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THE LATEST NEWS

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ONLINE POLL

QUESTION: Should President Bush have lifted tariffs on imported steel?

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

THURSDAY'S RESULTS

Should the city order the destruction of the old Zip Feed Mill after a fire destroyed a nearby office building?

► **YES:** 52.9 percent
► **NO:** 47.1 percent
► **TOTAL VOTES:** 1,470

Gov. Rounds sends off Guard units

Gov. Mike Rounds told hundreds of people at a National Guard send-off that soldiers, not politicians, pay for the freedoms U.S. citizens enjoy.

Rounds made stops Wednesday in Huron, Parkston, Wagner and Madison for activation ceremonies for the 153rd Engineer Battalion of the South Dakota Army National Guard.

At Parkston, Rounds thanked the departing soldiers and the veterans in the audience for giving him the freedom to stand up and express his opinions.

"That's not a freedom that a politician bought," Rounds said. "It was bought by men and women in uniform."

The soldiers will report to a mobilization center for training soon, and then deploy to support Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Man convicted in burglary

A Hartford man has been convicted of breaking into a Sioux Falls home, threatening the residents with a gun and discharging a round outside the home.

Victor Sinclair Neuroth, 23, of 100 E. Ninth St. Apt. 14, was found guilty Tuesday of three counts of first-degree burglary and one count each of aggravated assault with a firearm, commission of a felony with a firearm and possession of a firearm while intoxicated.

Neuroth was arrested June 11 after police said he pointed a handgun in the face of a resident whose home he broke into near 12th Street and Western Avenue.

Sioux Valley gets magnet rating

Sioux Valley Hospital has earned magnet status for nursing excellence, a national distinction awarded by the American Nurses Credentialing Center, an arm of the American Nurses Association. It is granted to hospitals that undergo a rigorous voluntary evaluation to demonstrate excellence in the nursing profession. Avera McKennan Hospital previously had earned magnet status.

CORRECTION

Because of the Sioux Falls Stampede hockey game with Green Bay at 7 p.m., "Joan of Arcadia" now is scheduled to air at 1:12 a.m. tonight on KELO-TV. The time is incorrect on Page 13D of today's Argus Leader.

LOTTERIES

\$100,000 CASH: 4-9-18-29-32
NORTHSTAR CASH: 4-7-16-17-20
DAILY 3: 8-6-9
IOWA PICK 3: 0-0-2
IOWA PICK 4: 2-4-1-6

637 flu cases reported in S.D.

BY DORIS HAUGEN
Associated Press

The number of flu cases reported to the state Health Department has surged in recent days, prompting medical experts to renew their call for South Dakotans to roll up their sleeves and get their shots. "Please, please go in" and get immunized, Lon Kightlinger, the state epidemiologist, said Thursday. As of Tuesday, 482 cases of Influenza A had been reported to the health department. By late Thursday afternoon, the number of reported cases had jumped to 637, with people getting sick in nearly all

Epidemiologist says vaccine supply sufficient

areas of the state. "They've started pouring in," said Kightlinger. "We're off and running."

Seven cases of flu have been confirmed at the state health laboratory. Five are influenza A, and two are influenza B. It also appears the cases are the Panama strain, which was targeted by this



Lon Kightlinger

year's vaccine, Kightlinger said. To keep the flu from spreading, the health department will launch an etiquette campaign early next week at clinics and hospitals.

The department will send letters asking that tissues and antibiotic hand gel be available for patients who come in with a cough, said Kightlinger. The department also is encouraging people with a cough to sit away from those who don't.

The best way to stay healthy is to practice such techniques, he said.

"It's to become the new norm for dealing with some of these diseases."

In communities statewide, the season is hitting earlier and harder. Sheila McFarland, director of patient care at Brown Clinic in Watertown, estimates 6,000 doses of the vaccine have been given out since the end of October.

"We've had lots of first-timers, which is good, and done a lot of children that we've never done before," said McFarland.

Holiday traveling often makes things worse, said Dr. Fred Thanel, a family practice physician at the Center for Family Medicine in Sioux Falls. When people visit another part of the country, some bring the flu back home, he said.

For the first time this year, South Dakota has made flu shots available free for children ages 6 months to 23 months.

As of Monday, 1,436 children have received immunizations through the program.

Kightlinger said plenty of vaccine is available, although some clinics have had to reorder.

