

THE VOLANTE



Helmets make history

SD looking to restrict usage of flock cameras

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The South Dakota Legislature has expressed interest in discussing limiting data access and placing restrictions on license plate readers, including Flock Safety cameras, for the upcoming legislative session.

Government officials, including Attorney General Marty Jackley, have discussed adding laws restricting access to data collected by these cameras across the state.

Traffic cameras are already limited around South Dakota. Red-light cameras, which are stationed near traffic lights and used to track vehicles that run red lights, have been banned in the state since 2014.

However, license plate readers detail and catalog not just a vehicle's license plate but information about the vehicle itself, posing a privacy and safety risk for South Dakota residents.

With privacy risks, come legal and moral risks against the general population.

"The way the Supreme Court has interpreted the Fourth Amendment, there can usually be no violation if the police are just collecting information that someone has already exposed to the public," USD Law associate professor Gregory Brazeal said. "Digital technology like Flock cameras creates new threats to privacy, so it's possible that courts will eventually respond by expanding Fourth Amendment protections."

Flock cameras have already faced controversy. Photos have shown Flock cameras positioned toward public pools, and reports have stated that police officers have used Flock cameras to track and monitor current or former romantic partners.

On the other hand, Flock

cameras have also been instrumental in criminal investigations and provide a useful tool for police officers.

"These systems can help locate vehicles associated with serious crimes, identify investigative leads, find missing or endangered persons, recover stolen vehicles and property, and improve the efficiency of criminal investigations and emergency response efforts," Chief of UPD Bryant Jackson said.

Jackley also commented on the cameras' use when searching for an abducted child from Clark County in 2023.

Students at USD, however, are still wary about the cameras being used around campus.

"General surveillance is the overall goal and not citizen safety," Andrew Hochstein, a vocal performance major, said. "I think they're trying to watch us more than they're trying to keep us safe."

The next legislative meeting for the South Dakota Legislature isn't until Sept. 29. Although multiple counties across the state are



Brady Cartledge | The Volante

Flock cameras posted outside of the Coffee Cup watches cars drive past.

restricting their use of the cameras, no official bills have been drafted yet for the Legislature to vote on. There are no Flock cameras stationed in Vermillion itself, with

only two cameras outside of U.S. Highway 50. However, with about 240 cameras in use across the state, future restrictions could decrease that number.

New facilities and curriculum, same goal

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The University of South Dakota is relocating its medical school to Sioux Falls, with the goal of a more active learning approach.

The first 18 months of USD's M.D. program is going to be taking place at Sanford Health's Tally Building by summer 2028. At the moment, students do not have a medical center to see physicians do their day to day work in hospitals and clinics.

With this move, students will be right on both the Sanford Campus where the Tally Building is under renovation and Avera is renovating a space where students will be as well. There will be another state of the art anatomy lab where students are not only going to be taught by anatomists, but surgical residents and faculty.

After this change, students will be more prepared for the clinicals they start after the first 18 months.

Clinician physician educators and biomedical sciences faculty will be working with students in the classroom together.

"They get excited about what they're doing and the retention is much better," Dr. Tim Ridgway, dean of the University of South Dakota Sanford School of Medicine, said.

Instead of a lecture style of teaching, students will be spread around the room and present patients' cases, as they want the patient to be the center of education.

Many community members have been concerned about this change, but the dean and other faculty members plan to stick to their original goal of bringing good healthcare to rural areas. Dr. Ridgway's mission statements are to provide the opportunity



Submitted | The Volante

to every South Dakota resident to get a high-quality medical education and to provide a curriculum that will encourage students to pursue their careers in the state as well.

This will not hurt the Vermillion community, and is going to help The Lee Medicine building in the end. Other healthcare related undergraduate programs are going to be enhanced because of the availability of the building.

The medical program relies on the PhDs in

The new Sanford building will offer education in Sioux Falls.

Vermillion to provide a crucial foundation, and that will not change with the move. "We will continue to absolutely emphasize the PhD education in those first 18 months, but we also rely on all of these clinical physicians around the state to make certain that we can deliver our mission," Dr. Ridgway said.

Sioux Falls is now going to be a true academic center, as USD's M.D. program heavily relies on all three health systems, Sanford, Avera, and VA.



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throughout the
week.

While many students were away for the summer, 12 University of South Dakota students spent two weeks unearthing history.

The Archaeology Field School, led by Anthony Krus, chair of the Department of Anthropology and Sociology, spent its time at the Bear Butte Creek Historic Preserve digging and studying artifacts from Fort Meade.

Fort Meade was once an Army post from 1878-1944. During that time, laundresses lived and worked near the fort; the area is now known as “Soap Suds Row.”

Two students who participated in the field school began their work earlier as interns. They spent about two weeks at the preserve before the rest of the students arrived to survey the area and search for different sites and artifacts.

“I don’t think you can really appreciate how much effort goes into archeology until you do fieldwork. It’s a lot of work, but it’s rewarding when you actually see something, draw it and finally put it in a bag,” Natalie Wagner, Anthropology major at USD and Field School intern, said.

Throughout the process, students helped dig, draw, clean and catalog the artifacts, among other tasks. During their visit, students conducted shovel test pits and learned how to use Trimble GPS and properly document their findings.

“I’ve helped with cleaning and cataloging, but I like digging the best because there is a lot of detail that goes into it,” Wagner said.

Some of the items they found included animal bones, wood, glass and steel nails, along with other artifacts connected to the laundresses and where they lived.

“I was excited for all the animal bones that we found because it is something that I get to investigate later with my thesis,” Wagner said. Beyond academic and personal growth, hands-on opportunities like this provide insight into the past and help uncover details about South Dakota’s history.

“We really get to understand a part of South Dakota’s history that was forgotten because we don’t have writings from these women. We don’t really have much documentation about what these laundresses were doing. It’s exciting to understand more about the area’s history,” said Wagner.

The summer experience gives students foundational knowledge of archaeology that they can take with them into future research, projects or jobs.

With a smile, Wagner said she was excited to be part of the work.

“I get to do this. I’m helping uncover history and I’m having so much fun,” Wagner said.

