

Sanford To Hire Two Native American Healers

BY KRISTI EATON
Associated Press

SIoux FALLS — The country's largest rural, nonprofit hospital system is hiring two traditional Native American healers to train medical staff in the Dakotas and Minnesota in an effort to better serve the American Indian patient population.

Sanford Health is in the process of hiring a Lakota/Dakota and an Ojibwe to serve as consultants as part of a three-year \$12 million Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services award, said Read Sulik, Sanford's senior vice president for Behavioral Health Services.

"Being where we're located in South Dakota, North Dakota and Minnesota, we realized we serve perhaps the largest American Indian population in a health system outside of Indian Health Services of probably any other system in the country, given where we're located across the northern Plains," Sulik said, noting that Native Americans as a group have some of the biggest health disparities in the country. "Several of the things that keep rising up (are) how patients feel welcome and engaged and effectively communicated to in the health clinics settings."

Sulik, who is based in Fargo, said the traditional healers will act as advisers to health care workers to develop training and curriculum about the American Indian culture, and will consult with medical staff on when it may be appropriate to use traditional healing techniques in conjunction with modern medicine.

The two healers won't necessarily be performing traditional healing ceremonies, Sulik said, but advising clinics in the three states on when a ceremony may be necessary and how to use local resources to make it happen.

Oitancan Mani Zephier, a 33-year-old Yankton Sioux tribe member from Vermillion, has seen firsthand how having a Native American by a patient's side can help psychologically. While working as an Army medic in Afghanistan in 2004-2005, he came across an injured soldier who had a Native American medicine pouch around his neck under his shirt.

"I told him I was Sioux. He said, 'You're Sioux?! Now I already feel better,'" Zephier recalled. "He wasn't even Sioux. He was Choctaw."

Some ceremonies and traditions might seem odd to non-Natives, he added, such as the smudging of sage and sweet grass to purify the area around the patient. When a baby is born, Zephier's people believe that wiping out the newborn's mouth with sage can help the infant better transition from the spiritual realm of the womb.

Some patients also wrap tobacco in cloths of red, black, yellow or white and hang them on their bedposts as prayer offerings.

"It's for the spirits, or the angels, if you will, who are coming in to help heal," said Zephier, who grew up on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, where his uncle is a medicine man — or intermediary between the spirit world and people.

In addition to the healers, Sulik said the health system is hiring a cultural and diversity specialist to understand and serve patients from a variety of cultural backgrounds.

"We have several refugee communities in various areas that we live and there are certainly lots of cultural differences," Sulik said.

Sulik, as part of being selected for a Bush Foundation Fellowship, will visit different communities all over the world over the next few years to see firsthand how some hospital systems are able to serve indigenous

communities by blending western medicine with traditional healing.

A similar initiative to blend western and traditional medicine started several years ago at Page Hospital in Page, Ariz., where up to 60 percent of the patients are Native Americans, including many Navajo Nation members. While the hospital doesn't employ traditional healers or medicine men on staff, medicine men do often come to the hospital to perform healing ceremonies or pray or bless the patient at the patient's request, said hospital CEO Sandy Haryasz.

For example, Haryasz said, if a Native American woman who follows traditional beliefs plans to have a vaginal birth delivery but for some reason must have a C-section that is not an emergency, sometimes a mother would request a medicine man come to the hospital to bless her before the operation.

"Our medical staff and nursing staff are extremely supportive of the spiritual side of the medicine men and healing ceremonies. They totally support patients' rights and respect their decision to have a medicine man come in," she said. "There's no issue between alternative medicine per se and traditional medicine."

Zephier said he knows of few Native Americans who wouldn't accept prayers of any sort — be they from a different tribe than their own or a different faith altogether.

"I've always welcomed any prayer of any faith when I've been in the hospital or for someone else. Prayers are prayers," he said.

But he added that having someone on hand to explain some of the patient's beliefs and traditions can help put everyone at ease.

