

Standard Form For Members of the Legislature

Name of Representative Curran, Leigh Raymond Senator Curran,  
Leigh Raymond - Represented Arva, Loda, Martin, and Hancock  
Counties, Iowa

1. Birthday and place 28 May 1906 Cambridge, Illinois

2. Marriage (s) date place

Dorothy Foster 10 Mar 1937 Nashua, Iowa

3. Significant events for example:

A. Business He was named Master Farmer in 1947; named Iowa  
Cattleman of the Year 1970; served on the North Iowa Fair Board for 67 years

B. Civic responsibilities Rotary; Mason; Shiner; Eastern Star;  
Mason City Riverfront Commission; Red Cross

C. Profession Farmer; Businessman

4. Church membership Methodist

5. Sessions served 59<sup>th</sup>, 60<sup>th</sup>, 63<sup>rd</sup>, 64<sup>th</sup> General Assembly 1961, 1963, 1971-1972 Senate

6. Public Offices 62<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly 1967 - House of Representatives

A. Local

B. State

C. National

7. Death 8 Jan 2004 Nora Springs, Iowa; buried Memorial Park Cemetery, Mason City, Iowa

8. Children Kayes (Mrs. McDonald); Janet (Mrs. Busby); Gail

9. Names of parents John L. and Alameda (Nordstrom) Curran

Curran, Leigh Raymond

10. Education Educated in the Mason City, Iowa public schools

11. Degrees Attended Hamilton Business College, Mason City, Iowa;  
attended Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa

12. Other applicable information Republican

- He moved with his family to Mason City, Iowa in 1911.
- He farmed southeast of Mason City for many years as well  
being in the cattle-breeding business.
- He was the North Iowa Fair Board treasurer for 32 years and  
president for 18 years.
- He was past secretary and treasurer of the Iowa Pooled  
Herford Association
- He was on the board of directors of the First National Bank for  
25 years.



**Leigh R. Curran**

**MASON CITY** — Leigh R. Curran, 97, of 62 Lakeview Drive, died Thursday (Jan. 8, 2004) at the Nora Springs Care Center.

Funeral services will be held at 1:30 p.m. Monday at the First United Methodist Church, 119 S. Georgia Ave., with the Rev. Jim Stiles and Rev. Jo Frahm-Watkins officiating. Interment will be in Memorial Park Cemetery.



Curran

Visitation will be from 5 to 7 p.m. today at the Major Erickson Funeral Home, 111 N. Pennsylvania Ave., with Masonic services at 7 p.m. conducted by Benevolence Lodge 145-A.F. & A.M.

Memorials may be given to the Leigh R. Curran Memorial Fund.

Leigh was born May 28, 1906, in Cambridge, Ill., the son of John L. and Almeda (Nordstrom) Curran. The Curran family moved to Mason City in 1911. Leigh attended school in Mason City, and would later attend Hamilton Business College and Iowa State University.

He married Dorothy Foster on March 10, 1937, at the Little Brown Church in Nashua. Leigh farmed southeast of Mason City for many years and was also in the cattle breeding business.

Leigh was an active member of the First United Methodist Church, where he served on various committees; was a member of the Mason City Rotary Club for over 50 years, and was named Master Farmer in 1947 and Iowa Cattleman of the year in 1970.

He served on the North Iowa Fair Board for nearly 67

years, was Fair Board treasurer for almost 32 years and served as Fair Board president for 18 years, and was a member of the Farm Bureau.

Leigh was an Iowa senator for eight years and state representative for two years, was a member of the Mason City Foundation Board, was past secretary and treasurer of the Iowa Polled Hereford Association, a member of the board of directors of the First National Bank for 25 years and the North Iowa Medical Center Board of Directors, was past president of the North Iowa Production Credit Association, served two terms on the Mason City Riverfront Commission, was county Red Cross chairperson and was an original 4-H youth leader in Cerro Gordo County. Leigh was also a member of Benevolence Lodge 145 A.F. & A.M., White Shrine and Eastern Star.

Leigh is survived by his wife, Dorothy Curran, of Mason City; three daughters, Kaye McDonald, of Moraga, Calif., Jane Burley, of Eden Prairie, Minn., and Gail Curran, of Alexandria, Va.; granddaughter, Michelle Smith and husband, A.J., of Louisville, Ky.; grandson, Curtis McDonald and wife, Mary, of Pleasant Hill, Calif.; four great-grandchildren; sister, Lucile Cannon, of San Diego, Calif.; brother, J. Benjamin Curran, of Mason City; two sisters-in-law, Doris Curran, of Lincoln, Neb., and Therese Curran, of Mason City, and many nieces and nephews.

Leigh was preceded in death by his parents; two brothers, Lester and Charles; three sisters, Grace Whisler, Loetta Martin and Blanche Fiedler, and son-in-law, Robert Burley.

Major Erickson Funeral Home & Crematory, (641) 423-0924.

**Robert S. Jar**

**BUFFALO CENTER**

Robert S. Jannsen, Buffalo Center, died Saturday (Jan. 10, 2004) at the Medical Center-North I Mason City.

Funeral services held at 10:30 a.m. at the First Reformed Buffalo Center with Bill Peake officiating will be in the Ramo Reformed Cemetery Titonka.

Visitation will be from 7 p.m. Monday at the First Reformed Buffalo Center, and one hour before the service at the cemetery.