The hidden traces of the past

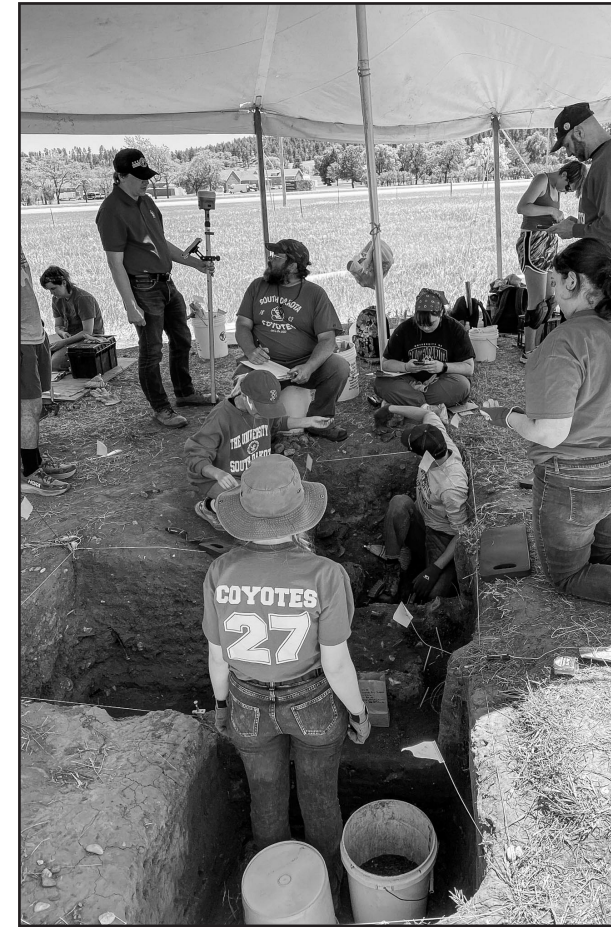
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Submitted | The Volante

Digsites in Fort Meade, SD reveal student findings.



Submitted | The Volante

Students participating in field study dig for artifacts.



Submitted | The Volante

Students gather to begin surveying the digsite.

SD rolls out new drivers license

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On Sept. 3, 2026, residents of South Dakota received the announcement that their driver’s licenses and identification cards will be replaced. New cards will have updated security features and a new image on the front.

The security features are intended to further prevent identity theft, fraud and other forms of identity-related crime. University of South Dakota Police Chief Bryant Jackson said the new features will make the cards more secure.

“The updated design and embedded security elements will be more difficult to duplicate and easier for law enforcement, retailers and other ID checkers to verify, helping strengthen the overall integrity of South Dakota’s identification system,”

Jackson said. The new changes could also help reduce the use of fake IDs. As technology has improved, creating fake IDs has become more sophisticated. The added complexity could make the cards more expensive and

“What may seem like a minor decision today can carry consequences that extend well beyond a college student’s time on campus.”

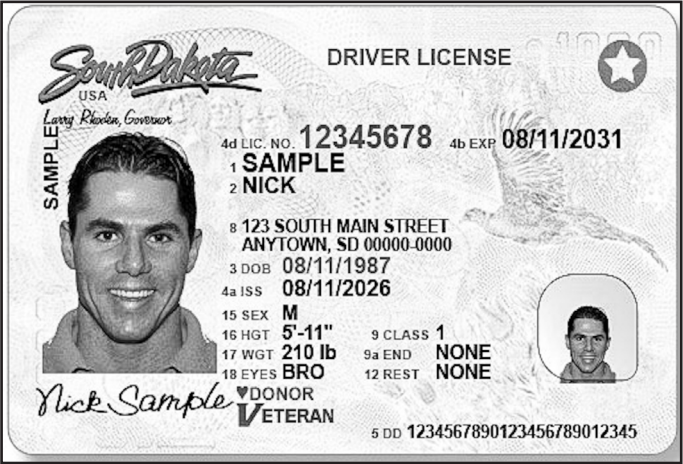
- Bryant Jackson, Chief of UPD

difficult to produce, limiting the purchase of them. “In addition to the enhanced security features, law enforcement officers have the ability

to access Nlets (the International Justice and Public Safety Network) to confirm the validity of a driver’s license in real time,” Jackson said. The system will give police officers another way to verify whether an ID is authentic or fake in real time.

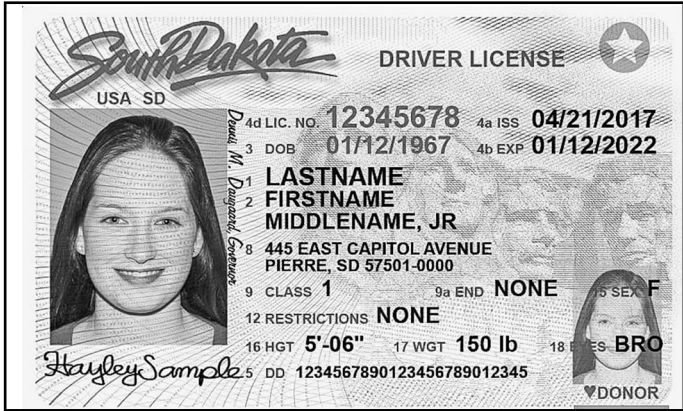
The new IDs also include a simpler format intended to make the information easier for users and officials to read. Jackson said the change could aid in a more efficient, safer, and timely verification process during public safety interactions.

There is no immediate action required to obtain an updated ID. South Dakotans will receive a new card when they renew or are issued a driver’s license or identification card.



Source: Department of Transportation

New drivers license intend to prevent fraudulent licenses.



Source: Department of Transportation

New drivers license intend to prevent fraudulent.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Volante covers issues relevant and interesting to USD students. Faculty, staff and community members are welcome readers, but the newspaper is written and presented for a diverse community of students from the students’ point of view. The paper should provide a variety of information, entertainment and educational opportunities for the readers. The Volante encourages everyone to write letters to the editor. The Volante wishes to be viewed by students as respectable, objective, accurate, fair and trustworthy. If you have comments, concerns or questions, please contact The Volante email at volante@coyotes.usd.edu. The Volante is distributed Wednesdays during the academic year free of charge locally with the cost of \$1 for each additional copy. One year subscription rates are \$40, which solely covers the mailing costs. The Volante does not endorse, promote or encourage the purchase or sale of any product or service advertised in this paper. Advertisements are the sole responsibility of the advertiser. The Volante disclaims all liability for any damage suffered as the result of any advertisement in this newspaper. The Volante reserves the right to refuse any advertising.