Great Bear opens with snow, optimism

Early start-up could lead to record season

BY DENISE D. TUCKER
dtucker@argusleader.com

It's beginning to look a lot like winter. So dust off your snowboards and skis - Great Bear Recreation Park is open for business.

There is enough snow covering the hill for four of the 12 ski runs to be open at the park at 5901 E. Rice St. The cross-country ski trails and the Kirby Family Tubing Park don't have snow and aren't open yet.

The park opened Monday, its earliest opening since 1991.

"We started making snow in early November," said Dan Grider, Great Bear area manager. "We have about 20 inches covering the four runs. Twenty inches is a good start for us. We're going to focus on getting the rest of the runs open and then focus on the base later on."

By February, there should be a 36-inch to 40-inch base on the hill, Grider said. Temperatures in the teens and low 20s are needed for effective snow making, he said.

Great Bear, owned by the city of Sioux Falls, opened last year on Dec. 9 and had a 91-day season.

"That was a good season length," Grider said. "We're hoping for a 100-day season. That would be a record."

The current record is 93 days in 2000-01, he said.

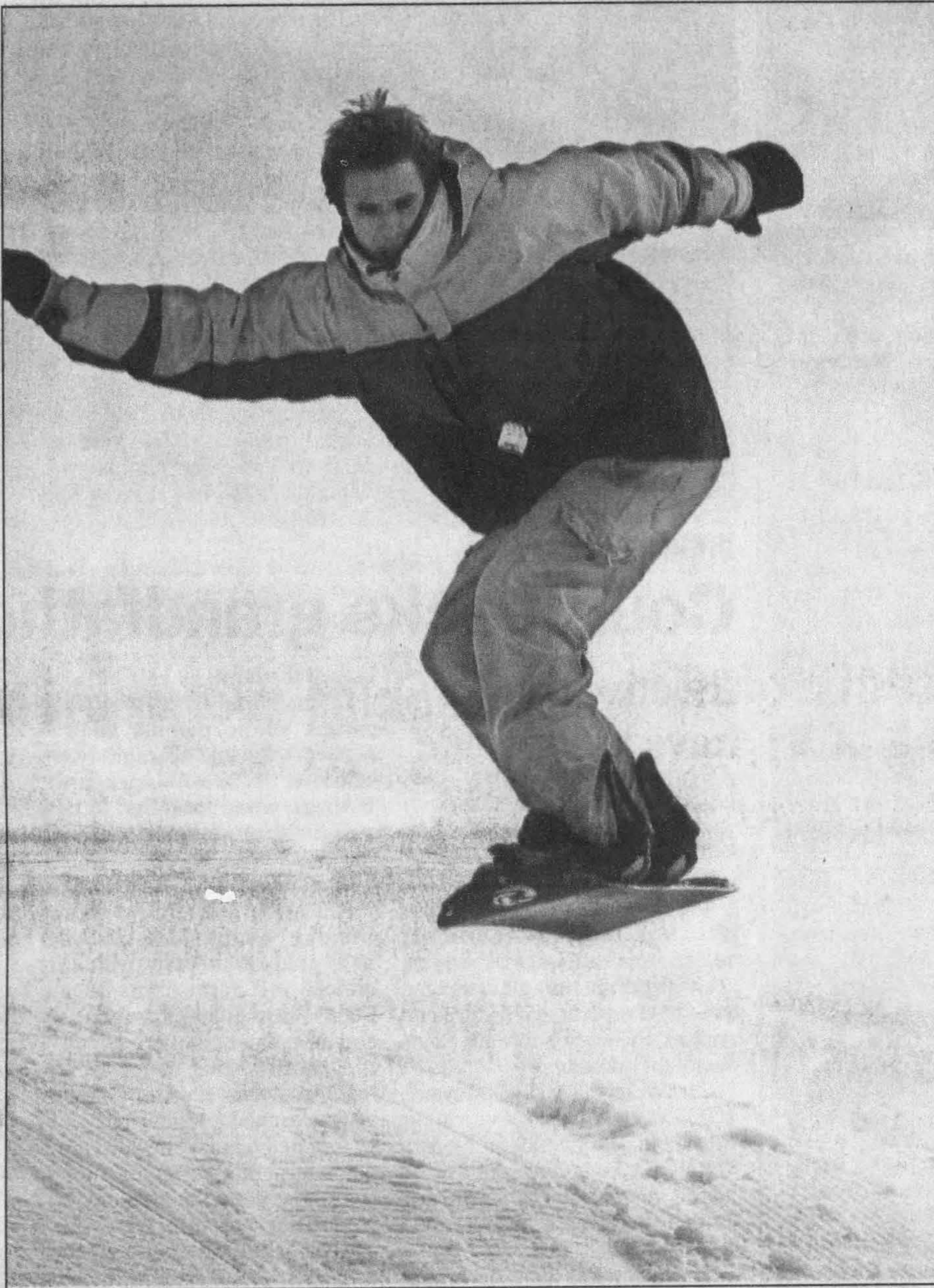
The average season is about 70 days; the shortest was 53 days in 2001-02.

