

Region
ISO RATING

SUPERIOR — The work of Superior's Volunteer Fire Department and adjunct city services were recognized recently as the Insurance Services Office Inc. lowered the city's ISO rating from Class 8/9 to Class 4/9.

This indicates an improvement in the city's fire suppression delivery system.

ISO is responsible for ratings used by underwriters to calculate premiums for residential, commercial and industrial properties.

The new classification followed a public protection survey, with information supplied by Fire Chief Todd Kroeger and Water Department Foreman Brad Erickson.

Information requested included hydrant flow data, procedure for processing fire alarms, fire department equipment, staffing and training.

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

DONIPHAN — The new Doniphan Community Foundation is up and running.

The foundation will operate under the legal and fiduciary responsibility of the Grand Island Community Foundation, working with prospective donors to facilitate their charitable interests, evaluate grant proposals and recommend grant distributions.

The Grand Island Community Foundation will provide staff support for development of promotional materials, establishment of permanent funds, financial oversight and investment of funds.

Terry Connick, Jeff Cornelius, Lee Jacobsen, Scott Roach and Brenda Wiltfong are directors of the Doniphan foundation. The Bank of Doniphan has provided initial funding of \$25,000 for the foundation.

For more information contact Connick at the Doniphan Insurance Agency, (402) 845-6568, or Lisa Katzberg, executive director of the Grand Island Community Foundation, (308) 381-7767.

State

MAN KILLED

FAIRBURY — A 31-year-old man died a one-vehicle crash early Sunday morning in Jefferson County.

Kelly L. Janssen of rural Fairbury was in a westbound vehicle on a county road when it apparently drifted into the eastbound lane, overcorrected and rolled, the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office said in a written statement.

Investigators said Janssen was not wearing a seat belt in the 1:06 a.m. crash. He was thrown from, then crushed by the rolling vehicle, authorities said. He was found dead at the scene of the crash.

The death was the 278th on Nebraska roads this year, compared with 227 by Dec. 1, 2001.

BACK TO AFGHANISTAN

OMAHA — The 13 Afghan teachers who have made a five-week tour of classrooms in Nebraska are heading back home.

The women tearfully acknowledged how close they have grown to their American counterparts, but say they are determined to return to the challenge that brought them here: teaching in a homeland starved for education.

The Associated Press

Calendar
HASTINGS

◆ Hastings Westernaires Square Dance Club dance, 8 p.m. Tuesday at Veterans of Foreign Wars, 1053 S. Wabash Ave.

Lotteries

WINNING NUMBERS

Sunday
Kansas Pick 3 8-1-8
Saturday
Powerball 14-19-21-29-PB-8
Power play 2; jackpot \$80 million
Nebraska Pick 5 10-15-25-28-34
Jackpot: \$92,000
2by2 Red 3-12, White 13-16
Kansas Pick 3 4-4-3
Super Kansas Cash 1-12-13-20-25
Super Cashball 4
Hot Lotto 16-17-27-28-37
Hot Ball 11

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE COSTS CLIMB OVER 2 YEARS' TIME

The Associated Press

LINCOLN — A struggling economy is driving up public assistance costs across the state.

As businesses lay off workers or cut back their hours, those people are turning in large numbers to public assistance.

For seven years before 2000, food stamp program numbers had been on the decline, dropping 32 percent since April 1993, when 116,113 Nebraskans

used food stamps.

Then came an economic slump in 2000. Now, two years later, almost 15,000 more people are using food stamps — a 19 percent jump from 2000. The state also is spending about \$800,000 more a month on Aid to Families of Dependent Children payments than it did two years ago.

Growth in the food stamp program does not affect the state budget much because the program is almost completely federally funded. But it does signal other rising expenses for the state.

"A bigger and bigger share of the state budget is public assistance. And that is very much squeezing other programs," Chris Peterson, spokesman for Gov. Mike

Johanns, told the Lincoln Journal Star.

The food stamp and welfare caseloads tend to serve as economic markers.

