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Argus Leader

Monday • May 9, 2005

SIoux FALLS, SOUTH DAKOTA

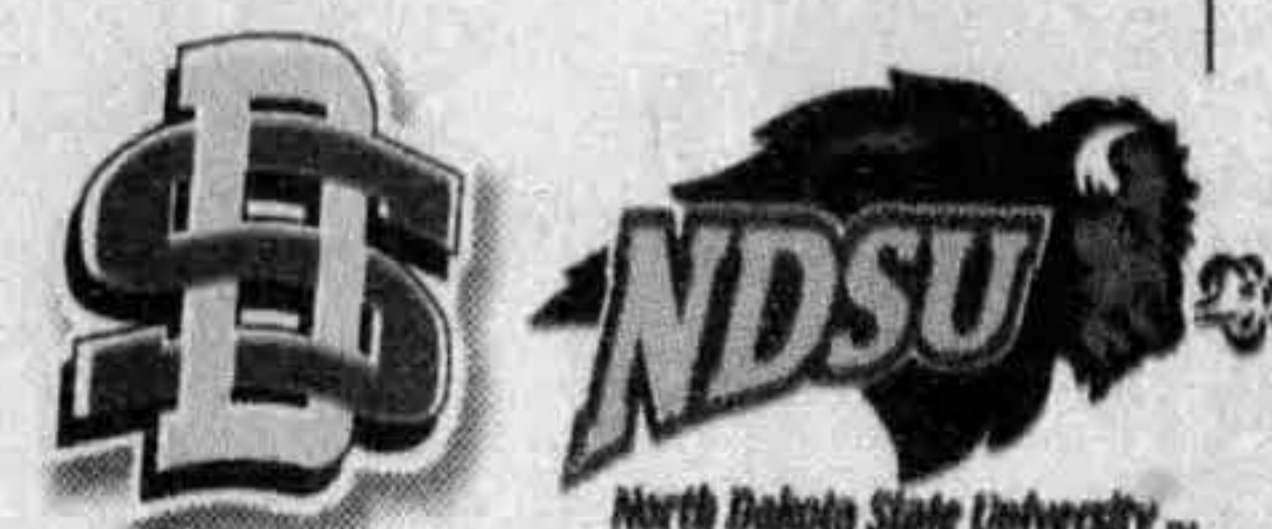
50 Cents

TODAY'S BRIEFING

LOCAL & REGION

Sidewalk police ready to crack down
 ▶ Got cracks? The city's likely to notice when it begins sidewalk inspections in mid-May. Problem areas will be marked, and city crews will check back to see that repairs have been made. If they haven't, the city will fix it - for a price. You could be looking at a chubby bill. **1B**

SPORTS



Schools get used to Division I waters

▶ It's been a year since South Dakota State and North Dakota State decided to play with the big boys in NCAA Division I, and both schools have achieved some success. But they both still have a few jobs to do. No. 1: Find a football conference. No. 2: Develop a rivalry as hot as they used to have with their respective "U's." **1C**

Green flag goes up for local auto races

▶ Fans of auto racing: Your time has arrived. After being called off last week because of bad weather, the season at Huset's got off to a hot start Sunday night. In the national race scene, a strategic mistake at Darlington, S.C., left leader Ryan Newman inhaling the dust of his competitors. Greg Biffle won his third season victory. **1C**

LIFE

Surgical advances available for elderly

▶ In the past, older folks might have opted to remain in pain rather than risk having surgery. But with medical advances and healthier seniors, knee replacement, hip replacement and other elective surgeries are routinely performed on patients in their 90s, giving many a new lease on life. **3D**

NATION & WORLD



▶ VICTORY IN EUROPE: On this day in 1945, Nazi Germany surrendered. See how Europe remembers. **5A**
▶ LONG-LIVED MOUSE: Scientists use antioxidants to extend life. **2A**

