

the compound north of the park. They have already been there for several years to make sure they are disease free.

Dennis Tilton, a rancher from nearby Livingston who worked for a year feeding the animals under government contract, said giving the animals to Turner amounted to "robbing from the

"We don't understand the antipathy," said Turner Enterprises general manager Russell Miller.

He said Turner is interested in the animals as a way to further his private bison conservation efforts, not for their market value.

"That doesn't mean there won't

unwanted competition for the grass that feeds their cattle herds.

Meanwhile, conservationists are sinking millions of dollars into restoration efforts for the animal. That includes an attempt by the American Prairie Foundation to buy up vast swaths of land in eastern Montana ranches and create a 3 million acre reserve for

# Wheat, barley,

Associated Press

FARGO — Stocks of spring wheat, durum wheat and winter wheat in North Dakota are higher than a year ago.

The Agriculture Department

## STATE ROUNDUP

### Jamestown attorney sworn in for new ND judgeship

JAMESTOWN — A Jamestown attorney has been sworn in as the newest Southeast District judge for North Dakota.

Thomas Merrick on Friday became one of the seven judges in the district, which covers 11 counties in southeastern North Dakota and includes the cities of Jamestown, Valley City and Wahpeton.

Merrick will be one of the two judges based in Jamestown.

The 59-year-old Merrick is a native of Indiana. He was an Air Force captain and his final posting was at the Grand Forks Air Force Base. He graduated from the University of North Dakota law school in 1983 and went on to practice law in Jamestown.

Merrick's district judgeship is one of two approved last year by the Legislature.

### New victim notification system running in ND

BISMARCK — A system to notify crime victims of changes involving offenders is up and running in North Dakota, and will be expanded this spring and next year.

The Statewide Automated Victim Information and Notification system is a database

on registered sex offenders and inmates in the custody of jails, the state Department of Corrections, and Parole and Probation.

Victims or concerned citizens can sign up to receive notification by e-mail or telephone when an inmate's status changes, such as if they are released on bond.

Program manager Amy Vorachek says there also is a module that gets information to law enforcement officers. Later this spring, a module on people with protection orders will be up, and in spring 2011 there will be one to update people on court proceedings.

To use the program, people can go to [www.vinelink.com](http://www.vinelink.com) or call 866-631-8463.

### 'Grandparent scam' persists in North Dakota

BISMARCK — Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem says the so-called "grandparent scam" persists in North Dakota.

In the scam, a con artist calls a senior citizen, pretending to be a grandchild with an emergency and asks for money.

Stenehjem says a Bismarck woman recently fell victim, wiring \$13,000 out of the country in the belief her grandson was in trouble in Canada.

Associated Press

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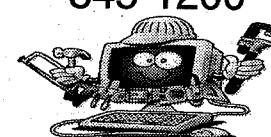
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