

Trial Delayed For Man Charged In Shooting

NORFOLK, Neb. (AP) — The trial of a man accused of shooting and wounding a woman in Norfolk has been delayed. The *Norfolk Daily News* says Monday that 34-year-old Carlos Arevalo-Martinez appeared in Madison County District Court and waived his right to a speedy trial. His attorney, Doug Stratton, says he just received police reports last week and they'll need time to go over the reports with an interpreter. Arevalo-Martinez's trial on charges of first-degree assault and use of a firearm to commit a felony is now set for July 9. He's accused of shooting 33-year-old Edna Gutierrez on Feb. 14. He was taken into custody after a standoff with police in Stanton on Feb. 16. Arevalo-Martinez remains in jail on \$1 million bond.

Development Board Drops REDI Fund Rate

PIERRE (AP) — Gov. Dennis Daugaard says the 3-percent interest rate on new loans from South Dakota's Revolving Economic Development & Initiative Fund is dropping to 2 percent. Daugaard says he's pleased with the decision by the Board of Economic Development, which oversees the REDI Fund. He says he's optimistic the change will help stimulate South Dakota's economy. The REDI Fund was created in 1987 under Gov. George Mickelson to diversify South Dakota's economy, increase capital investment and create stable jobs. The loan program is available to start-up firms, businesses that are expanding or relocating and local South Dakota economic development corporations. The Daugaard administration says the program has created more than 30,000 jobs through 2011.

Man Sentenced To Life For Child Sexual Abuse

SIoux FALLS (AP) — The U.S. Attorney's Office says a 46-year-old Pine Ridge man has been sentenced to life in prison for two counts of aggravated sexual abuse of a child. U.S. Attorney Brendan Johnson says Gillman Roddy Long, also known as Dave Gillman Long, engaged in sexual acts with a child under 16 between January and March of 2008. Long was convicted in July. Judge Karen Schreiber handed down the sentence late last week.

Parents: 6-Year-Old Recovering After Fire

MITCHELL (AP) — The parents of a 3-year-old boy who died from smoke inhalation in a house fire in Mitchell say their 6-year-old son is doing well and is expected to make a full recovery. Jordon and Jessica Sehnert said in a statement released by Avera McKennan that they are overwhelmingly saddened by the loss of their son, Jaxon Sehnert, and ask that they be allowed to grieve in private. Six-year-old Jacob Sehnert remains hospitalized. The couple expressed their gratitude for the outpouring of love, support and prayers. Officials say the house was engulfed in smoke when firefighters arrived on the scene. Crews used thermal imaging cameras to rescue the children. The boys were airlifted to Sioux Falls hospitals. Jessica Sehnert also was hospitalized but was released.

South Dakota Legislature

Oil, Gas Development To Be Studied

BY CHET BROKAW
Associated Press

PIERRE — South Dakota lawmakers decided Monday to appoint a special committee that will study what the state must do to prepare as North Dakota's oil boom moves south. The increase in oil and gas drilling is expected to bring increased truck traffic, housing shortages, skyrocketing rents and the need for additional restaurants, truck stops and other services in western South Dakota. Sen. Ryan Maher, R-Isabel, said the influx of oil and gas workers will require additional law enforcement, firefighting and ambulance services. And small towns in western South Dakota will be faced with demands that exceed their current water and sewer systems, he said. "I think it would serve us well to bring all parties to discuss what could potentially happen up there," Maher said. The Executive Board, a panel that handles management and administrative issues for the Legislature, voted unanimously Monday to set up a special committee to study the expected spread of oil and gas development from North Dakota's oil patch into South Dakota. The topic finished first in a survey that asked law-

makers what special studies should be conducted before the start of next year's legislative session. The board also agreed to set up a committee to study the funding of state-run universities and technical schools. Sen. Bob Gray, R-Pierre, said the study could explore funding the six universities and four technical schools with a system that rewards those that do the best in providing graduates needed to fill critical jobs. The Executive Board rejected proposals for studying the funding of school districts and examining issues related to large-scale livestock operations. After North Dakota's oil industry began to boom in the past decade, South Dakota started an effort to encourage more oil and gas exploration in the state. Part of that effort has been to put drilling and geological information on the Internet to help companies decide where to explore in South Dakota. However, officials in North Dakota have advised South Dakota to begin preparing for both the tremendous wealth and problems that will accompany increased oil and gas development. Maher, who lives near the area expected to see the most drilling activity, said each drilling rig brings 80 jobs, half for the drilling operation and half for companies that provide services to

rigs. The demand for housing will drive up rents to the point that people working outside the oil industry will have trouble finding a place to live, he said. Sen. Tom Nelson, R-Lead, said South Dakota cannot ignore the coming surge in oil and gas drilling. "It's not a matter of if, it's when," Nelson said. Reuben Bezpaletz, a legislative staffer, said the study committee may also want to look at a state law that allows ownership of mineral rights to be severed from ownership of the land's surface. When many South Dakota farms and ranches were sold, the original owners kept rights to any minerals under that land, he said. As mineral interests have been passed down through several generations, they have been divided among many heirs, Bezpaletz said. Companies will be reluctant to explore in an area where it's difficult to track down all the people who hold a share of the mineral interests, he said. However, the state holds the mineral rights underlying much land in South Dakota, Bezpaletz said. "If we did make a major strike in South Dakota, the state would be rolling in money," he said.

Some Omaha Polling Places Will Reopen


BY JOSH FUNK
Associated Press

OMAHA, Neb. — Nebraska election officials said Monday they plan to reinstate some of the 86 polling places Douglas County officials eliminated around Omaha, but won't be able to do so before next month's primary. State law does not allow for any polling place changes until after the primary because it is too close to the May 15 vote. Douglas County Election Commissioner Dave Phipps plans to meet with voters and work with Nebraska Secretary of State John Gale to decide which polling places to reopen for the general election. "It needs to be reconsidered simply because it was a major change," Gale said.


Community groups and Democrats have criticized Phipps, saying the changes — which eliminated nearly one-third of the county's polling places — will make it difficult for the poorest residents to vote. Phipps has said he made the changes to save money and because of new election laws that allowed precinct sizes to be increased. Phipps and Gale said they planned to review voter turnout data after the primary and compare it with past elections to help determine where there are problems. An advisory board of representatives from across Douglas County will also have input on the polling places, and Gale's office will have to approve the changes, which Phipps said he hoped to

complete before the end of July. State officials have said Phipps' actions don't appear to have violated any laws, and Gale declined to investigate. But U.S. Sen. Ben Nelson asked the U.S. Justice Department to investigate whether the changes will violate any Omaha voters' rights. Phipps said Monday that he was contacted about a week ago by the Justice Department's voting rights office, but he doesn't know whether a formal investigation will be conducted. Phipps said the federal officials wanted background information on his decision. Douglas County made the most extensive changes in its precincts and polling places, but Gale said that all four of the state's largest counties consolidated polling places this year.

Gale said Douglas, Sarpy, Lancaster and Hall counties all increased the size of their voting precincts and eliminated some polling places, but, other than Douglas, the other counties haven't faced significant criticism. Douglas eliminated 32 percent of its polling places in Omaha. Hall County cut 30 percent of its polling places around Grand Island. Sarpy County eliminated 25 percent of its polling places in Omaha's suburbs. Lancaster County dropped just 15 percent of its polling places around Lincoln. Gale said he had expected the counties to take a more gradual approach to the precinct change that lawmakers approved last year. "It was probably too soon, too fast," Gale said about the Douglas County changes.



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