TODAY'S WEATHER

HIGH **67°**
 Rain a.m.
 LOW **45°**
 Full report, 2A

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INSIDE

▶ WHEELS TO WORK: Riding to your job can be a relaxing commute. **1D**

▶ BAG IT: What to take along on your trek. **1D**

ONLINE

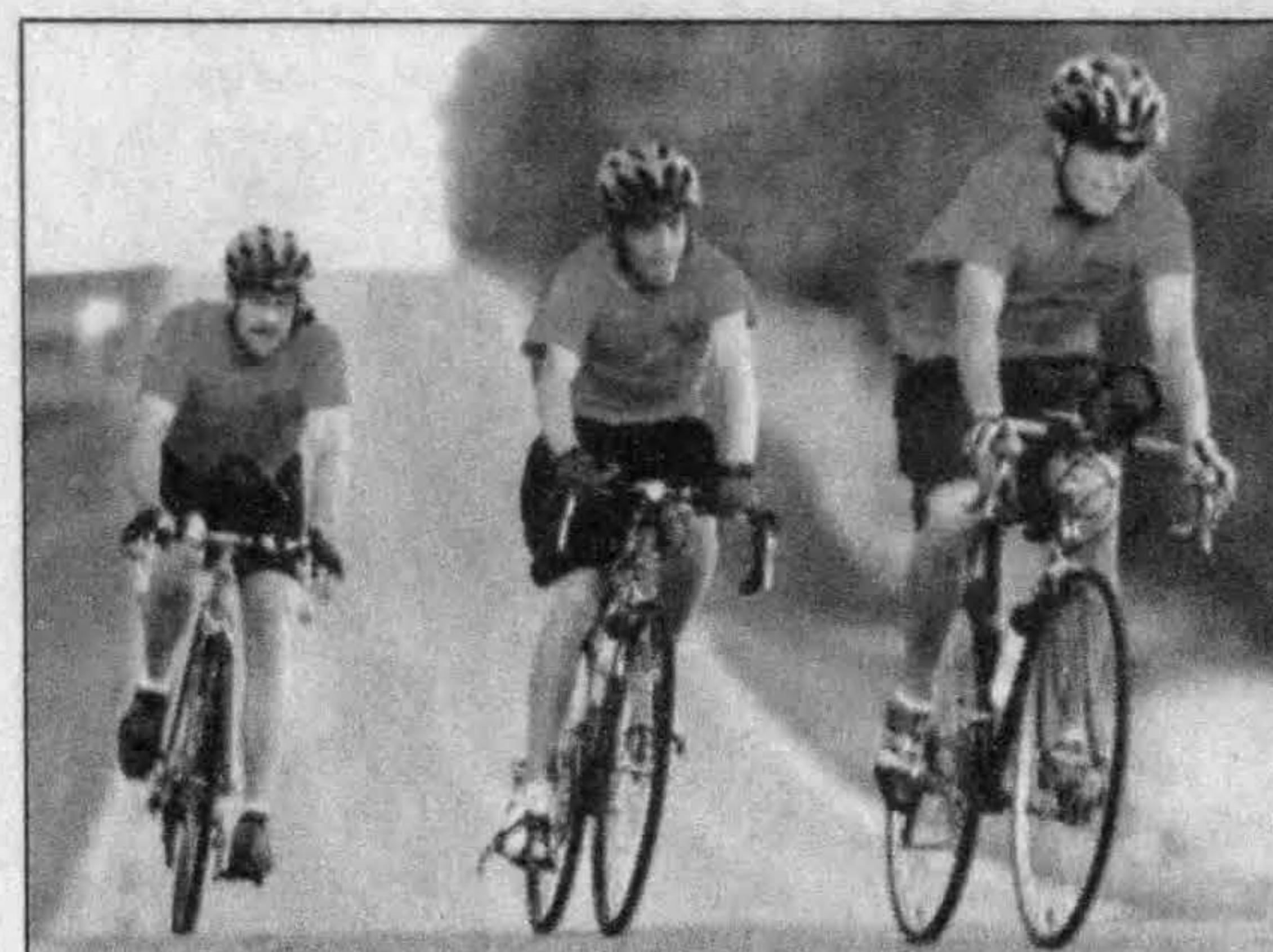
▶ SIGN UP: Take part in the inaugural Tour de Kota and read previous coverage at: www.argusleader.com.

