

## S.D. Woman Arrested After Pickup Chase

PIERRE (AP) — A South Dakota woman faces charges in two counties after allegedly stealing a pickup in Pierre and leading police on a chase that exceeded 90 mph.

Nineteen-year-old Ruby Sazue of Pierre is charged with grand theft in Hughes County after authorities say she stole a pickup parked in front of the federal office building. She is charged in Stanley County with aggravated eluding, underage drunken driving, speeding, careless driving and not having a valid driver's license.

Stanley County Sheriff Brad Rathbun tells KCCR Radio that Sazue drove the pickup across the Missouri River bridge and was located south of Fort Pierre. He says officers chased the pickup for 13 miles before Sazue pulled over and was arrested without incident.

## 'Virtual Library' Offered To Nebraska Schools

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Teachers returning to Nebraska classrooms this month will have a new tool they can use to create multimedia lessons for students, state officials said Wednesday.

Gov. Dave Heineman announced that the Nebraska Virtual Library system is now online and ready to use. The library offers more than 20,000 digital resources, including video, audio and interactive programs, free to students and teachers.

The site is part of a larger, statewide educational initiative announced last year. The Nebraska Virtual Partnership was formed to serve students from preschool through college, emphasizing science, technology, engineering and math.

The library contains resources from the Library of Congress, National Archives, PBS NewsHour, NOVA, American Experience, Electric Company and SciGirls.

"This is a significant step forward for the future of education in Nebraska," Heineman said. "The Virtual Library will provide Nebraska teachers and students with enhanced digital resources to enrich teaching and learning."

The site is run by Nebraska Educational Telecommunications and paid for with NET membership dues. NET General Manager Rod Bates said the site may develop in a way that lets educators share their own content with other teachers.

Nebraska Commissioner of Education Roger Breed said the site blends content with visual images to strengthen classroom lessons.

"I tried it out last night," Breed said. He then joked: "If this was around when I was an eighth-grade teacher back in 1970, my students might actually have learned something about history."

## 5th Motorcycle Fatality Reported At Rally

RAPID CITY (AP) — A fifth motorcycle fatality has been reported in connection with the Sturgis Motorcycle rally in western South Dakota.

The state Highway Patrol reports that 76-year-old Wilbert Verpooten of Lake Orion, Michigan, was killed in a crash on U.S. Highway 85. Verpooten crossed the center line while traveling on a curve and hit a trailer pulled by a pickup driven by 45-year-old Lisa Hollars of Laurel, Indiana.

Verpooten was taken by ambulance to the Lead-Deadwood Hospital, where he died. Hollars was not injured in the crash.

The Highway Patrol reports that only one person had died in a traffic accident at this point in last year's rally. The rally officially started Monday and ends Sunday.

## Deer Creek Power Plant Operations Begin

BROOKINGS (AP) — Basin Electric Power Cooperative has begun operating its Deer Creek Station power plant in eastern South Dakota.

The plant is Bismarck, N.D.-based Basin Electric's first combined-cycle facility.

The plant near Brookings uses natural gas and steam to produce electricity. It has a capacity of about 300 megawatts, or roughly enough energy to power 300,000 homes.

The *Brookings Register* reports that the plant began commercial operations Aug. 1. A dedication ceremony for the plant will be held Aug. 16.

Basin Electric supplies power to 134 rural electric systems in nine states.

## Parts For New Neb. State Fair Ride Destroyed

GRAND ISLAND, Neb. (AP) — The Nebraska State Fair's new sky tram ride might not be ready for this year's event because of an Interstate 80 accident this week that destroyed a truckload of parts.

The fair's executive director Joseph McDermott says the ride company, Wade Shows, is trying to determine what parts were destroyed because the truck was one of three delivering ride parts to Grand Island.

McDermott says it's not yet clear whether replacement parts can be obtained in time for the fair, which runs from Aug. 24 through Sept. 3.

The accident that destroyed the ride parts happened Monday around 6 a.m. on I-80 near Henderson, Neb.

The truck carrying ride parts was trying to merge onto the Interstate when another semitrailer truck collided with it. Both trucks caught fire.

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BY GRANT SCHULTE  
Associated Press

LINCOLN, Neb. — Gov. Dave Heineman pledged Wednesday to seek additional money from the Legislature if it's needed to help pay for firefighting in parched areas of Nebraska.

The governor said he wouldn't be surprised if the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency requires more money by the summer's end to reimburse local fire departments for their expenses.

"We are going to respond to any emergency challenge in this state and adjust accordingly," Heineman said at a news conference. "That's what the people of Nebraska expect."

Wildfires sparked by dry lightning have scorched tens of thousands of acres in central and western Nebraska. Last week, six fires burned an estimated 60,000 acres around Lake McConaughy, the state's largest reservoir and a popular summer getaway in western Nebraska. In July, three wildfires in north-central Nebraska blackened nearly 120 square miles and destroyed at least 14 homes.



Heineman

State officials say they don't yet know the exact cost of the fires, but Nebraska Emergency Management Agency assistant director Al Berndt estimated Wednesday the state has spent around \$7.5 million for manpower and equipment.