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The deadline for letters is 5 p.m.
the Friday prior to publication.
Letters must be typed and fewer
than 300 words.

South Dakota leads the nation in lowest unemployment

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Over the summer, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics released the unemployment rates for each state, and South Dakota had the lowest unemployment rate.

Mike Allgrun, a professor of economics at USD, said this statistic isn't an anomaly.

"South Dakota's relatively low unemployment rate is not a new development. We have consistently been a low unemployment state for decades," Allgrun said.

The national unemployment rate this year is 4.2%, while South Dakota's is 2.0%. Despite low unemployment's positive effect on workers, it can pose a problem for employers.

Robert Winslow, an assistant professor of economics at USD who specializes in research regarding unemployment, said employers can struggle to fill positions when unemployment is low.

"Something important to keep in mind is that there can be economic downsides to having a very low unemployment rate. When a labor market is tight, it can be difficult for employers to fill job openings. South Dakota has a pretty typical job opening rate, but when combined with our very low unemployment rate, we lead the nation in terms of the number of job openings per unemployed worker," Winslow said.

Despite the low unemployment rate now, just a few years ago economists were unsure whether South Dakota and the nation at large would be able to recover from the effects of COVID-19 on the employment market.

"The biggest story of unemployment in the last decade is, of course, COVID, where unemployment soared as various government policies shut down opportunities for work and encouraged some people to stay unemployed even when jobs were available again. South Dakota's unemployment rate spiked at this time, while still staying far lower than the U.S. average. We also recovered quite quickly compared with the national average," Allgrun said.

Fortunately for South Dakota, the recovery from COVID went relatively smoothly, compared with the predicted rate of recovery.

"The biggest story of the last decade when it comes to unemployment is, of course, the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic. But one of the most remarkable things there was how quickly the labor market recovered. Within a few years, the employment situation had largely returned to normal," Winslow said.

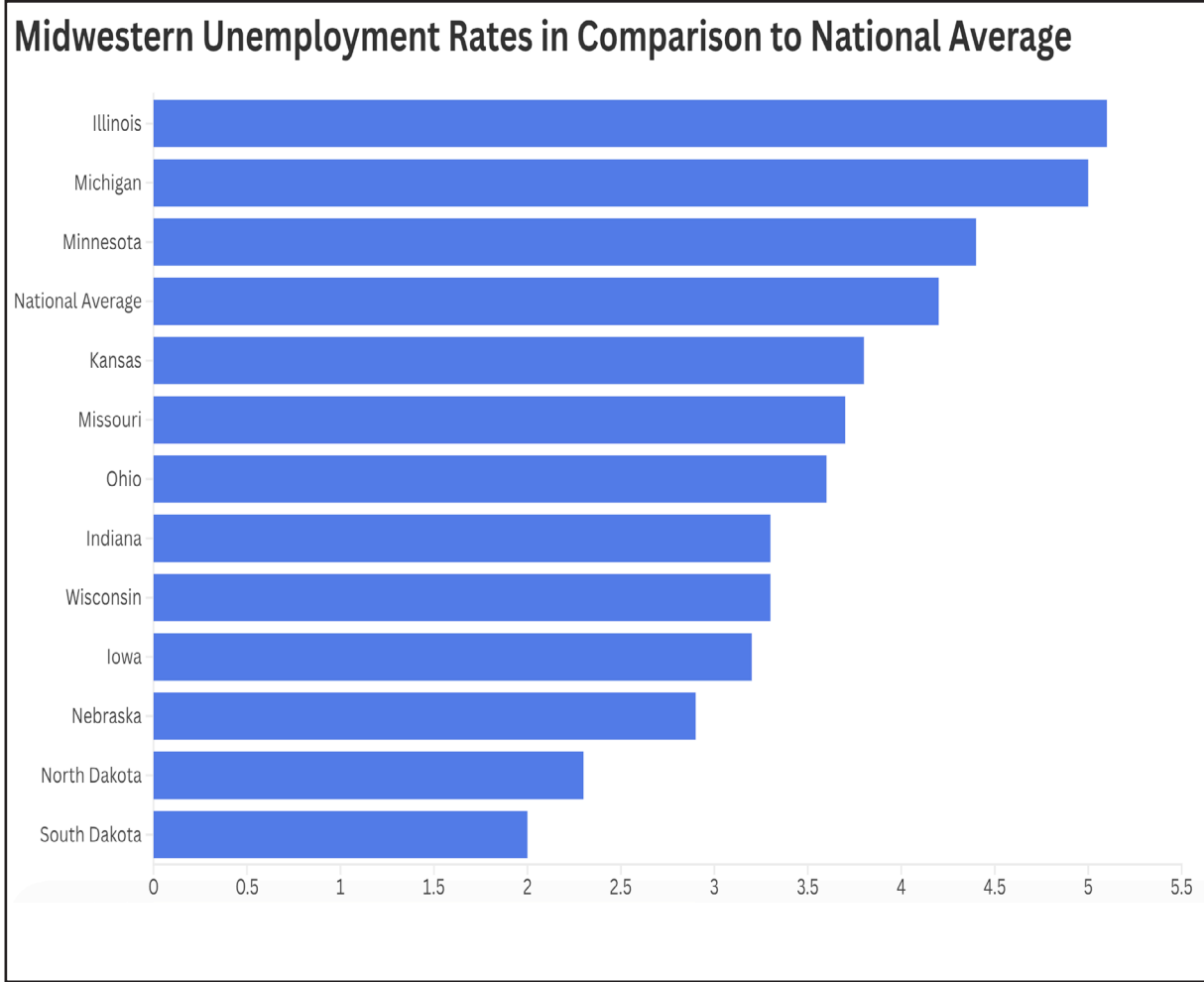
Now that the effects of COVID-19 are largely behind us, economists are looking to the future to predict what new developments could shake up the job market. Winslow believes the answer lies in Artificial Intelligence (AI).

