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SIOUX FALLS, SOUTH DAKOTA

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TODAY'S BRIEFING

SPORTS



S.D. prairie holds reminder of legend

► The last time a U.S. Open was played at Pinehurst No. 2, the winner was Payne Stewart, a golfing great who died less than five months later when his plane crashed near Mina in 1999. Sports columnist Stu Whitney visits the site of the crash and tells of the friendship born of tragedy. **1C**

NEW ONLINE

Skyforce coach offers assessment

► Sioux Falls Skyforce coach Dave Joeger talks about the NBA finals and summer coaching carousel as well as an update on the local team's prospects for next year. Join "Argus Leader Sports Web" host Stu Whitney and sports editor Eric Bursch on these and other topics at argusleader.com.

LOCAL & REGION

Celebrating 10 years of summer music

► Eager students have traveled to Augustana from places as far away as Kentucky for this year's College Summer Music Camp. What's the attraction? For eighth-grader Alex Stanley of Sioux Falls, it's getting her hands on an expensive harp. The other 147 participants have their own goals. **1B**



BUSINESS

Retirement doesn't suit Steve Metli

► So much for retirement. Steve Metli, former city planning and building services director, has taken a new job, three months after ending the last one. His next gig? Vice president of business development with Fishback Financial Services. Maybe he can use that gold watch to get to work on time. **6C**

NATION & WORLD

SERIAL MOLESTER:

A California man's victims might number in the thousands, police say. **5A**

TASTES LIKE CHICKEN?

Mexico's tradition of eating bugs heats up. **2A**

TODAY'S WEATHER

HIGH **83°**
 Sunny
 Full report, 2A
 LOW **62°**

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WOMAN WON'T WASTE A MOMENT OF LIFE

Told she is dying, Tansy Forbes skydives, sunbathes

BY STEVE YOUNG
 syoung@argusleader.com

Nine months ago, on a warm September afternoon, Tansy Forbes stepped out of an airplane at 10,000 feet, spread her arms and soared into the void. What followed were 30 seconds and 120 mph of wind screaming through her hair and blood surging wildly through her veins. And then the canopy unfurled, the free fall abruptly jerked to a gentle descent, and Forbes — feeling closer to heaven than to earth — began to speak to God.

"It just seemed appropriate, and it felt good," the 32-year-old Sioux Falls woman says. "I prayed for healing."

Today hundreds if not thousands of her relatives and friends are joining her in that prayer. For having battled cancer since she was 13 years old, having given up her right leg above the knee at age 21, and having been diagnosed as terminal two months ago, Forbes understands clearly that she needs a miracle.

But she isn't sitting around waiting on the miraculous. Nor is she ready to die. Forbes simply nods her head in

agreement when she hears about a new study suggesting that most children who survive cancer develop health risks later in life. Many are diagnosed with cancer years later, the study found.

Instead of complaining about it, this young wife and business developer for Wellmark Blue Cross-Blue Shield is pursuing an end-of-life treatment that includes jumping out of airplanes, sunbathing by the pool in Cancun, whistling down the highway with her husband, Jason, on a Harley-Davidson motorcycle, or



Tansy Forbes says she loves the freefall of skydiving most. She plans to give the sport a second try July 2.

See **FORBES**, page 6A

GREAT PLAINS ZOO

Problems hinted at contract's end



STUART VILLANUEVA / ARGUS LEADER

A bear yawns from atop his rocky perch May 18 at the Great Plains Zoo. A team soon will form to make decisions on the zoo's future. FOR PREVIOUS COVERAGE AND TO TAKE PART IN A FORUM, LOG ON TO ARGUSLEADER.COM.

Task force leader blames management

BY JENNIFER SANDERSON
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A nonprofit organization's sudden decision not to renew its management contract at the city-owned zoo can be traced to root problems years in the making, according to the leader of a group appointed last year to study the attraction.

High worker turnover, burned-out volunteers, mounting repair bills and questionable spending all point to poor management at the Great Plains Zoo, Rick Knobe said Thursday.

As chairman of Mayor Dave Munson's task force, Knobe found dedicated citizens behind the Zoological Society of Sioux Falls

and "a lot of good but junior staff people without the experience and mentoring they needed" from top management.

Ed Asper, the zoo's outgoing president and chief operating officer, did not return messages Thursday.

Several City Council members agreed with Knobe's analysis, offered a day after the society announced it would not renew its agreement. In an e-mail to the mayor and councilors, board Chairman Tony Bour wrote that the society would let its contract expire Sept. 30 but still wanted to support the zoo through fund-raising and long-term planning.

Bour could not be reached for comment.

The city owns the zoo's grounds, buildings and permanent exhibits as an arm of the Parks and Recreation Department. And it helps support the zoo's \$2 million budget with an annual subsidy that this year will reach \$821,372.

