

SIOUX EMPIRE

WAL-MART'S SHADOW

Yankton businesses say the presence of a Wal-Mart Super Center might mean changes in what stores sell.

PAGE 2B

SECTION B

ARGUS LEADER, SIOUX FALLS, S.D. • MONDAY • FEB. 7, 2005

THE LATEST NEWS

For the latest national and international news, and local news updates every afternoon, log on to: www.argusleader.com

ONLINE POLL

QUESTION: Should the city of Sioux Falls link the proposed recreation center to the events center on the ballot for an up-or-down vote?

To vote yes or no, go online to www.argusleader.com/news. Vote by 9 p.m. and see results in Tuesday's newspaper.

WEEKEND RESULTS

Is the state doing enough to protect against possible pollution from large feedlots?

▶ **YES:** 71.6 percent
▶ **NO:** 28.4 percent
▶ **TOTAL VOTES:** 3,599

Extra money arrives to pay heating bills

South Dakota will receive an additional \$847,000 in federal money to help low-income people pay heating bills.

Each year, the Low Income Energy Assistance Program provides more than \$4.5 million to low-income families nationwide to help heat and cool homes.

"This much needed aid will come as a relief to many low-income families in South Dakota," said Wade Horn, an assistant secretary for the Health and Human Services office.

Candle blamed for house fire

An unattended candle started a fire Sunday night that caused extensive damage to a Sioux Falls home, officials said.

Sioux Falls Fire Rescue was dispatched to 515 N. St. Paul Ave. at 7:15 p.m.

Firefighters saw flames through a bedroom window and quickly extinguished the blaze, said Battalion Chief Bill Curry. There was significant fire damage to the bedroom and heavy smoke damage throughout the house.

No one was home when the fire started, and no one was injured. The Red Cross is assisting the residents.

Free dance is open to teens

A free teen dance will be held from 7 to 10 p.m. Friday at the Oyate Community Center, 2421 W. 15th St.

A middle or high school identification card is required at the door. Pizza and soda will be sold, and door prizes will be given away, and Music in Motion will provide music.

For information, call 367-8222.

CORRECTION

A phone number in Saturday's Argus Leader was incorrect. Anyone with information about the Friday robbery of Kings Casino, 721 W. 11th St., should call Sioux Falls police at 367-7212.

LOTTERIES

NORTHSTAR CASH: 3-10-23-28-29

DAILY 3: 2-6-4

IOWA PICK 3: 9-6-2

IOWA PICK 4: 6-9-9-1

DAKOTA CASH: 7-12-18-20-32 (from Saturday)

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Growth dictates highway plans

Interchange layouts must work together

BY JENNIFER SANDERSON
jsanders@argusleader.com
Transportation officials are trying to outguess growth patterns as they prepare for major changes to highways that feed South Dakota's largest city.

A new interchange at North Marion Road and Interstate 90 is at least five years away. A reconstruction of the full cloverleaf where I-90 and I-29 meet is 30 years off, maybe more. But development in the northwest part of town has planners designing roadways and buying right of way now to save dollars and disruption later.

"This is kind of the chicken, and Marion Road is the

egg," said Joel Gengler, chief road design engineer for the state Department of Transportation. "We need to make sure we have this set up and moving in the right direction, because it will affect the Marion interchange. If they're too close together, vehicles will have trouble weaving and merging."

Since late November, the DOT has narrowed from seven to two the options for the I-90/I-29 interchange. The leading choice would overstep the existing footprint slightly.

It would require right of way only in the northeast and southwest quadrants, where loops with a larger,

300-foot radius would allow speeds of 30 miles per hour. Elevated "fly-over" ramps in the opposite corners could accommodate traffic at 50 to 60 mph.

In addition to its compatibility with the Marion Road exchange, the I-90/I-29 favorite also is the least expensive. Its estimated cost of \$29.1 million includes land access, construction and development. But that figure is in current dollars, and officials say it will rise as inflation drives up costs for land, materials and labor.

Transportation Department engineers will go over the finer points Tuesday

See **EXITS**, page 4B



This layout for the Interstate 90/Interstate 29 interchange is most compatible with the proposed Marion Road interchange on I-90, which is at least five years away.

IF YOU GO

The South Dakota Department of Transportation and engineering consultants HDR Inc. will host a public hearing on proposed changes to the interstate system north and west of Sioux Falls.

WHEN: Open house from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Tuesday, with a presentation starting at 6 p.m.

WHY: To get public input about reconstruction of the I-29/I-90 exchange and a new I-90 exit at Marion Road.

WHERE: SDDOT Area Office, 5316 W. 60th St. N.

LEARN MORE: Visit www.sddot.gov online.

