

## De Blasio To Visit Neb., Iowa Next Week

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — New York Mayor Bill de Blasio will be the keynote speaker for the University of Nebraska Peter J. Hoagland Lecture next week. The event, which is free and open to the public, takes place at 6:30 p.m. Thursday at Mammel Hall on the University of Nebraska at Omaha Pacific Campus. Seating is limited, so reservations are recommended. The mayor's speech will focus on fighting income inequality. He's scheduled to give a similar speech earlier Thursday at Drake University in Iowa. The visits come as de Blasio moves to expand his national profile. De Blasio, a Democrat, has close ties to Hillary Rodham Clinton, who will launch her 2016 presidential candidacy on Sunday.

## Worker Dies While Trying To Free Truck

SCHUYLER, Neb. (AP) — Authorities say a construction worker died Saturday in northeast Nebraska while trying to free a cement truck. The Colfax County Attorney's office told the *Columbus Telegram* that 26-year-old Craig Anderson of Columbus died Saturday around 8 a.m. while working south of Schuyler. A cement truck got stuck near Lake Socorro, which is just west of Highway 15. Anderson was driving a payload and attempting to pull the truck out with a chain when the incident happened. Authorities say the chain snapped and struck Anderson who died at the scene. A funeral is planned for Wednesday at Bible Baptist Church in Columbus. Anderson is survived by his wife, Dorothy Anderson, and three sons.

## Display Shows History Of Baseball In SD

PIERRE (AP) — An exhibit about the state's baseball tradition is on display for a year at the South Dakota Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre. "Play Ball! The National Pastime in South Dakota" will be housed in the Hogen Gallery of the museum through April 2016. It traces the history of baseball in South Dakota from when it was a territory to the present through artifacts, images, video and hands-on activities geared for people of every age. Museum director Jay Smith says baseball influenced community development and started community traditions statewide that are repeated every spring. The museum and the exhibit are open during regular museum hours of 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. CDT Monday through Saturday, and 1-4:30 p.m. on Sunday. There's an admission fee for adults, but kids are free.

## Fremont Struggles With Its Immig. Rules

FREMONT, Neb. (AP) — A Nebraska city's ordinance that bans renting homes to immigrants living in the country illegally is having little effect because Fremont officials haven't been able to determine applicants' citizenship status. The *Omaha World-Herald* reports the federal government is refusing to provide information about an individual's immigration status because Fremont doesn't collect enough information. So Fremont officials haven't revoked any rental permits since the city of about 26,000 started enforcing the ordinance last year. Voters originally passed the ordinance in 2010, but its enforcement was delayed while lawsuits were resolved. Mayor Scott Getzschman said the city is working to address the problem without amending the ordinance. "We are following the letter of the law and doing what we have to do," he said. "The only thing not being done is verification." The rules require Fremont residents to pay \$5 and swear they have legal permission to live in the United States. Landlords are prohibited from renting to anyone without a permit. People who say they aren't U.S. citizens have their information submitted to a federal database for review. At least 35 people have said they aren't citizens in the past year. Fremont's form collects only basic identifying information. Getzschman said federal officials have said the city doesn't collect enough to determine citizenship. "Our form doesn't require a Social Security number or driver's license number," Getzschman said. "There's no additional documentation. That's why the verification process is not being used." Supporters of the ordinance were surprised to hear about this latest setback. John Wiegert of Fremont said he thought the ordinance had been quietly working since roughly 60 percent of the city's voters decided to keep it last year. "I've not heard anyone complain," he said. "My job was to get out the vote, and then I was done with it." Another section of Fremont's immigration ordinance that requires employers to use a federal online system to check whether prospective employees are permitted to work in the U.S. has been in place since 2012. Many larger employers, including the major meatpacking plants just outside Fremont, were already using that federal E-Verify system before the ordinance was adopted.

