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# Rapid City Journal

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THURSDAY, MAY 14, 2009

## Lab hits 'critical milestone' Pumps finally drop water depth below the 4,850 level

By Tim Velder  
Lawrence County Journal staff

Officials at the Sanford Underground Laboratory at Homestake moved a big step closer to actual underground science experiments in Lead on Wednesday when crews cleared water from the 4,850-foot level.

"This is certainly a day we've

been waiting for the past year and a half," lab director Jose Alonso said.

Construction to establish the underground science and engineering experiments must wait another 30 days as crews verify that the underground tunnels are safe after spending years under water.

Bill Heisinger was a mine fore-

man when he walked out of the Homestake Mine in 2001 when it closed. He thought it would be the last time he would see the 4,850.

But Wednesday, he was one of the first men to see the relatively dry floor of the mine's major travel artery. It was about 70 degrees, the air cool and clean coming down the surface shafts.

He and cohorts Jack Stratton,

Willy McElroy and Bryce Pietzyk had ridden the industrial "cage" elevator down the Ross Shaft to the 4,550-foot level, then walked by ramps to the 4,850.

Then, they walked nearly a mile to the Yates Shaft, the other main surface access route for the mine.

Water from natural underground sources and openings funneling rain and snowmelt had

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Steve Seidel, left, and Brady Rhodes wet-sand and polish bumpers and trunks Tuesday in Lehman Trikes' polish booth in Spearfish.

Photos by Ryan Soderlin/Journal staff

## Win hail across prairie

By Steve Miller  
Journal staff

Vernon Starr, his hired man Bill Clark and several neighbors were visiting and ear tagging on the Starr ranch, trying to get up and get to shelter from a storm hit Tuesday evening. They didn't make it. The sky darkened



Photos by Ryan Soderlin/Journal staff

Steve Seidel, left, and Brady Rhodes wet-sand and polish bumpers and trunks Tuesday in Lehman Trikes' polish booth in Spearfish.

# 'We're in a hiring boom'

## Lehman Trikes thriving despite recession

By Jeremy Fugleberg  
Journal staff

SPEARFISH — One company in Spearfish is bucking the employee layoff trend experienced at other area businesses.

Lehman Trikes USA moved to the Black Hills from Canada in 2004 and started with only a handful of employees. Now, the company employs 140 and expects to hire more by the end of the year.

"We actually started five new employees yesterday," Ken Hines, executive vice president of Lehman Trikes, said Tuesday.

"When you look at everybody else in western South Dakota, we're in a hiring boom right now!"



See TRIKES, Page A13 Jake Nemeč installs jumpers to a reverse motor.

"This is the American West, and it makes it easy to find and work with people."

**Ken Hines**  
executive vice president of Lehman Trikes

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By Jomay Steer  
Journal staff

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Photos by Ryan Soderlin/Journal staff

Dee Dee Farghali fills a tray with parts Tuesday at Lehman Trikes in Spearfish. Farghali stocks the Harley assembly line with parts.

## TRIKES: Lehman Trikes is the official supplier of the Tri Glide.

From Page A1

The company credits its affluent customers, niche market and a supply deal with Harley-Davidson for the new jobs.

"We're fortunate to be considered the industry leader in a market that is, I think, a lot less impacted than a lot of other consumer markets," said Clay Strilchuk, sales and marketing manager for the manufacturer of the three-wheeled motorcycles. "And our niche still presents a great opportunity for growth going forward."

That niche got a boost when Harley-Davidson unveiled its Tri Glide three-wheel motorcycle line last summer, and announced Lehman Trikes would be the official supplier of the Tri Glide.

In February, Lehman's revenues were up 40 percent from the previous year. The number of employees climbed as the company dealt with the demand for its motorcycles. In May 2005, the company employed 15. In 2008, 100 worked at the manufacturing facility, and that number climbed 40 percent in a year.

The company added white-collar positions last year, and is now bulking up on the number of technicians, engineers and material handlers to



Brent Ryder wires in a tail light lens in quality control.

supplement the 140-person staff.

"The 140 number doesn't mean we're done," said Hines. "We anticipate we will be into another hiring cycle in about 60 days, and we'll be adding additional paint, technical and warehouse staff at that time."

Hines said it can be difficult to find people trained in the fields needed for work at Lehman Trikes. But he said the company has a strong training program, and has seen a good number of applications for the opening positions.

Spearfish and South Dakota had many draws for the company, including economic development incentives and the location near Sturgis and its world-famous annual motorcycle rally, Hines said. And the low crime, good education and work ethic help create a great work force.

"This is the American West, and it makes it easy to find and work with people," Hines said.

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