



# Hastings Tribune

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## Street collapse

San Diego landslide opens chasm in road, forcing evacuation of 111 homes.

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# Burlington widening raises concerns

STATE OFFICIALS EXPLAIN PROJECT, CONSIDER HISTORIC DISTRICT'S NEEDS

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Lower decorative street lights and natural grasses may become part of a street-widening project in Hastings.

On Wednesday, representatives from the Nebraska Department of Roads and the Nebraska State Historical Society met with Hastings residents to discuss the

Burlington Avenue widening project.

The plan is to widen the thoroughfare from Seventh to Ninth streets so the entire length would be as wide as it is at the intersections.

Burlington Avenue is part of U.S. Highway 281, meaning that it is controlled by the state and federal government.

Patrick Schafer, designer for the project with the Department of Roads, told the audience of about a dozen people that the project would start in late September 2008 and last about a month.

The project currently is estimated to

cost about \$408,000, with half being paid by the federal government and the other half by paid by the city. Hastings City Engineer Dave Wacker said the adjacent property owners would not be responsible to cover any of the costs of the project.

Schafer told the group that this project stemmed from safety concerns regarding the lack of a designated turning lane along the entire length from Seventh to Ninth streets.

"This is a safety project to widen existing Burlington to account for a

common left turn lane between Seventh and Ninth streets," he said. "This would prevent rear-end accidents and backups where people are turning onto Eighth Street or into the new development."

Schafer said he is also planning to make improvements to the striping on Seventh Street east and west of Burlington Avenue to help with the flow of traffic moving onto the highway.

In total, the highway will be widened by 7 feet on each side at its narrowest point. When completed the

street will be about 65 feet wide with four driving lanes and one designated turning lane.

To widen the highway, Schafer said, curbs will be removed and the additional width will be added. The highway will not be completely closed at any time, and only the necessary portions of Burlington Avenue will be torn up for the project, he said.

"We'll just tear up what is needed," Schafer said. "We're not tearing up the entire street."

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AMY ROH/Tribune

Lincoln Elementary students Sheldon Kennedy (left), Shiann Cook and JaVonte Harris pet Moonie, a quarter horse brought by Alice Longhorn (center) to teach students how to safely handle horses Wednesday during Progressive Agriculture Safety Day at the Adams County Fairgrounds.

# Johanns says he'll enter Senate race next week

ANNA JO BRATTON

The Associated Press

LINCOLN — Republican Mike Johanns plans to officially enter the Nebraska Senate race next week, and he's hired a former employee to manage his campaign, Johanns said Wednesday.



Johanns

## Inside

Osborne confirms he interviewed for ag secretary before Johanns. — Page A5

Johanns resigned as U.S. agriculture secretary last month to launch a bid for the Senate seat to be vacated by Republican Chuck Hagel. Johanns faces Jon Bruning, the Nebraska attorney general, and Pat Flynn, a Schuyler businessman, in the May primary.

Johanns said he's ready to start his campaign and plans to tour the state to announce his bid.

"There's a lot of miles to travel out there, and I'm going to travel them," he said.

Johanns has hired Chris Peterson, who worked for Johanns — as his spokesman and later his assistant chief of staff — from 1998 until October 2003, when he left to work as executive director for the state Republican Party.

He left that job in December 2004 to become a lobbyist for Union Pacific Railroad.

Peterson, 36, was responsible for Union Pacific's relations with government officials in Arizona, Kansas, Missouri, New Mexico, Oklahoma,

Please see JOHANNS/page B2

# Skills for a lifetime

LESSONS FROM AG SAFETY DAY APPLY TO MORE THAN THE FARM

TONY HERRMAN

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Students from various Adams County elementary schools spent Wednesday learning safety lessons that are useful not only on the farm, but most anywhere they may find themselves.

The students attended the annual Progressive Agriculture Safety Day on the Adams County Fairgrounds.

