

SPECIAL DELIVERY

A VISIT FROM MS. SANTA



Cub Scout Pack 165 delivered homemade Christmas ornaments, cards and candy to servicemen at the Veterans Hospital in Sioux Falls on Dec. 6. Above is Mr. Reeves, a SeaBee from WWII donning a Cub Scout hat and having fun with the boys. Representing Pack 165 were Gabe Bennett, Skyler Chase Wait, Johnnie Christiansen, Dagen Cottam, Joseph Donahoe, Ben Fairholm, Nathan Fairholm, William Fairholm, Ryan Farrell, Jesse Fulk, Nic Harris, Liam Percy, Keegan White, Jordan Wilcox along with Nicole Anglin, Mike Anglin, Adri Cottam, Damien Donahoe, Carl Fairholm, Shannon Fairholm, Duane Fulk and Don Harris.



Ms. Santa visited the Vermillion Public Library Dec. 10 to read stories to local children. Her appearance was made possible by Yankton Area Literacy Council, which also gave out story books to the children.

Victim in fatal Yankton house fire identified

Corps short on Mo. River levee-repair money

From P&D Staff Reports

The victim in a fatal house fire in Yankton Tuesday has been identified.

According to a press release from the Yankton Fire Department, Gladys Merkwán, 89, died when her mobile home at 1100 E. Eighth St., No. 4, started on fire. The fire department was notified of the blaze at 1:21 p.m. Tuesday and responded.

Upon arriving at the scene, firefighters entered the structure and performed a search and fire-suppression operations. Merkwán was removed from the structure after firefighters

gained access through a rear entrance to the building. She was transported to Avera Sacred Heart Hospital where it was reported she was pronounced dead.

The Yankton Fire Department was assisted by Yankton County EMS, Yankton Police Department and Yankton County Emergency Management

The cause of the fire is currently under investigation. Assisting the YFD in the investigation was the South Dakota State Fire Marshal's Office and the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF).

OVERLAND PARK, Kan. (AP) — The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers announced Monday that it has money available so far to fix only 11 of 68 Missouri River levees and is draining extra water from upstream reservoirs to nurse the flood-battered system through 2012.

The damaged levees are in Missouri, Nebraska, Iowa and Kansas, officials announced during a meeting of the Missouri River Flood Task Force in suburban Kansas City. About half are federal levees and the other half are part of a program in which the corps helps pay for flood repairs if the levees pass routine inspections.

"The reality is that not all damages can be repaired this year because of funding and time limitations," said Brig. Gen. John R. McMahon, commander of the corps' northwestern division office.

The \$68 million available is only sufficient to help pay for the 11 most crucial projects.

The goal is to fix those levees at least enough to protect against a 25-year flood, although many provided 100-year flood protection previously, said John Leighow, chief of the readiness and contingency operations division in the northwestern division of the corps.

It would cost \$253 million to make all the Missouri River Basin repairs. That money is part of the more than \$2 billion the corps estimates it needs to repair the damage to the nation's levees, dams and riverbanks caused by this year's excessive flooding. A supplemental appropriation bill is stalled in Congress, and the corps has been focusing its limited money on fixing levees that protect communities and facilities such as water treatment plants.

For now, the corps has been shuffling money around in its existing budget to pay for the levee fixes, Leighow said.

"We are trying to be in the best possible position come March 1," he said.

One step the corps has taken to help is to wait an extra week to drop to lower winter-release levels on the Missouri River, allowing it to empty extra water from the six upstream reservoirs. The corps has been stepping down the releases slowly and plans to hit the target level Wednesday.

"We don't anticipate that we will have a repeat of this year next year," said Jody Farhat, chief of the corps' Missouri River Basin Water Management office. "But the system is vulnerable and that is why we are releasing this additional water. The levees aren't repaired, so having some additional storage ... may allow us more flexibility to operate next summer."

