

It's a girl — now tell South Dakota

By **ASHLEY LIVINGSTON**

News of baby Gabriella's upcoming birth traveled fast ... and far.

When mom-to-be Christine Greenwood couldn't fit the huge bouquet of pink balloons her co-workers at Chenin Orthodontics in Henderson had given her into her car, she had to let them go into the windy night. Three days and almost 1,500 miles later, South Dakota resident Stan Rauch spotted a bobbing pink mass on the edge of his property.

Rauch, who lives in the deer-dense country six miles south of Lake Preston, S.D., said he went out and grabbed the half-deflated bouquet so it wouldn't mar the scenery or scare the animals. He said, "I knew the deer would get a case of the big eyes seeing that thing."

After getting the balloons back to the house, Rauch said, he saw the hand-written congratulatory notes the office staff had put on the balloons with the Chenin Orthodontics name and



Stan Rauch of Lake Preston, S.D., holds up a deflated bouquet of balloons released by mother-to-be Christine Greenwood from her office at Chenin Orthodontics. The balloons traveled almost 1,500 miles to the northeast.

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served for patients. He said he figured the balloons had been purposely released as part of a baby shower celebration.

Out of curiosity, he got online and looked up the orthodontist's office and was in awe when he realized how far the balloons had traveled.

Rauch said just for fun, he decided to contact the office staff, so he sent an e-mail.

bie Miraflor said when the group saw the message, one of them did some Internet research to see exactly how far the balloons had traveled.

Greenwood was surprised. "I was amazed that the balloons made it over the mountains and stayed intact," she said.

After a few laughs and conversations, Rauch mailed the deflated bouquet back to the office along with

a photo of him and the balloons that was run by his local paper, the Lake Preston Times.

Greenwood said she plans for both the photo and the balloons to grace the pages of her unborn daughter's baby book.

Rauch said, "It goes to show the world is a pretty small place after all."

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