"Looking ahead, the main thing to watch for is the effect of AI. It's only this year that we're really starting to get AI systems that are potentially disruptive to certain occupations, so the statistics are still fresh and the effects of AI on the workforce are still uncertain, Winslow said."

Although low unemployment rates may give students the impression that finding jobs will be easy after college, Allgrun urges students to look early and diligently at what opportunities are available to them.

"Students should realize that even in a favorable job market like South Dakota, finding a good match is not automatic. I strongly recommend students be thinking about a career plan early in their college experience. Certainly by your junior year you should treat the job search like an additional course you work on regularly. We have great resources for all USD students like the Center for Career Design and discipline-specific help like the Student Success Center at the business school," Allgrun said.

Students looking to get their foot in the job market can utilize the services at the Center for Career Design located in MUC Room 101.



Study shows high CTE rates in the NFL

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A recent study conducted by researchers at Mass General Brigham and Boston University released August 25 found that of former National Football League (NFL) players who died from 2016 to 2021, 25% had chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE).

Eight-hundred-seventy-eight former NFL players died between 2016 and 2021. Researchers were able to examine 235 of the deceased players' brains, and found CTE in 215 (91.5%) of those brains. This means that at least one in four NFL players have the disease.

CTE, a neurodegenerative disease, has been linked to repeated trauma to the head and is a growing topic of concern for the world of sports. Symptoms of the disease include cognitive impairment such as trouble thinking and memory loss, mood and behavioral issues such as aggression, depression, and suicidal ideation, as well as movement issues regarding balance.

Due to football being a high impact sport, specifically to the upper body and head, there is a higher chance for football players to develop the disease. The game of football has started to introduce new rules and safety precautions to keep players safe. One way safety has become a priority is in equipment, more specifically, helmets.

Joshua Pansegrau, the assistant director of equipment operations for USD, details football helmets and how they have changed to better fit player safety.

"The biggest priority is obviously fit. It's something in my job that has grown tremendously over the years," Pansegrau said.

Fitting helmets to players has improved over the years with the help of technology. Teams can scan players' heads and fit the helmets with the help of 3D printing to better protect an athlete's brain.

"It's a huge game changer," Pansegrau said.

Outside of helmets, the Coyotes use guardian caps. Guardian caps are another level of padding that is strapped onto a player's helmet during practice to reduce the total amount of force an athlete's head is taking.

The football program also uses the Insight Program, a tracking system put inside the helmets to detail which athletes are taking the most impacts to the head and how much force they are receiving.

"Player safety is always something that will continue to be pushed forward and continue to be a forefront of every equipment room. It's always our main goal to try to make it as safe as possible," Pansegrau said.

Due to the effects on mental health the disease has, mental health is also a priority amongst football players and staff.

Tanner Peterson, the coordinator of athlete mental health, addiction & preventative services at USD, discusses student athlete mental health and what he looks out for.

"Some common risk factors I might typically see with athletes is transition. In these times of transition, we see these can spark difficult times for our student athletes... Those struggles might manifest in any number of mental health concerns, but typically those times of transition can be especially challenging," Peterson says.

Peterson compares mental health to physical health, "Just like we anticipate physical strain with student-athletes, we also want to equip them with the tools to manage the mental and emotional strain of being a student-athlete."

The department and Peterson specifically teaches student athletes how to regulate their nervous systems and manage mental and emotional strain.

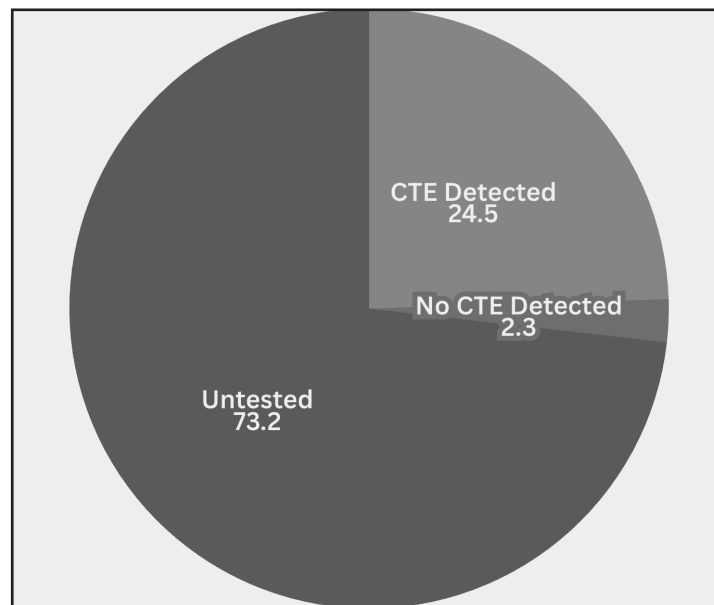
Mental health and its research is continuously being evaluated and discussed. "I feel our biggest shift has come with our student-athletes. I believe our sport ecosystem, both at USD and nationally, has drastically shifted how we approach mental and emotional health within athletics," Peterson said.

The disease cannot be diagnosed until after death however, so the current rate of CTE in current NFL and football players is unknown.



USD football player helmets in storage.

Colton Tolly | The Volante



Total percentages of passed away NFL players' brains and if they were tested in CTE study.

Coyotes perform well in CSU/Wyoming tournament

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The South Dakota women’s volleyball team closed the CSU/Wyoming Tournament with two consecutive victories, defeating Wyoming and sweeping UC Santa Barbara after opening the weekend with a loss to Colorado State.

The tournament began Sep. 10 in Fort Collins, Colo., where the Coyotes fell to Colorado State in three sets, 17-25, 14-25, and 19-25.

Lauren Medeck and Gabi Zachariasen led USD with nine kills each. Medeck also recorded 11 digs for a double-double, while Morgan Bode added five fills on a team-best .385 hitting percentage.