OUR LIFE | 02.07.05



Mr. Twister enjoys watching smiles pop

Two-year-old Jada Mindt gets a big hug and a balloon bear from Mr. Twister as her brother, Campbell, 4, watches at The Empire Mall. The man behind the colorful balloon creations is Bob Anderson of Sioux Falls. For the past seven years, Anderson has transformed himself into Mr. Twister to bring delight to children.

"I've always wanted to own my own business," he says. "I was hooked after twisting my first balloon."

Anderson's passion for balloon sculpting has evolved from selling

balloons to performing at birthday parties and children's shows.

"It's a really uplifting thing," he says. "When I'm not twisting and I get recognized, that just makes my day."

Anderson's own son, Brandon, 11, has gotten into the act. "Sometimes, he travels with me," Anderson says. "We call him Little Twister."

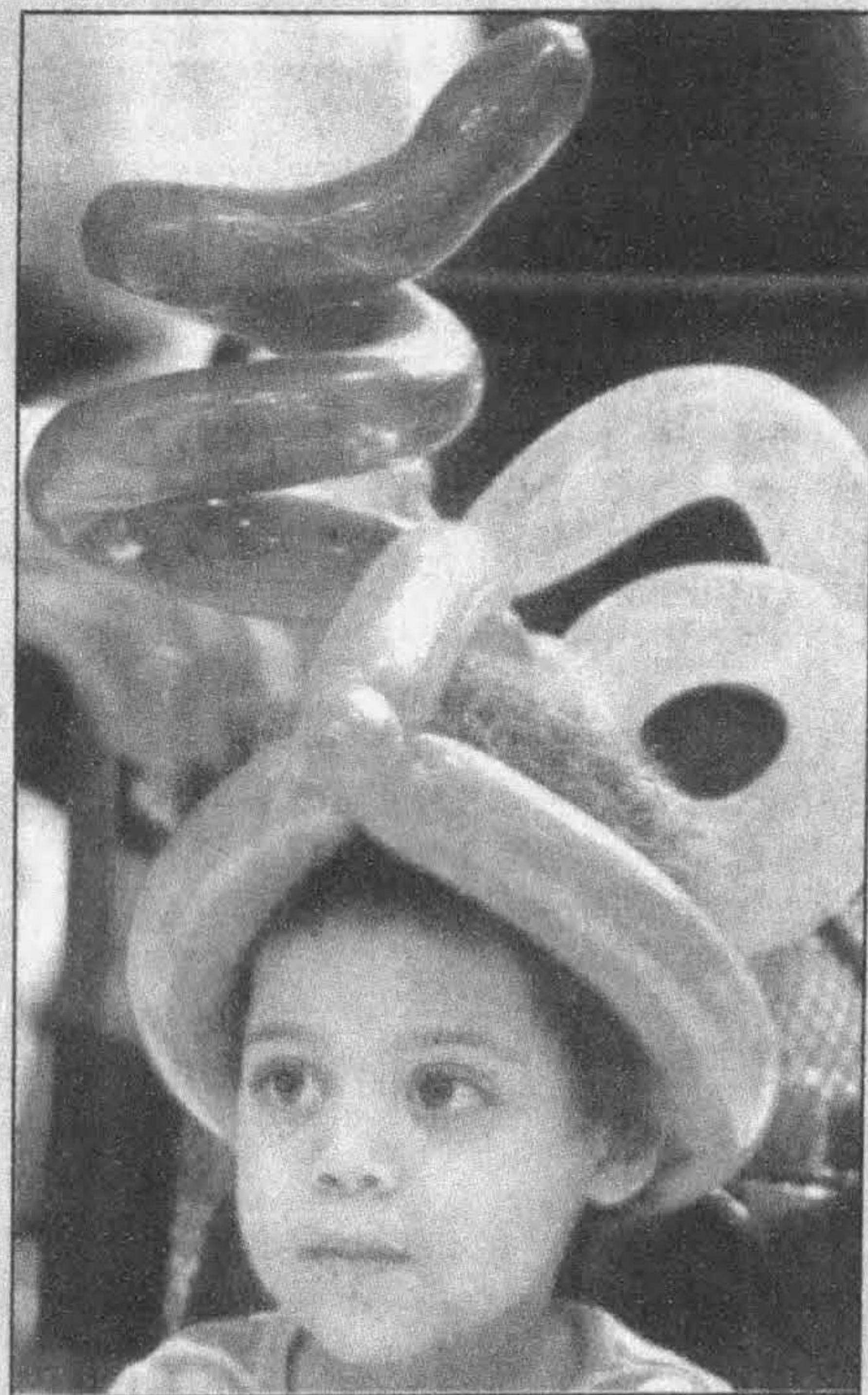
Through the years, Anderson's designs have included a mosquito, a butterfly and a vampire bat.