Families to tackle Tour together

40% of registered riders are couples, groups

BY JARETT C. BIES
 jbies@argusleader.com
 When facing the challenges of a multi-day bicycling tour such as the *Argus Leader* Tour de Kota, it helps to have backup. That's why almost half of the more than 200 registered riders are taking on the first-year tour with strength in numbers. Mark Stearns will lead a family team of riders as he and his sons, Nathan, 18, and Bradley, 15, make the trip on bikes from Yankton to Pierre. Stearns' wife, Jill, will support the team effort, pulling the family's pop-up camper from stop to stop. "It's going to be a full-week family event for us," said Jill Stearns, 47, of Madison. "I'm anxious to get out on the route, to meet

new people and hear their stories." Mark Stearns has been a cyclist for more than 20 years, and he's done RAGBRAI, the *Des Moines Register's* Great Bike Ride Across Iowa, many times, often with his family dropping him off at the start and picking him up in eastern Iowa, where the bike tour concludes. Nathan Stearns, 18, is a senior at Madison High School. He took part in RAGBRAI with his father two years ago. "It was a little bit harder than I expected, but by the halfway point, there was a feeling of accomplishment," he said. "With Tour de Kota, it's something we can all do for a



CHRISTOPHER GANNON / ARGUS LEADER
 Nathan (right) and Bradley Stearns lead their father, Mark, during a training ride Sunday west of Madison. They plan to ride in the Tour de Kota next month.

See **TOUR DE KOTA**, page 6A

BUILDING BUSINESS AT HOME



PHOTOS BY STUART VILLANUEVA / ARGUS LEADER
 Tricia Murphy of the Four Bands Community Fund (from left), Jonni Hertel of Oti Kaga Inc. and Renee Brereton of the Catholic Campaign for Human Development join hands with other Cheyenne River tribal business leaders and guests while they dance in a circle May 5 during the Four Bands Funders' Day program.

Tribal entrepreneurs share their success

Individual ownership rises on reservations

BY TERRY WOSTER
 twoster@midco.net
EAGLE BUTTE - Joni Hertel became a businesswoman out of desperation. She became a business leader out of a desire to help young Native Americans follow her path. Hertel, who started a day care in Eagle Butte 10 years ago when she was barely 20 years old, recently helped form the American Indian Business Leaders chapter at

Cheyenne-Eagle Butte High School. She sees it as a way to help young Lakota men and women understand that they can have dreams of business success come true. "I was 19, pregnant and working one of those \$4-an-hour waitressing jobs," Hertel recalls of her decision to start a business. "I was desperate. I needed a better job if I was going to take care of a family. I needed day care for the baby I would have. What did I

know about starting a business? Nothing. Not a thing. I knew I had to do something." She took the plunge with a small loan, made it work, bought a house and now acts as a mentor for young reservation-school students who, Hertel said, may not know it but are capable of being entrepreneurs in a culture that has been slow to embrace the

See **BUSINESS**, page 4A

SELF-EMPLOYED

- 88 PERCENT** of business owners were white
- 6 PERCENT** were Asian
- 4 PERCENT** were Hispanic
- 2 PERCENT** were black
- 0.5 PERCENT** were Native American or Native Alaskan

- 2002 U.S. Census

▶ **ONLINE:** Find links to more information at www.argusleader.com.



Dawn O'Hara (left) and April Bachman, both seniors at Cheyenne-Eagle Butte High School, are finalists in the American Indian Business Leaders contest. Their project is a Native American magazine called Native Youth Voice.

