

Officials Break Ground For New Events Center

SIoux FALLS (AP) — The city of Sioux Falls has held a groundbreaking ceremony for the new events center. Hundreds of people gathered to watch as city leaders officially broke ground for the Denny Sanford PREMIER Center Thursday afternoon. Construction on the \$115 million project started in July.

Judge Tosses Confession In S.D. Murder Case

ALEXANDRIA (AP) — A judge has tossed the alleged confession of a 17-year-old girl charged in the killing of a Mitchell teen. The *Argus Leader* reports Judge Tim Bjorkman tossed the confession of Maricela Diaz, of Fort Wayne, Ind. Bjorkman ruled that police failed to properly inform Diaz of her Miranda rights. Diaz was set to stand trial in the November 2009 kidnapping and death of 16-year-old Jasmine Guevara. Authorities say Guevara was lured to a rural area, stabbed and left in a burning vehicle. Bjorkman's decision will delay the trial. Attorney General Marty Jackley says his office plans to appeal Bjorkman's decision to the South Dakota Supreme Court. Diaz's boyfriend, 21-year-old Alexander Salgado, is serving a life sentence without the possibility of parole after pleading guilty to second-degree murder in 2010.

Woman Killed In Omaha Motorcycle Crash

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — Police say a motorcyclist is dead after losing control of her bike and crashing it into a car in northwest Omaha.

Police say the crash happened Thursday morning on Military Avenue. Investigators say Stacy Hauser, of Omaha, was driving a motorcycle eastbound on the road when she had problems negotiating a curve and drove into oncoming traffic. An oncoming car swerved to try to avoid Hauser, but couldn't.

Police say Hauser was thrown into the car's windshield, then to the ground. She was taken to Creighton Medical Center, where she died, despite wearing a helmet and other safety equipment. Hauser had turned 33 on Wednesday.

Police say the driver of the car was not at fault and no charges are expected.

Neb. Woman Gets Prison Time For Beating Son

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — A Lincoln woman has been sentenced to two to four years in prison for beating her infant son. Twenty-two-year-old Nicole Westwood was found guilty of child abuse earlier this year for breaking as many as 10 bones of her then 4-month son. The *Lincoln Journal Star* says she was sentenced on Thursday in Lancaster County District Court.

Westwood's defense attorney requested probation or to let her serve the time in a county jail. The judge, siding with the prosecution, denied probation and sent her to prison.

The boy, who has recovered, and his older sister were placed in protective custody.

Pheasant Numbers Increase In S.D.

PIERRE (AP) — South Dakota wildlife officials believe the state's pheasant population is up this year, and they anticipate good hunting this fall.

The state Game, Fish and Parks Department says annual August pheasant brood counts indicated pheasant populations grew in many areas of the state, due largely to a mild winter and ideal weather during the nesting and brood-rearing season.

Department Secretary Jeff Vonk says pheasant hunting will be good across most of the state, as it was last year when more than 1.5 million birds were shot.

The season begins Oct. 20 and runs through next Jan. 6.

Corn Belt Benefits From Recent Rains

BY JIM SUHR
AP Business Writer

ST. LOUIS — Growers in key farm states punished by the nation's worst drought in two generations welcomed recent rains that at least for a time soaked their parched crops and eased the dryness. But with Hurricane Isaac's remnants crawling their way, some farmers wonder whether too much relief is on the horizon.

Forecasters expect Isaac, which since making landfall Monday on the Gulf Coast has been downgraded to a tropical storm, could slide into Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa and Ohio as early as Friday, dumping as much as 12 inches of rain on the region.

That kind of deluge — usually welcomed by farmers who are famously at nature's mercy — may be too little too late for corn growers and could actually work against them by making their fields too muddy to accommodate harvesting equipment. Strong winds could topple drought-weakened stalks. "I don't want the wind," said Kenneth Met-

calf, a 75-year-old farmer with nearly 600 acres of corn and 120 of soybeans yet to harvest near Mechanicsburg, central Illinois. "This corn is not at all that stable to start with, and we don't need 50- or 60-mile-per-hour winds. It would just break the stalks off."

Portions of the thirsty Corn Belt that got a good soaking last weekend saw the extent of their drought conditions level off or slightly improve, according to a drought-tracking effort.

The weekly U.S. Drought Monitor map released Thursday shows that the section of the continental U.S. in the worst two categories of drought — extreme and exceptional — remained relatively unchanged at 23.2 percent as of Tuesday.