Grider is optimistic that it will be a good season at the park. Already, 567 season passes have been sold, 20 fewer than last year's total.

Snowboarding is a way of life for Patty Pharis' three children.

"It's fun. It's safe. And good people hang out here (at Great Bear)," said Pharis, 40, of Sioux Falls. "It's close to home and a great way to bring them out to do a sport they love."

The family has frequented the park for the past seven years.



PHOTOS BY LLOYD B. CUNNINGHAM / ARGUS LEADER

ABOVE: Austen Gillis, 16, flies over a snowbank as he snowboards at Great Bear. TOP: Brent O'Neal, 12, watches as other snowboarders who followed him down clear the slope.

► Schedules for winter recreation sites 5B

"I like to read a book, ski a little and talk to girlfriends who are here with their kids," Pharis said.

The costs at Great Bear are reasonable compared with what skiers and snowboarders would pay in the Black Hills, she added.

Her daughter Abbey, 10, said snowboarding is easy once one gets the hang of it. She

started the sport when she was about 4. Her favorite part about being at Great Bear is that "you get to see all of your friends."

Brent O'Neal, 12, of Sioux Falls glides down the park's hill with ease on his snowboard. Friends introduced him to the sport two years ago, and he began visiting Great Bear last year.

"It's just fun," he said.

For those who prefer ice-skating and sledding, the Sioux Falls Parks and Recreation Department will open all six outdoor ice-skating rinks at 4 p.m. Dec. 19. The rinks are at Memorial, McKennan, Frank Olson, Campus, Sherman and Tuthill parks.

The sledding hill at Tuthill Park, the city's only super-sized hill, will be open from 1 to 5 p.m. Dec. 20.

Reach Denise D. Tucker at 331-2335.

City, county dedicate law enforcement building

Pooling resources saves money, time, sheriff says

BY MELANIE BRANDERT
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As a new Sioux Falls police officer in 1972, Mike Milstead worked out of City Hall's basement with his colleagues. The Minnehaha County Sheriff's Department and jail were on Sixth Street, three blocks away.

Each department had its own records, dispatch centers and front desks. Every morning, the jail would load prisoners to book them at the police station, then drive them back, Milstead said.

"We tried to work together, but that separation made it frustrating and difficult," said Milstead, now Minnehaha County sheriff.

Fast-forward three decades to December 2003 and a new law enforcement center with one crime lab, one shooting range and one records area.

"Being able, in this facility, to share information, technology and intelligence is critically important to be effective in law enforcement," Milstead said at Thursday's dedication of the \$8.5 million Sioux Falls Law Enforcement Center. "What we have done is eliminate duplication of services. People who benefit when that happens are taxpayers."

About 100 residents, officers and city and county leaders attended the dedication at the center's indoor parking area. Police and sheriff's vehicles lined the walls, and the honor guard stood behind the podium.

Afterward, the public could view a display of SWAT team and bomb-squad weapons and equipment and tour the new facility.

Police and Sheriff's Department staff moved into the two-story center at 320 W. Fourth St. last month after spending 26 years in the Public Safety Building, which also housed the county jail.

The new five-story jail south of the law enforcement center opened in June.

The Public Safety Building will be renovated into meeting, administrative, medical and dental rooms, storage and other uses. Inmates continue to be booked there before being transferred to cells in the new jail.

Police Chief Doug Barthel said the old building had become too cramped. Police personnel had doubled since the department moved into the building, he said, and the amount of evidence stored had grown to about 29,000 pieces.