"Many non-Natives don't understand where we're coming from and the things we do," he said. "Something like this could help."

Peterson Seeks Guarantee Before Tackling Farm Bill

BY STEVE KARNOWSKI
Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — Minnesota U.S. Rep. Collin Peterson said Wednesday he's so upset that Congress passed only a short extension of the 2008 Farm Bill that he won't work on a new version without assurances from congressional leaders it will get a vote.

The full House never took a floor vote on a five-year farm bill that passed out of the House Agriculture Committee in July with bipartisan support from Peterson, the ranking Democrat on the panel, and its chairman, Rep. Frank Lucas, R-Okla. The plan was projected to reduce spending on Agriculture Department programs by \$35 billion over

10 years. But Speaker John Boehner said it didn't have enough votes to pass because some Republicans wanted to see deeper cuts to food stamps.

Peterson told The Associated Press he and his staff were writing to Boehner and other House leaders expressing frustration over what he called lack of respect for the committee's hard work. He said he would demand a guarantee that if the committee passes a farm bill in 2013, it will be allowed to come to the floor where representatives can fight out any disagreements over the details.

"If they will not give me that assurance, I am not interested in writing a farm bill," Peterson said.

Peterson said he discussed his

frustrations with Lucas and that Lucas told him he couldn't write a farm bill without Peterson's support.

Lucas wasn't available for an interview but issued a statement saying the extension gives farmers the certainty they need to plan and allows the congressional agriculture committees to keep working on a five-year farm bill.

The bill passed Tuesday night to avert the tax increases and spending cuts known as the "fiscal cliff" extends current farm bill programs for just nine months and averts a potential spike in milk prices that could have happened if the current dairy program had been allowed to expire. It does not contain a broader overhaul of dairy policy

that Peterson authored, which was in both the House committee's farm bill and the version that passed the full Senate with bipartisan support in June.

Agriculture committee leaders in both chambers tried to get a comprehensive five-year farm bill along the lines of the House and Senate bills included in the final fiscal deal, but their arguments that it would actually help cut federal spending went nowhere. The committees will have to start over this year.

Peterson predicted Congress may end up passing a series of one-year farm bill extensions if nothing changes.

"All I can say is we did our work. And we were disrespected. And that's not how government is supposed to operate," Peterson said.

OBITUARIES

Gert Vonderheide

Gertrude (Konz) Vonderheide, age 86 of Hartington, Nebraska died after a brief illness, surrounded by her family, on Tuesday, January 1, 2013 at Avera Sacred Heart Hospital in Yankton, SD.

Mass of Christian Burial will be on Friday, January 4, 2013 at 10:30 a.m. at the Holy Trinity Catholic Church in Hartington with Rev. Jeffery Loseke and Rev. Garry Welsh officiating. Burial will be in the St. Michael's Cemetery in Hartington.

Visitation will be on Thursday from 3:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. with a rosary at 4:00 pm and a Vigil Service at 7:00 pm at the Wintz Funeral home in Hartington. Visitation will begin one hour prior to services on Friday at the church.

To send online condolences please visit www.wintzrayfuner-



Vonderheide

alhome.com. Pallbearers will be Tom Dreesen, Nick Wiebelhaus, John Konz, Dustin Faulk, Ron Slattery, John Wiczorek, Ryan Gratzfeld and Sebastian Gomez.

Gert was born on December 24, 1926 in rural Hartington to Joseph and Margaret (Leffel-) Hahn. She grew up in the East Bow area and graduated from Holy Trinity High School in Hartington in 1945. She then worked in the Cedar County Treasurer's office until her marriage. On June 7, 1949 she married John M. "Jack" Konz in Hartington. In 1953 they purchased the Globe Clothing store in Hartington and Gert opened the ladies department in 1963

and then retired in 1987. Jack died on June 16, 1984 at the age of 57. She married Ben Vonderheide on July 2, 1991 in Hartington and he died on May 25, 1998 at the age of 79.