## Shop: Ban Over Gay Rights Bill Served Purpose

FARGO, N.D. — A worker-owner of a Fargo coffee shop who instituted a tongue-in-cheek ban on North Dakota lawmakers for opposing an anti-discrimination bill says the response has been "99.9 percent positive" and that he made his point, even if a few people didn't like it. Joe Curry, one of the worker-owners of the Red Raven Espresso Parlor, posted a newspaper page in the shop earlier this month that showed the 55 Republican state House members who rejected a bill that would have prohibited discrimination based on sexual orientation in housing, government, public services and the workplace. It was accompanied by a sign saying the legislators were banned. "Unless accompanied by a lesbian, gay, bisexual or transsexual, queer, intersex or asexual person." The stunt got a lot of attention, with Republican-led legislatures in Indiana and Arkansas having just rolled back their new religious objections laws under pressure from critics who considered the laws invitations to discriminate against the LGBT community. Curry said he wanted to use humor to make a serious point and to show support for his customers, whom he describes as mostly "lefties" in a conservative state.

"The ban was, I thought, very tongue in cheek, requiring them to be escorted by someone from the LGBT community," Curry said Wednesday. "I hope that they thought about it, at least, and I hope some of them giggled. But in the end, they are all welcome here." Not everyone giggled. State Rep. Josh Boschee, a Red Raven regular and

the state's only openly gay lawmaker, said he didn't like the tactic. "I understand what they are trying to make a point but I would have done it differently," the Fargo Democrat said. Republican state Rep. Jim Kasper, a local who voted against the legislation, said he's never been in the coffee shop because he doesn't get downtown much. He also took

the ban seriously and went as far as to support the premise. "They have the perfect right to refuse anyone they want," Kasper said. The ban got attention on cable news shows. MSNBC's Melissa Harris-Perry described it as her "favorite thing that happened this week" and wondered aloud if Fargo was a "center of LGBT rights."

# Bird Flu Outbreak Spreads To 3 More Turkey Farms

BY KEVIN BURBACH AND STEVE KARNOWSKI  
Associated Press

SIoux FALLS — A bird flu outbreak that has puzzled scientists spread to three more Midwest turkey farms, bringing the number of farms infected to 23 and raising the death toll to more than 1.2 million birds killed by the disease or by authorities scrambling to contain it. The U.S. Department of Agriculture confirmed on Saturday that the H5N2 strain of avian influenza was found among 38,000 birds at a commercial farm in Kandiyohi County in west-central Minnesota. It's the third confirmed outbreak in Kandiyohi, which is the top turkey producing county in the country's top turkey producing state. This was after the USDA confirmed late Friday that bird flu was found at two more South Dakota farms, saying it had infected a flock of 53,000 turkeys at a farm in McCook County and in a flock of 46,000 turkeys at a farm in McPherson County. South Dakota State Veterinarian Dustin Oedekoven said crews were working Saturday to begin euthanizing any birds not killed by the highly contagious strain to prevent the virus from spreading. Once those birds have been destroyed, the 23 farms in Minnesota, South Dakota, North Dakota, Missouri, Kansas and Arkansas will have lost more than 1.2 million turkeys, a small fraction of the 235 million turkeys

produced nationally in 2014. Canadian officials also confirmed earlier in the week that a turkey farm in southern Ontario with 44,800 birds was hit, too. Ken Rutledge, the CEO of Dakota Provisions, the only commercial turkey processing plant in South Dakota, said the more than 200,000 turkeys affected in the Dakotas so far account for about 5 percent of his total annual production. "It probably will not impact our ability to service our customers, but is a serious impact in terms of lost volume at our plant and, obviously, is a severe impact to the growers themselves," Rutledge said. In Minnesota, turkey producers have now lost over 900,000 birds. Scientists suspect migratory waterfowl such as ducks are the reservoir of the virus. They can spread it through their droppings. They're still trying to determine how the virus has managed to evade the strict biosecurity that's standard practice at commercial turkey farms. The virus can be carried into barns by workers or by rodents and wild birds that sneak inside. Dr. Beth Thompson, assistant director of the Minnesota Board of Animal Health, said the reason Minnesota has had so many cases has a lot to do with the fact that it's the country's top turkey producing state, and that it has a myriad of ponds and lakes that are attractive stopover places for migrating waterfowl such as ducks. "We have to think about what Minnesota is. It's the Land of 10,000 Lakes