"It went great," said Ron Seymour, ag extension educator for the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in Adams County, who gave a presentation about reflexes. "We received great comments from teachers, and the kids learned skills not only can they use if they visit a farm but good skills, like road safety or not to mess around with electricity."

The Progressive Agriculture



AMY ROH/Tribune

Dewey Lienemann, with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln extension office, talks to students from Zion Lutheran School about the dangers of power take-offs during Progressive Agriculture Safety Day Wednesday at the Adams County Fairgrounds.

Safety Day was founded by the Progressive Farmer magazine in 1995. The program trains and provides the resources that local communities need to conduct one-day safety programs that are age-appropriate, hands-on, fun, and safe for children.

The 190 fifth- and sixth-grade

students from Adams Central District 13, Juniata, Zion Lutheran and Lincoln Elementary schools also participated in presentations on sun safety, railroad safety, large-animal safety, power take-off safety, weather safety, grain safety, diggers hotline safety and first aid safety.

"Those are things that are very important on the farm, but it's more general safety," Seymour said. "We're hoping they will keep (the skills and information learned) for a lifetime."

Juniata Principal Lonnie Abbot thought Progressive Agriculture Safety Day was beneficial for his students, of whom 10 percent to 15 percent have an agricultural background.

"We live in an agricultural community, so a lot of kids are around farm equipment," he said. "I thought they covered a lot of things that were beneficial for all our students."

The different presentations taught children with hands-on activities. For instance, Seymour timed how long it took the students to catch a falling yardstick.

He then distracted participants as they did the same thing. The activity was meant to teach the children to pay attention, especially in a situation when they didn't know what to expect because a person's reaction time is slower when distracted.

Please see SKILLS/page B2

# Nelson flattered by rumors he'll run with Clinton

TIMBERLY ROSS

The Associated Press

OMAHA — U.S. Sen. Ben Nelson has rebuffed speculation that he's being considered as a running mate for Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Rodham Clinton.

The Nebraska Democrat said Wednesday during his weekly conference call with reporters that while he's flattered by the rumors, he remains focused on his job in the Senate.

"I'm not going to let the bright lights affect what I'm doing," he said.

Nelson was linked to Clinton, the Democratic front-runner in the 2008 race, in a recent column written by syndicated political columnist Marianne Means that put him on a short list of potential running mates.

"Either could bring balance to a Clinton ticket," Means wrote in her Monday column, referring to Nelson and Ohio Gov. Ted Strickland and the support they have in traditionally Republican states.

Please see NELSON/page B2

## Weather

Lo: 65  
Hi: 88



Art by Amber Lynn Pedersen, 9, Alcott School

## METH SCARE

ST. PAUL, Minn. — Seven students from Hazel Park Middle School Academy in St. Paul, Minn. were taken to hospitals this week after ingesting crystal methamphetamine a classmate brought to

## Nation

school. Principal Coleman McDonough said that about 12:15 p.m., during a school lunch period, one girl went to the school nurse because she wasn't feeling well and was anxious and scared. The girl confided that the group

of students, including six girls and one boy, had found a substance and "ingested" it, officials said. All of the students were taken to hospitals. McDonough said the students apparently took small amounts. Minneapolis-St. Paul Star Tribune

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Local

**SONIC ROBBERY**

A 19-year-old Hastings man accused of assisting in the robbery of a fast-food manager pleaded no contest Wednesday in Adams County District Court.

Zachary Lee, of Grand Island, pleaded to an amended charge of accessory to a felony. In exchange for his plea, prosecutors reduced the charge from aiding and abetting a robbery, a Class 2 felony.

Adams County District Judge Terri Harder ordered a pre-sentence investigation to be completed. A date for Lee's sentencing has not been set.

According to court records, Lee was an ex-employee of Sonic Drive-in, 928 S. Burlington Ave., and reluctantly gave Luke E. F. Lefever, 18, of Broken Bow, a layout of the restaurant prior to a Jan. 24 robbery.