Marines issued armor despite warnings

BY CHRISTIAN LOWE
 Marine Corps Times
 In all, the Marines bought about 19,000 Interceptor outer tactical vests from Point Blank Body Armor that failed government tests because of

"multiple complete penetrations" of 9mm pistol rounds and other ballistic or quality-assurance tests. After questioned about the safety flaws for this story, the Marines on Wednesday ordered the recall of 5,277 Interceptor vests. The Marine Corps has not said what it intends to do with more than 4,000 vests still in use. Army ballistics expert James MacKiewicz, in a memorandum last July 19

rejecting two lots of vests, said his office "has little confidence in the performance" of the body armor. MacKiewicz, who works at the Army Soldier Systems Center in Natick, Mass., is responsible for verifying that the vests meet protective requirements and other quality standards. Instead of heeding the warning of MacKiewicz, the Marine program manager for the vests, Lt. Col. Gabriel Patricio, and Point

Blank's chief operating officer, Sandra Hatfield, signed waivers that allowed the Marines to buy and distribute the vests that failed to meet standards. The Marines questioned the accuracy of the initial tests. It pulled samples from some of the challenged lots and had them tested at a private lab. Patricio, who recently retired from the Marines, said the second tests show the vests meet standards.

'Meth mouth' costs county

Drug wears out teeth, budget for dental care

BY DENISE D. TUCKER and JENNIFER SANDERSON
 Argus Leader



Mike Milstead and **Michelle Boyd**

The cost for dental treatment for inmates in the Minnehaha County Jail has nearly doubled during the past two years, due in part to a side effect of methamphetamine abuse - a condition called meth mouth. "Our dentist tells us as soon as they (inmates) open up their mouths, he is able to recognize the rotting and brittle teeth, all symptoms of meth mouth," Sheriff Mike Milstead said. Many of the teeth become unsalvageable, said assistant sheriff Michelle Boyd. In 2002, Minnehaha County paid \$18,000 for dental treatment for inmates. The cost grew to \$32,000 in 2004, Milstead said. Dental

costs are a part of the overall medical budget. "Correctional facilities across America, in particular in areas where methamphetamine use is on the rise, are being hit with the financial realities of meth abuse," he said. It's inflating the cost of locking up meth addicts, according to law enforcement officials nationwide. "The costs just go on and

See **METH**, page 6A

BIGGER BILLS

In two years, the county jail's cost of treating dental problems in meth users nearly doubled.

\$18,000 Costs in 2002
\$32,000 Costs in 2004

Detroit chews on fast food fee

BY SARAH KARUSH
 Associated Press

DETROIT - Would you like fries with that? Either way, the Detroit city treasury would like a bite. Faced with a \$300 million budget hole, Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick is hoping people in this already heavily taxed city won't mind forking over a few extra cents for their Big Macs and Whoppers. Kilpatrick wants to ask Detroit voters to approve a 2 percent fast-food tax - on top of the 6 percent state sales tax on restaurant meals. Critics say the tax would hurt the poor and economic development. Other cities and states have special taxes on prepared food, and some have tried "snack taxes." But if approved, the Detroit tax would be the country's first to target fast-food outlets, the National Restaurant Association said. The tax would apply to anything sold at a fast-food restaurant - even salads. Opponents have been



BIG MAC TAX?

WHAT'S AT STAKE: Detroit mayor wants to raise funds to fill city's budget deficit with a 2 percent tax on fast food items.

NO SURE THING: Tax likely would require change in state law.

PLAN CRITICS: The restaurant industry. Youths and senior citizens might pay an unfair share.

quick to call it a "fat tax" in this city dubbed the nation's fattest in 2004 by *Men's Health* magazine. Detroit fell to No. 3 for 2005.

Meth: Dry mouths lead to decay, tooth loss

Continued from 1A

on," Wisconsin Attorney General Peggy Lautenschlager said of meth's impact on prison budgets. "Dental costs alone are skyrocketing."

In Coffee County, Tenn., Sheriff Steve Graves said meth-addicted inmates are depleting the money he has budgeted for prisoners' tooth and gum problems.

"It's not uncommon for us to take a vanload at a time to the dentist," he said.

The additional financial burden comes at a time when many states are struggling to balance their budgets and the federal government is cutting back funding for local drug-fighting programs.

The Bush administration, which has recommended cutting money for local anti-meth programs, does not have national figures on the drug's economic toll.

"We just don't track this data," said Jennifer DeVallance, a spokeswoman for the Office of National Drug Control Policy.