"It's not a question of how long it took to learn," he says. "It's how many balloons you pop doing it."

ONLINE

"Our Life," a Monday feature of the *Argus Leader*, explores the everyday nuances of living in Sioux Falls. Past "Our Life" installments will be posted on our Web site, argusleader.com. If you have an idea for this feature, call photo editor Val Hoepfner at 331-2389 or e-mail her at vhoepfne@argusleader.com.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY **STUART VILLANUEVA** ARGUS LEADER



Kaitlyn Epp, 3, wears a balloon hat created by Mr. Twister.

Thune praises troops in Iraq

Voters impress senator as well

BY DENISE D. TUCKER
dtucker@argusleader.com

Sen. John Thune, R-S.D., said a weekend trip to Iraq has left him feeling good about U.S. troops, the new Iraqi security force and the lingering joy of Iraqi citizens who voted in last week's elections.

Thune, who spent 13 hours in Iraq, was part of the first congressional delegation to visit post-election Iraq. He traveled with Sens. Johnny Isakson, R-Ga., and James Inhofe, R-Okla. The senators also made stops in Germany and Jordan.

"It was a whirlwind trip. We saw a lot and took in a lot," Thune said Sunday, speaking by phone while on a return flight to the United States.

Thune divided his time in Baghdad between Camp Victory and the Green Zone, the heavily fortified compound that includes the U.S. Embassy.

"It's amazing the skill and the determination of our troops," Thune said. "We've got, by far, the best technology in the world and the best soldiers."

Thune spoke with several South Dakota soldiers, including Grant Thimsen, 27, who is three months into his second tour in Iraq. Thimsen interned for Thune when he was in the House.

Thimsen's father, Sioux Falls lawyer Gary Thimsen, said he appreciates the senator's trip.



John Thune

See **THUNE**, page 4B

Few students will write ACT essays

Most S.D. colleges don't require newest addition to entrance exam

BY BRENDA WADE SCHMIDT
bschmidt@argusleader.com

When local college-bound students take the ACT this week, some will be asked to compose an essay for the new writing portion of the exam.

But most students didn't sign up for the additional writing test because most colleges in the area are not requiring it, officials say.

"If they don't require it, there's no point in taking it," said Ken Gullette, director of media relations for the Iowa-based ACT. "We don't believe students should take tests they don't need."

The ACT, which uses multiple-choice questions to test English, math, reading and science, has begun offering the writing test as an option. The SAT college-entrance exam now requires an essay.

Students pay \$28 for the regular three-hour ACT or \$42 to add the 30-minute writing exam. The ACT is

FOR MORE INFO

The ACT has added an optional writing component to the standard battery of English, math, reading and science tests. Some colleges will require enrolling college freshmen in fall 2006 to have an ACT writing test score. The ACT also is offering a book that includes writing examples and tips. To find out which colleges will require the writing test, or to order "The Real ACT Prep Guide," go online to www.actstudent.org.

administered five times per year.

Nationally, about half of the students who have signed up to take the ACT on Saturday plan to write the essay, Gullette said. He expects the

percentage of South Dakota students to be far less.

That's because only Dakota Wesleyan University in Mitchell and Oglala Lakota College in Kyle require that students take the essay portion.

While some colleges recommend it, even regional draws such as the University of Nebraska, Creighton University, Iowa State University and St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minn., don't require the additional test.

Dakota Wesleyan administrators say writing is a critical skill, and the ACT writing exam is one way to see how incoming freshmen measure up.

"This is a major issue among our faculty, to figure out how we can better teach our students how to write," said Bob Duffett, DWU president.

The essay portion will be required of incoming freshmen in 2006.

See **ACT WRITING**, page 4B

DWU, Southeast Tech offer nursing program

BY RANDY HASCALL
rhascall@argusleader.com

A partnership between Dakota Wesleyan University and Southeast Technical Institute will let licensed practical nurses become registered nurses through an additional year of classes on the Southeast campus in Sioux Falls.

Through the program, which will be administered by the nursing faculty at Dakota Wesleyan in Mitchell, LPNs will be able to earn an associate of arts degree in one year. Then, they'll be eligible to take an RN licensing examination.

The two schools announced the agreement last week at a news conference.

"Both of us saw this need to enhance the educational

needs of LPNs," Wesleyan President Bob Duffett said. "We will have better prepared nurses, and we will better meet health care needs."

The program will start next fall, and administrators expect to accept 12 to 16 students each year.

"There's a need here," Duffett said. "And not one dime more of taxpayer money will be used."

