

Neb. Veterans’ Home Marks 50 Years Of Service

NORFOLK, Neb. (AP) — The Norfolk Veterans Home is celebrating its 50th anniversary, and a construction project will yield two new outdoor areas for residents.

The *Norfolk Daily News* reports that construction is scheduled for completion by the end of this year. The areas will be dubbed “Heroes Park” and “Memorial Flag Plaza,” and will give veterans and their loved ones a place to walk around the relax.

The veterans home sits on 19 acres and houses 140 men and women. It opened in 2001.

The home held a birthday celebration on Friday with live music, a picnic dinner, a bouncy house and a visit from Gov. Dave Heineman.

Former UNK Student Gets Probation For Prank

KEARNEY, Neb. (AP) — A former University of Nebraska at Kearney student has been given 18 months of probation for setting off a firecracker in a dormitory.

The *Kearney Hub* reports that 20-year-old Ann Castater of Omaha was sentenced Thursday in Buffalo County Court. Authorities say she set off of an M-80 firecracker while police were investigating an emergency alert on campus.

Castater pleaded no contest to attempted possession of a destructive device and disturbing the peace. Both charges are misdemeanors. A university spokeswoman says Castater is no longer a student at the university.

The probation requires Castater to complete outpatient therapy

Annual Sioux Falls Light Show Fades To Black

SIoux FALLS (AP) — The light show that had illuminated Sioux Falls’ Falls Park for more than a decade has gone dark.

The board of directors of the Wells Fargo Falls Park Sound and Light Show pulled the plug last winter and have decided not to resurrect the annual tradition.

May 24 was to have marked the beginning of the show’s 14th year, but board president Deanna Larson told the City Council that the show “had run its course.”

Larson tells the *Argus Leader* that the conversation to end the show has been going on for years. One reason is a drop in attendance. The number of people coming to the lighted musical history of Sioux Falls had slid from about 80,000 to less than 35,000 over the past few years.

SDSU Names Fahrenwald New Nursing Dean

BROOKINGS (AP) — South Dakota State University has announced that Nancy Fahrenwald will serve as dean of the College of Nursing.

Fahrenwald currently is associate dean for research in the SDSU College of Nursing, a position she’s held since 2009. She came to SDSU in 1995. Before that she served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Malawi, where she was AIDS coordinator for the Zomba district and a nurse educator at the Lilongwe School for Health Sciences.

Fahrenwald succeeds Dean Roberta Olson, who led the college since 1994 and is retiring.

The South Dakota Board of Regents must still approve Fahrenwald as dean.

Electrical Problem Causes Sewage Release

BELLEVUE, Neb. (AP) — An electrical problem at a wastewater treatment plant in Bellevue caused untreated sewage to pour into the Missouri River.

The city of Omaha says the problem began about 4 p.m. Friday at the Papillion Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant, just south of Offutt Air Force Base. The electrical problem caused about 115 cubic feet per second of sewage to be discharged into the river.

Workers were able to fix the problem within about four hours.

Before the problem was resolved, Omaha Public Works advised people to stay out of the river south of the confluence with Papillion Creek and several miles downstream. Officials lifted that advisory after the flow or untreated sewage stopped.

Lincoln Police Say Man Broke Breathalyzer

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Lincoln police say a man arrested for driving under the influence will likely face a felony vandalism charge after he broke a \$6,000 Breathalyzer machine.

The *Lincoln Journal Star* reports that 28-year-old Jason Hansen was arrested around 3:45 a.m. Sunday for driving under the influence. Lincoln Police Assistant Chief Brian Jackson says Hansen was taken to the Cornhusker Place detoxification center for a formal blood alcohol test.

Jackson says that after the test was complete, Hansen ripped up his ticket and pushed a table, which caused the \$6,000 Breathalyzer machine to fall to the floor.

Jason was taken to the Lancaster County jail, where he remained later Sunday.

Neb. Ranchers Can Learn About Using Cattle DNA

CLAY CENTER, Neb. (AP) — Genetic testing is becoming a tool for cattle producers to use to monitor and improve the health of their herds.

That’s why the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension offices are planning a seminar on DNA technology on June 26.

Several experts in genetic research and some of the products available will give presentations about the potential benefit of the technology.

The meeting will be held at the USDA’s Meat Animal Research Center near Clay Center.

For more information or to register, call Terry Behl at 402-472-6441. The workshop costs \$10.

American Indian Studies ‘Overdue’ At SDSU

BY STEVE YOUNG  
Argus Leader

SIoux FALLS — A new major in American Indian Studies at South Dakota State University holds the promise of more knowledge going back to the state’s reservations, and more expertise for those who work with Native American issues.

