

S.F. Motel Has Second Stabbing In 3 Weeks

SIoux FALLS (AP) — A weekend stabbing in Sioux Falls that left one man dead was the second stabbing in three weeks at the DeLux Motel. Fifty-five-year-old Vind Strozier faces murder and aggravated assault charges in the Saturday night incident. Police identified the man who died as Rodney Iron Hawk Jr. They have yet to release the name of a 40-year-old man who was cut on the arm during the fight. In the late July incident, police say a 21-year-old woman used a broken bottle to stab a man three times in the neck and chest at the motel. Area residents tell KELO-TV that police frequently respond to disturbances there. Manager Dennis Archer tells the *Argus Leader* newspaper that he posts a sign saying no noise after 10 p.m. and no parties.

Heavy Rain Swamps Northern Roberts County

WATERTOWN (AP) — Some parts of northern Roberts County were hit by between 4 and 8 inches of rain on Monday. National Weather Service meteorologist Dave Hintz tells KWAT radio that an area from Claire City to New Effington was affected by the storms. Roberts County Emergency Manager Jim Pearson says some roads in the county were barricaded, but the main focus of concern was New Effington. Pearson says the town dealt with some flooding a few weeks ago, and a diversion channel built at the time should help move out some of the water.

Employee Arrested In School District Fire

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Authorities say an employee with Lincoln Public Schools has been arrested for allegedly setting a fire that destroyed the district's office building. The *Lincoln Journal Star* says Sharon Brewster was booked in the Lancaster County jail Monday on first-degree arson charge. The newspaper says Brewster is associated with the curriculum staff, focusing on the gifted program. The May 30 fire caused an estimated \$20 million in damage. Authorities finished the on-site investigation last month, and Monday's announcement was the first to link the fire with suspicious activity. Officials say the fire started on a desktop in a cubicle but not Brewster's. Brewster is being held pending a court appearance Tuesday. Her case isn't listed on the online court system, and it wasn't immediately known if she has an attorney.

Death Investigation In Grand Island

GRAND ISLAND, Neb. (AP) — Authorities are investigating what officials are calling an apparent murder-suicide in Grand Island. The Hall County attorney's office says the deaths happened Monday morning. County Attorney Mark Young says in statement Monday afternoon that no names are being released pending notification of family. Young says no other details are being released because a grand jury may be convened to investigate. The *Grand Island Independent* newspaper says police say the investigation surrounds an incident that closed a portion of U.S. Highway 281 for several hours Monday morning.

Officials Say Sturgis Attendance Likely Down

STURGIS (AP) — Officials say attendance at the 2011 Sturgis Motorcycle Rally that ended Sunday was likely down from last year's 70th anniversary event. But rally officials and vendors tell the Rapid City Journal that the drop is probably no more than usual for a year after a big anniversary. Official crowd estimates will be released later this month after the city of Sturgis receives vendor sales tax revenue figures from the state Department of Revenue. But some indicators showed decreases from last year. Traffic counts into and out of Sturgis by the State Department of Transportation were down nearly 12 percent through Thursday. And reservations for campgrounds and hotel and motel rooms booked by Black Hills Central Reservations were down about 6 percent.

Buffett: Raise Taxes On 'Mega-Rich'

By The Associated Press
Billionaire investor Warren Buffett is calling on the "mega-rich" to pay more in taxes. Buffett said Monday in a *New York Times* opinion piece that he would immediately raise rates on households with taxable income of more than \$1 million, and he would add an additional increase for those making \$10 million or more. He also recommends that the 12 members of Congress charged with devising a deficit-cutting plan leave rates for 99.7 percent of taxpayers unchanged. "My friends and I have been coddled long enough by a billionaire-friendly Congress," Buffett wrote. "It's time for our government to get serious about shared sacrifice." Buffett, who is chairman and CEO of Omaha-based Berkshire Hathaway, has been calling for higher taxes on the super wealthy for several years. He has said the tax system has contributed to the growing gap between rich and poor.

rate of 15 percent on most investment income but practically nothing in payroll taxes. The middle class, meanwhile, typically falls into the 15 percent and 25 percent income tax brackets and is hit with heavy payroll taxes. He said Washington legislators "feel compelled to protect us, much as if we were spotted owls or some other endangered species." Buffett said he knows many of

the mega-rich well, and most wouldn't mind paying more in taxes, especially when so many fellow citizens are suffering. He also said he has yet to see anyone shy away from investments because of tax rates on potential gains, even when rates were much higher in the mid-1970s, 1980s and 1990s. "People invest to make money, and potential taxes have never scared them off," he said.

President Barack Obama cited Buffett's op-ed to reinforce a point he was making at a town hall meeting in Cannon Falls, Minn., about spreading the pain when drafting a plan to deal with the nation's mounting deficit. Obama drew laughter and applause when he quoted Buffett's line about not coddling billionaires. Buffett noted Monday that the mega-rich pay income taxes at a

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Obama Hits Back At GOP

President Lambasts Republican Rivals For Not Compromising

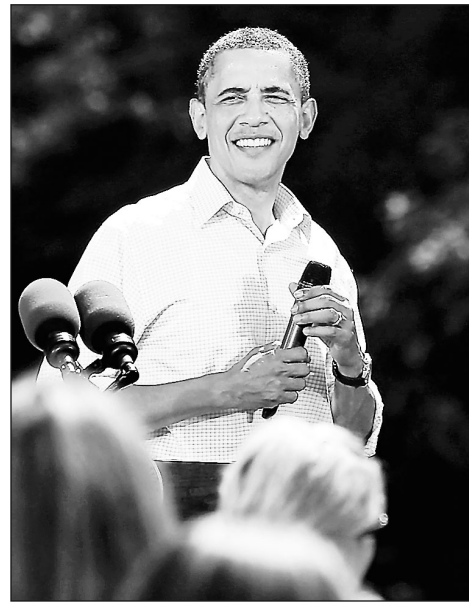
BY JIM KUHNHENN
Associated Press

DECORAH, Iowa — Hitting back against an emboldened GOP, President Barack Obama launched a rare direct attack Monday on the Republican presidential field, criticizing his potential 2012 rivals for their blanket opposition to any deficit-cutting compromise involving new taxes. "That's just not common sense," Obama told the crowd at a town hall-style meeting in Cannon Falls, Minn., as he kicked off a three-day bus tour through Minnesota, Iowa and Illinois.

