

SD Facility Helping In Search For Plane

SIOUX FALLS (AP) — A U.S. Geological Survey facility in South Dakota is helping in the international search for a missing Malaysian jetliner.

The Earth Resources Observation and Science Center north of Sioux Falls collects, archives and makes available for download more than 400 data-filled images of the Earth each day. The center also partners with a network of ground stations across the globe that help download and distribute the data.

The request for help in the search for the plane came from China, EROS Disaster Response Coordinator Brenda Jones told KELO-TV. The Beijing-bound Boeing 777-200 last communicated with air traffic base stations east of Malaysia in the South China Sea, which for several days has been the main focus of the search.

"We respond to a lot of big disasters," Jones said. "Typhoon Haiyan (in the Philippines) we responded to, the Japanese tsunami and earthquake ... Hurricane Katrina back in 2005."

The images coming from EROS have not produced any solid leads in the case of the missing plane, but Jones said she hopes the center's work eventually will help lead to answers.

"I can only hope and pray somebody sees something that will help all these families figure out what happened to their loved ones," she said.

Woman, 82, Driver Who Struck Cyclist

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — An 82-year-old Nebraska woman has been identified as the driver of a vehicle that struck and killed an Omaha cyclist.

Police said Friday that Ruth Jeffers of La Vista was driving the 2002 Ford Taurus that crossed the center line Thursday and struck Jim Johnston, who was biking in the other direction.

Jeffers hasn't been charged, but the investigation continues.

The Omaha World-Herald reports Johnston was flown by helicopter to a hospital, where the 56-year-old died a short time later. He was the athletic trainer at Millard West High School, where teachers burst into tears during a staff meeting called to announce his death.

Math teacher Seth Turman says Johnston was probably out for his daily ride when he was struck.

A message was left for Jeffers on Friday.

Gov. Signs 45 Bills, Repeals Some Laws

PIERRE (AP) — South Dakota Gov. Dennis Daugaard has signed 45 bills into law.

One bill he signed Friday repeals outdated policies on the sale of petroleum products. Other new laws will require the daily recitation of the pledge of allegiance in public schools and appoint a task force to study child sexual abuse.

Another addition to statute makes the fourth Saturday in July the "Day of the American Cowboy."

Daugaard says the nature of government is to add laws, but more isn't always better. The state repealed 378 unneeded rules between the 2012 and 2013 legislative sessions. Daugaard's office says the governor already signed 21 bills this session to repeal existing laws.

Daugaard says it's important to get rid of the "clutter" in state government.

Two Children Rescued From Mud Hole

RAPID CITY (AP) — Two 13-year-old boys in western South Dakota are safe after firefighters rescued them from a mud hole in a construction area.

Multiple news outlets report the Rapid City children were cutting through a construction area to get to Wal-Mart when an embankment on the edge of a drainage system gave way. The boys fell down and got stuck in a muddy pond.

The fire department says one of the boys was trapped up to his waist during the Thursday night incident, while the second had mud up to his knees.

Firefighters rescued one boy using a rope. It took them about an hour to get the second boy out of the mud. Rescuers had to inject air into the mud to be able to pull him out little by little.

Service Remembers 2 Who Drowned

SIOUX FALLS (AP) — Members of the American Indian community in Sioux Falls scheduled a Friday evening memorial service to remember two people who drowned trying to save a child a year ago.

Sixteen-year-old Madison Wallace and 28-year-old Lyle Eagle Tail drowned in the icy Big Sioux River on March 14, 2013, while trying to help Wallace's brother after he fell in the water. The 6-year-old boy escaped unharmed.

The city later installed more warning signs at Falls Park in response to the drowning deaths.

Organizers of the memorial service also wanted to honor emergency officials and volunteers who helped recover the bodies.

Legislators Locate \$2.2 Million For Teachers

BY BOB MERCER
State Capitol Bureau

PIERRE — The Legislature suspended its rules Friday night to give school districts an additional \$2.2 million in state aid to spend on teacher salaries in the coming year.

Lawmakers still haven't fully refilled the cut from 2011, however.

The 3.3 percent increase for the coming year will take state aid per student to \$4,781.14. School boards sought \$4,804.60 to get back to the pre-cut amount.

The \$2.2 million came on top of the 3 percent increase that Gov. Dennis Daugaard had recommended.

"That's something to be proud of," Senate Republican leader Tim Rave of



Hunhoff

against it.

But the two parties came together Friday night to approve the extra money 35-0.

"It's nice to know you did hear us about the need," Sen. Chuck Welke, D-Warner, said. "Unfortunately all our ideas were killed and we were told at the time there was not enough evidence."

Baltic said.

A legislative study committee submitted a resolution at the start of the 2014 session stating South Dakota had a teacher shortage.

Senate Republicans killed it in January without saying a word

In the House, Rep. Justin Cronin said a letter of intent might be needed to ensure school districts use the money for teacher salaries.

"This is a step in the right direction," said Cronin, R-Gettysburg. "It will make a difference."