Water levels must be dropped in winter to avoid flood-causing ice jams, but this year's mild fall weather allowed the corps to delay the reductions. Besides the helpful fall weather, Farhat also found hope in the relatively light snowpack.

SD proposes alternative to No Child Left Behind

By CHET BROKAW
Associated Press

PIERRE — Education Secretary Melody Schopp said Monday that South Dakota has put together a new system for assessing schools' performance to replace flawed provisions in the federal school improvement law known as No Child Left Behind.

The new system should qualify the state for a waiver from current federal requirements and provide a long-term method of accountability once Congress makes expected changes in the law, Schopp said.

No Child Left Behind primarily uses an annual test to measure schools' progress. South Dakota's system would include testing but also look at students' academic growth from year to year, elementary school attendance, high school students' readiness for college or jobs, the effectiveness of teachers and school administrators and community attitudes toward local schools.

"We really think this model places the emphasis on continuing improvement," Schopp said.

A group of 23 teachers, school administrators and officials from education groups developed the plan. After getting public comments and making changes in response, the committee will submit its final version to the state Board of Education for approval Jan. 27, and a waiver proposal will be submitted to the U.S. Education Department on Feb. 21, Schopp said.

South Dakota's plan includes many elements contained in waiver proposals already submitted by 11 other states, Schopp said.

The public can comment on it on the Education Department's website, www.doe.sd.us.

Wade Pogany, executive director of the Associated School Boards of South Dakota, said school boards believe a change is needed from the current federal law, but it will be particularly difficult to work out details for evaluating teachers.

An official with the South Dakota Education Association, the state's main teachers' union, was not immediately available to comment.

Education officials in many states have complained No Child Left Behind labels many schools as failures even if they make progress. It requires every student to be proficient in reading and math by 2014, but many education officials say that's an unrealistic goal and they expected Congress to change the law by now.

President Barack Obama and U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan have said states can get waivers from current requirements if they agree to some reforms, such as tougher evaluation systems for teachers and administrators.

South Dakota would use the current test for this school year's evaluations, and then the new system would be phased in over four years. Schools ranked near the bottom under the new system would receive support to make improvements instead of being punished, Schopp said.

Schools in the bottom 70 percent also would have to seek greater annual improvements than those above that level.

The new system would use annual tests to measure the percentage of each school's students scoring proficient or advanced in reading and math. It would measure the academic achievement of students in groups that traditionally have scored lower than the statewide average on tests, including Native American, black, Hispanic and low-income students.

Paul Haeder

Paul A. Haeder, 96 of Lincoln, NE, passed away on Saturday, Dec. 3, 2011. He was a retired professor of mathematics at the University of Nebraska Omaha and University of South Dakota. He was born to German immigrants in Yale on July 31, 1915, the second of eight children. He married the love of his life, Phyllis Reisenweber, on June 23, 1939 in Britton. He graduated from Huron College in 1939 and received his Masters Degree from the University of South



HAEDER

Dakota in 1950. He completed his Ph.D. from Iowa State University in 1968.

Paul had a wonderful life, richly blessed by his family and his faith. He was preceded in death by his wife, Phyllis; his daughter, Rosalie Hootman; and by his parents, Richard and Emma Haeder; and brothers and sisters, Otto, Gerda (DuBois), Richard, Hugo and Esther (Jungemann). He is survived by children, Allison (Marty) Winaker, Walnut Creek, CA, Bill (Linda) Haeder, Rockwell City, IA and Paula (Matt) Metcalf, Lincoln, NE; and by his son-in-law and wife, Joe and LaVonne Hootman, of Grand Forks, ND. Paul is also survived by his eight grandchildren, (Jeff Winaker, Sara Winaker Kiehn, Joseph Hootman, Janine Hootman Wilke, Amy Haeder Dettmer, Adam Haeder, Meredith Metcalf and Allie Metcalf

OBITUARIES

Crummy), by 18 great-grandchildren, (with #19 due in March); by his sister, Hilda Ulrich of Sioux Falls, brother, Robert Haeder of Huron, and by a large extended family and many friends.