Berndt said his agency started the year with about \$10 million, and that state officials will start conducting damage assessments next week to see if Nebraska can qualify for federal aid.

"Right now, we have sufficient funds to cover the expenses we've had thus far," Berndt said. "However, depending on what happens with the remainder of the fire season, we could be finding ourselves where we're approaching a deficit."

Berndt said the state typically keeps around \$5 million available for emergencies. But the agency ended up with more than usual this year, after lawmakers approved additional money for 2011 flood relief and the state's costs came in lower than expected.

Among the expenses was \$3.25 million for

the fires in north-central Nebraska. The Nebraska National Guard claimed \$976,000 in expenses, and fire departments in that area also sought reimbursement for the cost of pilots and aircraft used to douse the blazes.

Berndt said the state also pays local departments that are called to help with fires beyond their jurisdiction.

Berndt said in 2006, the state paid about \$10 million to fight a series of fires near Chadron and Valentine, but 75 percent of the firefighting costs were covered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, because they affected population centers.

Meteorologists with the National Weather Service have said conditions in Nebraska are still ripe for fires. Western Nebraska missed its usual rainfall in May, June and July — the wettest summer months of the year — and what meteorologists describe as the best chance to "green up" the prairie grasses and make them more fire resistant.

Several western counties recently endured a streak of 25 consecutive days with temperatures above 90 degrees, the longest stretch since the Dust Bowl in 1936.

# Temperature Drop Could Ease Summer Fish Kills

BY DIRK LAMMERS  
Associated Press

SIoux FALLS — As the Dakotas' temperatures move away from the extreme heat of July, the cooling could help ease the trend of localized fish kills on the states' lakes and rivers.

Warm August days are typically the ones biologists worry about, but a milder forecast could mean that fish simply experienced summer stressors earlier than normal this year, said Scott Gangl, a fisheries management director for the North Dakota Game and Fish Department.

"They came really early and that got us really scared," Gangl said. "If we had another week of hundred-degree temperatures in July and August, we could start experiencing it even more."

Nearly a dozen North Dakota water bodies had some level of fish kills this summer, affecting northern pike, trout, panfish and yellow perch.

In South Dakota, low flows, high water temperatures and elevated ammonia levels late last month contributed to hundreds of fish that died and washed up along the Big Sioux River in Sioux Falls. Some kills have also been reported on the James River in the Sand Lake area and south of Huron, said Todd St. Sauver, a South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks regional fisheries manager.

St. Sauver said fish are more susceptible to bacteria, viral infections

and high ammonia levels when river water is warm. And as water levels decline, fish are pushed into more crowded pools where they compete for oxygen.

Many of South Dakota's lakes turn green with algae blooms each summer, which often leads to isolated fish kills that can claim up to a few hundred fish. Plants produce oxygen in the day but use it at night, so sun-down on an algae-ridden section of lake could choke some fish from the air they need to survive, St. Sauver said.

"They look kind of bad in that one area, but there are always lots of other fish that survive," he said.

People often wonder why fish on larger lakes don't simply migrate to deeper water, but it's not that simple, Gangl said.

"Often times the deeper, cooler water in some of our shallow prairie lakes doesn't have any oxygen in it," he said.

And Gangl said when it gets hot, fish just grow lethargic, stop moving and succumb to the elements, he said.

St. Sauver said some relief from the heat should help, but fish need water to survive, so persisting dryness will continue to stress the state's fishery.

"If the drought continues to be this severe and we don't start replenishing some of the water supply in our lakes and rivers, then things are likely to get worse in some of them," he said.

## Corn Palace Murals To Be Less Colorful This Year

MITCHELL (AP) — The Corn Palace events center and tourist attraction in Mitchell will be a little less colorful this year because of drought.

The dry conditions have hurt some of the colored corn that a contracted farmer grows for the palace murals. Four colors of corn will be taken out of the mural designs this year: blue, calico, orange and light brown, *The Daily Republic* reported.

There might be some usable cobs in each of the colors but only a limited amount, Corn Palace Director Mark Schilling said.

"After going through the first four fields, things looked very bleak," he said. "There were areas where you would walk 100 rows going sideways through the field and you literally had to search . You could not see an ear of corn that was usable for the Corn Palace."

It takes about 275,000 ears of corn to decorate the Corn Palace, which attracts about 200,000 tourists each summer. The board that oversees the facility had considered keeping the current murals for another year but on Tuesday decided to go forward with a scaled-back redecoration.

"When you look at some of the more traditional designs ... they didn't have the color palate that I have," said Cherie Ramsdell, the local artist who designs the murals. "The colors are pretty arbitrary when you place them. It's a matter of contrast."

This year's planned mural theme is "We Celebrate," with murals depicting holiday scenes. Last year's theme, "Saluting Youth Activities," is still on the building. Schilling said the easy thing would be to leave them in place another year.

"But I think the Corn Palace is really too important to us. It's the icon," he said. "If there's ways to make it happen, we need to make it happen."

YOUR NEWS! THE  
PRESS & DAKOTAN

### River City Gymnastics and Cheer Presents

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