Setter Ella Rogers finished with 26 assists, and Sierra Pokharel recorded nine digs and both of South Dakota’s service aces. The Coyotes were held to a .073 hitting percentage as Colorado State finished the match hitting .302.

South Dakota responded Sept. 11 with a four-set victory over Wyoming in Laramie, Wyo. The

Coyotes won the first two sets, 25-15 and 25-17, before the Cowgirls took the third set, 25-15. USD answered with a 25-20 win in the fourth set to secure the match.

Medeck led the offense with 13 kills, while Audrey Nelson added nine and Amanda Loschen finished with eight kills. Loschen also contributed with five blocks.

Rogers recorded a double-double with 42 assists and 10 digs while adding a match-high four service aces. Samantha Untiedt and Pokharel led the defense with 13 digs each.

USD finished the match with 49 kills, nine aces, seven blocks and 60 digs. The Coyotes hit .248 while holding Wyoming to a .163 hitting percentage.

The Coyotes completed the tournament Sept. 12 in Fort Collins with a three-set sweep of UC Santa Barbara, winning 25-16, 25-16, and 25-22.

Zachariasen led South Dakota with 13 kills,

Medeck added six kills and a team-high 14 digs, while Bode finished with five kills and five blocks.

USD’s defense controlled the match, holding the Gauchos to a .070 hitting percentage and without any service aces. The Coyotes recorded 11 team blocks, led by Bode’s five, and four each from Loschen and Medeck

Rogers directed the offense with 29 assists, Pokharel added 12 digs and Untiedt served a match-high three aces. South Dakota finished the tournament with a 2-1 record and improved to 7-2 overall.

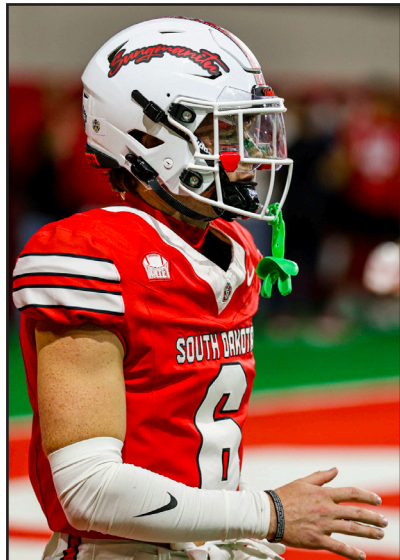
The Coyotes will return to action at the South Dakota Lottery College Volleyball Classic in Sioux Falls. USD will face Minnesota on Sept. 18 at 7pm and Washington on Sept.19 at 12pm at the Sanford Pentagon.



USD volleyball player sets the ball against Colorado State.

Source: GoYotes.com

Football helmets honor indigenous cultures



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Colton Tolly | The Volante

USD and Eastern Washington honor indigenous cultures with helmet decals.

Last weekend marked a historic moment in the Dakota Dome. It was the first time in Division I history that both teams wore helmets with Indigenous wording.

South Dakota's helmets read "Sungmanitu," which is Lakota for coyote. The helmets debuted last season.

The helmet decals were designed by Sadie Red Wing (Spirit Lake Dakota).

Eastern Washington's helmet decals displayed the Salish phrase "uł pqlqeyn," which translates to "group of eagles." The decal was first worn by

EWU in 2024.

"My responses are based on my academic training in Indigenous studies and U.S. history. I do not speak on behalf of Tribal Nations, Indigenous Peoples, the Institute of American Indian Studies or USD."

Dr. Elise Boxer is the director of the Institute of American Indian Studies at USD.

"This is a good first step in the symbolic representation of Indigenous Peoples and languages on helmets, but I am more interested in what happens next," Boxer said.

"How do these respective institutions increase access to institutions of higher education? Do these sports teams go into the Indigenous communities whose languages appear on their helmets and provide training camps or access to the sport? How is talent being cultivated in these communities so they can be prepared to compete at the Division I level? What type of cultural and historical education do players receive to have a better understanding of the Indigenous Peoples and Tribal Nations that the helmet represents?"

Boxer also has personal connections to both schools.

"On a more personal note, my first academic job was at Eastern Washington University, so I was excited to see these two teams play one another," Boxer said. "I brought my family to enjoy the game, which speaks to the power of a sport, like football, to bring fans together."

Coyote Crazies 30th anniversary

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The USD Dance and Cheer teams are not the only groups cheering for USD athletics. Since 1996, the Coyote Crazies have worked to engage students and build school pride at athletic events.

This year marks 30 years of Coyote Craziebringing school spirit to USD athletics.

Co-President Colton Pottratz has cheered alongside fellow Crazies to help build energy and school spirit for years.

"I feel like we bring up energy and give a sense of belonging and a sense of community in the way that we are all coyotes together, and that we cheer for these teams together. We cheer for each other as well," Pottratz said.

Co-President Jacob Geelhart said that one of his favorite memories over the years was at a Men's basketball game against Omaha, where the Coyote won.

"The players immediately ran to us and celebrated. And then, Coach Peterson came and gave us all hugs. And that's when I really realized that, the crazies mean more to the athletes and the fans than I thought before," Geelhart said.

An article in The Volante from the late 1990s reported that the Crazies were then known as Charlie's Crazies. The group was started by Graduate Assistant Eric Powers and Dean of Students Dave Lorenz.

"My thought was we don't get real good student attendance at games and (students) haven't discovered how much fun it can be," Lorenz said, in the article.

According to the article, membership tripled within the group's first week.

"We've talked to a few people that were a part of the original Coyote Crazies and how it affected them, and I was just changed over the years. It is really eye opening," Pottratz said.

Both co-presidents hope the Crazies will continue to grow and support USD athletics for another 30 years.

"Keep the energy high. I mean, sometimes it's tough, but the crazies are there, to give, you know, the students, the athletes, the coaches, the sense of pride and reliability. We need to be there to keep everybody happy and engaged. And I think that's always how it's going to be," Geelhart said.

The Coyote Crazies became an official student organization in 2013. Students interested in joining can find membership information through USD's Campus Groups page.



The Coyote Crazies cheer for the football team during the game.