bringing the wild waterfowl into Minnesota, and we're also number one in turkey production. I think that answers the question, that we do have a lot of turkey barns out there, and that is why we are seeing the infection rate we are in those facilities," she told reporters Friday. Officials stress the risk to public health is low and that there's no danger to the food supply. No human cases have been detected in the U.S. Because trucks and equipment provide a potential way to carry the virus onto farms, Minnesota Gov. Mark Dayton signed an executive order Friday lifting seasonal weight restrictions for poultry feed trucks and trailers, and for emergency equipment being used in the response. His order said tightening biosecurity by reducing the number of trips to poultry farms is critical to lowering the risk of introducing the virus to non-infected farms. While South Dakota's taken a drubbing in the last two weeks, Oedekoven, the state veterinarian, said tests on poultry living in the 10-kilometer quarantine zones of the state's first two farms have almost all come back without any signs of the disease. They're still awaiting a few results. And he said for the time being, no other possible cases are pending confirmation in the state. "If we can get a couple nice days of sunshine here and have everybody just wash their boots and blow their nose, we'll hope for the best," he said.

## Gov't Study: Climate Change Could Reduce Sage Grouse Habitat

SIoux FALLS — A warming climate could significantly reduce the amount of greater sage grouse habitat in portions of Wyoming, a key stronghold for the troubled bird species, government scientists concluded in a new study. The chicken-sized grouse has seen dramatic declines in recent decades due to disease, oil drilling, grazing and other changes across the bird's sagebrush habitat. U.S. Geological Survey scientists said a warming climate could become an even greater risk, potentially reducing grouse nesting habitat in southwestern Wyoming by 12 percent by 2050. The findings were published in the journal *Ecological Indicators*. Scientists analyzed past climate patterns across 3,200 square miles and compared that with rain and snowfall projections to predict future conditions. As precipitation levels drop in coming years, the study said, sagebrush will become more vulnerable to fire, insects and disease. Some areas with the plants will convert to bare ground. The study centered on an area of the sagebrush ecosystem that is considered among the least vulnerable

to climate change. That suggests other areas occupied by sage grouse could see even greater change, the scientists said. "Historic disturbances of fire, development and invasive species have altered the sagebrush landscape, but climate change may represent the habitat's greatest future risk," said Collin Homer, a USGS scientist based in Sioux Falls, South Dakota and the lead author of the study. The team of USGS researchers examined warming impacts on areas as small as a quarter of an acre, which Homer said could help land managers better plan for the future. The U.S. Interior Department is to decide this fall if the birds should be protected under the Endangered Species Act. They occupy 290,000 square miles of sagebrush habitat in California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, Wyoming and portions of southern Canada. Population estimates for greater sage grouse range from 100,000 to 500,000 birds. Grouse numbers are down at least 30 percent since 1985.

## Thune, Ag Leaders Hope Bill Can Keep Rail Service On Track

SIoux FALLS (AP) — U.S. Sen. John Thune and some of the state's agriculture leaders hope new legislation will help to keep rail service in the state on track after a backlog last fall forced farmers to wait before taking their product to market. Thune and leaders from the state's soybean, wheat and corn growers associations met Friday in Sioux Falls to discuss issues with rail transportation in South Dakota. Two years of record harvests in South Dakota coupled with the increase in North Dakota oil production in part led to a lack of rail cars and high shipping costs. "We rely so heavily out here on railroads to get our commodities to the marketplace that we just flat have to have a very sound, good, reliable, affordable form of transportation," Thune said. That's why the senior Republican senator hopes his Surface Transportation Board Reauthorization bill, which was introduced in March, could alleviate some issues in the future. He says the legislation would give the Surface Transportation Board more authority to investigate when there are issues like the ones producers saw this fall. Lisa Richardson, the executive director for South Dakota Corn Growers Association, said the bill and Thune's negotiation with railroads are what's going to allow the state's agriculture industry to flourish. Thune's bill has been passed by the Commerce Committee and is headed to the floor of the U.S. Senate.

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