"We had an entire division of the department located in a separate building," Barthel



Mike Milstead

Last meeting helps school-border plans

Parents favor option with least busing

BY JENNIFER SANDERSON
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Parents and school officials braved Thursday night's murky weather to get a clearer picture of how the Sioux Falls School District will look next fall.

The open house at Oscar Howe Elementary School was the last of three outlining proposals to carve up attendance areas for elementary schools west of Interstate 29. The district hopes to rework existing populations and spread students more evenly when the new west-side school opens.

Most of the 25 or so parents favored the third option, which would keep Oscar Howe's area more intact than the other two proposals. That option also would save the district \$70,000 to \$75,000 in transportation over the others because it would use the fewest buses.

While the district appears to be leaning in that direction,

What's next

The Sioux Falls School District has outlined three leading proposals for re-drawing attendance areas for the new west-side elementary school. Starting in fall 2004, Hayward, Oscar Howe and John F. Kennedy schools will see changes in enrollment and busing.

THROUGH JANUARY: District will prepare recommended boundaries. School board probably will approve the final plan Jan. 12. District also will appoint a transitional committee of staff, administrators and parents for the

new school. **FEBRUARY:** Parents will receive newsletters detailing attendance areas. District will make final decisions for open-enrollment applications.

MARCH: Parents will be notified whether their open-enrollment requests have been granted.

APRIL: Committee will complete student transition plan for new school.

MAY THROUGH AUGUST: Committee will send out newsletters to parents and hold an open house and tours.

board members emphasized that no decisions have been made.

Many parents asked pointed questions about the district's open-enrollment policy. Open enrollment, offered on a space-available basis, is a possibility for those unhappy with the

board's final vote, expected in mid-January. The time spent on open enrollment suggested parents are hedging their bets, reserving judgment until lines are drawn but hoping to find assurance in the meantime.

Bill Smith, the district's director of instructional support ser-

vices, urged parents to carefully consider their reasons for filling out open-enrollment applications.

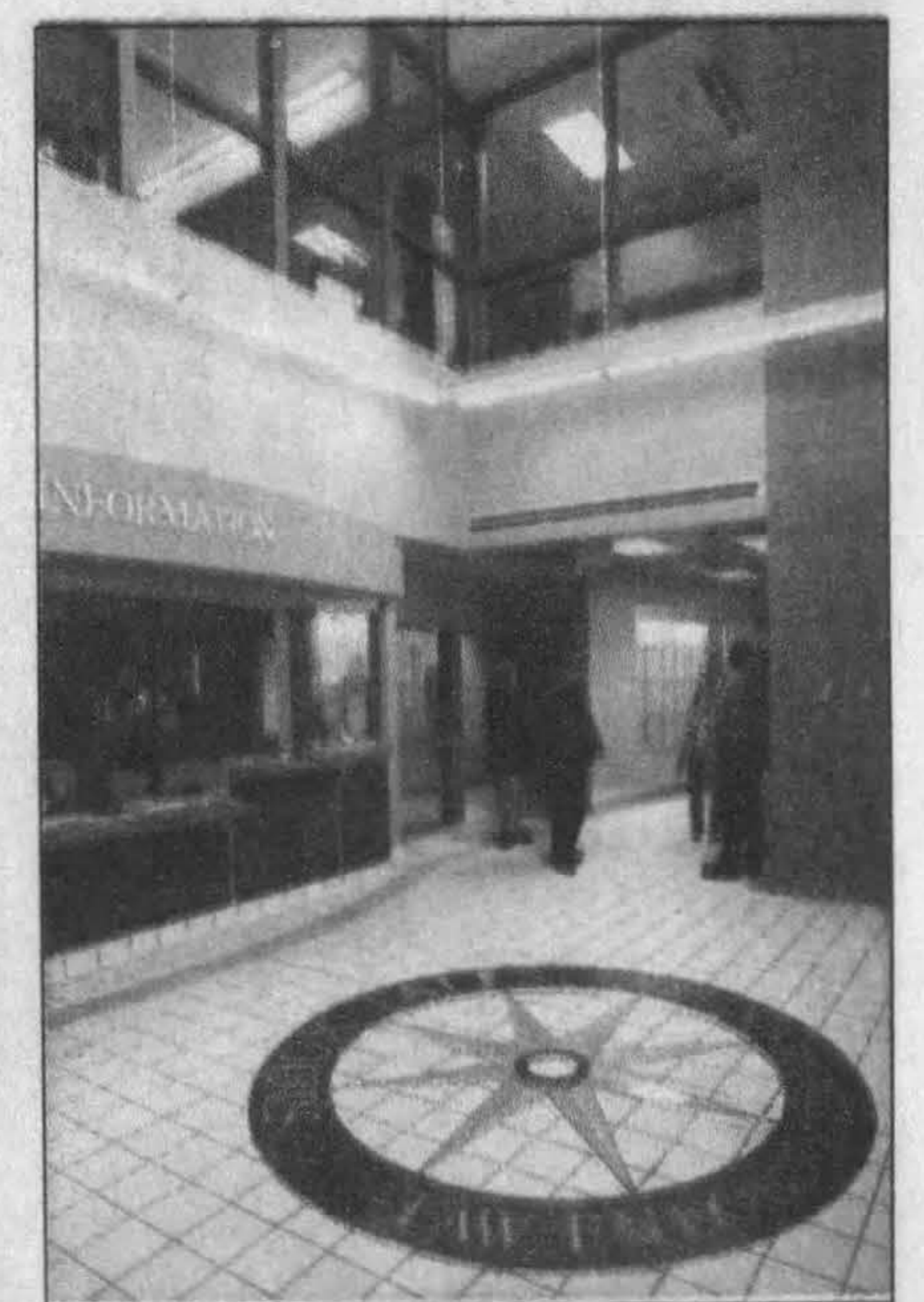
"I hear people saying, 'I want to stay at my school. I don't want to change,'" he said. "Your school will change."