"When the economy flattens out, you'll see program growth almost every time, particularly in the food stamp program," said Mike Harris, deputy administrator in the Office of Economic and Family Support.

The Nebraska Health and Human Services System has requested about \$10 million more in state tax funds next fiscal year to cover the growing number of families getting Aid to Families of Dependent Children payments.

A rainy-day fund consisting of federal tax dollars for public assistance programs set aside during the late 1990s helped

pay for the mounting costs in the last two fiscal years.

But the state health agency expects to deplete that fund this year, said Mary Steiner, program analysis and research administrator for the system.

In future budgets, state tax dollars likely will have to pick up all the growth, plus expenditures previously covered by the rainy-day fund.

Also, Medicaid will need an additional \$36.7 million in state tax money to keep up with rising recipient numbers and medical costs next fiscal year.

State lawmakers cut Medicaid in a summer special session, eliminating about 23,000 adults and children from program eligibility.

COMMUNITY BRIDGE TOURNAMENT



B. SHERIDAN BARTELL/ Tribune

Sutton bridge players (left to right) Roger Sheridan, Ernie Snell, Betty Sheridan and Renalda Snell play during a bridge marathon.

Love of the game

B. SHERIDAN BARTELL
Hastings Tribune

SUTTON — Jeanine Ham Erickson and her sister, Beverly, organized a bridge marathon 30 years ago to raise a bit of money for the Sutton American Legion Club.

Little did they know that their brainchild would carry such lasting social significance for so many card players in the Sutton area.

The bridge marathon has played itself out every year since then.

"It all started when my husband, Wayne, was Legion Commander, and we thought having a bridge marathon at the Sutton Legion with entry fees was a way to give the Legion some money," said co-founder Jeanine Erickson.

"We started really fancy, with open-faced sandwiches cut like diamonds, spades and hearts. We even made homemade ice cream."

The schedule of play is by the book of customs, with sign-up in September, an initial group card party on the first Sunday in October, a Christmas group card party on the first Sunday in December, and a closing group meal and card party on the first Sunday in May.

Stacked between the group card play is individual play in homes, with two couples, of 24 hands of bridge. A given couple usually will play about 10 individual bridge games in the marathon season.

Twenty couples currently are signed up in the bridge marathon, but the number of couples has been as high as 30. The top three high-scoring bridge couples are announced at the May meal, but with the non-competitive social decorum that comes from playing bridge together for decades.

Longtime players Ernie and

Ronanda Snell enjoy the time-honored tradition.

"It's a way to meet new people that might join up, and a way to be with people in our community that we know of, but are not in other community groups with," Ernie Snell said. "It's a nice social opportunity for us."

The marathon holds a few challenges.

For couples who head to warmer climates in the winter, it's a challenge to get all their games played.

For novice bridge players, it is a challenge to play 24 hands at one setting and "keep track of trump." And for the seasoned player, the challenge that a game of bridge offers is what keeps players coming back for more.

Interested players for the 2003-2004 season can contact Dixie Weldon in Sutton or Delores Yost in Harvard.

Woman takes police on short, fast chase

Hastings Tribune

A 20-year-old Hastings woman was arrested Wednesday after leading police on a short chase — with speeds reaching in excess of 50 mph — through a Hastings residential area.

Hastings Police Sgt. Dan Losada said officers were called to Second Street and Sixth Avenue at 10:30 p.m. Wednesday after a resident reported a vehicle with a flat tire driving on a lawn.

Officers attempted to make contact with the driver, but the vehicle sped off at a rate of 50 mph, leading officers north on Sixth Avenue, Losada said.

The driver was weaving into the oncoming lane, he said, then drove into the ditch and struck a mailbox in the 1000 block of North Sixth Avenue.

The vehicle turned west on 12th Street, forcing traffic on 12th Street to clear the way.

The pursuit ended about five minutes after it began in the 1200 block of North Cedar Avenue after the woman stopped her vehicle, according to an HPD press release.

The driver was arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol, minor in possession of alcohol, suspicion of careless driving, leaving the scene of an accident, driving left of center and flight to avoid arrest.