Source: Volante Archives

Charlie's crazies

USD students create a subculture for super fans

By Julia Meyer
VOLANTE

They're loud, rowdy and red but full of pride: Coyote pride. Charlie's Crazies are the newest and wildest fan group on campus, here to support USD athletes.

"We just want to get people involved in the games or just watch a bunch of guys be crazy," Eric Powers, graduate assistant to Dave Lorenz, interim Dean of Students said.

With reserve seating rights on the sideline, the crazies scream and yell favorite cheers such as "U-S-D," and "De-Fense," and other not-so-traditional cheers.

Along with the band, the Crazies are the loudest section in the Dome. By half-time most voices are starting to disappear, but the Crazies are still yelling.

"We're more enthusiastic and more into the game. This is what stuff should be regardless of what sport it is," senior Joey James said. "We need more athletic support from everybody. This is what gets teams hyped."

The group got started when Lorenz talked to Powers about starting something to encourage student participation in athletic events.

"My thought was we don't get real good student attendance at games and (students) haven't discovered how much fun it can be," Lorenz said.

Each week, the Crazies pick a theme to go with. In the game against Minnesota State, it was "Go Get Red," with Crazies in red shirts, shorts, body paint and, for a few brave macho men, red dresses. In the first game of the season against Wayne State, several Coyote Crazies (males) painted their bare chests, each with a

letter, which collectively spelled: C-O-Y-O-T-E-S.

"It's almost like Halloween. You see who has the best costume. From personal experience, it's nice to have students rooting for you," junior Jeremy Kudara said wearing a red dress with white polka dots to the Minnesota State game.

Since the first week the Crazies invaded the Dome, group membership has tripled. More and more come in a variety of costumes to cheer on the 'Yotes each week.

Powers and others hope the enthusiasm will continue to catch on and will represent Division I

spirit. Powers said crazies plan to emulate Duke University fans during basketball season by cutting mini-basketballs in half and wearing the halves as hats.

"We want to build it up bigger and bigger for basketball and to carry it on for next year," freshman Travis James said.

Why do these "crazy" people cheer in such an outlandish way? "It's about time students do this for the team. People here are so uptight. It makes it real fun," Sophomore Leroy Anderson said.

"You don't have to be afraid to say stuff because you get people to back you up. We walk to the game and walk in together," Kudara said.

"Why not? It's my fifth year and I've never had as much fun at

a game," senior Eric Rawson said. "What's the point of coming and just sitting there. You can dress up like you don't know right from wrong."

To be a part of the craziness, Powers said any students are welcome to show up and be ready to cheer on the 'Yotes.

An old Volante newstory from 1998 discussing The Coyote Crazies

Source: Volante Archives

Clay County reported incident update

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With students now fully settled back onto USD's main campus, The Volante has decided to continue closely logging police report activity so as to inform students and community members alike of incidents taking place within Clay County. The following information has been sourced from the Vermillion Police Department and entails press narratives from Sept. 6 through Sept. 12.

09/06/2026: Officers assisted the highway patrol in issuing an impaired driving test.

09/06/2026: Officers received a report of a potential attempted break in,

officers searched the surrounding area and were not able to locate a subject.

09/06/2026: Officers investigated an accident with no reported injuries.

09/06/2026: Officers received and responded to reports of suspicious activity at a local business.

09/06/2026: Officers received a report of a dog bite near a residence.

09/06/2026: An arrest of a subject was made for the alleged assault, abuse and neglect of a minor.

09/07/2026: Officers investigated an accident with no reported injuries.

09/10/2026: Officers responded to the report of suspicious activity.

09/10/2026: Officers responded to reports of a noise complaint at a local residence.

09/10/2026: An arrest of a subject was made for impaired driving.

09/10/2026: Officers investigated an accident with no reported injuries.

09/10/2026: Officers investigated the burglary of a local residence.

09/10/2026: Officers investigated a reported dispute between subjects.

09/10/2026: Officers responded to reports of a noise complaint at a local residence.

09/10/2026: Officers investigated reports of a vehicle striking a bicyclist.

One subject was transported to a regional medical facility for severe injuries.

09/11/2026: A subject was cited for the possession of an open container.

09/11/2026: Officers arrested a subject for possessing a fake ID and underage drinking.

09/11/2026: Officers arrested a subject for impaired driving, underage drinking and the possession of a fake ID.

09/12/2026: Officers arrested a subject for possessing a fake ID and underage drinking.

09/12/2026: Officers arrested a subject for possessing a fake ID and underage drinking.

OVERHEARDS

Here you'll find the weirdest, funniest and stupidest things we've heard during the week. Context is for suckers.

"This is genuinely bazinga, awesome."

- Coyote Twin Theatre

"The blood drive doesn't want my blood, It's filled with alcohol."

- Carey's

"Did anyone else wake up feeling like Diddy this morning?"

- North Complex

"Someone get me a hammer, and kill me with it."

- Old Main

"Ugh, he just looks like a virgin."

- Char

"I need at least 50 more crab rangoons stat."

- Silk Road

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Robots here to help

Alyssa Batt

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There's a new member of the university's campus but it's not another student, building, or staff member. Instead of seeing only human facilities management keeping up the landscaping, there's now a robot lawnmower.

USD Facilities Management (FM) has been looking at the possibility of automated equipment to help facilitate their work across campus. Whether that is in Grounds, Custodial, Maintenance, or Construction. FM currently only has one unit of automated lawnmowers.

Associate Vice President for Facilities, Brian Limoges, and Director of Grounds, Nate Steele, have reviewed that possibility for years. Over the last five years, costs have come down and the technology has improved, allowing for Grounds management to purchase an automated mower. Additionally, there's limited full time staff and employees that they have

"It will allow our full-time and student staff to be able to complete other tasks such as trimming, trash pick-up, weed control, edging, landscaping, etc.," Limoges said. Currently, facilities spends approximately two days a week mowing the entirety of campus. Having an automated mower will allow staff to focus on other tasks while making sure mowing is completed. FM plans to expand their purchases of automated devices for the campus.

"We have also purchased an automated machine for custodial work that will sweep and mop. Our plan is to implement that into the newly renovated Churchill-Haines Laboratory building," Churchill-Haines has large and long corridors that require a large amount of time to sweep and mop. Like Grounds, this will allow full-time staff to spend more time cleaning other areas within the building.