The society since 1985 has run day-to-day operations, assuming ownership of the animals it holds in trust for the public.

ZOO NEWS

WHAT'S NEW: Mayor Dave Munson is forming a transitional team to help steer decisions about how Sioux Falls will run day-to-day operations at the Great Plains Zoo. The nonprofit group that has managed the zoo since 1985 will not renew its contract.

WHAT'S NEXT: Directors from finance, parks and recreation, human resources and the city attorney's office hope to meet with board members from the Zoological Society of Sioux Falls within the week. They'll talk about budgets, staffing, animal care and more.

Those animals will revert to the city when the contract ends. Munson is putting together a

See **ZOO**, page 6A

More than a ride: a prairie pilgrimage



MORE ONLINE

For photo galleries, a road blog by *Argus Leader* staffers and updates, see www.argusleader.com.

INSIDE

► **REST DAY:** Riders take a well-deserved break before today's big ride. **7A**

CHAMBERLAIN — A hypnotist was appearing at the Silver Dollar here Thursday evening. By the time you read this, I might be under his spell.

The goal, of course, is to get implanted in my mind some notion that the ride from Chamberlain to Pierre on Highway 1806 that will finish the Tour de Kota today is a foregone conclusion. The ominous reports from *Argus Leader* tour organizers, and from participants in this tour who live in Pierre and ride that road, promise a long day of difficult cycling. Many hills. Possible wind. And the weather

is supposed to be hot.

Who would turn down any potential advantage when confronted with such a scenario?

The danger is that for the amusement of the locals, the hypnotist might have stuck me with the thought "You're dragging a piano to Pierre. You're dragging a piano to Pierre."

But I doubt it. The folks here at the Silver Dollar have been nothing but kind. Dana Kenobbie, who owns this Main Street landmark, shared deep-fried



PETER HARRIMAN
 Tour de Kota

See **PILGRIMS**, page 7A

Jack Rabbit buses bought, tours studied

Foreman Charters steps up

BY JIM CHEESMAN
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A Miller bus company has bought some of the assets of Jack Rabbit Charter and Tours and is trying to salvage the bankrupt bus line's trips planned for this summer and beyond.

Foreman Charters bought two buses this week from Lowell Hansen, Jack Rabbit's former owner and a secured creditor in the bankruptcy case.

Company president Doyle Foreman also has a list of tours and customers and says he will try to honor the deposits made up to this point.

"We've just started looking at things, and it's still too early to guarantee anything," Foreman said. "But we are going to do as many of the trips as we possibly can while remaining financially sound."

Foreman Charters did not buy the Jack Rabbit name and is not legally obligated to honor deposits or issue refunds or credits for tours scheduled by the company.

"But we want customers to be happy with us and do busi-

TOUR INFO

If you have questions or concerns about an upcoming Jack Rabbit tour, call Foreman Charters at 336-3339.

ONLINE

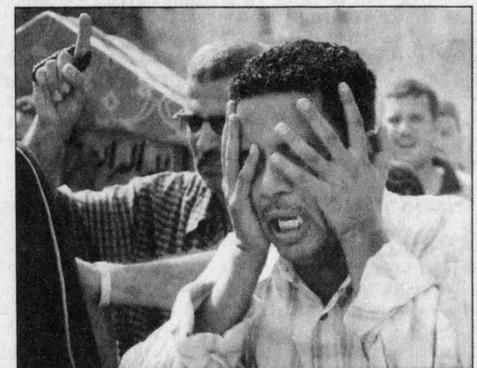
For previous coverage, log on to www.argusleader.com.

ness with us again," Foreman said. "We're looking at the trips on a case-by-case basis. If it makes sense, we'll do it. If not, we'll try to work something out with the customer."

Foreman Charters was formed in 1969. The company has three divisions: sales of new and used school buses, contract bus service for school districts near Miller and charter bus service.

"We have done very few tours up until now," Foreman said. "One of the reasons we are doing this is to get into

See **JACK RABBIT**, page 9A



HADI MIZBAN / AP

An Iraqi man mourns the death of Saddam al-Said as he walks in the funeral procession Thursday in Baghdad, Iraq. Al-Said was killed, along with four others, in an overnight rocket attack on the neighborhood, family members said.

Compromise found on Iraq constitution

BY HAMZA HENDAWI
 Associated Press

BAGHDAD, Iraq — In a political breakthrough, members of a Shiite-dominated committee drafting Iraq's new constitution reached a deal Thursday with Sunni Arab groups concerning their representation on the panel.

The agreement came after weeks of tough talks and just two months before a deadline for completing the new charter. The compromise, which could prove as signifi-

cant as January's historic elections, was expected to yield a constitution acceptable to all Iraqis, anchoring America's efforts to help transform Iraq into a stable and functioning democracy.