The woman was transported to Mary Lanning Memorial Hospital where a blood alcohol test was performed. She was booked in the Adams County Jail, then taken to another jail that houses women.

Formal charges had not been filed this morning.

Crashes slow traffic on I-80

Hastings Tribune

GRAND ISLAND — Two accidents gnarled Interstate 80 traffic Sunday night, bringing a line of cars seven miles long to a standstill.

The first accident involved two eastbound cars just on the east side of Grand Island about 6:50 p.m., Hall County Sheriff's

Sgt. Bryan Simonson said.

Shortly after, there was a five-car accident about a mile away, also in the eastbound lanes.

Simonson said a 71-year-old Illinois woman was transported to a Grand Island hospital with minor injuries in the first accident. There were no reported injuries in the five-car pileup.

HC coach wakes up to accident in driveway

Hastings Tribune

The coach of the Hastings College women's basketball team was awoken early Sunday morning by the driver of a vehicle who crashed into the coach's pickup parked in the driveway.

Tony Hobson slept through the noise of the crash, but heard the doorbell. Hobson lives at 2545 S. Deer Trail at Idlewilde Acres south of Hastings.

"He came to my door," Hobson said from his office this morning. "That took some guts."

Hobson said it was an odd thing to wake up to — someone trying to explain how they crashed in your yard and then hit your pickup.

"It was kind of kind like, 'run that by me again,' " he said. "It took me awhile to come around."

Hobson said his pickup, which was parked in the driveway about 20 yards from the street, was knocked about 10 feet upon impact.

"He had to hit that thing hard," he said.

Michael J. Bonham, 18, of 2870 S. Smokey Hill Road was northbound on Deer Trail when his car left the roadway and crossed over an open lot of grass, according to Adams County Sheriff's Deputy Jason Ackles.

The vehicle slid sideways and hit the edge of Hobson's driveway, rolled and then struck the pickup.

The driver was found inside the Hobsons' residence. He was treated at Mary Lanning Memorial Hospital and taken into custody at the Adams County Jail on suspicion of driving under the influence of alcohol, Ackles said.

Bonham was released later that day on a \$250 bond.

There were no other injuries.

Weigh station officers become troopers

The Associated Press

LINCOLN — The Nebraska State Patrol gave badges to 70 new troopers Monday, but all of them had already been working for the state's law enforcement agency.

The State Patrol's 70 carrier enforcement officers, who work at weigh stations across the state, officially became troopers during an official badge ceremony in Lincoln.

The officers' uniforms will change from green to blue, and they will also receive pay and benefits equal to the troopers working traffic enforcement.

State

'TIE ONE ON'

LINCOLN — Mothers Against Drunk Driving wants Nebraskans to "tie one on for safety" this holiday season.

It is asking that drivers tie a red MADD ribbon to their cars or place a red decal on their windshields as a visible pledge that they will not drive drunk.

The 16th annual "Tie One On For Safety" campaign was launched today in Nebraska by Gov. Mike Johanns. He was joined by relatives of people killed by drunken drivers, as well as other state and local police and public officials including Lincoln Mayor Don Wesely and University of Nebraska-Lincoln Chancellor Harvey Perlman.

The Associated Press

Goodfellows

'TIS THE SEASON TO GIVE

The Goodfellows campaign accepts donations of new toys or cash.

Donations can be dropped off at the Tribune offices, 908 W. Second St., or mailed to P.O. Box 788, Hastings,

NE 68902. Also, monetary donations may be placed in the Tribune drop box in the alley behind the Tribune.

Drop boxes for toys are located at the Tribune, Big Kmart, Walmart, Gordmans, Dollar General, Lincoln Federal Bank and Ben Franklin.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO DATE

Elaine Hatten	\$20	Total	\$685
Terry Classen	\$50		

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Pendergast-Tjaden

Hollie Daphne Pendergast and Brian Eric Tjaden announce their plans for a wedding Saturday, December 7 at First St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Hastings.