Last month, the Board of Regents approved a new bachelor of arts in tribal studies at SDSU, making it the state’s third university to offer such a major, along with the University of South Dakota and Black Hill State.

It’s one more drawing card for SDSU, which has the largest tribal student population among the state’s six public universities. And it reflects school efforts to make the campus more inclusive and culturally supportive, especially after the accrediting corporation Higher Learning Commission suggested that SDSU needed to do more after a visit four years ago.

“It would be fair to say, it upped the ante, upped the volume,” Jaime Nolan-Andrino, SDSU’s chief diversity officer, told the *Argus Leader* newspaper about the commission’s visit. “I think the movement was already here, but maybe it helped to foster a sense of urgency.”

Nolan-Andrino’s position at SDSU didn’t even exist prior to her arrival in 2011. And the American Indian Education and Cultural Center that sits at the southwest corner of the campus had opened only a year earlier as the cornerstone for recruiting, retaining and graduating tribal students.

Richie Meyers, SDSU’s American Indian Studies program coordinator, said the plan is to roll out the major this fall with up to 30 students enrolled in it. SDSU already has a minor in American Indian Studies, so many students likely will gravitate to the major, he said. Others who plan to become a doctor or

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KURT HACKEMER

lawyer or teacher might choose the major because they intend to work eventually with tribal people.

In its pitch to the Board of Regents, SDSU officials suggested that employment opportunities for American Indian Studies majors cross a wide swath of fields within tribal, state and federal government. They work as policy analysts, journalists, housing directors, economic development officers, National Parks personnel, forestry managers and educators, officials said.

At USD, which has had a bachelor of arts in Native Studies since 1997, many students will pair that major with another, said Kurt Hackemer, chair of the school’s Department of History.

“A student who is studying anthropology or political science or history, you’ll often see those students with a double major in Native Studies,” Hackemer said. “It just adds some more depth. If you think want to do something in regional politics and you are a political science major, given how significant natives are in the state population, it kind of makes sense that it would be a good pairing for you.”

There is a mix of native and non-native students majoring in American Indian Studies at Black Hills State, said program director Urla Marcus. That makes sense for non-natives who are interested in teaching some day, or might work in federal government positions that require interaction with tribes, she said.

Harding County native Jack Thompson is working on his master’s degree at SDSU and envisions pursuing a doctorate in American

Indian Studies and eventually teaching those courses. He earned his undergraduate degree in history at SDSU and was introduced to tribal studies by Joseph Brewer, who was the program director at SDSU at the time.

“Through getting to know him, I started hanging out at the American Indian center,” Thompson, who is non-native, said. “It showed me a whole different way of looking at history that I never really thought about but I had always questioned. To be honest, if there had been an American Indian Studies major when I started here, that’s what I would have gone into.”

Certainly, native students have the opportunity to study their language and culture at the state’s numerous tribal colleges, said Ernest Weston Jr., a political science major at SDSU who just finished his freshman year and is a Lakota from Porcupine on the Pine Ridge Reservation

But while tribal colleges typically focus on the language and customs of the local community, universities offer a broader perspective that covers many of the indigenous tribes across the country, and their relationship historically and politically with the federal and state governments.

“With new majors like this one at SDSU, you’re going to get more non-indigenous students who want to learn more about Native Americans but don’t know how,” Weston, 19, said. “You’re going to get people who want to work with tribes or work for tribes, and this will offer them a way to do it.

“It seems like something that should have happened here at SDSU 20 years ago. It’s long overdue.”

Body Found In Des Moines River Is Abducted Teen

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — Authorities confirmed Sunday that a body found in the Des Moines River was that of a 15-year-old Iowa girl who was abducted along with a younger friend after getting off a school bus last month.

An autopsy confirmed the body found Friday night under a bridge near Boone is Kathlynn Shepard’s. Her kidnapping on May 20 in the small city of Dayton led to a massive search involving federal, state and local authorities.

Chief State Medical Examiner Dr. Julia Goodin said Sunday that Kathlynn’s death was a homicide and that she died of “multiple sharp and blunt force injuries.” The autopsy was completed a day earlier.

Residents of Dayton, about 60 miles north of Des Moines, had braced for the news. Investigators had expressed confidence

the body — concealed by debris when discovered by a fisherman — was Kathlynn’s. Clothes on it matched what the high school freshman was wearing when a man lured her and a 12-year-old friend into a pickup truck.

Authorities also found zip ties matching ones used to restrain the younger girl, who managed to escape and call 911.