Southeast Tech Director Jeff Holcomb said the cooperative program will allow the two schools to address the need for professional growth in health care.

"Pathways for students to advance in their chosen career are highly important," Holcomb said.

See **NURSING**, page 3B

Today's Obituaries

Robert Brunner, 74
Hurley, SD
Helen Glanzer, 94
Bridgewater, SD
Sara C. Harrigle, 80
Sioux Falls, SD
Wilbur Dean Heuer, 69
Hawarden, IA
Hermína Heynen, 84
Sioux Center, IA
Fred Krull, 94
Parker, SD
Phyllis M. Larson, 88
Fairmont, MN
Jay Scott Pliska, 37
Sioux Falls, SD
Alfred J. Reinhart, 83
Flandreau, SD
Carol Steever, 73
Lennox, SD
Oran V. Tjeerdsma, 76
Springfield, SD

Jay Scott Pliska

Sioux Falls — Jay Scott Pliska, 37, died unexpectedly of a massive heart attack on Saturday, February 5, 2005, at Sioux Valley Hospital. Jay was born in Vermillion, SD on June 18, 1967, the son of Garran and Ruth (Johnson) Pliska. He grew up in Sioux Falls, where he received his education, graduating from Washington High School in 1985.



Upon his graduation, he enlisted with the United States Air Force and for a time was stationed at Hellenikon Air Base in Athens, Greece. Following his discharge, Jay returned to Sioux Falls and began his employment at Gateway for ten years. In October of 2004, he began working as a technical generalist at LodgeNet.

On September 5th, 1998, Jay was united in marriage with Lori Holmberg.

Jay was a charter member of Holy Cross Lutheran Church, the Jaycees, and in his high school days was active in the drama department. Jay was an avid fiction reader and writer. Along with his father and brothers was the annual West River deer hunt in Phillip, SD. He also enjoyed golfing and computers. Jay's most cherished times were spent with his daughter.

Grateful for having shared his life are his daughter, Alexis Jade Pliska, his parents, Garran and Ruth Pliska, his brothers, Shawn (Hilary) Pliska and Chad Pliska, all of Sioux Falls, and Dana (Michelle) Pliska, Brandon, SD; a special cousin, Stacey Ahlers, Sioux Falls; his grandmother, Ardis Johnson, Centerville, SD; his niece and nephews, Torin, Justin, Tristin, Regan, and Austin, Alexis's mother, Lori Pliska, Sioux Falls; and numerous aunts, uncles and cousins.

Jay was preceded in death by his grandfather, Ernest Johnson, and grandparents, Joe and Lucelia Pliska.

Funeral services will be at 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday at Holy Cross Lutheran Church, 1300 S. Sertoma Ave. Visitation will begin at 12:00 (noon) on Monday; the family will be present to greet friends from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m., with a prayer service at 7:00 p.m. at Miller Funeral Home Valley View Chapel, 6200 West 41st Street.

Carol Steever

Lennox — Carol Steever, 73, died February 5, 2005 at Sioux Valley Hospital in Sioux Falls.



Carol Cleveland was born July 29, 1931 to Ole and Rachael Cleveland. She received her RN degree at Augustana College and was employed at Canton-Inwood Hospital and Dr. H. P. Volin's office in Lennox. She married James M. Steever on August 22, 1953. Grateful for having shared her life are her husband, James; four children, Joe (Ellen) Steever of Lennox, Gregg (Mary) Steever of Gettysburg, Dan Steever of Sioux City, IA and Angela (Keith) Nussbaum of Garretson; six grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; a brother, Dr. James (Ruth) Cleveland of San Diego, CA; and 2 sisters, Cleone (Alvin) Hatwan of Long Beach, CA and Lois (Robert) LeVan of Parker, CO.

Services will begin at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday at First English Lutheran Church. Visitation will begin at noon on Tuesday at Dindot-Klusmann Funeral Home, with the family present from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Sara C. Harrigle

Sioux Falls — Sara C. Harrigle, 80, 3117 E. 21st St., died Friday, February 4, 2005, at Avera McKennan Hospital. Mass of Christian Burial has been rescheduled to 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, February 8, at St. Lambert's Catholic Church. A complete obituary and online registry is available at www.georgeboom.com.

Helen Glanzer

Bridgewater — Helen Glanzer, 94, of Bridgewater, died Saturday at Diamond Care Center in Bridgewater.

Helen Johnson married John D. Glanzer in 1938; John died in 1988. Survivors include one son, Jojae (Judy) of Bridgewater; 4 grandchildren, Brian, Ken, Rebecca Sorenson and Amy Wipf; 2 great-grandchildren; and a special nephew, Lonnie Glanzer.