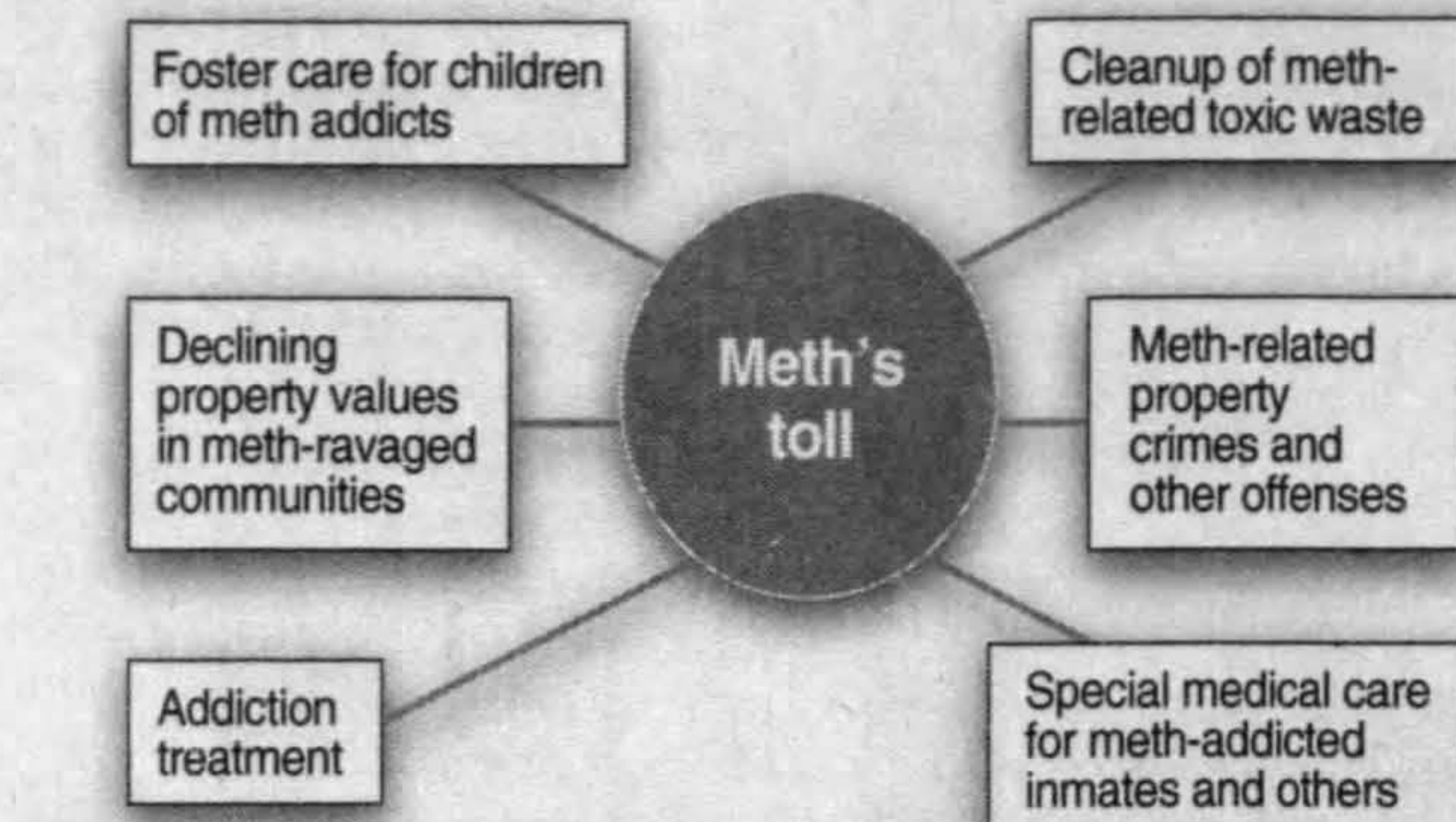
Methamphetamine is the fastest-growing drug threat in the nation, according to federal officials. As the meth epidemic has swept eastward from California and the Pacific Northwest, it has created unique - and expensive - problems in a variety of areas.

The South Dakota Department of Corrections also is experiencing rising dental costs.