The stalemate had threatened to torpedo Iraq's carefully choreographed political process, which enters its final stretch with two nationwide votes scheduled for later this year. It also heightened

See **AGREEMENT**, page 3A

OTHER IRAQ NEWS

- The United States loses five Marines, one sailor near the violent city of Ramadi.
- The House likely will approve \$45 billion for wars, next year, even as opposition grows.

Forbes: 'You have to celebrate the good times'

Continued from 1A

howling in the crowd at a Kenny Chesney concert.

"There's a line from the Tim McGraw song that goes, 'live like you're dying,'" Forbes says as she sits at the kitchen table of



Tansy Forbes

her southwest Sioux Falls home. "I really believe everyone should live their life like that."

That's why this Saturday evening, for example, she and her husband will be

hanging out at Skelly's Pub & Grill for a dance and a silent auction being held by her friends to celebrate her life and to help the couple defray her ongoing medical expenses.

The silent auction runs from 7-10 p.m. The dance music begins at 8 p.m. and will play until midnight. Even the public is invited if they want to attend.

"We want to celebrate the good times," Forbes says. "That's what this is all about Saturday. That's how I sign my e-mails to people these days. ... you have to celebrate the good times."

Especially when you've known your share of bad.

Growing pains

That learning process began for Forbes in the sand hills around Ainsworth, Neb., when she was 13. The middle of three daughters born to Fred and Shirley Pitcher, she grew up a country girl on her family's ranch, learning all about working hard, playing hard and allowing the aches and pains of life to resolve themselves before you go running in to see the doctor.

Except this time, the ache in her right leg that she figured was just shin splints or growing pains didn't go away after four or five months. So the Pitchers began seeking medical opinions, first with the family doctor in Bassett, Neb., then with an orthopedic physician in Grand Island, Neb., and finally with a specialist at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn.

Eventually, they put a name to the pain - Ewing sarcoma, or a type of bone cancer.

The treatment that followed involved 18 months of chemotherapy and three months of radiation. By the time they finished, the tumor was gone, and Tansy Pitcher had become another childhood cancer survivor.

But her ordeal was far from done.

A month ago at the annual meeting of the American Society of Clinical Oncology in Orlando, Fla., researchers presented study findings that verified that 68 percent of childhood cancer survivors suffer from one or more health problems later on.

Compared with their siblings, such survivors are four times more likely to endure blindness, infertility or paralysis later in life, the study found. They are more likely to get cancer again, too.

Dr. Jakica Tancabelic at the Children's Specialty Clinic in Sioux Falls says pediatric cancer specialists such as herself always knew anecdotally that children with cancer likely faced more health issues as they got older.

But this new study, focusing on more than 10,000 cancer survivors diagnosed from 1970 to 1986, is the first to verify that with statistical backup.

"There was a time in the 1970s and 80s where doctors pushed higher doses of radiation for solid tumors, such as Ewing sarco-

ma and rhabdomyosarcoma," Tancabelic says. "They thought kids could tolerate higher doses ... than adults, bigger doses in a shorter period of time."

"They used to just zap it. Now they limit the dosages more and direct it more to the tumors than just a generalized area."

Heavy doses of radiation to the brain caused mental retardation and other cognitive problems, Tancabelic says. It damaged the spine as well and caused paralysis. And chemotherapy took its toll on the lungs and the heart.

"It's much better today than it was 15 to 20 years ago," she says. "Now we don't radiate if we don't have to. And we do a better job of regulating the dosages for chemotherapy."

"Still, even today, we can't be sure of the effects 10 years from now."

Reason to celebrate

Tansy Pitcher finished her treatment the summer before her sophomore year of high school and was doing well until her freshman year at the University of South Dakota in Vermillion.

Radiation years earlier had weakened the bone in her leg, and she suffered from stress fractures and had to be in a full cast. Then in the late fall of her junior year, the pain started becoming more intense.

By the following August, X-rays showed that a tumor had returned. She was diagnosed with osteogenic sarcoma, or radiation-induced bone cancer. Two weeks before she was crowned homecoming queen at USD that October, she had her leg amputated above the knee, followed by nine months of chemotherapy.

"You have to put your trust in the doctors, and I feel I've had the best doctors in the country," Forbes says now.

HOW TO HELP

A silent auction and dance to benefit Tansy Forbes will begin at 7 p.m. Saturday at Skelly's Pub & Grill, 130 S. Phillips Ave., Sioux Falls. The silent auction is 7 to 10 p.m., and the dance is 8 p.m. to midnight.

Among the items being auctioned are framed artwork, sporting event tickets, jewelry, dining certificates, wine and many other items, including a Botox treatment and an in-office teeth-whitening session.