But thanks to rains last weekend, the amount of Iowa — the nation's biggest producer of corn — in the two worst drought classifications fell by 9 percentage points to 58.3 percent. Illinois saw a 7 percentage point drop-off to 69.6 percent as Kansas' numbers slid 6 points to 90.1 percent. Missouri's sta-

tus improved nominally, slipping nearly 2 percentage points to 97.4 percent. Indiana's portion in the two highest drought conditions rose, up 2.1 percentage points to 39.22 percent.

Still, the rains may not be enough to help corn growers.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture reported Monday that 52 percent of that crop was listed as being in very poor or poor shape, more than double the status of 19 percent in those two categories at this time last year. Soybeans, which could benefit from more rains because it's earlier in the growing season than corn, were faring only slightly better, with 17 percent of that crop described as being very poor while an additional 21 percent was poor, the USDA said. A year ago, just 15 percent of the nation's soybeans were in those categories.

The USDA said that just 6 percent of the nation's corn harvest was completed as of Monday, three times the average at this time of year over the previous four growing seasons.

Attorney: Chance At Getting Paid Back Very Low For Victims Of Recent Ponzi Scheme

BY DIRK LAMMERS
Associated Press

SIoux FALLS (AP) — A South Dakota attorney who won a multimillion-dollar civil judgment against a foreign currency trader accused of defrauding hundreds of investors in a Ponzi scheme says there's "minuscule" chance that investors will get any of their money back.

Jeffery Lowrance is expected to be ordered to pay restitution to victims of the scheme after reaching a plea deal in Chicago on federal charges of wire fraud and money laundering.

But attorney Wanda Howey-Fox said it's unlikely that Lowrance, 51, has any remaining assets to reimburse the hundreds of investors he defrauded.

"We have looked and looked and looked and haven't been able to turn up any money," Howey-Fox said Wednesday. "He was quite the spender. He's had bowling tournaments and he liked to travel and he liked to

sponsor other people's tournaments."

Lowrance was arrested in Peru in February 2011 and extradited to the U.S. in July 2011 to face charges in the northern district of Illinois in a scheme to bilk some 400 investors of more than \$25 million. He pleaded guilty last month to one count each of wire fraud and money laundering.

The charges carry a maximum sentence of 40 years in prison, but the plea agreement signed by Lowrance and prosecutors recommends about 12 1/2 to 15 1/2 years. A judge will have the final say at Lowrance's Sept. 28 sentencing.

In September 2009, U.S. District Court of South Dakota Judge Karen Schreiber issued a default judgment of more than \$40 million against Lowrance, who never showed up in court or responded to the lawsuit filed by some 200 plaintiffs. Schreiber later approved punitive damages of three times the default judgment.

"Unless he starts another Ponzi scheme or unless he happens to be lucky enough to win the lottery, the chance that he will ever be able to pay is so slim as to be minuscule," Howey-Fox said.

The plaintiffs in the civil case accused Lowrance and his New Zealand-based First Capital Savings & Loan of fraud, breach of contract and fraudulent mismanagement of offshore foreign currency exchange accounts.

The suit said Lowrance failed to make the promised currency trades, transferred money from one client's account to another to keep up the appearance of earnings, and used proceeds for personal gain and other business ventures, including an alternative newspaper he started called *USA Tomorrow*.

Lowrance's court-appointed attorney in the Illinois case, federal public defender Mary Judge, said she couldn't comment on Lowrance's finances. But she noted that those represented by

her office have to first sign affidavits saying they're indigent.

Randall Samborn, a spokesman for the U.S. Attorney's office in Chicago, said orders of restitution are mandatory in such federal criminal cases regardless of a defendant's ability to pay. The government can continue collection efforts for up to 20 years after a defendant is released from prison, he said.

Lowrance, who has also lived in California, Houston and Panama, has been on the Internal Revenue Service's radar at least as far back as 2007, according to an affidavit in the Illinois case.

Two undercover IRS agents met with Lowrance in Panama in 2008, and Lowrance said his company had 419 clients and was managing about \$37 million. He told them that First Capital paid interest rates of 3 percent to 5 percent per month through the foreign exchange trading program, according to the affidavit.

Our Employees - Dedicated to their Careers and Community
 THANK YOU TO ALL OUR EMPLOYEES FOR YOUR HARDWORK AND DEDICATION.
 WE APPRECIATE EACH ONE OF YOU!

A APPLIED ENGINEERING INC.