The number of inmates in prison rose from 2,781 in fiscal year 2002 to 3,059 in fiscal year 2004, according to the state DOC. During that same time, the average per-inmate expenditure for

Meth crisis costs society in variety of ways

A national epidemic of meth trafficking and addiction is forcing many communities to tap their budgets to cover new meth-related costs. Those costs cover a wide range of services.



Source: GNS research

Janet Loehrke, Gannett News Service

dental care went from \$238.69 to \$239.36, an increase of 67 cents.

In state fiscal year 2004, 22 percent of male state prison inmates and 15 percent of female state prison inmates had a primary diagnosis of amphetamine dependence, according to the DOC.

"When you think about the ingredients (anhydrous ammonia, phenyl acetone and battery acid) that go into making meth, it's caustic," Milstead said. "It's no wonder that these people's teeth are literally falling out of their gums."

"And in my conversations with physicians, the devastating effects these toxic chemicals have on teeth could be the tip of the iceberg on the long-term effects on an abuser's general health."

Meth use triggers a cycle that aggravates base causes of problems in healthy mouths. Intentionally or not, addicts frequently

ingest large amounts of sugar because meth leaves a cottonball feeling in the mouth.

"They're always drinking pop or sucking on hard candy" to stimulate salivary glands, said Lonna Jones, a dental hygienist and supervisor for the Sioux River Valley Community Dental Clinic. "They don't know that's what they're trying to do, but that's why their bodies need them to do it."

Jones deals with the lingering effects of meth mouth after patients have decided to clean up. At the downtown public health center, a city/county partnership, Jones sees the tell-tale signs: excessive decay on unlikely tooth surfaces.

"It's the facial surfaces, the part of the teeth you see when someone smiles or talks during an interview to try to get a job," Jones said.

That's atypical for dental patients as a whole, who most

"When you think about the ingredients (anhydrous ammonia, phenyl acetone and battery acid) that go into making meth, it's caustic. It's no wonder that these people's teeth are literally falling out of their gums."

Mike Milstead
Minnehaha County Sheriff

often get cavities in the pitted chewing surfaces of their molars. The anterior teeth, or those at the front of the bite's arc, are less dense than those tough molars and wear away more quickly.

Six months of meth use may be enough to cause irreparable damage, Jones said. "The decay is much more serious with meth" than that found in those who smoke cigarettes or use chewing tobacco, she said.

And unlike the dental problems that follow those addictions, meth mouth isn't confined to the drug's user. It's a communicable disease.

"If you have a parent or other caregiver with rampant decay, and they kiss their baby on the lips, they can pass it to the child," Jones said. "We preach that all day long. Even if they won't stop or get help for themselves, there's the hope that they'll do it for their children."

Widespread abuse has catapulted meth into the national spotlight as a public health hazard. The community dental clinic opened in 2001, and Jones said cases of meth mouth have steadily increased.

"It has a huge impact on our entire way of living," she said. "Almost as soon as they start using, they're unemployable. And that puts them on welfare."

Few patients deny previous

meth habits.

"Most will say, 'Oh, yeah, I got into it and it ruined my teeth,'" Jones said. By then, it's often too late for any remedy other than extraction - a cost-effective way to permanently relieve pain via the pinched Medicaid budget.

Those payments, which together with Medicare made up 36 percent of the Community Health Clinic's revenue last year, don't cover more expensive restoration or cosmetic therapies. A root canal might run \$700 to \$1,000, with the crown to follow at another \$600 or so.

"That's for just one tooth," Jones said, "and it's usually seven or eight" that need care when meth mouth's involved.

Milstead said his department will have to consider the cost of meth mouth when it puts together its next budget.

"We're about to start our budget process with the county commission," he said. "And like other line items in our budget, we'll need to sit down and review our medical expenses knowing what kind of impact methamphetamines are having on our inmates, and work to predict what our best estimate for our medical expenses will be for 2006."

Argus Leader wire services contributed to this story. Reach Denise D. Tucker at 331-2335 or Jennifer Sanderson at 575-3629.

TRAINING FOR THE TOUR

With five weeks to go, Tour De Kota riders should be off the softness of the bike trail and on the road, where wind and gravity make training more realistic.