Lefever snuck up on Sonic store manager Cory Levos after he closed the store for the night. Using a handgun, Lefever ordered Levos back into the restaurant to open the safe. Lefever took a red money bag, containing \$1,196.59, left the store and headed west on foot. About a block from the store, Lefever met with a getaway vehicle and fled the scene.

Lefever pleaded no contest to the robbery July 26 and was sentenced to three to five years in prison and \$1,196.59 in restitution.

Lee reportedly received \$100 for his part in the robbery.

A 17-year-old Juniata boy was issued a citation for accessory to a felony. He reportedly drove the getaway vehicle and received \$200 for his part.

Accessory to a felony is a Class 4 felony punishable by up to five years imprisonment and a \$10,000 fine.

**BOUND OVER**

The case of a 31-year-old Hastings man accused of spitting infected blood and saliva on three officers was sent to Adams County District Court Tuesday.

Adams County Judge Jack Ott bound over the case of John M.C. Roberts, fo 302 E. 26th St., after a preliminary hearing. Roberts faces three counts of first-degree assault on an officer on Aug. 23.

According to court records, Roberts was being placed in emergency protective care at Mary Lanning Memorial Hospital when he spat blood at Walter Eley III and Brian Hessler, both officers in the Hastings Police Department, and Deputy Nathan Smith with the Adams County Sheriff's Office.

The officers and emergency room staff at Mary Lanning were aware that Roberts has the Hepatitis C virus, a liver disease that can be transmitted through blood.

Ott also issued a warrant to have Roberts' blood tested.

Roberts is in the custody of the Adams County Sheriff's Office with a \$25,000 bond.

First-degree assault on an officer is a Class 2 felony punishable by up to 50 years in prison.

**Osborne interviewed for ag secretary position**

FORMER U.S. REP.  
WAS ASKED ABOUT  
POSITION BEFORE JOHANN'S

ANNA JO BRATTON  
The Associated Press

OMAHA — Before Mike Johanns became U.S. agriculture secretary three years ago, the president's chief political strategist called another Nebraskan and asked him to interview for the job.

Former U.S. Rep. Tom Osborne confirmed when asked this week that he went to the White House in November 2004 to interview for the nation's top farm job.

But the legendary Nebraska football coach was in the middle of a congressional term and trying to decide whether to run for governor in 2006.

"We were trying to work on a lot of things in the 3rd District, and we were trying to see that through," Osborne said.

He called Karl Rove the day after the interview to tell him he wasn't interested.



Osborne

Now, nearly four years later, Johanns has resigned his Cabinet post to enter the Senate race to replace Republican Chuck Hagel.

"I don't want to come across as being critical of Mike Johanns for leaving," Osborne said this week. But "this is a critical time for the farm bill, and some of the decisions I made in the past were based on trying to finish the job."

The legislation is tangled in arguments over the scope of government payouts to wealthy farmers. The House passed its version of the multibillion-dollar legislation in July, and the Senate Agriculture Committee hopes to consider its version

of the bill this week.

Osborne, a Republican, has backed out of politics and is teaching in the College of Business Administration at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

He said he won't publicly endorse a primary candidate, but he said he'll personally stand by Attorney General Jon Bruning, who supported Osborne when he ran for governor.

"Jon stayed with me right to the end," Osborne said. "One thing that is important to me is loyalty. I'm not just going to turn my back on someone."

Osborne and his wife, Nancy, have both contributed to Bruning's campaign.

White House spokesman Alex Conant said Wednesday he couldn't confirm whether Osborne interviewed because the White House did not comment on such matters.

Osborne, 70, said administration officials indicated he was the first person to interview after Agriculture Secretary Ann

Veneman resigned in November 2004.

Later that month, reports surfaced that Democratic Nebraska Sen. Ben Nelson was being considered for the Cabinet post. Nelson wouldn't say whether he was offered the job, and his spokesman this week still would not.

Then on Dec. 2, 2004, the bombshell: Bush offered Johanns the Cabinet post and Johanns would leave midway through his second term as governor to accept.

