



CAPITAL JOURNAL

Thursday, March 7, 2013 ■ www.capjournal.com

The voice of central South Dakota since 1881
Volume 132, Issue No. 47 ■ 75¢

2012 Pierre sales tax revenue growth slightly above average

By DAVID ROOKHUYZEN
DAVID.ROOKHUYZEN@CAPJOURNAL.COM

Pierre's sales tax receipts showed decent growth during 2012, according to the year-end financial report presented at the city commission meeting Tuesday.

Total sales tax revenues brought in by the city were \$7.4 million last year, up 7.26 percent from \$6.9 million in 2011. It's also an improvement from 2010, when the city brought in \$6.7 million.

October was the only month in 2012 when receipts did not surpass the previous year. It also surpassed 2010 in every month except January.

Pierre's sales tax growth also compared well against 10 other population centers, surpassing five of them. The increase was slightly less than Fort Pierre's 7.5

percent, but ahead of Rapid City's 6.98 percent and Sioux Falls' 6.26 percent.

Property tax receipts were also at a six-year high, rising from \$1,937,969 in 2006 to \$2,527,343 in 2012.

Commissioner Steve Harding called the whole financial report a positive one, pointing especially to the growth in sales tax.

Harding predicted tax receipts will continue to grow through 2013, pointing to the golf course being open again after the flood forced it to close in 2011. The city can also hold softball and tennis tournaments to bring in more tax revenue now that flood repairs are nearly complete, he said.

Twila Hight, Pierre's financial

officer, said the growth is slightly above average for the city. It is also more than twice the conservative increase estimate of 3 percent the city budgeted for.

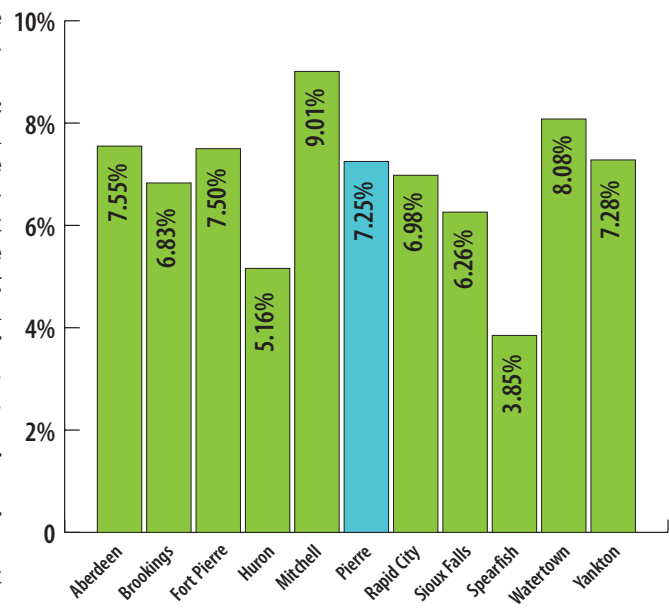
There's no specific cause that can be pointed to for the increase, aside from growth in the community as a whole, Hight said. Even though there were no major sporting events in 2012 due to flood damage, there were other events, such as swimming meets, that brought in sales tax revenue, she said.

With the golf course and other sports facilities in operation, Hight said 2013 could see a similar increase in sales tax revenues.

"I see no reason to believe it wouldn't," she said.

There's no specific cause that can be pointed to for the increase, aside from growth in the community as a whole, said Twila Hight, Pierre's financial officer.

2012 sales tax growth



Taco John's in Pierre held an all-day fundraiser March 6 from 5:30 a.m. to midnight in honor of Casey Crane, an employee of the restaurant who died Feb. 24. Crane is survived by her two young sons, Jace and Zaden. Fifty percent of all Taco John's sales for the day will be donated to a memorial fund benefiting the two boys. (Allison Jarrell/Capital Journal)

Taco John's raises money for Casey Crane's sons

By ALLISON JARRELL
ALLISON.JARRELL@CAPJOURNAL.COM

Community members arrived in droves at the Taco John's in Pierre on Wednesday as the restaurant held an all-day fundraiser in honor of Casey Crane, a Taco John's employee who died Feb. 24 when her car went off Interstate-90 near Presho. The 31-year-old Crane was a manager at the restaurant for more than 10 years.