Funeral services will be at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday at Salem M. B. Church of rural Bridgewater, with burial at the church cemetery. Visitation will begin at 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday at Walter Funeral Home in Bridgewater, with family present from 7:00 to 8:00.

Wilbur Dean Heuer

Hawarden, IA — Wilbur Dean Heuer, 69, of Hawarden, Iowa, died Friday, February 4, 2005, at the Hawarden Community Hospital.

Funeral services will be at 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday at the Trinity Lutheran Church in Hawarden, with Rev. Todd Bunge officiating. Burial will follow in the Grace Hill Cemetery at Hawarden, with military rites by the Bergstrom-Bodeen American Legion Post 128 of Hudson. Visitation will begin at noon on Monday, with a prayer service at 7:00 p.m. at the Porter Funeral Home in Hawarden.

Wilbur Dean Heuer was born August 31, 1935 at Hawarden, Iowa, the son of Theodore and Clara (Busch) Heuer. Dean served with the U.S. Army and he later married Kay Wells. Dean farmed in the Hawarden area for many years and later was employed at Hawarden Machine as a welder. He later was a welder for Boyer Machine in Hawarden.

Dean was a member of the Hawarden Eagle's Club and the Bergstrom-Bodeen American Legion Post 128 of Hudson, South Dakota. He had a lifelong passion for woodworking and enjoyed sketching and painting.

He is survived by his son, Lyle of Hawarden; a brother, Ron Heuer and wife, Eloise, of Ireton, Iowa; a sister, Lee Ann Bronkhorst and husband, Ron, of Hawarden; and special friend, Mary Kay Finch of Hawarden.

Dean was preceded in death by his parents; two sons, Darwin in 1985 and Glenn in 1987; and a nephew, Craig Heuer.

Hermína Heynen

Sioux Center, IA — Hermína Heynen, 84, of Sioux Center, Iowa, died Saturday, February 5, at the Sioux Center Community Nursing Facility.

A memorial service will be held on Tuesday, February 8, at 10:30 a.m. at the Bethel Christian Reformed Church of Sioux Center, with Rev. Stephen Rhoda officiating. Interment will be held prior to the memorial service in Memory Gardens Cemetery of Sioux Center.

Visitation will be held on Monday, February 7, from 2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., with the family present from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., at the Memorial Funeral Home of Sioux Center.

Phyllis M. Larson

Fairmont, MN — Funeral services for Mrs. Phyllis M. Larson, age 88, of Fairmont, MN, and formerly of Milbank, Brookings, and Howard, SD, will begin at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday, February 9, 2005, in the American Lutheran Church in Milbank.

Phyllis died on Thursday, February 3, 2005, in the Lakeview Methodist Healthcare Center in Fairmont. Visitation will be at the Emanuel-Patterson Funeral Home in Milbank on Tuesday from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. and in the church Wednesday one hour prior to services. There will be a prayer service for family and friends in the funeral home at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday evening. Burial will be in the Milbank City Cemetery.

Survivors include one son and four daughters, including Susan (Tony) Sbei, Big Stone Lake, SD, and Faye (Todd) Oines, Howard, SD.

Orvan V. Tjeerdsma

Springfield — Funeral services for Orvan V. Tjeerdsma, 76, of Springfield, will be at 10:30 a.m. on Monday, February 7, 2005, at the Emmanuel Reformed Church in Springfield, with burial in the Emmanuel Cemetery, rural Springfield. Visitation will be at the Crosby-Jaeger Funeral Home in Springfield from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., followed by a prayer service.

Thankful for having shared his life are his wife, Gertrude of Springfield, and his children, Randel and wife, Barb, of Yankton, Jean Brown and husband, Wayne, of Akron, IA, Keith and wife, Jill, of Sergeant Bluff, IA, Marilyn Feekes and husband, Duane, of Orange City, IA, Wayne and wife, Shari, of Avon, Larry and wife, Dwan, of Avon and Lois Siewert and husband, Greg, of Sioux Falls.

Fred Krull

Parker — Fred E. Krull, 94, died Saturday, February 5, 2005, at the Tieszen Memorial Home, Marion, SD.



Fred E. Krull was born on April 23, 1910 at Chancellor, SD to Harm and Jennie (Begeman) Krull. He graduated from Chancellor High School in 1929 and served in the Army during WW II in the European Theatre. On June 5, 1941, he was united in marriage to Leah Withsee at Omaha, NE. He had lived in Parker since 1936, where he worked for the Farm Program Office and later was employed by Turner-Hutchinson Electric in Marion until his retirement. He was a member of the First Presbyterian Church, Parker, a life member of VFW Post 2821, Parker Masonic Lodge, and past member of Parker Cemetery Assn. Board.