After Johanns was confirmed by the Senate, Lt. Gov. Dave Heineman took over as governor.

In April 2005, Osborne announced he would challenge Heineman for the Republican nomination but lost in the 2006 primary election. Heineman went on to win his own term.

Osborne said he hasn't had any calls from the White House since Johanns resigned last month, and he doesn't think anyone's planning to offer him the job.

**UNK honors retired Minden bandmaster**

HASTINGS TRIBUNE  
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MINDEN — Phil Fahrlander, who spent 29 years as band director at Minden High School here, has been named the 2007 Gary Thomas Distinguished Music Award recipient by the Department of Music at the University of Nebraska at Kearney.

The award is named for Gary Thomas, a UNK music faculty member for 37 years who served as department chairman for 34 years.

Fahrlander retired in 1997 after a total of 38 years in the teaching profession. At Minden, he taught instrumental music to two generations of students in grades 5-12. He also taught English and humanities classes and directed the high school gifted program.

Before moving to Minden, Fahrlander spent five years teaching at Diller and four at North Loup-Scotia Public Schools.

During Fahrlander's tenure in Minden, the Whippet marching band brought home more than 100 trophies and other awards and concert bands consistently received superior ratings at district music contests.

Through the years, he served as president of the Nebraska State Bandmasters Association and as chairman of band affairs for the Nebraska Music Educators Association. He was active in both organizations and led many of their committees.

For more than 12 years, he wrote a humorous column for the Nebraska Music Educator magazine and designed covers for the publication. He also designed logos for the Nebraska Music Educators Association and the Nebraska State Bandmasters Association.

Since his retirement, Fahrlander has served frequently as a judge for various band competitions including Harvest of Harmony in Grand Island and the Hastings College Melody Round-up.

In Minden, he helped to launch and coordinate the annual Minden Bandfest marching contest, the 17th annual edition of which is scheduled for Oct. 13.

Please see MINDEN/page B1



BRENT MCCOWN/Tribune

Venezuelan concert pianist Karine Gil practices in Fuhr Hall on the Hastings College Campus for her concert next Tuesday.

**Cranes, strains, and audibles**

ECOLOGIST/CONCERT PIANIST  
KARINE GIL TO PERFORM  
AT HC TUESDAY

JOHN HUTHMACHER  
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The sound of whooping cranes singing is literally music to the ears of ecologist Karine Gil. A native of Venezuela, Gil, 47, also happens to be a gifted concert pianist and teacher. Her work abroad as an ecologist has led to concert performances in Mexico, Sweden, the U.S. and Venezuela. She is in Nebraska on a postdoctoral position to study the migration of the endangered whooping crane from 2007-10.

Gil will perform a recital featuring Venezuelan music at 7:30 p.m. Oct. 9 in Fuhr Hall at Hastings College. The concert will include some of her original compositions, including "Scenes of Lake Maracaibo," a score containing musical translation of birds and other environmental sounds from the Zulia State Lake — the largest lake in

South America — in the western region of Venezuela.

Her performance is by sheer happenstance. In February, while looking for a piano to practice on, she met HC president Phil Dudley at the Platte River Whooping Crane Trust Office in Wood River. Upon learning she was a concert pianist, Dudley promptly extended the invitation.

Gil has studied the demography of whooping cranes since 2002. Her dissertation — completed in 2006 — explained how whooping cranes utilize Texas and Canada for survival and breeding. The next step in her studies will focus on the causes of mortality among the birds and their migration habits along the corridor of wetlands from North Dakota to Texas.

"Mainly it's about how they use the Platte River," she said. "It's a model of the dynamics of this bird to understand better what happens with its population."

Her work is funded by the Platte River Whooping Crane Trust Institute, which has studied the birds

since 1978. Her mission is to track the 20 surviving birds left from the original 134 that were color-banded at age 6 months between 1977 and 1988 during a joint study project conducted by Canadian and U.S. wildlife services.