Scout Vacek is a sophomore student that is majoring in nursing so she has classes in Churchill-Haines. She is also a Resident Assistant Beede 4. Housing works hand and hand with FM custodial staff.

"Makes facilities management focus on certain aspects." It might eliminate a position but streamlines FM overall. Since it doesn't affect Vacek personally, it doesn't make a huge difference in her life but for someone in FM it might change the way they operate and function.

"No matter what your job is here, it represents the university and we are a part of that community. Replacing those people with robots inserts isolation," Vacek said. Vacek states how we still need people for the quality and efficiency that is desired.



Dakota Days parade registration is

OPEN

registration cost \$25

discounted for students - email

dakotadays@coyotes.usd.edu for discount code

closes september
24, 2026

scan the QR code
to registrar



Music bringing countries together

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The memories that about 85 Vermillion residents made this summer in Ratingen, Germany, were a lifetime experience. Two Vermillion high school teachers facilitated the trip to celebrate Vermillion’s sister city’s 750th anniversary.

Almost 1% of Vermillion was in Ratingen at the time. Kevin O’Kelley gave his first formal speech as mayor at the welcome ceremony in Germany, completely in German. O’Kelley was sworn in as mayor the same week as the event.

The organization for the music side of the trip started with musicians in Ratingen. Since Todd Cranson had experience as a band director, he volunteered to organize it from the United States side of things. Cranson was playing with Alphorns in front of his house when he was pitched the idea to be a part of this trip by a Vermillion high school teacher.

In the United States Ambassador’s speech, she stated that “Political situations are very tense right now, so this is what we need. That human-to-human connection.”

Cranson mentioned that getting to have this experience with Ratingen gave him hope for humanity.

“One of my favorite music experiences in my whole life,” Becky Rider, former band teacher, said.

Rider was asked to coordinate rehearsing local musicians and high school students who were not a part of the exchange program to get them to Germany.

“[This experience was] everything we hoped for, and then some,” Rider said.

The Ratingen band director ran the rehearsals in English when they performed together. The Vermillion high school students sat with other German band members. Two of the horn players from Vermillion and Germany still keep in contact.

“To play under the baton of somebody that wrote the piece, in the place where it was written to

commemorate, that was a real highlight to me,” Rider said.

They played a seven and a half minute concert-band piece made by Charles “Chuck” Dibley called “Ratingen 1276 to 2026” that he wrote for this trip specifically. He tried to capture the feeling of time moving through a city. The Tuesday night concert was the world premiere of the piece, and the audience gave a long ovation.

“It has taken me about now to talk about that concert without getting choked up. It was so meaningful to me to do it with our sister city, with kids I taught and people I taught with,” Rider said.

Dibley wrote and conducted a piece of music for the band to commemorate the 750th anniversary in Ratingen. The Vermillion community members, high school band members, and the Ratingen band all learned it.

“You hear people say the cliché that music is the universal language, but we really got to experience that. It made that cliché not feel like a cliché to me,” Cranson said.

Todd was able to play 3 concerts during his time there. Getting to play music at that event and having those comments made was most impactful. There was a larger audience during the final concert, which made the performance memorable to everyone.

“The experience and trip turned out to be an amazing thing for Vermillion but also really cool for USD specifically,” Cranson said.

His students benefited directly from the trip. Afterward, USD did additional work, touring the Adams music factory and purchasing a tuba in the Netherlands.

“I hope the way I work with students in rehearsals was constructive. You hope they learn something and get better at their music because they work with them,” Rider said.



Paul Ebsen | The Volante

Vermillion’s Alphorn Quartet plays on the Market Platz in Ratingen.



Becky Rider | The Volante

German-American Brass Band performs at Ratingen 750 celebration.

Ketchup Entertainment unvaults past film

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The movie Warner Bros. didn't want you to see finally came to theatres on Aug. 28 after being shelved for nearly three years. In November 2023 Warner Bros. announced that their anticipated movie "Coyote vs. Acme" was finished, but would not be released. Instead, Warner Bros. shelved their project in the hopes of receiving a \$30 million tax write-off.

Yet, much like the movies' protagonist Wile E. Coyote, initial failure was not going to determine the rest of the story. After many years of public advocacy and private attempts to save the film, it was bought by Ketchup Entertainment for \$50 million and is finally getting the attention it deserves.

The film has grossed around \$37 million domestically following Labor Day weekend, which means that it has surpassed the compensation Warner Bros. would have received if they had written "Coyote vs. Acme" off. The situation gave "power to the people" and was "proving that there was a desire for...smaller releases," Shannon Cole, executive director of the Vermillion Cultural Association, said

The controversy surrounding the movies' release not only sparked interest but also provided an almost perfect backdrop for its hilarious political satire.

This movie centers on the idea that Wile E. Coyote is suing ACME for selling him all the products that we've seen blow him up, or otherwise harm him, since 1935 during his pursuit of the Road Runner.

The movie combines wit and physical comedy of the beloved Looney Tunes with a human element that audiences can relate to. Director Dave Green describes this as "If you really start to study him, this is a character who wants something very, very deeply and his passion and his persistence and his resilience are what fuel his every day."

These elements meld to create a movie that anyone can enjoy, with a humor that reaches everyone. "It was so true to what Looney Tunes was...homage to that with the slapstick comedy and the jokes," Cole said. All the while it weaves in ideas that make it poignant and interesting for older audiences.

The creativity and talent on this project bounds beyond the humor or characters with the work and skill put into the acting and animations. "Coyote vs. Acme" blends live-action acting and animated artistry. Some familiar faces you'll see are John Cena as the main antagonist Buddy Crane, and Will Forte as well as Lana Condor playing the grumpy and sunshine friends and legal representatives of Wile E.

Coyote. All of whom did an incredible job, especially in maintaining the movie magic that blended the real and the cartoon. None of this is to downplay the talent within the voice actors with some actors such as Eric Bauza voicing as many as ten roles in the movie.

The animations themselves were a blend of the nostalgic Looney Tunes style and newer technological elements. "They were animated characters but they were so much a part of the world," Cole said.

