

Man Killed While Working On Car

WALL (AP) — The Pennington County Sheriff's Office was investigating the apparent accidental death of a Wall area resident.

Lt. Marty Graves told the *Rapid City Journal* that a family member found 38-year-old Travis McDonnell under a car in a garage north of Wall Monday morning.

Graves said it appears jacks holding up the car fell while McDonnell worked on the car Sunday.

McDonnell drove race cars at the Black Hills Speedway.

Gov. Urges Top High School Seniors

PIERRE (AP) — Gov. Dennis Daugaard has urged South Dakota's top graduating high school seniors to dream big.

Daugaard spoke in Pierre on Monday at a luncheon recognizing the top 1 percent of graduating seniors from high schools. Each high school chooses at least one student for every 100 graduating seniors.

The governor says the students obviously are intelligent, but they also need to use persistence to accomplish their dreams. He also warned the students not to underestimate themselves just because they come from a rural state with a small population.

Daugaard says the top students should recognize the teachers and school administrators who helped them, but they should particularly honor their parents for their support.

The Associated School Boards of South Dakota has been hosting the event since 1990.



Daugaard

Nutritionists Put Blame On Economy

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Health advocates say the nation's economic downturn is partly to blame for areas in Nebraska that lack easy access to affordable, nutritious food.

University of Nebraska Lincoln nutrition specialist Wanda Koszewski says higher gas prices have limited the distances families can travel for healthy offerings. She says business closures and tighter family budgets have contributed as well, forcing some shoppers to choose cheaper but less healthy food.

Omaha Sen. Brenda Council has introduced legislation this session that would offer tax credits and encourage private funding for grocery stores, farmers markets and community gardens that serve low-access areas. An amendment to her bill, scheduled for debate this week, would reduce the total available tax credit each year to \$200,000.

Trial Set In Trooper Assault Case

PIERRE (AP) — A Sept. 7 trial has been scheduled for an Onida man accused of assaulting a South Dakota Highway Patrol trooper.

Seventy-six-year-old Chester Strickland is accused of punching the female trooper three times in the face last August during a traffic stop north of Pierre.

Strickland has pleaded not guilty to assaulting and obstructing a law officer and possessing a concealed weapon without a permit.

Sioux Falls Casino Robbed At Gunpoint

SIoux FALLS (AP) — Sioux Falls police are searching for a male who robbed a casino at gunpoint.

Authorities say the suspect walked into the Black Diamond Casino at about 1:30 a.m. Monday armed with a handgun, demanded money and fled with an undetermined amount of cash.

KELO-TV reports that the casino has been robbed twice before, last July and in December 2010.

Nelson Faces Tough Senate Race

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — The last time Sen. Ben Nelson ran for re-election, in 2006, Democrats held four of the six Senate seats representing the 650 miles of plains from Nebraska north to the Canadian border.

If the Nebraska senator's political fortunes don't change, soon there will be just one.

As Nelson quietly prepares for his 2012 re-election campaign, he is doing so in a region that is trending away from him. As recently as 2004, the Great Plains wasn't just a place where Democrats could win — it was a power center, led by then Majority

Leader Tom Daschle of South Dakota. Today, the region is tilting toward the GOP.

Republicans have taken control of two Senate seats and two House seats long held by Democrats and solidified statehouse majorities. Another seat is likely to be on the way in 2012, after North Dakota Sen. Kent Conrad announced he wouldn't seek re-election earlier this year. That would leave just two Democrats in the Plains: South Dakota Sen. Tim Johnson, who is up for re-election in 2014, and Nelson.

Polls have shown Nelson strug-

gling. Some have had him down as many as 10 points to prospective opponents. Even his supporters say he's in a tough spot.

"He's got some very tough votes coming up, on some really tough issues," such as the upcoming votes on debt ceiling and the federal budget, said Mike Fahey, the former mayor of Omaha and a friend of Nelson's. "He will need to try and find a balance. I think 2012 will be a real test for him."

Although the election is more than a year away, Democrats are already concerned. The party holds control of the Senate by a precarious margin,

51 to 47, with two seats held by independents. The outcome of races like Nelson's could determine whether the party stays in power or loses control of Congress to the Republicans, who already dominate the House.

Three Republican candidates have announced plans to run against Nelson. Nelson raised more than \$1 million in the first quarter of 2011 and has more than \$2 million cash on hand, providing a strong financial base for defending his seat. He also plans to step up his home state political appearances.

Missouri River Runoff On The Rise

SIoux FALLS (AP) — The Army Corps of Engineers says this could be a year of record runoff into the Missouri River system.

Spokeswoman Jody Farhat said the reservoir system already is holding a lot of water and runoff from mountain snowmelt in the Northern Rockies is just beginning.

Farhat tells South Dakota Public Broadcasting that the corps is starting

to release more water from the reservoirs to free up space for more runoff.

Lake Oahe north of Pierre is 18 inches below its all-time record high. Farhat said it's unlikely that Oahe will exceed the record set in 1996.

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