Crane is survived by her two sons, Jace Crane and Zaden Camp Crane. Fifty percent of Taco John's sales from Wednesday will be donated to the Casey Crane Memorial Fund to benefit the two boys.

LeRoy Carroll, general manager of the Pierre Taco John's, said that restaurant traffic started at 5:30 a.m. and kept going strong for the rest of the day, with an overflow of patrons during lunch and dinner.

"Lunch was crazy. We had people waiting almost an hour for their food," Carroll said. "I had lines in Sioux (Avenue) waiting to pull in to go through the drive-thru."



People wait inside of Taco John's Wednesday evening. (Allison Jarrell/Capital Journal)

Carroll said that customers coming through donated hundreds of dollars on top of the proceeds from the restaurant.

Bryon Itterman, owner of the Pierre Taco John's, said that the restaurant had already made more than \$8,000 in sales by 4 p.m., which

See **CRANE**, A6

More gun laws equals fewer deaths, 50-state study says

By LINDSEY TANNER
AP MEDICAL WRITER

CHICAGO (AP) — States with the most gun control laws have the fewest gun-related deaths, according to a study that suggests sheer quantity of measures might make a difference.

But the research leaves many questions unanswered and won't settle the debate over how policymakers should respond to recent high-profile acts of gun violence.

The average annual gun death rate ranged from almost 3 per 100,000 in Hawaii to 18 per 100,000 in Louisiana. Hawaii had 16 gun laws, and along with New Jersey, New York and Massachusetts was among states with the most laws and fewest deaths. States with the fewest laws and most deaths

Gun rights advocates have argued that strict gun laws have failed to curb high murder rates in some cities, including Chicago and Washington, D.C. Flegler said his study didn't examine city-level laws, while gun control advocates have said local laws aren't as effective when neighboring states have lax laws.

See **GUNS**, A6

Building South Dakota development incentives advancing in Legislature

By BOB MERCER
STATE CAPITOL BUREAU

PIERRE, S.D. – With the Daugaard administration expressing its support for the first time publicly, House and Senate negotiators moved forward Wednesday toward a final version of the Building South Dakota program.

The latest amendments show the Legislature now will be asked to put in \$7 million of state general funds for the first year of the program on July 1.

The program's purpose is to direct millions of dollars annually for financial incentives from state government for economic and community development.

The initial \$7 million of state funding would be followed in year two by the state treasurer transferring 25 percent of unclaimed property revenue.

The one-quarter share would generate an estimated \$7 million, according to Senate Republican leader Russ Olson of Wentworth.

For year three the state treasurer would transfer 50 percent of unclaimed property revenue. That one-half share would be about \$14 million, Olson said.

The 50 percent transfer would continue annually after that each Nov. 1.

Unclaimed property is money and other items of value that people have left behind at banks and

See **INCENTIVES**, A6

Student loan defaults continue to rise in SD, nationwide

By ALLISON JARRELL
ALLISON.JARRELL@CAPJOURNAL.COM

Data from the U.S. Department of Education shows that an increasing number of students in South Dakota and across the nation are defaulting on their federal loans after completing college.

The Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis District, which includes the states of South Dakota, North Dakota, Montana, Minnesota, part of Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, all have rates below the national average, but each state is following the national trend with steady

"About 37 percent of all students classified as having defaulted on their loan from a South Dakota higher education institution in 2009 came from NAU. Some of them never stepped foot into the state, yet they are attributed to the state average,"

Ron Wirtz, editor of the fedgazette

ly rising default rates.

South Dakota saw a particularly large increase in the two-year default rate of students entering payment in fiscal year 2010, with 8.5 percent compared to 6.5 percent in fiscal year 2009.

"The Federal Department of Education quantifies loan default rate as the two-year rate, so they look at the cohort of students who are coming in to repayment

See **LOANS**, A6

