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RAPID CITY JOURNAL'S TOP 10 STORIES OF 2010

## A year of change

A LOOK BACK: South Dakota said goodbye to smoking, Stephanie and fireworks in 2010.



Journal file photos

Top stories of the year for 2010 included, from top left, the Rapid City Rush winning the President's Cup; Kristi Noem defeating U.S. Rep. Stephanie Herseth Sandlin; beginning of the Main Street Square project; approval of a statewide smoking ban; fireworks canceled at Mount Rushmore; Gov. Mike Rounds dealing with the state budget crisis; and the censure of Rapid City Alderman Sam Kooiker.

## Noem's victory wins top story of year

It was a year of change in South Dakota. And much of that change came courtesy of voters.

The state's voters elected a Castlewood rancher to go to Washington, D.C., to help steer this country in a different direction as a representative in Congress. Rapid City voters, meanwhile, ousted a city council member who had been involved in the proceedings to censure long-time Ward 2 Alderman Sam Kooiker. Two other city council members who voted to censure their colleague did not seek re-election. And in November, voters extended a smoking ban to the state's bars,

casinos, video-lottery establishments and restaurants.

The region's power rates changed, though it could have been worse for consumers. Black Hills Power requested a 26.6 percent increase. The utility eventually was awarded a 12.7 percent increase by the state's Public Utilities Commission.

The Hills went a year without one of its largest events. The annual July 3 Rushmore fireworks were canceled in 2010, due in part to the forest's pine beetle infestation. It is a cancellation scheduled to continue in 2011.

Change was most definitely the focal point of two of

2010's top stories.

The Main Street Square project, which will convert a parking lot into a downtown showpiece, broke ground in December at the corner of Sixth and Main streets. Ellsworth Air Force Base will share in a new mission, flying unmanned drones for the military, a move that will eventually bring 280 new jobs to the base.

Finally, let's not forget that the city's first professional hockey team, the Rapid City Rush, captured the Central Hockey League championship in only its second year and created a legion of hockey fans in the process.



### Inside

See the list of our picks for the top 10 stories of 2010. A6-7

### Coming next week

Read about the 11 people to watch in 2011.

## Budget likely will dominate session

LEGISLATURE: Rapid City delegate will propose temporary sales tax increase to help education funds.

By David Montgomery  
Journal staff

Sen. Stan Adelstein and Rep. Don Kopp come from opposite sides of Rapid City's Republican community, but the two lawmakers might have a common cause on one controversial issue this legislative session: a temporary sales tax increase.

For Adelstein, preventing sharp cuts to education by raising tax revenue is at the top of his agenda in Pierre.

"I don't think people have realized how popular this is compared to the cuts," Adelstein said of his proposal to raise the sales tax from 3 percent to 4 percent during the summer months for a three-year period.

That will raise \$50 million a year, Adelstein said — money he wants to use to cancel proposed cuts to education and



Adelstein



Kopp

See BUDGET, Page A4

## Educators weigh impact of change to truancy law

By Josh Verges  
Sioux Falls Argus Leader

More teens are showing up in classrooms and courtrooms since South Dakota raised its compulsory school attendance age from 16 to 18, but the change hasn't had quite the effect some people expected.

In 2009-10, the first school year under the new law, the statewide dropout rate for grades seven through 12 fell to 1.8 percent, the best rate in five years. Meanwhile, the number of court cases filed against truant children climbed 38 percent.

Yet it is likely that hundreds of children are leaving

### Truancy filings

Court petitions filed for truancy:  
■ 2009-10 school year: 334  
■ 2008-09 school year: 242  
Truancy cases referred to diversion programs:  
■ 2009-10 school year: 48  
■ 2008-09 school year: 83

See TRUANCY, Page A11

### WEATHER



HIGH 44 LOW 22  
Complete forecast.F8

### ONLINE

### Take a movie break

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### COMING TOMORROW



### Soldier now a biathlete

National Guard member joins national team.

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