Gert was a member of the Holy Trinity Catholic Church, Guild, Ministry of Praise, Christian Mothers and had a Perpetual Hour of Adoration for many years. She was well known for her faith and love for our Lord. She belonged to a bridge club and played cards at the Senior Citizen Center. She enjoyed golfing, watching Husker volleyball and game shows, square dancing and polkas. Gert loved to cook, bake and spend time with her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Gert is survived by her four children, Mike and Pilar Konz of Kearney; Dave Konz of Hartington; Mary and Robert Caruana

of Gilbert, AZ; Kathy and Ron Slattery of Lincoln, NE; 13 grandchildren, 11 great grandchildren, 2 brothers, Gene and Laureen Hahn of Lincoln; Bill and Loretta Hahn of Hartington; 2 sisters, Mary Dreesen of Yankton and Dolores Armstrong of Sepulveda, CA.

She was preceded in death by her parents, both husbands, 2 brothers, Albert and Harold Hahn, 2 sisters, Leona Johnson and Evelyn McCoy.

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Jorgen Urup

Jorgen Urup, 93, of Vermillion, SD passed away Monday, December 31 at the Wakonda Heritage manor Avera in Wakonda, SD.

Jorgen was born in Gudumholm, Denmark on December 24, 1919 to Peter and Elna (Jensen) Urup. Jorgen married Ruth Moenster in 1950, and immigrated to the USA in 1957 to be with his brothers. Jorgen worked as a carpenter, and often put in long days. He also liked to hunt and fish.

He is survived by his son Niels and daughter Elna both of Denmark and many cousins in Denmark and in South Dakota.

Memorial services will be held at 2:00 p.m. Saturday, January 5 at the Hansen Funeral Home in Vermillion with burial of ashes to follow in the Bluffview Cemetery in Vermillion.

In lieu of flowers, please send donations to the American Cancer Society.

Visit hansenfuneralhome.com.
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Danelle Squirrel Coat

Danelle Squirrel Coat, 42, of Lake Andes died Tuesday, Jan. 1, 2013, at her home in Lake Andes.

Funeral services are at 11 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 5, at the White Swan Community Center, Lake Andes.

Wake services started Wednesday at the Community Center.

Crosby-Jaeger Funeral Home, Wagner, is in charge of arrangements.

Janelle Hart

Janelle Hart, 43, of Sioux Falls died Saturday, Dec. 29, 2012, at her home in Sioux Falls.

Funeral services are at 10:30 a.m. today (Thursday, Jan. 3) at the Boys & Girls Club Gym. Marty. Burial is in St. Paul's Catholic Cemetery, Marty.

Wake services began Tuesday at the gym.

Crosby-Jaeger Funeral Home, Wagner, is in charge of arrangements.

Robert 'Bob' Record

Robert W. "Bob" Record, 88, of Menno died Wednesday, Jan. 2, 2013, at the Menno-Olivet Care Center, Menno.

Memorial services are at 4 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 6, at the Salem Reformed Church, Menno, with the Rev. Michael Hecht officiating. Burial of Robert's cremated remains will be at a later date at the Galveston Cemetery, Galveston, Ind.

The Aisenbrey-Opsahl-Kostel Memorial Chapel, Menno, is assisting with the services.

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Neb. Officer Suffers Minor Injuries In Crash

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — Omaha police say an officer suffered minor injuries when his cruiser was struck by another vehicle.

The Omaha Police Department says Officer James Stokes was transported to the University of Nebraska Medical Center on Wednesday for possible soreness on the left side of his body.

Police say Stokes, a 21-year veteran, was driving when a Toyota Corolla driven by Sandra Peralta drove through a red light and hit the cruiser's left side. Speed and alcohol were not factors in the accident.

Peralta was cited for not having a driver's license or valid insurance.