Using mapped data, volunteers and binoculars, she hopes to spot as many of the banded birds as possible during the fall migration period, which historically runs from Oct. 11 to Nov. 10. According to numbers from last year's reports, just 18 birds of the 236 in total that traveled along the Platte River during their migration were sighted.

Gil holds a doctorate in biology from Texas A&M University, an applied ecology master's degree from Zulia University in Venezuela, and a music professor degree from the Conservatory of Music in Venezuela.

In her view, her two careers complement each other well. Both require a keen sense of hearing, and both are equally compelling, she said.

Please see GIL/page B1

Calendar

HASTINGS

- ◆ Alcoholics Anonymous, noon, 5:15, and 8 p.m. Friday, 521 S. St. Joseph Ave.
- ◆ Narcotics Anonymous, 8 p.m. Friday, 401 N. Lincoln Ave.

Lotteries

WINNING NUMBERS

- Wednesday  
Powerball ..... 2-4-14-15-28-PB23  
(Power Play: 4; Saturday's jackpot: \$15 million)  
Nebraska Pick 3 ..... 1-8-9  
Kansas Pick 3 ..... 5-3-2  
Super Kansas Cash ..... 4-10-15-18-29  
(Super Cashball: 10)  
Nebraska Pick 5 ..... 3-10-15-21-36  
Jackpot: \$70,000  
2by2 ..... Red 4-12, White 7-12  
Hot Lotto ..... 8-10-18-29-32  
Hot Ball 2

**Hastings CCC hosts FCCLA District 10 conference**

DEANN STUMPE  
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Central Community College-Hastings swelled Wednesday as it played host for the annual Family Career and Community Leaders of America District 10 leadership conference.

The FCCLA conference welcomed chapters from nine schools, including seven Tribland schools: Bruning-Davenport, Doniphan-Trumbull, Exeter-Milligan, Fillmore Central, Superior, Sutton and Thayer Central.

The day began with the keynote speaker, Dave Zimmer, of Kearney, who spoke about discovering potential within yourself. Using the conference's theme, "Saddle Up For Success With FCCLA," Zimmer told the students to keep growing and getting better.

Please see FCCLA/page A6



DEANN STUMPE/Tribune

FCCLA members walk through campus at Central Community College-Hastings to get to their next session during the Leadership conference Wednesday. Seven area chapters attended the one-day conference.

# Gil: Ecologist/concert pianist to perform at Hastings College

*Continued from page A5*

"It's like, 'Which of your children do you like more?' " she said. "I work on both every day. As a musician, I've learned many skills that are helping in ecology and visa versa.

"When the birds are breeding, or when they communicate, it's like a perfect language you can write as music. I've studied birds that are very easy to identify their language as music."

In Venezuela, her love of music prompted her and her husband, Enrique Weir, to establish FUNDACEM, a foundation for music training, in 1989.

The school taught various

kinds of music, including classical, popular and folk, to 400 students in two locations. The school closed in 2004, the consequence of a petroleum strike that caused 17,000 people to lose their jobs.

She hopes to one day return and reopen the defunct school. Until then, she will continue to offer piano lessons to some students at St. Mary's Cathedral and other locations in Grand Island.

"I love to teach," she said. "I always play piano and compose. Every day of my life after 4 o'clock I've invested my time in performing or teaching piano lessons."

# Minden: Fahrlander honored

*Continued from page A5*

He also is active in the Minden Community Players and served as programming coordinator for the newly reopened Minden Opera House during its inaugural year.

He leads the praise band "In His Time" at the Minden United Methodist Church.

Honors presented to Fahrlander through the years have included the Nebraska

State Bandmasters Distinguished Service Award, the Don Lentz Outstanding Band Director Award, the Nebraska Music Educators Distinguished Service Award, the Cooper Foundation Excellence in Education Award, and the Minden Area Jaycees Outstanding Young Educator Award.

He and his wife, Nadine, have two sons and several grandchildren.

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Great Sav