“Today our family has lost part of its soul — not just the Shepard family but the families of Dayton and all of Iowa,” the Shepards said in a statement. “An innocent, caring, fun-loving child was taken from this world long before her time.”

Authorities said Kathlynn and her friend were lured into a pickup that police believe was driven by registered sex offender Michael Klunder. They said Klunder took the girls to a hog confinement facility where he worked, and the 12-year-old girl

was able to get away.

Klunder, 42, was found dead hours later at another rural property. Authorities said he hanged himself.

Gerard Meyers, assistant director of field operators for the Iowa Division of Criminal Investigation, said Sunday that authorities believe Klunder acted alone.

“We have no indications of any co-conspirators,” he said.

Meyers has said a positive identification would be “the final trigger for not only the family but the community, our investigative personnel, our partner agencies ... to move into that next phase, which is really the closure phase of this very unfortunate circumstance.”

Hundreds of officers and volunteers had searched for Kathlynn, but hopes of finding her alive were dampened when testing confirmed that blood found on Klunder’s truck and at the hog building was Kathlynn’s.

“We were robbed of some innocence in this whole thing,” said Webster County Sheriff James Stubbs after the body was discovered. “We’ll never quite be the same. Hopefully time will heal some of those wounds, but the awareness is a lot higher than it was before.”

Klunder had been released from prison in 2011, after serving 20 years for convictions in two separate Iowa kidnappings that occurred on back-to-back days in December 1991.

Police also are investigating whether Klunder is responsible for kidnapping and slaying two young cousins who vanished while riding bikes in Evansdale, about 90 miles from Dayton. The bodies of the girls, who were ages 10 and 8 when they vanished, were found in December in a wooded area in Bremer County, where Klunder once lived in a home for emotionally troubled youth.

Long Family History Brings Group Of Relatives To Columbus

BY JULIE BLUM  
Columbus Telegram

COLUMBUS, Neb. — Gerhard Reese ran his fingernail across the gravestone, rubbing off a bit of grime that collected over the years.

In a thick German accent, Gerhard joked that he should have brought a toothbrush to clean off the marker in Christ Lutheran Cemetery. He was there visiting the gravesite of his great-great-grandparents, Johann Hinrich and Anna Marie Reese.

The *Columbus Telegram* reports Gerhard traveled from Buchholz, Germany, to meet up with a third cousin, Dan Reese, of Nashville, Tenn. The two came to Columbus last week, meeting for the first time face to face, to research their family history and visit their roots.

Dan, 56, who is originally from Grand Island and grew up in Kear-

ney, has been into genealogy for years, claiming he got started when he was in kindergarten because of an assignment by his teacher. Wanting to dig deeper into his father’s side of the family, Dan put out an inquiry online about the Reeses. He knew that part of his family was from Germany, but wanted to know more.

Johann and Anna Marie Reese immigrated to Platte County in 1873 from Germany, bringing with them three of their six children. One of the children who came to Nebraska, a daughter, Engel Sophia Reese, married William Becker, brother of J.P. Becker, one of the founders of Columbus. Dan is a descendant of the son of William and Engel Sophia.

Dan had done extensive work on his family tree during history class at the University of Nebraska at Kearney. He has information dating back as far as the early 1600s. He kept up the hobby after college, but wanted to know more about

the Reese children who remained in Germany. That is when he posted a message about them online.

It took several weeks, but Dan eventually heard from Gerhard, 73, who explained he is a descendant of one of those children, a son, Caspar Ludwig Reese. That makes them men third cousins.

The two, along with a few other relatives, spent a day in Columbus visiting cemeteries where their family members are buried. Their first stop was Christ Lutheran Cemetery. Dan retold stories he discovered about the Reeses, confusing some of his own family members listening in who hadn’t quite memorized the bloodlines like he had.

One of the departed relatives he was most impressed with was William Becker, who was a city clerk for more than three decades in Columbus before he died in 1929.

“He worked for 30 years and

never missed a day of work. He never took a vacation,” Reese said.

Becker’s obituaries claim he was a true pioneer of Columbus and that he never was absent from a meeting of the city council during his time as city clerk. He only left office because of failing health.

Becker came here in 1863 from Columbus, Ohio, to visit J.P. Becker. He liked it so much that he stayed, becoming the first city librarian, one of the first members of the Columbus Fire Department and a charter member of Immanuel Lutheran Church.

Discovering bits and pieces of their own family is what has kept both Dan and Gerhard on the quest to find out more about their roots.

Neither know when they will stop digging, but without their inquisitive nature, they never would have bridged the thousands of miles between them to meet.



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