Grateful for having shared his life are his wife, Leah; a sister, Delia Huisinga, Mitchell, SD; and nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, a daughter, Frances, a brother, Harley (Genevieve) Krull, a sister, Bertha (Herman) Uhe, and a brother-in-law, David Huisinga.

Funeral services will be at 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday, February 9, 2005, at the First Presbyterian Church, Parker, with burial in Rosehill Cemetery, Parker. Visitation will begin at noon on Tuesday at the Hofmeister-Jones Funeral Home, Parker, with the family present from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday evening.

Alfred J. Reinhart

Flandreau — Alfred J. Reinhart, 83, died Saturday at Riverview Manor. Al was born February 25, 1921 at Kimball, SD to John and Minnie (Boesen) Reinhart.



He received his education in Jerauld County, SD, and they moved to Moody County in 1937. Al served in the U.S. Army from 1942 to 1945 in the Aleutian Islands. He married Shirley Thomas on April 23, 1948 in Elkton. They farmed north of Flandreau until moving into Flandreau in 1961. Al worked as a custodian at the Flandreau Public School for 30 years. His wife preceded him in death on August 21, 2004. Al is survived by 6 children, Gary, Fargo, Kathy Floyd (Jim Patterson), Denver, CO, Linda Reinhart, Bangkok, Thailand, Sandy Reinhart, Flandreau, Tom, Fargo, and Barbara (Glenn) Riggs, Newcastle, WY; 3 grandsons, Michael, Patrick, and Daniel; a granddaughter, Quincee; and special friends, Randy and Deb Johanson and their sons, Bob and Jake.

Mass of Christian Burial will be at 10:30 a.m. on Friday at St. Simon and Jude Catholic Church, with burial in the church cemetery. Visitation will begin at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, with a 7:00 p.m. Scripture Service at Skroch Funeral Chapel.

He has had only a couple of questions about the writing exam so far from Lincoln students but said he expects more because most juniors sign up in March to take the April ACT.

Robert Brunner

Hurley — Robert Brunner, 74, died Friday, February 4, 2005, in Yankton.



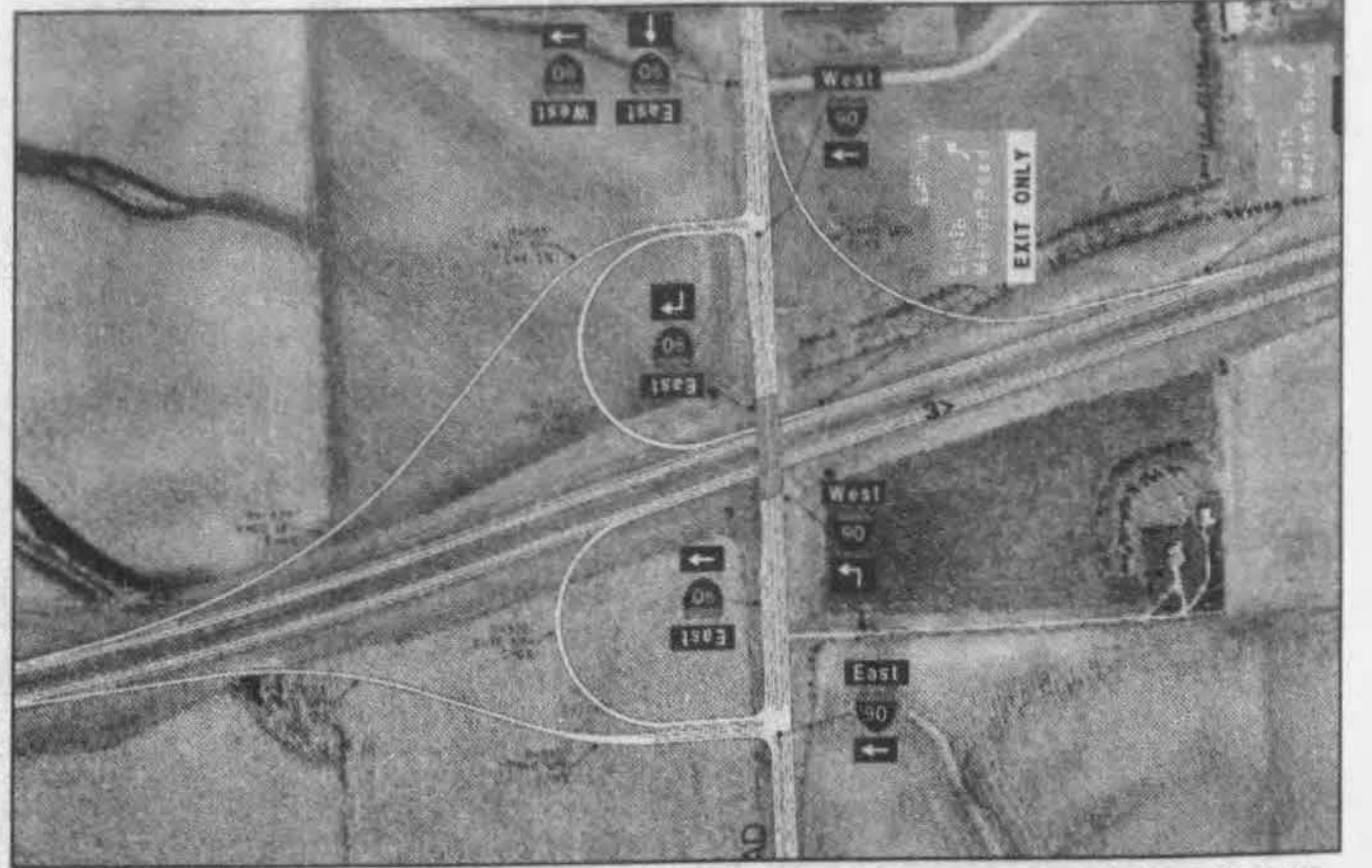
Robert Joseph Brunner was born on February 7, 1930 at Yankton, SD to Frank and Clara (Anderson) Brunner. He attended country school near Hurley, where he lived on the family farm before moving to Yankton in 1999. He was a resident of the Adjustment Training Center, Yankton, and a member of St. Christina's Catholic Church, Parker.

