

News Digest

By The Associated Press

'Nothing to look forward to'

Reservation battles suicide wave

ST. STEPHENS, Wyo. — In less than two months, eight young male Indians have hanged themselves on the Wind River reservation, a sparsely populated, 2-million-acre tract of barren plains and rolling hills in central Wyoming.

The suicides have galvanized mental health agencies, educators, priests and social workers, but they admit they are at a loss to explain the deaths.

Counselors who have lived here all their lives say they have never seen such a mental health crisis before. Since the beginning of the year, there have been at least 48 reported suicide attempts, compared to less than 30 last year.

The suicides have focused a glaring spotlight on this tight-knit community at the base of the Wind River Mountains, where the unemployment rate among 6,000 Indians is nearly 80 percent, where many teen-agers have no prospects of going to college, where most of the people have a drinking problem, and where there are few recreational facilities for youths.

The rash of suicides began Aug. 12, when a 20-year-old jailed in Riverton for public intoxication hanged himself with his socks. Four days later, 16-year-old Donovan Blackburn hanged himself

with his sweatpants from a tree.

Several days after Blackburn killed himself, Darren Shakespeare, 14, hanged himself from a tree with baling twine. Shakespeare had been at Blackburn's wake and threatened that he would be next.

This month, five men and teen-agers committed suicide, all by hanging. The latest was discovered Saturday.

Stone says many students thought Blackburn's suicide was a courageous act. It makes her job tougher to show them the difference between courage and cop-out.

On a recent Friday, Stone was preparing for a suicide prevention session with some students. She apologized for not having an organized program, explaining she had spent the morning admitting one student to the mental health hospital in nearby Lander and was making arrangements to admit another. The two students had threatened suicide.

Students in her session complained there was nothing for them to look forward to that weekend, that all the tribal recreation money went for bingo, that they had no cars in which to go into town to cruise.

There is no mall on the reservation, no shopping center, no movie house.

Stone tried to persuade them they weren't any worse off than the youths in nearby Riverton or Lander, who also are bored on weekends. But the Indian students weren't convinced.

At least four of the suicides occurred while the young men were under the influence of alcohol. Studies show 51 percent of the students have a drinking problem and 47 percent have tried drugs.

St. Stephens administrators applied unsuccessfully for a federal grant for an alcohol education program. They are offering programs anyway on a shoe-string budget. Students have been trying to support each other since the suicides began, while teachers and counselors give special attention to high-risk cases.

Pat Stoehr, with Fremont Counseling Service in Riverton, a city bordered by reservation lands, emphasizes that teen suicide is not unique to the reservation.

Teen-agers across the county are under mounting pressure from parents and peers. Death is perceived as an escape rather than as a permanent departure.

Second session may be called

LINCOLN — A widening gap between state budget obligations and diminishing tax collections appears to be too great to close with budget cuts alone and may require another special legislative session, state senators say.

A general tax-rate increase, a state lottery and accelerated implementation of a new tax on financial institutions are some of the revenue-generating proposals lawmakers were discussing after a downward revision Friday of the \$31.6 million in the official state revenue forecast for the fiscal year ending next June 30.

"Obviously a special session should be done, and obviously there'll be some across-the-board (spending) reduc-

tions," said Sen. Jerome Warner of Waverly, chairman of the Legislature's Appropriations Committee.

Furthermore, Warner said, the Legislature should enact a 1 percent increase in the 1985 individual income tax rate, which now stands at 19 percent of federal liability. The increase would raise an estimated \$30 million during the current fiscal year.

Other tax-raising options, including a sales tax boost, would not generate revenue quickly enough to help state government avert the \$16 million deficit it faces on June 30, the last day of fiscal year 1985-86, Warner said.

The downward revision in revenue

projections issued Friday by the Nebraska Economic Forecasting Advisory Board wiped out a projected June 30 state general fund balance of \$16 million and replaced it with a projected \$16 million year-end deficit.

Gov. Bob Kerrey has been on vacation since Thursday and has not been available to comment on the revised revenue figures. His chief of staff, Don Nelson, said administration officials are examining alternatives for action on the budget problem. Nelson expects a list of options, which will include a special session, to be sent to Kerrey at midweek for his consideration.