Overall, a great many minds and talents came together to bring this project to fruition, and they weren't going to give up on almost five years of hard work because Warner Bros. shelved it.

The movie expresses this same sentiment with the line "If we lose we lose, if we quit, we really lose". This ties into the Sisyphian themes woven throughout the movie. For Wile E. Coyote he repeats the same cycle chasing the road runner over and over; Yet, failing to do so has not deterred him, and instead he is able to try and fail and try again, and find a certain happiness in doing so. I think that this movie shows us that there are some ways we can take after our fellow Coyote.



Source: Ketchup Entertainment

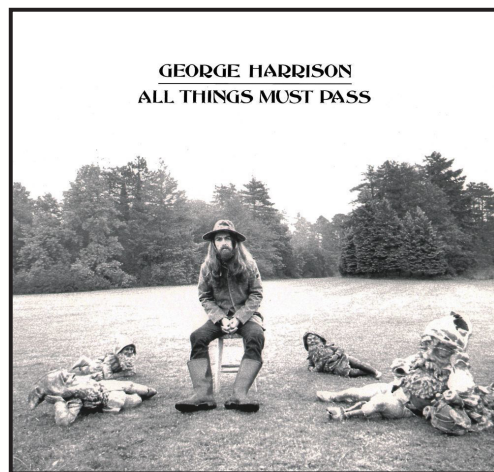


Madyson Jarrott | The Volante

Editors pick: autumn albums

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Cover courtesy of EMI Records

"All Things Must Pass" by George Harrison

George Harrison, well known as the quiet Beatle, had an outstanding solo career with an album that set him apart from others at the time. Harrison's most renowned 1970 album is a fall must-listen with songs that sound like fall. "Apple Scruffs" is not a popular song off the album yet it doesn't sound like the other songs. This is a great addition for apple-picking with songs full of harmonica. Some personal favorites include "I'd Have You Anytime," "Let It Down" and "What Is Life." This is a no-skip album with a few instrumental songs. "Wah-Wah" is a must-listen song made during his temporary quit with the Beatles as a frustrated reaction to the creative restrictions Paul McCartney had on him during the creation of Get Back.

"Jar of Flies" by Alice In Chains

Jar of Flies is a mid 90's grunge album with some of Alice in Chains best work. Fans can tell how good a band is based on how they perform live. I think some of the best live songs from this band are songs in Jar of Flies. This is a gut wrenching album projecting Layne Staley's, the lead singer, struggle with drug addiction and depression. "Nutshell" is amazing in Jar of Flies but even better in Alice in Chains Unplugged. The percussion in "No Excuses" makes this song stand out with assisting vocals from the bassist Jerry Cantrell. "Rotten Apple," "I Stay Away" and "Don't Follow" are songs that amplify the album's sound. This is an iconic fall album with raw emotions.



Cover courtesy of Columbia Records



Cover courtesy of Capitol Records

"So Tonight That I Might See" by Mazzy Star

Mazzy Star 1993 album falls under the alternative rock, dream pop and psychedelic rock genre. Every song from her feels like autumn. Mazzy Star utilizes a soft electric guitar to convey a melancholy tone. The most popular songs on this album include "Fade Into You" and "Blue Light". Both of these songs are Mazzy Star's most streamed songs, with "Fade Into You" featured on Gilmore Girls. Almost all of Mazzy Star's music can be good for fall as it calms and her songs have a similar feeling. Mazzy Star's voice is soothing and melancholy. Compared to the other albums recommended, Mazzy Star's voice is her instrument rather than her instruments standing out.

Field of Memories: Raising awareness for suicide prevention

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Helping people can look different, but it is as simple as asking a question and checking up on someone. September is recognized as Suicide Prevention Month, and the University of South Dakota’s Student Counseling Center decided to contribute in a more visual way.

The Field of Memories event, hosted by the Student Counseling Center this Tuesday, turned the MUC West Lawn at USD into a place of remembrance and awareness.

“[The event] is meant to symbolize people that we’ve lost but also start the conversation about mental health and suicide because it should be something more frequently and openly talked about. People shouldn’t feel isolated,” said Benjamin Severson, Mental Health and Addiction Counselor at the Student Counseling Center.

The South Dakota Department

of Health stated in its Suicide Data Report that in 2024, suicide was the 10th leading cause of death in South Dakota but was the leading cause among ages 20 to 39. The report also states that South Dakota had the 9th highest suicide death rate in the United States in 2023.

“But we don’t just want to look at statistics; we want something more visual, so it makes it more real. Behind every number is a person,” said Severson.

At the event, attendees could write the name of someone they lost, honor someone who has struggled with mental health, or write a message of encouragement and hope.

“Ultimately, we want students who walk through the field, especially someone who is struggling, to come away with the message that ‘you matter, people care about you, help



Nadia Castillo | The Volante

A look at the flags placed in honor of those who have lost their lives due to suicide.



Nadia Castillo | The Volante

One of the many signs currently placed on-campus with mental health resources.

is available and your story isn’t finished,” said Severson.

But suicide prevention and awareness are not only addressed during the month of September. At USD, the Student Counseling Center partners with different departments and staff to provide trainings that can equip people with the right knowledge and resources. The center offers trainings such as Mental Health First Aid and QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer).

“Events like these are impactful and curiosity leads a person to find out why there are flags. This helps educate and inform the people,” said Severson. Suicide is a sensitive topic for many, which causes stigma around the topic because it can be difficult for people to talk about it.

“Starting a conversation and talking openly about [suicide] takes the power away from this hidden

secret. When it’s out in the open, we can work with it. Being open-minded and able to ask the question as well as pointing them in the right direction is important,” said Severson.

Some of the resources available include the Student Counseling Center, where students can request different services like counseling and group therapy. Further, Coyote Care is USD’s 24/7 clinic support line, which is staffed by professionals, giving students access to immediate help during crises. The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is a nationwide network that offers 24/7 help that also provides support.

“This particular population [college students] is an important population because they are at a very transitional period, where they can experience many changes. It’s good to help students build kind of like a toolbox to deal with things,” said Severson.