Grateful for having shared his life are a sister-in-law, Maxine Brunner, Hurley; 2 nieces, Jeanne Jorgensen (Keith) and Connie Flyger (Craig), both of Hurley; 5 great-nieces and nephews; and 6 great-great-nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, a nephew, James, a brother, Francis, and a great-great-niece, Erica.

Funeral Mass will be Wednesday, February 9, 2005, at 10:30 a.m. at St. Christina's Catholic Church, Parker, with burial in the church cemetery. Visitation will be from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday at Hofmeister-Jones Funeral Chapel, Hurley, with a Scripture Service at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday evening at the church.

Exits: Right of way, funding are key

Continued from 1B



SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION; HDR INC. The interchange footprint at Marion Road is compatible with the proposed Option 5 for the Interstate 90/Interstate 29 layout.

evening, when they double-check their choice against landowner concerns at a public hearing.

"If we're affecting wetlands — and there is a small area here — we need to offset that somewhere else," said Steve Hoff, project manager for the private firm HDR Inc. The group's Sioux Falls office specializes in civil engineering and consulting.

"We're going to lose some farmland, and that has to be taken into account," Hoff said. "But this option is the one that most people preferred last time we met."

Gengler grants that the former group, all landowners, gave a skewed perspective. Right of way quickly can become one of the trickiest aspects in road work, but property owners aren't the only stakeholders.

"We may have a route where there's 33,000 vehicles a day, but 30 landowners show up for a meeting," Gengler said. "All the information we got from them was consistent with the direction we were leaning, but we're missing feedback from the traveling public."

Neither construction project is scheduled yet. While uncertainty over a new federal transportation bill looms, Gengler said South Dakota will receive slightly more money this year than last.

"That's good news because we've been taking a very conservative approach in programming, assuming no additional money," he said.

Those federal dollars do little more than enable continued

work on projects already under way. The last transportation appropriation law officially expired a year ago this month, and Congress has been unable to come to terms on a six-year reauthorization.

In late 2004, the House of Representatives compromised its \$375 billion plan for one that spends \$100 billion less, but the Senate held firm to its \$318 billion figure. President Bush's administration, however, insisted on keeping the tab below \$300 billion.

Democratic Rep. Stephanie Herseth, in Sioux Falls last week to address economic development issues, said she hoped to move on the bill before the spring construction season.

"It's going to come down to agreeing on an overall number," she said, noting that wrangling over returns from gas taxes complicates the process.

Those taxes account for more than 90 percent of the money that goes into the U.S. Highway Trust Fund, which, in turn, funds state projects. South Dakota's population is growing more slowly than its highway use, leaving states with more people to pay a greater proportion of the nationwide need.

Under the expired law, South Dakota was a "donee state," receiving \$2 in project money for every \$1 residents paid in gas taxes.

Donor states now want a bigger return, with some lawmakers pushing for at least a 95 percent guarantee. That would mean the nearly 30 donee states all would lose revenue, according to Rep. Jim Oberstar, D-Minn., a ranking member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

Reach reporter Jennifer Sanderson at 575-3629.