His greatest joy was his family. He loved sending birthday greetings to his children and grandchildren and their spouses and to each great-grandchild. He loved his South Dakota farm background, church music, sports and the trees in Lincoln. He had an outstanding memory and knowledge of history, and he delighted family and friends with stories of his interesting life.

Paul was a WWII veteran of the U.S. Navy. He received UNO's Great Teacher Award in 1980. He served as president of

Lutheran Men of Omaha and the West Omaha Lion's Club. Throughout his life, he was an active member of the Lutheran Church and he was a current member of Sheridan Lutheran Church.

Celebration of Life Service was 11 a.m. Thursday, Dec. 8, 2011, at Sheridan Lutheran Church, 6955 Old Cheney Rd, Lincoln, NE. Visitation was 5 to 7 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 7, at Roper and Sons, 4300 'O' Street. Family suggests memorials to Sheridan Lutheran Church or Lincoln Community Foundation.

Arrangements by Roper and Sons Funeral Services. Condolences or personal reflections may be sent online at www.ropersons.com

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Thank You Vermillion!

Once again we must offer our sincere gratitude and thank you to the citizens and the community of Vermillion. The loss of our father and grandfather has been difficult for us, but the generosity, love, and caring you have all extended to us has been truly amazing. Dad was a people person who made and maintained countless friendships throughout this 92 years, and the depth of those friendships has been displayed in abundance to all of us. What loyal and loving people you are. We were especially touched by all the personal memories and comments in the cards...some stories we never knew, some we had forgotten...but all will be cherished forever.

A special thank you to the Kober Funeral Home for their compassion, their humor, and the respectful way they handled a difficult and emotional time for our family. Another special thank you to the Vermillion Police Department...what an honor to Dad's memory to have them so involved.

Dad loved Vermillion and it appears to us that Vermillion loved him back. Thank you so much for the wonderful life Dad got to live in this special place.

The Family of Merle Offerdahl

We want to say....

Thank you to everyone who helped make the 3rd Annual Parade of Lights, Community Tree Lighting, Stockings for Soldiers at the Vermillion Public Library, Coloring Contest - Lunch With Santa and Pictures With Santa a great success!

- City of Vermillion
- Vermillion Street Dept.
- Vermillion Light & Power Dept.
- Vermillion Police Dept.
- Vermillion Fire Dept.
- Vermillion Public Library - "Stockings for Soldiers" & crafts
- Mick & Cheryl Breske
- Randy Hammer - Emcee
- Todd Brevik - donating the Community Christmas Tree
- Hy-Vee - sponsoring the coloring contest & lunch with Santa
- USD Fine Arts Dept. - USD Carolers
- USD ROTC Color Guard
- LTC Tom Martin
- Mayor Jack Powell & Lisa Ketcham
- Nancy & Tom Nelson
- United Church of Christ
- Brunick Furniture
- Peterman Photography

- All of the Parade Participants:
- Brad's Plumbing
- Classic Hits 106.3
- CorTrust Bank
- Dakota PC Warehouse
- Dan & Peggy Lund
- Diamond C Ranch
- Kappa Alpha Theta
- Louie's Carpet Cleaning
- Sanford Vermillion
- Ribs, Rods & Rock'n Roll Stream
- USD ROTC Color Guard
- USD -Charlie I Shuttle & Charlie the Coyote
- Vermillion Fire Department
- Vermillion Lions Club
- Vermillion Public Library

Congratulations to Sanford Vermillion - the entry winner of the 2011 Parade of Lights!

On behalf of the VCDC Holiday Events Committee:
Kimberly Andres - Chairperson
Stacey Allen - Sara Engel - Barb Martin
Laurie Siegel - Kelsey Thomas