"I don't think he has any option" but to call a special session, Warner said.

Spielberg, professor aid alien search

HARVARD, Mass. — With the touch of a lever, "E.T." director Steven Spielberg on Sunday inaugurated a search for real-life extraterrestrials, switching on a giant antenna that astronomers hope will detect radio signals sent from outer space.

"This marks the beginning of a really powerful search that has a decent chance of finding something," said Paul Horowitz, a Harvard University professor who designed the 84-foot communications dish, part of the most powerful radio-scanning system ever used to hunt for aliens.

The dish, capable of scanning 8.4 million radio channels, marks an escalation of such efforts by The Planetary Society, which scans the skies for signs of life from its Oak Ridge Observatory in Harvard, a small town northwest of

Boston.

Since 1983, the space-watching group had been searching with a simpler scanner, which picked up only 180,000 radio channels.

The new antenna, known as Project Meta, was built with the help of a \$100,000 grant from Spielberg, the science fiction filmmaker whose credits include "Close Encounters of the Third Kind" and "E.T.," which featured a lovable alien.

Spielberg whisked into Harvard just long enough to flip on the antenna with the help of his infant son, Max. The communications dish hummed as it rotated skyward.

"It's the most sophisticated search for extraterrestrial intelligence in human history," said Carl Sagan, the

popular science writer and president of the Planetary Society, who joined Spielberg, Horowitz and other astronomers at the observatory to dedicate the antenna.

Horowitz said the antenna was capable of reaching to the edges of the known galaxy. If there is life on other planets, he said, "this kind of communications system can do the job." He said he will visit the observatory once every two weeks to check on the project.

The scanner, which took two years to construct, is more versatile than its predecessor and includes changes that should increase the chances of raising alien messages. The antenna is hooked up to a computer room, which records all radio signals emitted from space.

Newsmakers

A roundup of the day's happenings

Seven years after his graduation from UNL, Dale Ganz was joined by three other performers from Opera Omaha on Saturday in singing the national anthem for the Cornhuskers at the Nebraska-Oregon game. The four performed as part of the commemoration of National Arts Week.

Geraldine Ferraro says her campaign last year for vice president was "almost unbearable," as she was subjected to scrutiny, bigotry and sexism. The former New York congresswoman has written in her book "Ferraro: My Story," which will be published by Bantam Books in November, that she told Walter Mondale to remove her name from the list of possible running mates because members of his staff had been criticizing her anonymously in news reports. "Please take my name out of consideration. I do not want to be part of this process anymore. I never really did want it," she said. "But he refused."

A 25-year-old Omaha woman will receive \$2,660 in back pay from a former employer that a state commission, upheld by a Nebraska court, determined had fired her because her 40-inch bust was "too distracting." Patricia

Tinerella worked as a receptionist-cashier for about seven weeks at the Rec Room Shoppe before she was told Oct. 4, 1983, that she and others were being dismissed in a budget cutback. Later, company officials said she was dismissed because she did not perform her work well. After hearings, the Nebraska Equal Employment Opportunity Commission found that she had been discriminated against in her firing, saying she had been treated differently from male employees by "requiring her to de-emphasize an immutable characteristic of her sex...."

Andre Kertesz, one of the great innovators of photography in the 20th century died Friday at his New York home. He was 91. Kertesz, a native of Hungary, recorded urban life for more than 50 years and was noted for his subtle pictures that caught the beauty of a hidden gesture, a lover's kiss, the juxtaposition of old and new.

The unheralded New Orleans Saints shocked the defending Super Bowl champion San Francisco 49ers 20-17 in the biggest upset of the early National Football League season.

In Brief

Black man burned to death in riot

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa — A mob burned a black man to death Sunday in the second straight day of clashes between rival black groups near Durban, and anti-apartheid violence spilled into white areas for the third day in a row, police said.

Police also reported they shot and killed a black man who was heaving a gasoline bomb in Dordecht, in eastern Cape Province.

An explosion that police believed was caused by a bomb went off in the men's room of a hotel near Durban where about 150 black youngsters were guests at a "children's day," but no one was injured.