There will be a \$10 charge at the door to cover the cost of food.

Donations also can be made to the "T.J. Forbes Fund" at Valley Bank, NA, 3520 S. Louise Ave., Sioux Falls, SD 57106, Attention Erica.

"Sure, you can't help wonder, 'What if?' What if we did amputation and chemotherapy when I was 13 and not radiation? But I don't dwell on it because I know my physician did what was appropriate in 1987."

Instead, cancer for Forbes has become what she calls "an opportunity" to celebrate and live every day as if it's her last.

She not only lived with cancer, she used her experience to give motivational speeches to others.

"She was never satisfied with just being in the crowd or being a member of a group," says her friend, Genevieve Evans Taylor, now the adviser to the fraternities and sororities at USD. "She sought out the president and vice-president positions so she could have an impact on those organizations."

Zoo: Animals will revert to city after contract

Continued from 1A

transition team made up of directors from several city departments. That group will meet with board members to hash out money and staffing needs, animal inventories and immediate repairs.

"There's probably no such thing as a good time for this," Munson said. "But come September, things will be starting to wind down after summer, so it will give us more time to get everything in place for the next busy season."

Wednesday's e-mail is an abrupt change in direction for the society. In May, Bour asked the city to grant his group a minimum five-year contract. At the same time, he lobbied the city for extra money to hire two top-level employees to replace Asper.

But the most recent statement made it clear the 15 job applicants would have to wait: The society is abandoning the search and will let the city hire the zoo's next leader.

Council Vice Chairman Andy Howes said it would be wise to hire the new chief executive officer sooner rather than later, to help develop the zoo's new struc-

ture. That likely will be organized under the parks department, as it was before the nonprofit stepped in.

But it's unclear whether the city will look first to the society's pool of candidates and how many current workers the city will shift to its payroll.

In the weeks before the bombshell, the society seemed ready to meet challenges laid out in the task force's report. The zoo's Web site was upgraded to allow online registration and payment for popular summer ZooCamps. Bour met with a public-relations professional from a local firm to brainstorm ways to make the zoo more visible in the community.

Still, public perception suffered during the past year, board member Dick Gregerson said. Criticisms of maintenance, a growing city subsidy and recent staff trips to Australia and Germany bogged down the society's efforts, he said.

But Howes said things simply got out of control at the zoo.

"The more money you ask for, the more accountability you owe the people providing you with the money," Howes said. "There isn't one thing that any of us asked for over the last several months that

was out of line. We wanted a good, open, honest decision about how they were going to implement the task force report, why a five-year agreement would make sense with all the issues they were having and why they would need two people to replace their director."

Knobe, a former mayor, acknowledged the wearing effects of constant scrutiny. But he, too, put greater emphasis on people and priorities.

"The task force was concerned about about the turnover rate - 40 or 45 full-time equivalents in the past four or five years," Knobe said, noting that the zoo runs with 30 to 40 FTEs. "That's a lot of people, and it's not good for any organization."

Having Asper on the road so often for zoo business and industry events left the zoo without a leader by example, Knobe said. Knobe, a onetime board member, said employees who pressed for change could take their ideas only so far before hitting a wall. The same was true of complaints. Problems festered until employees went elsewhere, Knobe said.

"There's a structure that needs to be followed, and when things

aren't resolved at the upper-management level, it's very difficult for workers to know what they're supposed to do," he said.

Knobe, whose name has surfaced as potential zoo director, said the society's executive board faced the same roadblock in Asper. But board members left him in place. Last year, they paid him \$96,000.

In retrospect, some councilors said an unprecedented communication from the board might have been a subtle way to prepare the city for the changing of the guard.

Earlier this month, councilors received a copy of the zoo board's May 18 meeting minutes, with an attached spreadsheet outlining the nonprofit's finances as of May 31. It was the most detailed information councilors have been given since the task force presented its report in February.

"It's hard to comprehend all that needs to be done" looking ahead, Councilor Vernon Brown said. "The bottom line is that in Sioux Falls, we have a certain standard for public venues and parks. The zoo grounds just haven't lived up to it."

Reach reporter Jennifer Sanderson at 575-3629.

Ambassador: bin Laden, Taliban chief not hiding in Afghanistan

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) - Osama bin Laden and fugitive Taliban chief Mullah Mohammed Omar are not believed to be in Afghanistan, U.S. Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad said Thursday, a day after a purported commander of the rebel group said the pair are alive. "Mullah Omar is not in

Afghanistan. I do not believe that Osama is in Afghanistan," the Khalilzad said at a news conference in Kabul. He did not say where the two were believed to be hiding.

U.S. officials have repeatedly said they think bin Laden is in the mountains between Afghanistan and Pakistan.



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