

## Trade Center Beam Going To Rapid City

RAPID CITY (AP) — Rapid City will be getting a steel beam from the World Trade Center in New York to serve as a memorial to those who lost their lives in the 2001 terrorist attacks.

The *Rapid City Journal* reports that Rapid City Chamber of Commerce is raising money for the memorial that will be placed in Rushmore Plaza Civic Center.

The I-beam is about five feet long.

## Buyer Chosen For S.D. Town Of Scenic

SCENIC (AP) — The woman who owns much of the South Dakota community of Scenic has chosen a buyer for what was once known as a Wild West town next to the Badlands.

Realtor David Olsen tells the *Rapid City Journal* that Twila Merrill is hoping to close on the sale by the end of next week. He declined to name the buyer or the sale price until after the deal is done.

Olsen says there were more than 100 potential buyers, from California to New York. He says some serious inquiries even came from China.

The property was listed at \$799,000. It includes 46 acres, with 12 in town and 34 surrounding. It includes a post office land lease, a convenience store, a saloon, a museum, two homes and two jails.

## Rural Learning Center Opens In Howard

HOWARD (AP) — A \$6.5 million rural learning center has opened in the small eastern South Dakota community of Howard.

The *Daily Republic* reports that the Maroney Rural Learning Center has a hotel, restaurant and conference rooms where training will be conducted on the subject of rural revitalization.

It was built with the help of federal stimulus money.

The center is named for a businessman who donated \$1 million to the project.

Sen. Tim Johnson, D-S.D., attended Thursday's grand opening and said the center can serve as a model for other rural communities.

## 68-Year-Old S.D. Woman Faces Assault Charge

RAPID CITY (AP) — A 68-year-old South Dakota woman is accused of pulling a handgun on a neighbor after an argument.

Rapid City police spokeswoman Tarah Heupel says Kamalynn Hurd and her neighbor apparently were arguing over ownership of a yard light Wednesday afternoon.

Hurd allegedly went back into her home to retrieve the gun, then pointed it at the neighbor.

Heupel says officers recovered a handgun in Hurd's garage when they arrested her on an aggravated assault charge.

Hurd did not immediately respond to an Associated Press request for comment on Friday. She is due in court Sept. 1.

## Police: Driving Teacher Offered Students Wine

CORALVILLE, Iowa (AP) — Coralville police say a driving instructor is charged with providing alcohol to minors for allegedly offering wine to two teenage girls during driving time and then continuing with their lessons.

The *Iowa City Press-Citizen* says Friday that police say Frederick Binder, of Mount Pleasant, offered wine to the girls at a restaurant on June 27.

He operates Auto Right Driving School.

The newspaper says a third driving student did not take any wine and told her father, who contacted police.

Bindner is to be arraigned on Sept. 1.

# Corps Boomed At Meeting On Flooding

CHET BROKAW

Associated Press

PIERRE — Residents of South Dakota's flood-stricken cities boomed at an informal congressional hearing Friday when officials of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers blamed the flooding on record heavy rains that fell upstream on the Missouri River in May.

People whose homes and businesses were damaged by high water joined local officials in criticizing the way the corps managed the flood, which has lasted nearly three months. They said the corps knew of heavy snowpacks in Plains states and northern Rocky Mountains and should have released more water from the Missouri River dams earlier in the year to create more space to hold the spring runoff.

The exchange occurred at a meeting held in Pierre by Rep. Kristi Noem, R-S.D. and two members of the U.S. House Transportation Committee. Republican Reps. John L. Mica of Florida and Bill Shuster of Pennsylvania also joined Noem earlier for a tour of some flooded areas.

Mica, the committee's chairman, said the three lawmakers will work to get the Federal Emergency Management Agency to send federal aid quickly to cities and the state to help repair roads and other infrastructure and to compensate them for work that protected areas from flooding this summer. They also will seek to gain FEMA approval of financial assistance to

homeowners and to make sure the corps finds a way to prevent floods in future years, he said.

