

Ag mechanics keep farmers in the field
TODAY'S FARM, INSERT INSIDE



daily GAZETTE

Tuesday, May 3, 2011 ■ SERVING ROCK FALLS, STERLING AND THE SURROUNDING AREA SINCE 1854

DEATH OF BIN LADEN



Overcome with the need to celebrate, Rick Taylor of Rock Falls gives a thumbs up to a passing motorist Monday in Sterling while showing off a handmade sign proclaiming "bin Laden dead!" on one side and "USA" on the other.

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Locals proud, happy – but fearful of retaliation

BY KIRAN SOOD
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Inside the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 5418 in Rock Falls on Monday afternoon, the headlines on television all carried the same message: Osama bin Laden is dead.

Members Brian Haenni of Sterling and Wolfgang Ziesch of rural Dixon were taking in the news.

"I thought it was excellent that we finally got a little justice," said Haenni, 57. "I don't like to see anybody harmed in any way, but it's a proven fact that he did harm us."

"I think it's correct to have it done and I think [President Barack] Obama made

Inside

- Some still doubt the death of the 9/11 mastermind, **A11**
- Could the death of the terrorist leader change U.S. policy on Pakistan and Afghanistan?, **A11**
- NIU football player Jake Coffman reacts, **B2**

the right decision to go in and have this done."

Army veteran Mark Miller is commander-elect of VFW Post 540 in Dixon; he served in Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

He, too, was reflecting on Sunday's development.

"I can't say elated," Miller said. "I can't say that I'm happy that any person would be killed."

"However, I believe it would be a better day for the United States, knowing that he is no longer a threat to this country."

Haenni, a retired construction worker, commended Obama for planning the successful mission.

"He [bin Laden] was a man, but a bad man," Haenni said.

Ziesch, 70, of rural Dixon, said he's "glad he's gone."

Ziesch served in the Vietnam War from 1963-66. An Army veteran, he was stationed in France.

RETALIATION CONTINUED ON A2 ▶

TAMPICO

Town gets Russian sister city

Reagan, Gorbachev birthplaces connected

BY DAVID GIULIANI
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TAMPICO – What would be a logical Russian sister city for Tampico, the birthplace of Ronald Reagan?

Tampico resident Andy Hinton thought Privilnoye was an obvious choice. That town of 3,000 is the birthplace of the last leader of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev.

Gorbachev and Reagan developed a close relationship in the late 1980s, signing agreements to reduce the number of nuclear weapons and generally improving relations between the two countries.

Recently, Hinton got leaders from the two towns to sign documents making them sisters.

"Sister cities usually have something in common," he said.

Hinton, 42, visited Russia a couple of years ago and became interested in the country. He found out that Appleton, Wis., and Chicago both had Russian sister cities.

He hasn't been to Privilnoye, which is more than 700 miles south of Moscow. But he plans to visit in a couple years or so.

Hinton, who retired from the U.S. Navy nearly a year ago, said everyone was friendly during his visit to Russia.

SISTER CITY CONTINUED ON A2 ▶

NICIL notes handicap violations

Agency working to spread awareness of parking law

BY DAVID GIULIANI
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ROCK FALLS – A group checking to see whether businesses are following the law for handicapped parking is finding many violations.

Most people aren't aware of what's required and work to correct problems once they're told about them, the group says.

The Rock Falls-based Northern Illinois Center for Independent Living inspected Rock Falls businesses last year and is now doing so in Morrison.

It hopes to implement similar projects in Sterling, Dixon and other area towns.

A few weeks ago, NICIL approached Morrison's Business Advisory Group about the project. The city panel backed the center's request to inspect Morrison businesses for compliance.

VIOLATIONS CONTINUED ON A2 ▶

DCC OFFICER OF THE YEAR

Dixon prison employee set to retire after 28 years

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DIXON – The Dixon Correctional Center's Sgt. Glen Wicks, 49, is its correctional officer of the year – and just in the nick of time.

The Rock Falls native has been at the prison almost from Day One – he began working there the September after its July opening, 28 years ago.

"I would say [the biggest change over the years] is more control of the inmates that we have," Wicks said. "Before they used to run everywhere. You couldn't control them, because we had no structure as far as control, but now we have escorted movement."

This type of management – called free-flow – has been phased out across Illinois, and

Wicks now manages a cluster of almost 600 inmates.

When he's not working, Wicks enjoys bicycling and motorcycle riding, antiques and helping his 11-year-old son, Glen, with Cub Scouts.

Wicks plans to retire in December and work part time for a couple of friends, one who owns Audio Video Connection in Dixon, and the other who owns a landscaping company, he said.

Dirk Dusing, assistant warden of operations, interrupted: "I don't want him to retire."

Wicks said he decided to retire because of "the unknown of what they're going to do with the retirement benefits and the retirement system."



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Sgt. Glen Wicks, 49, of Rock Falls, talks about his 28-year career at Dixon Correctional Center. He is the prison's 2011 Correctional Officer of the Year.

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INDEX

DEAR ABBY.....A8 CROSSWORD....B11 OBITUARIESA4
BUSINESSA12 LIFESTYLEA7 OPINIONA6
COMICS.....A10 LOTTERYA2 SPORTS.....B1

Today's weather
High 58. Low 32.
More on **A3**.

Play ball
Dixon-Sterling series begins, **B1**.

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