ACT writing: Many S.D. grads go to state schools

Continued from 1B

Other colleges suggest writing is important, too, but say they can predict how well students will do based on past tests and high school transcripts.

The ACT writing test requires students to compose a persuasive essay taking a side on an issue. ACT provides a prompt and background information on both sides of the issue, Gullette said.

Lincoln High School has 10 students signed up to write the essay out of the 75 students taking the test, said David Myers, guidance counselor.

He has had only a couple of questions about the writing exam so far from Lincoln students but said he expects more because most juniors sign up in March to take the April ACT.

At Roosevelt High School, seven of 85 students taking the ACT have signed up for the essay, said counselor Vickie Donohoe.

"A lot of our students stick around this area for college," she said.

At O'Gorman High School, it's too early for a good indicator of how many students eventually will take the writing exam, said Joan Mahoney, assistant principal.

"I don't even think they realize it's been added," she said. "We don't have a large number of kids who test in February."

At both the Lincoln and O'Gorman test sites, the April test draws the biggest numbers of juniors.

National test results show that writing is not the biggest academic area of concern, Gullette said.

"Math and science are the biggest problem," he said.

Only 40 percent of students who take the ACT are adequately prepared to earn a C or higher in college algebra, he said. Only 26 percent are ready to earn that grade in college biology.

That compares with 68 percent of test takers who could pass an English composition course with at least a C, Gullette said.

Reach reporter Brenda Wade Schmidt at 331-2321.

N.D. to clear trees for bighorn sheep

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
MEDORA, N.D. — State wildlife officials plan to cut stands of juniper trees near here to enhance habitat for bighorn sheep.

Brett Wiedmann, a biologist with the state Game and Fish Department, said "pockets of junipers" will be felled on a near mile-long ridge along the Little Missouri River.

Wiedmann said bighorn sheep need clear areas to protect their young.

"We will do this over the next several years to minimize the impact on the landscape," he said. The tree-thinning will begin in about two weeks.

About 250 bighorn sheep in 12 herds live in the North Dakota Badlands, Wiedmann said.

The Chateau de Mores herd has 11 ewes and 11 rams. Predators and disease killed all of last year's lambs, Wiedmann said.

Lambs are vulnerable to coyotes and mountain lions that hide in trees, he said.

Wiedmann said the herd has been lambing in the same place for at least five years. Sheep were transplanted to the area in 1962.

Since 2000, the sheep have been monitored using radio collars, which makes it easier to pinpoint where to cut the trees, he said.

Thune: Soldiers called equipment sufficient

Continued from 1B

"I think it's important if he wants to know firsthand on what's going on in Iraq," Gary Thimsen said. "There's no better way to do it than by talking to the troops on the ground."

Thune met with U.S. Army Lt. Gen. David Petraeus, who is in charge of training the Iraqi security force. The senator said he is impressed with the strides being made in training the group and is confident about its future.

"We may have turned the corner on the progress we are making," Thune said. "There's a dramatic improvement over what we've seen before in terms of the training process."

He praised the security force for protecting polling places in last weekend's election, calling it one of the group's first real tests.

Thune said he witnessed the exuberance of Iraqis who voted. "For the first time, they have tasted freedom. A lot of them were still sporting ink-stained fingers," he said, referring to the method used to indicate who had voted.

This was Thune's first trip to Iraq. He said another one is possible.

"As a member of the Armed Services Committee, it was a good trip to make assessments and see what the needs are," he said. "I hope when I go back things are more stable and the Iraqis are living in freedom," he said.

said.

Thune, who had to wear body armor at times, spoke to soldiers about their equipment needs.

"They said they had plenty of body armor and the guns they needed," Thune said, adding, "There's always an example of things we can do better. For the troops to protect themselves and win the fight, we want to make sure they've got what they need."

Thune said the quick trip covered a lot of ground, including a stop at a military hospital in Landstuhl, Germany, where he visited with wounded soldiers.

While acknowledging that dangers and obstacles remain, Thune said he hopes 2005 will be a decisive year for the cause of freedom in Iraq and the region.

"Look at what's happening with the Israel and Palestine people, who are starting to taste freedom," he said. "We've got to keep in mind there's a lot of heavy lifting ahead and turbulence. ... We're hopeful."

Reach reporter Denise D. Tucker at 331-2335.

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SARA C. HARRIGLE
Wake Service 7:00 PM
Monday in our chapel.
Mass 10:00 AM Tuesday
St. Lambert's Catholic Church.
SHARON SCHLOE
Service 2:00 PM Tuesday
Renner Lutheran Church.
GARY KUEMPER
Service 1:00 PM Thursday
Messiah New Hope Lutheran Church.