

# Jensen

From Page 1A

lined the sidewalk.

Bestgen greeted people at the church entrance, thanking them for their support. Jensen's flag-draped coffin stood in the entryway, which contained posters with a collage of photos from his life.

During the service, SDNG Adj. Gen. Tim Reisch spoke of Jensen's adherence to the seven Army values. Jensen showed "selfless service" and "remarkable personal courage," Reisch said.

"Those who joined since 9/11 know there is a good chance they are going to combat," the adjutant general said. "But very few would go to combat with another unit like Dennis did."

Jensen's awards include the National Defense Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal, NATO Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal, Overseas Service Ribbon and the Army Service Ribbon.

The Rev. Joe Schulte, the Yankton church's pastor, called Jensen "a fighter in the best sense of the word."

"(Jensen) has been a fighter from birth. He was born prematurely and weighed less than 2 pounds, and yet he survived," Schulte said. "As a child, he fell and developed fluid on the brain that was a great concern. There were even thoughts of doing surgery. But Dennis' body absorbed the fluid on its own."

Jensen fought to enter the military not only to benefit himself but also for others, Schulte said. Jensen showed that love for others when he would remain on the phone with his sister, who was feeling anxiety following her move to Minneapolis, until she fell asleep.

Jensen showed zest for a life that ended all too early, Schulte said. "As his grandmother said, 'At least we had him for 21 good years,'" the pastor said.

Besides Bestgen's greeting to the audience, Jacob Jensen offered remarks on behalf of the family.

Jacob Jensen told of the strong lifelong bond he shared with his late cousin. He described mischievous childhood moments ranging from kickball games to a fireworks experiment that went awry and required quick dousing.

But there were also serious moments, such as summer painting jobs that provided time for the cousins to discuss their Christian faith and spiritual development.

"We ended up talking a lot about where God was in our lives and what Jesus meant to us," Jacob said of his cousin.

During a visit to their grandfather's house in Alcester, the two cousins spoke of Dennis' military service.

"I could tell he had a warrior's heart," Jacob said. "He had the desire, you could see it in his eyes. He had the focus and pride in the way he carried himself."

Jacob spoke of dreams that will now go unrealized with his cousin's passing.

"We were both meandering spirals. We bonded in lots of ways," he said. "I looked forward to having him at my side when I got hitched some day, of getting old with him."

Jacob choked back tears, pausing before he spoke of his admiration for his cousin. "Dennis was never taller than me, but I got to look up to him," he said with a smile.

The service included remarks from U.S. Sen. John Thune (R-S.D.) and South Dakota Gov. Dennis Daugaard.

Americans enjoy freedoms because of soldiers such as Jensen, the senator said.

"(These soldiers) are devoted to duty, honor and country. They go to faraway places like Helmand province," Thune said. "Today, we say thank you the best we can."

Daugaard spoke of Jensen's passing at a young age when so many years should have been ahead of him. Death comes quickly, and we all need to let others know at every possible moment how much we love them, the governor said, noting it would have been what Jensen wanted.

The entire state has felt the pain of Jensen's passing, Daugaard said. "We are all diminished, and South Dakota is less for his loss," the governor said.

Daugaard had ordered flags flown Thursday at half-mast in Jensen's memory.

During a video tribute, the family mixed sobs with occasional smiles and soft laughter. During one tribute scene, Bestgen pointed and smiled at a man in the balcony, who returned the recognition.

Musical selections echoed through the church, filling the air with emotional moments. Kathy Koenig sang "Ave Maria," accompanied by her daughter, Maureen Koenig McFarlane. During two other selections, five bagpipe players performed at stations around the sanctuary. For the final number, four bagpipe players exited as the remaining player completed "Amazing Grace."

After the casket was removed from the church, Jensen's family and friends, along with dignitaries, gathered on the church steps for the 21-gun salute and "Taps." Besides Thune and Daugaard, the dignitaries included U.S. Rep. Kristi Noem (R-S.D.), First Lady Linda Daugaard and Lt. Gov. Matt Michels.

Following the Yankton funeral, the procession of family, friends and

Patriot Guard Riders traveled U.S. Highway 81 to Madison, then to DeSmet and Pierre in recognition of his Guard units. Upon reaching Pierre, the Patriot Guard Riders were scheduled to drop out of the procession while the remaining vehicles proceeded to Sturgis.

Spc. Jensen's interment will occur at 10 a.m. MDT today (Friday) at the Black Hills National Cemetery near Sturgis. Patriot Guard Riders from Rapid City plan to attend the ceremony.

During Thursday's service, Bestgen pledged her family's support for those in attendance.

"We are a village, and our family understands that all of you are grieving," she told the gathering. "If you ever need anything, our arms are open to you as well."

# Bags

From Page 1A

Scherschligt said he had originally thought the county would be able to use the sand, but that won't be the case.

"The sand in the bags is too fine and won't compact on gravel roads," he stated. "The sand that we use for salting the highways in the winter is pre-mixed when it is purchased. It just won't work out."

Scherschligt said property owners farther away from the river are already starting to dispose of sandbags.

"A lot of people are using the sand to fill in things they always

wanted to fill in," he said.

Scherschligt said the sandbags he has seen that were under water are covered in green moss and have a bad odor. However, they are not considered to be contaminated materials.

"According to the state, they are not considered contaminated unless they fall under a certain criteria. None of the water we had come into contact with sandbags here is in that criteria," he said. "That means the sand can be dumped anywhere the property owner wants to dump it."

Still, the state is recommending that residents take precautions when cleaning up sandbags or other flood-affected areas.

The South Dakota Department of Health offers the following reminders:

- wear hard-soled shoes, long-

sleeved shirts, long pants and heavy work gloves;

- scrub walls, hard-surfaced floors, counter tops, pantry shelves, etc., with warm, soapy water, then sanitize with a solution of one cup of bleach to five gallons of water;

- to clean actual mold growth from hard surfaces such as floors or countertops, wash with a solution of one cup bleach to one gallon water, rinse with clean water and allow to air dry. Ventilate the area while using any cleaning products;

- remove and throw away any insulating material that has been saturated with flood waters;

- if there has been sewage backflow into the house, remove and throw out wall coverings, cloth, rugs, Sheetrock and other absorbent materials. Wear rubber boots and water-

proof gloves during the cleanup.

Clean and mop the area, treat with disinfectant and dehumidify;

- do not use gas- or diesel-powered pumps, generators or pressure washers inside, as they release carbon monoxide, a deadly but colorless and odorless gas. It is virtually impossible to assure adequate ventilation;

- clean minor wounds thoroughly with soap and water, cover and keep them dry while working on cleanup. If you need a tetanus shot, see your doctor. Wash hands often with soap and water; and

- set priorities for cleanup tasks and pace the work out over days or even weeks. Get plenty of rest and take frequent rest breaks before exhaustion builds up.

More information about flood cleanup can be found at

doh.sd.gov/flood/.

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