Jim Kersten, an organizer of the Bike Ride Across Eastern South Dakota, offers these training tips.

► By this point, aim to complete training weeks around 200 miles. This is about halfway, Kersten says, toward having a confident feeling when approaching a multi-day tour.

► Train on contiguous days as much as possible. Getting back in the saddle day after day can't be simulated in any other way. Even one hour daily will help toughen the backside.

► Long rides of three to four hours must become a part of training now. If possible, take long rides on consecutive days.

► Long rides should include hills, as several portions of the Tour de Kota are in hilly parts of South Dakota. Kersten recommends a circular route from Alcester to Elk Point and back. This challenging route can vary from 30 to 65 miles.

► Hill work makes a rider get out of the saddle, and hills will help less-experienced riders get used to their gears. Since most people ride too high, start letting the bike work for you by trying all the gears.

► Eat in the saddle. An 80-mile day might mean 8 to 10 hours in the saddle, and with all the calories burned, it's impossible to wait until the evening meal and still feel good. Same rules apply for hydration.

► Test yourself: Set up at least one "tough" ride now and see how difficult it really is. Every mile put in now will make the miles of the tour that much easier. No one ever does a tour thinking they trained too much.

-Jarett C. Bies

Tour de Kota: Family readies to ride

Continued from 1A

week together."

Last year, Bradley, 15, joined his father and older brother on the Iowa ride.

When Tour de Kota was announced, he joined his brother in suggesting the family switch states and do the new tour.

"I'm curious. I haven't been down in that area of the state," Bradley said. "The last day will be hard, but touring is a rush. The best part is visiting the towns."

Owen Hotvet, tour coordinator for the Argus Leader, said about 40 percent of the riders already registered are couples or groups. "We have more than 200 registered now, and we're seeing some groups and couples," he said. "The fact that we have no history might be part of the reason we're seeing fewer groups."

Hotvet said next year, because of word of mouth and exposure, the number of families and groups will increase. "After taking calls from people who said they wished they had known about the event, I think we'll see an increase," he said. "People need time to coordinate schedules. It's one thing for a couple to get time off work, but another for six couples to do it."

Mark Stearns said he's just started with training. Between his own schedule, and that of two varsity athletes, plus Nathan's upcoming graduation, training time has been tight. "The boys won't need to train as much," he said. "But we're going to get out and ride five evenings a week once school is out."

As "crew chief" for the Stearns' endeavor, Jill Stearns is confident



CHRISTOPHER GANNON / ARGUS LEADER

The Stearns family of Madison (from left) Mark and Jill, with sons Bradley and Nathan, will ride the Tour de Kota together this summer.

her family will do well on the ride. "With their father riding with them, I know they'll be fine," she said. "It will be nice to visit new towns and meet people. In this day and age, not all kids want to do things with Mom and Dad, so we're going to take advantage of it."

Even with a modest level of touring experience, Nathan Stearns said he knows the ride can be rigorous. "There were a couple of days last year in Iowa where it was cool and raining. Those days weren't much fun," he said. "The hardest part is getting your butt used to the hours in the saddle."

Nathan's brother said mornings on tour can be a struggle. "Getting going is the hardest part, the start in the morning," Bradley said. "By midday, you have lunch, and you just go."

As the days add up, Mark Stearns said the Tour de Kota will

be a different ride compared with tours he's done with his boys in

years past. "There will be less mobs and less bikes. This will be quieter," he said. "With all the different scenery and smaller groups, it'll be enjoyable."

Hotvet said the Tour de Kota support staff will provide a bulletin board to help groups and families like the Stearnses stay in touch.

"Disconnections can happen because people might be quicker than others," Hotvet said. "So we'll help out with that, to help with coordination."

Though all mothers worry, Jill Stearns said the tour is a good fit for her sons and husband. "They're adventurous, and they had such a good time on RAGBRAI," she said. "They're excited, and we're all taking part. It's going to be nice camping together in all the state parks. I'm sure we'll have fun."

Reach reporter Jarett C. Bies at 977-3925.

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