Robert is survived by two daughters, Agnes and Carolyn, of Crystal Lake; son, Mike Vodraska, of Des Moines; four grandchildren; great-grandchildren; three sisters-in-law, Fannie Johnson, Dorothy Hofbauer, and Dorothy Jannsen, all of Buffalo Center.

Winter Funeral Home & Cremation Service, 2858 S. Broadway, Buffalo Center.

**Anita Zimme**

**CHARLES CITY**

Charles C. Zimmer, 85, a former resident of 808 Seventh Avenue, died Saturday (Jan. 10, 2004) at the Ninth Chautauqua Guest House, Charles City.

Funeral services held at 10:30 a.m. at the First Baptist Church, Charles City. The Rev. Yeaton, pastor, will officiate. Burial will be in the First Baptist Cemetery in Colwell.

Friends may call at the Hauser Funeral Home, 101 S. Main St., Charles City, from 5 to 8 p.m. Monday. An hour prior to the service on Tuesday at the church. Hauser Funeral Home, (641) 228-2323.

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**Gladys Finch**

**MASON CITY**

Gladys Finch, 97, of 302 Second St. N.E. died Saturday (Jan. 10,

Whether  
Buying or

One soldier died from injuries received in the mortar attack on the base, and 30 others were injured, including those from Iowa.

The identity of the dead soldier was not released, but authorities said he was not a member of an Iowa National Guard unit.

Doidge sustained injuries to the left side of his chest and the left leg below the knee, and was unconscious for a while, his family said.

He remains hospitalized today but his injuries are not life-threatening, said his

See BASE ATTACK, A2



**Spc. David Mulder**  
Undergoing treatment at military facility in Iraq

**Spc. Cory Popejoy**  
Treated and released to duty

**Spc. Paul Schutz**  
Treated and released to duty

**Sgt. Jon Silger**  
Story City, being treated at military facility in Iraq

**Staff Sgt. Roger Solberg**  
Boydton, treated, returned to 1133rd

of 11 members of the 1133rd Transportation Co. injured in a mortar attack Wednesday was provided by the U.S. Army through the Iowa National Guard.

# A journey of self-discovery

North Iowan's odyssey retracing her past in Guatemalan village has led to a new effort to help those still living there

By JULIE BIRKEDAL  
Of The Globe Gazette

**ALGONA** — Denese Becker is in the midst of a journey to discover her past and its meaning for her future.

She began life as Dominga Sic Ruiz, a child who witnessed the massacre of her village in Guatemala.

Today, the Algona career woman and mother continues to unravel her life's story.

"It's not like how you make butter. There's step 1 through 10," she said. "My story is so ongoing."

Becker, 31, was adopted by Brian and Linda Burck, then of Thompson, when she was 11 years old.

Her first return to her homeland occurred in June 2000. That's when Becker said she began to learn her own story.

Becker was born in the Maya Achi village of Rio Negro. In 1982, she went into the mountains to live with her 14-day-old baby sister after her mother and other villagers were slain.

After several months and her sister's death, a cousin took her to a convent and the nuns placed her in an orphanage.

After being adopted and growing up in Thompson, Becker went to La James College of Hairstyling and Cosmetology in Mason City. She graduated in 1994.

She married Blane Becker of Algona. They have two sons, Sturling, 10, and Skylar, 7.

"He's been with me twice" on trips to Guatemala, she

See JOURNEY, A2



SARAH SCHUTT/The Globe Gazette

After another visit to Rio Negro, Guatemala, Denese Becker of Algona is working to better the lives of people from her Guatemalan village of Maya Achi. Becker is helping the women in her village by selling their brightly colored, hand-woven traditional cloths in North Iowa.



**Curran**  
Served on North Iowa Fair Board for 67 years

## Long-time Fair Board member Curran dies

By DICK JOHNSON  
Of The Globe Gazette

**MASON CITY** — Leigh Curran, who served on the North Iowa Fair Board for nearly 67 years, died Thursday at the Nora Springs Care Center at age 97.

Curran was Fair Board treasurer for almost 32 years

until resigning late last fall, fair manager Katy Elson said.

He served as Fair Board president for 18 years, was an Iowa senator from 1960-72, a member of the Mason City Foundation board, an honorary capitol fund campaign co-chairman for The Music Man Square and an original 4-H youth leader in Cerro

Gordo County.

"He was a wonderful man," Elson said. "A gentleman. A person with deep feelings toward causes that he felt were important."

"I guess I'd have to say he was a legend in this community," said Jim Kuhlman, a former Cerro Gordo County Extension education director.

"Probably nobody has accomplished more in Cerro Gordo County than Leigh Curran did over his long lifetime. He was just a wonderful guy, and we're going to miss him."

Funeral arrangements are incomplete at Major Erickson Funeral Home, Mason City.

Reach Dick Johnson at 421-0556 or dick.johnson@globe-gazette.com.

Globe Gazette Business Office:  
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(641) 421-0524; (800) 421-0524



**Forecast**

**Mostly cloudy** today with temperatures in the mid-20s. Partly cloudy tonight with lows in the 20s. Partly cloudy and warmer Saturday.

**Weather, A12**

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**Winter Color**

A Mason City cc are enjoying beautiful blooming flowers th deck-turned-greenh

**Home & I**