"You've got to be willing to compromise to move the country forward," the president said later in the day as he delivered the same message at a town hall in Decorah, Iowa. At the same time Obama was forced to defend his own record as Iowa voters asked him about all the compromises he's made with the GOP.

"I make no apologies for being reasonable," Obama declared as he stood in front of a cheery red barn, surrounded by bales of hay. The president recalled a moment in last week's GOP presidential debate when all eight of the candidates said they would refuse to support a deal with tax increases, even if tax revenues were outweighed 10-to-1 by spending cuts. Obama didn't mention any of the candidates by name, and prefaced the remark by saying, "I know it's not election season yet."

But his comment underscored that election season is indeed under way. The bus tour, although an official White House event rather than a campaign swing, is taking Obama through three states he won in 2008 but where he now



ELIZABETH FLORES/MINN. STAR TRIBUNE/MCT
President Barack Obama holds a town meeting on Monday in Cannon Falls, Minn., at the start of a three day bus tour of the Midwest.

needs to shore up his standing. It's giving him a chance to return to the grassroots campaigning that helped propel him to the White House, and shed his jacket and tie to mix it up with voters in coffee shops and lunch joints far from the Beltway — as he did in three unscheduled stops Monday, including one in a tree-lined Minnesota town where he was swarmed by enthusiastic kids.

The president is traveling in an imposing new \$1.1 million bus, outfitted with tinted windows and flashing lights, that the Secret Service purchased.

In Iowa, Obama returned to a state that handed him a key victory over Democratic rival Hillary Rodham Clinton in their nomination fight but where Republicans have now been blanket-

ing the state in preparation for its first-in-the-nation caucuses, attacking the president at every turn. The bus tour came on the heels of Rep. Michele Bachmann's weekend victory in the Iowa Straw Poll and Texas Gov. Rick Perry's contest-rattling entrance into the race.

It also came after the president spent much of the summer holed up in the nation's capital enmeshed in bitter, partisan negotiations on the debt crisis that cratered his approval ratings and those of Congress amid a faltering economy and high unemployment.

The president got a rosy reception from his Minnesota audience, but Iowa voters were a tougher crowd, demanding to know why he'd compromised on principles important to Democrats, and asking to hear his plans for dealing with intransigent Republicans.

The president responded by pledging to present a specific jobs plan to Congress when lawmakers return from their summer recess in September. "And if they don't get it done, then we'll be running against a Congress that's not doing anything for the American people and the choice will be very stark and very clear," the president said.

At both town hall meetings, Obama used questions on his health care bill to take hard shots at Mitt Romney, the GOP front-runner who has had to defend implementing a health care plan while governor of Massachusetts that's similar to the federal version.

"You've got a governor who's running for president right now who instituted the exact same thing in Massachusetts," Obama said, referring to a central component of his law — the requirement for nearly everyone to carry health insurance.

"This used to be a Republican idea," Obama said. "It's like suddenly they got amnesia."

The so-called individual mandate in Obama's health care law was struck down by a federal appeals court last week, but Obama expressed confidence that the Supreme Court ultimately would uphold it if justices follow existing law and precedent.

Neb. Weighing Choices For Health Care Exchange

BY GRANT SCHULTE
Associated Press

LINCOLN, Neb. — Unanswered questions about the new national health care law have slowed Nebraska's efforts to prepare a statewide insurance exchange, state insurance officials said Monday.

Nebraska insurance analysts told a legislative panel that they need more federal guidance before deciding which health exchange option to recommend, so the state can comply with the Obama administration's overhaul of the nation's health care system.

The state exchanges are meant to offer a one-stop-shop for Americans to buy health insurance coverage. The state exchanges must be federally certified by January 2013 and operational by the start of 2014.

State officials must decide whether Nebraska will join the federal exchange, participate in a regional exchange with other states, or launch an exchange of its own to comply with federal law. Sciuolo said a regional exchange appears unlikely, because each state has different regulations and needs.

State health insurance analyst Michael Sciuolo said officials still haven't learned the exact details of the health insurance exchange offered by the federal government. Still unclear is whether a Nebraska-run program would carry over to other states, which option is the most cost-effective and how many participants would meet various income requirements to enter into an exchange.

"There seems to be a lot of challenges with the concept," Sciuolo said. "I think initially it was a concept that sounded great, particularly when we talk about the pooling aspect. But with all the other

challenges facing states as they prepare for the exchange process ... it's been one of those things that sounded a lot better in theory than has worked out practically."

The state insurance officials gave their briefing to a joint meeting of the Legislature's Banking, Commerce and Insurance Committee and Health and Human Services Committees. The health care exchanges are expected to surface as a significant issue when lawmakers convene a new session in January.

A state-commissioned study released last August determined that the new federal law will increase Nebraska's Medicaid costs by \$526 million to \$766 million over the next decade. In May, a state-by-state report commissioned by the Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured estimated a much lower cost of between \$106 million and \$155 million.

Updated For Yankton's 150th Anniversary

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By Bob Karolevitz

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