South Dakota would need to pay its teachers an additional \$2,800 apiece to pull ahead of Mississippi into 49th place among the 50 states, according to House Democratic leader Bernie Hunhoff of Yankton.

"I think we're starting to recognize there is a problem," Hunhoff said.

House members voted 69-0 for the extra money. Teachers will receive approximately \$220 apiece in their base pay if the \$2.2 million is evenly distributed.

Deep Frost Leads To Flooding, Main Breaks

BY DIRK LAMMERS
Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS — Deep frost from a brutally cold winter in the Dakotas is leading to an increase in basement flooding, water main breaks and bumps in the roads as the ground begins to thaw.

"It's really unfolding as a pretty significant issue right now because we have a lot of flooding taking place in areas that didn't have a significant snowpack," said Allen Schlag, a National Weather Service hydrologist based in Bismarck, N.D.

The Weather Service this winter has recorded frost depths of 49 inches in the Bismarck area and more than 53 inches in the Williston, N.D. area. Such

measurements are relatively new, but Schlag estimates that a normal depth in inches for Bismarck would be in the high 20s to low 30s.

"We have contractor reports of water lines freezing at 6 1/2 feet," he said. "It's really been a remarkable year with respect to how deep our frost has been."

In South Dakota, the ground froze down to near 2 feet in the Sioux Falls area and was even deeper moving north of Interstate 90, said Mike Gillispie, a Weather Service hydrologist in Sioux Falls.

"It increases as you go north to 30 to 40 inches," Gillispie said.

Winter water main breaks are directly correlated to frost in the soil, and the Dakotas have seen a number

of breaks this winter. The frozen ground creates pressure that can shear off the lines, Schlag said.

Late last month, a break in a water main that feeds a downtown Sioux Falls fire hydrant sent water flowing into the basements of several businesses including the family owned Bechtold Jewelry.

Paul Bechtold said the break dumped 6 inches of water into a downstairs area that holds a couple of offices, but there was no damage to his main-floor retail area. Cleanup crews filled three garbage bins with commercial carpet, wood shelving and other items.

"We just had a lot of old records and Christmas decorations in our basement," he said. "Basically, it gave us a

chance to clean out something that needed to be cleaned out for a long time."

The thaw is also causing problems as temperatures have climbed into the 50s and even 60s this week. During a year with a deep frost, the ground tends to thaw at the top and the bottom first, leaving a solid middle area, Schlag said.

"If the soil's not accepting any moisture, the water has to go somewhere," he said. "And it's persistent."

Gillispie said that when the soil is frozen, any snow melt or rain on top of that has a hard time finding a place to go. It's especially troublesome for residents who have snow piled up next to the house.

"If it finds a crack it's going to get in," he said.

Nebraska Woman's Privacy Complaint Gets New Life

BY MARGERY A. BECK
Associated Press

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — The Nebraska Supreme Court on Friday gave new life to a lawsuit filed by a woman who says someone at a Fremont medical clinic gossiped about her positive HIV test results.

A lawsuit filed by the woman, identified only as C.E. in court records, against Prairie Fields Family Medicine of Fremont will go to trial, the state's high court ruled.

The woman sued Prairie Fields in 2012, more than a year after she says someone there disclosed her positive test results.

She testified that in 2010, she went to a diagnostic laboratory in Omaha to have a physical examination for a life insurance application. That lab sent her blood sample to another lab, which sent the results to her doctor at Prairie Fields.

Later that year, she went to the clinic to get the results, and was told by a physician's assistant of the positive HIV results. Her doctor explained the test was actually inconclusive, and arranged for another test. But the woman said the next

day, she was contacted by the father of one of her children to ask how she was doing, because a friend of theirs had texted him she had "full blown-out AIDS."

The woman testified that she had told no one of the test results, and that no one at the labs where the blood was drawn and tested knew her. She testified that she was acquainted with at least one staffer who looked at her file the day she learned of the test results, and later found out a clinic staff member who transcribed her medical records was dating the man who texted the father of her child.

A Dodge County District Court judge dismissed her invasion of privacy claim in July 2012, saying she had missed the deadline to sue. Almost a year later, the court issued summary judgment in favor of the medical clinic on the woman's claims for intentional and negligent infliction of emotional distress.

The lower court found that the woman had

presented no competent evidence that a clinic employee had disclosed her diagnosis. But the state's high court said Friday that decision should have been left to a jury.

"The (lower) court incorrectly stated that her evidence must show it was more likely than not that a Prairie Fields employee had disclosed her diagnosis," Justice William M. Connolly wrote for the high court. "A court does not weigh the evidence at the summary

judgment stage."

An attorney for the clinic, Michael Gibbons of Omaha, said he's disappointed with the ruling, but is confident that the clinic will prevail.

"The court's ruling doesn't change the fact that Prairie Fields did not disclose any information regarding plaintiff's medical condition," Gibbons said. "All this decision means is that the plaintiff will get her day in court."

An attorney for the woman said he would comment on the ruling later Friday.

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