That's because teachers and other staff will be shifted along with student populations. John F. Kennedy, for example, could lose as many as 300 students, which translates into 12 fewer classroom teachers.

Currently, Hayward, Oscar Howe and JFK are running above capacity, with two of them exceeding maximums by more than 130 students. The district's three proposals would leave Oscar Howe with the most students because that area has virtually no housing growth. Hayward, another school with minimal growth, would run about 30 students under capacity.

JFK and the new school would have the most room, in keeping with growth patterns in

See **BORDERS**, page 5B



LLOYD B. CUNNINGHAM / ARGUS LEADER

The public was given the opportunity to tour the new Law Enforcement Center in Sioux Falls following a Thursday morning ribbon-cutting. The focal point of the new facility is its main entrance. A tour group pauses for a moment as it moves through the building.

Check inmates more, jail told

Inspector's letter urges clearer policy at facility where suicide occurred

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ST. PAUL — A Villanova University history professor who killed herself in the Ramsey County jail despite being under suicide watch wasn't always checked as often as she should have been and once went unchecked for almost two hours, a state inspector said.

Inspector Diane Grinde of the state Department of Corrections did not link Mine Ener's suicide to the timing of the checks. But she urged more vigilance by recommending a standard already in place at most jails: staggered checks at intervals no longer than 15 minutes for inmates on suicide watch.

Staggering the checks prevents them from occurring at predictable intervals, such as 2:30, 2:45, 3:00.

Ramsey County Sheriff Bob Fletcher said Wednesday that he is aware there were gaps in checks on Ener during her jail stay. However, he said, on the day of her death, the checks went according to regulation.

In addition, he said that the state's concern about missed inmate checks will be systematically addressed in the county's new jail, which opens this month.

Ener, a St. Paul native, was in custody for killing her disabled 6-month-old daughter while on a family visit to St. Paul. She suffocated herself with a trash can liner Aug. 30 after a guard last checked on her at 3:20 p.m. to 3:25 p.m.

She was found about 25 minutes later, Grinde said.

State regulations require inmate checks at intervals of no more than 30 minutes. The reg-

ulations require "more frequent observation" of inmates on suicide watch.

In an Oct. 31 letter to Ramsey County jail administrator Dimitri Burroughs, Grinde said her review of policy and "suicide curriculum" at the jail found no specific guidelines regarding how often jailers should check on suicidal inmates.

Fletcher said employees always have been instructed to make such checks at unspecified intervals of less than 30 minutes, as stated in Department of Correction regulations.

"I recommend that policy be developed that gives staff more direction," Grinde wrote. "Most facilities use 15 minutes staggered as the time frame for persons on suicide watch."

Grinde said the jail doesn't face any penalties for the violation, but she said she will be making periodic unannounced visits to inspect the logs.