Fewer Soviet diplomats favored

WASHINGTON — Fuelled by recent spy chases, pressure is building on the Reagan administration to crack down on espionage by reducing the number of Soviet bloc officials allowed to live in the United States.

Of about 2,500 Soviet and East European officials in America, former FBI officials estimate that 33 percent to 40 percent are spies.

Led by President Reagan, several congressmen, conservatives and other members of the administration have gone on record favoring a reduction in the number of East bloc officials permitted to live in the United States.

Besides the United Nations, Soviet bloc intelligence officers try to penetrate high technology companies to steal secrets, and they also try to penetrate U.S. intelligence agencies, regulatory agencies, the State Department and Congress, according to Wannall.

The situation perhaps became more urgent as a result of spy scandals involving John A. Walker, the accused ringleader of an alleged family spy ring that also included a brother, Arthur Walker, who has been convicted of espionage charges.

Britain cleans up after second riot

LONDON — Bulldozers shoved burned-out cars off streets while shopkeepers boarded up broken windows Sunday in the racially mixed slum district of Brixton after a night of rioting erupted when police shot and wounded an unarmed black woman.

A dozen stores were gutted, 26 civilians and 10 policemen suffered minor injuries and 45 people were arrested in seven hours of rioting, police said. It was the second racial riot in three weeks in a British urban slum district.

But youths, most of them black, marched to the Brixton police station and began hurling firebombs, paving stones, bottles and pieces of lumber. Stores were looted, cars and trucks overturned and set alight.

4 more Americans confirmed dead

MEXICO CITY — Heavy equipment crews worked Sunday to remove concrete slabs from the pile of rubble that was Juarez Hospital, giving rescue teams access to lower floors where scores of people were trapped when the first of two devastating earthquakes struck Mexico.

However, prospects were slim that any of the victims, including some 30 medical students and their teachers who were trapped in classrooms when the first quake struck Sept. 19, had survived.

More than 4,600 people were killed in Mexico City when two major earthquakes struck Sept. 19 and 20, toppling buildings and burying thousands in the debris. Another 1,000 people are missing, according to a special interagency commission established by President Miguel de la Madrid to coordinate earthquake recovery.

The U.S. Embassy on Saturday said four more Americans were identified as victims of the quake, raising the total number of U.S. citizens killed to nine. Twenty-four Americans are missing.

Parachutists die in plane crash

JENKINSBURG, Ga. — An airplane filled with parachutists crashed on takeoff from a private rural airstrip Sunday, killing all 17 people aboard, officials said.

The single-engine Cessna 208 Caravan crashed in a pasture around 12:30 p.m., said Federal Aviation Administration spokesman Roger Myers. Rescue workers spent two hours pulling bodies from the wreckage which were taken to a National Guard Armory in nearby Jackson, said Hicks.

Number of households up 7 percent

WASHINGTON — Offering good news for homebuilders and merchants, the Census Bureau reported Sunday that Americans are setting up house-keeping at a sharply higher rate than the nation's overall population growth.

While the population grew 4.2 percent between 1980 and 1984, the number of households jumped 7 percent, the new Census Bureau study said.

Changes in the nation's age structure were cited by the report as leading to this shift in living arrangements.

The so-called Baby Bust, occurring as the post-World War II Baby Boom generation postponed families to pursue education and careers, has resulted in fewer youngsters in America.

Overall, the report said, as of July 1, 1984, the nation has a population of 236,158,000, with 86,019,000 households.

Scientists discover 2 Maya tombs

WASHINGTON — Archaeologists who unearthed the undisturbed graves of two Maya rulers who died 1,000 years apart said Sunday their discovery contradicts the notion that ancient Central American civilization declined before the Spanish conquest.

The intact skeletal remains of high-ranking officials and accompanying artifacts show the Maya retained an advanced political and economic system up to the time European contact destroyed them, the scientists said.

Diane Z. Chase and Arlen F. Chase, a husband-wife team of anthropologists from the University of Central Florida, said the burial places found in Belize last month are strong evidence the Maya culture was not in decline during its final centuries from 1350 to 1530, when the Spanish arrived.

During its height between 300 A.D. and 900 A.D., known as the Classic period, the Maya empire covered much of what is today Mexico, Belize and Guatemala, and parts of Honduras and Nicaragua.