After the meeting, Larry Cronin of Fort Pierre, who had water damage to his house and had to relocate his business, said the gathering was a success because the three House members have the power to seek changes in river management and push for financial help to those hurt by the flooding.

"I think we went to the right people," Cronin said.

City officials and homeowners complained that the corps gave them only a few days warning in May that releases would increase dramatically and cause flooding downstream of the dams on the Missouri River.

State and city officials had been told earlier in May that the corps would make modest increases in the water flowing through the reservoir system. But in the final week of May, the corps several times announced higher and higher releases would be needed.

The corps and the cities then built emergency earthen levees to protect large areas of the cities, and many homeowners in flood-threatened areas protected their homes with walls of sandbags and then moved to higher ground.

Because the levees have held and water levels are falling as releases are gradually dropped, many residents of low-lying areas in Pierre and Fort Pierre have moved back to their homes.

About half the residents of Dakota Dunes in southeastern South Dakota had to leave their homes in early June, and they will not be able to return home until September or later.

One of the exchanges that drew boos from the crowd was when Jody Farhat, chief of water management for the Missouri River basin, said the corps had sufficient room in the six Missouri River dams to handle spring runoff until heavy rains fell in May in Montana and other upstream areas.

"We had sufficient flood-control storage available in the reservoir system to handle the plains and mountain snowpack," she said after the noise subsided.

The crowd of several hundred cheered earlier when Steve Rounds, a businessman whose marina just below Oahe Dam near Pierre was severely damaged by high water, said the corps had mismanaged the reservoir system.

"The corps is part of the government and the government is to serve and protect. The problem is you didn't protect us," Rounds told corps officials.

Noem said she knows that many people want to assign blame for the flooding, but she is more worried about seeking changes to avoid flooding in future years.

"When you look at these communities and the hell they've been through, they want to know it's not going to be the same story next year," Noem said.

## Union Pacific Resolves Part Of Long-Running Drug Fine Dispute

BY JOSH FUNK

AP Business Writer

OMAHA, Neb. — Union Pacific has resolved part of its long-running dispute with the federal government over fines imposed over drug smuggling on trains crossing from Mexico, but the railroad's lawsuit challenging whether it's proper for U.S. officials to impose the penalties will proceed.

The company and the U.S. Customs and Border Protection agency announced an agreement Friday that covers about \$500 million in fines the government had tried to impose and provides a five-year amnesty for Union Pacific. In exchange, the Omaha-based railroad agreed to invest \$50 million in efforts to strengthen security in the rail supply chain at the Mexican border without admitting any fault.

Federal officials agreed to let continue Union Pacific's lawsuit

challenging about \$60 million in fines imposed between 2002 and 2008 when more than 4,000 pounds of drugs — mostly marijuana — was seized.

In dispute is whether it's right for Customs to impose these fines on U.S. railroads. Union Pacific, the largest rail shipper on the U.S.-Mexico border, has always argued that it shouldn't be held responsible for the train cars until after they cross the border. Government officials maintain that the railroad is re-

sponsible for verifying the nature of what it is bringing into the U.S.

Union Pacific said it is not practical for the railroad to patrol trains in Mexico because its security officers have no authority there and cannot carry guns. Plus, drug trafficking is a dangerous business. It owns 26 percent of Ferrocarril Mexicano, but says since it does not control the Mexican railroad and cannot force that business to make drug interdiction efforts.

According to the lawsuit, Cus-

tom and Border Protection agents found at least 4,514 pounds of marijuana hidden on Union Pacific trains, and on at least one occasion about 257 pounds of cocaine was also found.

The drugs are often found in false compartments on the railcars.

Thirty-seven of the seizures took place at the Calexico, Calif., crossing. Four happened at Nogales, Ariz., and one seizure happened at Brownsville, Texas.

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