Center: Facility holds firing range, kennel

Continued from 1B

said, referring to the Community Services Division, which had been in the county administration building. "Now, we have everything under one roof."

Milstead said the joint facility aids law enforcement in a time of terrorism fears and threats to national security.

"There has been no time in America's history when it has been more important for law enforcement to work together," he said. "This building sets the stage for that to happen."

County Board Chairman John Pekas recalled the long, controversial road to build the center. When the city and county negotiations for land near the new jail stalled, former Mayor Gary Hanson agreed to buy 3.8 acres east of Hy-Vee on East 10th Street.

But then Milstead suggested the county give the city the land in exchange for combining operations in one facility, Pekas said.

"When he said that, the county commissioners looked at each other and said, 'That's the best idea I've heard in a long time. We're going to make this hap-

pen,'" Pekas said. "This should be a model for the rest of the nation."

Mayor Dave Munson said he is impressed by how the center will foster cooperation among law enforcement agencies.

"The thing I really admire about them is how willing they are to work together," Munson said. "They all have one mission — keep Sioux Falls safe."

Barthel said he already has noticed improvements.

"Having enough room to move around and work properly has changed the attitude of employees," he said.

The officers' enthusiasm was apparent when they gave tours of the 180,000-square-foot center.

Tour participants learned about the indoor firing range, new K-9 kennel for drug dogs and such new technology as a surveyor device with a laser pointer to reconstruct accidents.

"(We have) all the fancy stuff you see on 'CSI,'" said Jessica Lichy, a crime-lab technician.

"We just don't have the hair and makeup people," she said, drawing laughter.

Reach Melanie Brandert at 977-3926.

Borders: Some schools below capacity to allow for city growth

Continued from 1B

southwest and west-central Sioux Falls. The two schools are designed to handle 680 students apiece but would have 135 to 160 fewer students than the maximum number.

Some parents at Thursday's meeting weren't sure that's enough of a cushion. But Smith said he has studied city growth trends during the past 10 to 15 years. Elementary divisions new in 1994 in one portion of Sioux Falls and new in 1997 in another part of the city have held. Smith is confident that any of the three plans would "stand for at least five years, probably longer."

Becky Keen, a mother of three, found the greatest concern in an option that she said would tempt

dangerous paths. Her neighborhood has access only to the east, using Thatcher Drive to connect to 26th Street. One version would place students there in the new school's area without busing — meaning students would need to walk east, then north, to go west.

"They're going to end up going farther than some students who will be bused to Hayward," Keen said. "Those kids aren't going to walk around. They're going to be cutting through that drainage area, skipping through backyards or through cold water when the ice isn't quite hard."

She supports options one or three for her neighbors' sakes, although it's a nonissue for her youngest, a fourth-grader.

Those who will enter fifth grade in the fall may finish their elementary education at their current

Skating and skating hours

Sioux Falls winter recreation sites have announced their regular and holiday hours.

Great Bear Recreation Park: Regular hours 3 to 10 p.m. Monday through Friday and 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Holiday hours 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. Dec. 19-Jan. 4. Open 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Dec. 24, closed Dec. 25 and open 9 a.m. to midnight Dec. 31. Cost is \$17 for a lift ticket, \$14 for ski rental and \$10 for tubing.

City ice-skating rinks: 1 to 9 p.m. Dec. 20 to Jan. 3, 1 to 4 p.m. Dec. 24, closed Dec. 25, 1 to 8 p.m. Jan. 4. Then regular hours of 4 to 8 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 4 to 9 p.m. Friday, 1 to 8 p.m. Sun-

day. Skating is free. Ice skate rentals are \$3 for adults and \$1 for children.

Sledding hill: Regular hours 1 to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Holiday hours 1 to 5 p.m. Dec. 20 through Jan. 4, 1 to 4 p.m. Dec. 24, closed Dec. 25.

Sioux Falls Ice and Recreation Center: Regular hours of 7:30 to 9 p.m. Wednesday and Friday; 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. and 8 to 10 p.m. Saturday; and 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Sunday. Special open skates from 1 to 4 p.m. Dec. 22, 23, 26, Dec. 29-Jan. 2, Jan. 19, Feb. 11-13 and 16. Closed Dec. 24 and 25. Admission is \$3.50 for adults and \$2.50 for 18 and younger. Hockey and figure-skate rentals are \$2.

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