept. 30.

• The first seven licensed practical nurses to begin

classes in a new LPN to RN program did so in 2018 as part of a partnership involving the Huron Regional Medical Center Foundation, Southeast Technical Institute, Huron Community Campus and several others.

• Thirty-five educators representing several school districts and coming from as far away as Minnesota were recognized in June after they earned their master's degree in teaching and learning.

Representing seven different school districts, the teachers spent one weekend per month on the Huron Community Campus earning the degree. It is offered under the umbrella of Northern State University, which oversees the academics at Huron.

• For the first time since 1992, the Huron Tiger football team earned a trip to the DakotaDome in Vermillion.

The Tigers first made the trip in 1991, a decade after the football playoffs began in South Dakota.

In 1992, Huron won the title. In 2018, Huron won its first three games and climbed to the top of the Class "11AA" rankings, before dropping its

next four games.

• From barrel racing to breakaway roping, from chute dogging to bull riding, the Huron area hosted the first of two summers of National Junior High Finals Rodeo in June..

They come from all 50 states, three Canadian provinces and Australia after advancing from regional and state competitions. The city played host to 1,200 contestants in sixth through eighth grade and their families.

• As the year came to an end, residents were intrigued to see the huge piles of boulders of all shapes and sizes being stockpiled on the east side of the James River at the Third Street dam.

The plan is to place them in about 100 feet of the river below the dam to create rapids and eliminate the dangerous and deadly undertow that has existed there since dam construction in the Dust Bowl days of the 1930s.



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# Looking back . . . 2019

The past year has been filled with hope and heartache, blessing and despair, and once again, the most common conversation item had the largest impact on the Heartland — the weather.

Abnormal weather in 2018 left the ground saturated throughout the winter, and set the stage for what would be an incredible year of weather happenings.

In late January through most of February, the state suffered through a tremendous cold snap. Huron broke records for lowest recorded temperature multiple times between Jan. 24 and Feb. 19.

After slightly more than a dozen inches of snow in total before mid-February, within a month, Huron was up to 35 inches of snow for the year and had an inch and a half of rain falling March 13. A major April blizzard blanketed Huron with nearly 20 inches of snow in a 24-hour period.

The James River has been in a flood stage since March.

Major storms in late July and early August dumped more than five inches of rain and came with severe high



**Work continues on a new entrance at Huron High School to offer better security.**

winds that ripped down trees and saw significant destruction throughout the town of Huron and area.

This led to a very difficult year for area farmers with crops unable to be planted at all, or planted and unable to be harvested because of moisture.

- Dakota Avenue on both ends of town were punctuated with road construction projects. On the north side of town, the Highway 14/37 intersection was completely rebuilt. The intersection was widened for safety and to be more easily navigated by larger vehicles.

- On the South end of town, the intersection of 21st Street and Dakota Avenue underwent a similar renovation that left traffic re-routed at

times and often down to one lane in each direction.

- The Huron School District continued an upgrade to its facilities as well. In a series of projects that will extend into 2020, Huron High School's main entrance began a renovation this fall. When completed, the new entrance will offer better security for staff and students as well as the community during events at the facility. Additional work at the high school involves replacement of asbestos tiles throughout the original high school, remodeling of bathrooms, and an upgraded intercom system.

- Taco John's, Huron's first fast-food chain restaurant, was required to move its footprint to the north, because of a new entrance that came about

from the Highway 14/37 rebuild and opted to purchase an adjacent structure, raze the existing building and build a completely new space, which is expected to open early in 2020.

- In April, Governor Kristi Noem named Huron, along with Volga, as Communities of the Year.

- The Violet Tschetter Memorial Home was closed in May 2019 after 59 years of service to the Huron community, adding its name to a growing list of similar facilities shuttered in the past few years.

- Huron's Community Campus has been impacting the city and region since its inception, and it continued to grow this year marking the first in which Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) received their degrees to become Registered Nurses — exclusively through the HCC program that is administered through Southeast Technical Institute.

- The intersection of Highways 34 and 37 south of Huron, long known to be a dangerous intersection, led to tragedy as three young people lost their lives and two others were injured in an accident in

September. The reaction was swift — new stop signs to the intersection. Woonsocket students, mourning the loss of classmates, were instrumental in the swift action, as they reached out to the governor to ask for the change.

- Huron residents were excited to add a sit-down restaurant to the community in 2018 when Ground Round opened as part of the business development on the South part of town. Just a year later, the restaurant had shut its doors permanently.

- In March, the De Smet Lady Bulldogs capped a remarkable season with a 10-point win over previously unbeaten Ethan on the Huron Arena court to claim the Class "B" State title. De Smet enjoyed a brief celebration, as its boys' team tipped off in the Class "B" boys tournament five days after the Lady Bulldogs grabbed the hardware.

- Roger Larsen retired at the end of November, after 44 years with the paper.

- Both Walkers Flower Shop and Smith Jewelry celebrated 100-plus years in business. Smith's later closed.

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