Officer Assaulted After Confronting Inmate

MITCHELL (AP) — A Davidson County correctional officer is being treated for multiple facial fractures after an assault by an inmate.

KSPY television reports that Officer James Dietz was doing his rounds shortly after 10 p.m. Tuesday when he discovered evidence of "fishing." The practice involves an inmate attaching an object to dental floss to toss it across to another inmate.

When Dietz confronted the inmate, the man attacked the officer, requiring two other officers to assist. One of the assisting officers used a Taser to subdue the man.

Dietz was transported to a local hospital. The name of the prisoner, who is serving time for burglary and reckless burning, was not released.

Jail Administrator Don Radel says the jail hasn't had an intentional assault on an officer in about a decade.

2M Gallons Lost During Water Main Break

SIoux FALLS (AP) — Some 2 million gallons of Sioux Falls drinking water were lost during a New Year's Day water main break.

An emergency team from the Sioux Falls Public Works water division responded to the break in a 20-inch water main on the Big Sioux River near Falls Park and stopped the leak. The treated water was emptying into the river.

State and city environmental teams were notified and are monitoring the water.

Investigators Seeking Info On Fetus Remains

ASTORIA (AP) — Authorities are still seeking the public's help with information about discovery of the remains of two fetuses in eastern South Dakota.

The decomposed tissue and bones were found Nov. 2 in a rural shelterbelt on private land near Astoria, and state and local officials are investigating the case as a homicide.

Deuel County Sheriff Dave Solem tells the Associated Press that he has no new information to share but investigators would still like to speak to anyone with information related to the discovery.

Experts have concluded that the fetuses were about 40 weeks old and capable of living outside the uterus. The sheriff's office and the state Division of Criminal Investigation have been gathering additional information from an autopsy report and a forensic anthropological evaluation.

N.D. Has Deadliest Year On Roads Since 1981

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — North Dakota has had its deadliest year on its roads in more than 30 years, with 168 people dying in 146 crashes on roads within the state.

The *Bismarck Tribune* reports that North Dakota hadn't topped 150 traffic fatalities since 1981.

North Dakota Highway Patrol Sgt. Tom Iverson says the 2012 traffic statistics can partially be attributed to more people driving and more miles being driven in the state. Statistics from the state Department of Transportation show a steady increase in miles traveled and registered vehicles.

The 2012 fatality tally is 20 higher than 2011 and 63 higher than 2010.

Iverson says busier roads, especially in western North Dakota's oil country, contribute to the jump. Alcohol and failure to wear seat belts also play a part.

Daugaard To Lead Another China Trade Mission

PIERRE (AP) — Gov. Dennis Daugaard is inviting South Dakota business leaders to join him on another trade mission to China.

The Governor's Office of Economic Development says the trip is scheduled for April 5-12. Daugaard led a similar trade mission last spring. He says one of the focuses of his administration is increasing South Dakota's exports, and there is tremendous potential in China.

Economic Development Commissioner Pat Costello and state Agriculture Secretary Walt Bones also will be part of the trade mission. Representatives of up to 15 companies also will be selected to participate.

Man Killed In Standoff Used Son As Shield

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — Omaha police say the shotgun used by a man killed in a New Year's Day standoff was unloaded, but he posed an imminent threat by using his 3-year-old son as a human shield.

Police chief Todd Schmaderer said Wednesday that 31-year-old Tyree Bell was holding his twin children inside the north Omaha home when officers responded to a domestic disturbance call.

Schmaderer says Bell repeatedly made threatening and suicidal comments. Bell eventually released the couple's daughter, but Schmaderer says Bell held his son in front of him while pointing both a pellet gun and shotgun at officers.

Four officers who fired their guns are on administrative leave, pending an investigation. They were identified as 31-year-old Douglas Arrick, 36-year-old Carl Hanson, 29-year-old Chithauta Hester and 35-year-old Alan Peatrowsky.

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