

SD Farm Real Estate Value, Cropland Up

SIoux FALLS (AP) — Farm real estate in South Dakota has increased in value by 29 percent. The Agriculture Department says in a new report that the value of farm land and buildings in 2013 averaged \$1,800. That is up \$400 per acre. Cropland value increased 30 percent from last year to \$3,020 per acre. Dry land cropland averaged \$3,000 per acre, up \$700 from a year ago. Pastureland value was \$710 per acre, up \$120. Cash rent paid to landlords in 2013 for cropland increased from last year. Irrigated cropland rent averaged \$190 per acre, an increase of \$25. Dry land cropland averaged \$104 per acre, up \$11. Pasture rented for cash, which averaged \$20 per acre, is up \$2.50 from the previous year.

Truck Kills Omaha Woman Near Market

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — Police say a 62-year-old woman has been hit and killed by a truck while crossing a street in south Omaha. Police say the truck hit the woman, who wasn't identified, about noon Friday. She was pronounced dead at the accident scene. Neighbors say the woman was returning from a grocery store with items in a small wagon. The driver hasn't been cited and police are continuing the investigation.

Obama Signs Disaster Declaration

PIERRE (AP) — Seven South Dakota counties will receive federal money to help recover from a series of June storms. Gov. Dennis Daugaard says a presidential disaster declaration was signed Friday for Beadle, Codington, Deuel, Grant, Hamlin, Hughes and Kingsbury counties. Preliminary estimates showed more than \$1.7 million in damages. Costs included debris removal and repairs to roads, bridges, culverts and electrical power lines. A disaster declaration authorizes the federal government to provide assistance for up to 75 percent of the eligible costs.

Artist Working On Memorial To Officers

RAPID CITY (AP) — A Rapid City artist is working on a lasting memorial for two police officers who died in a shootout exactly two years ago. Officers Ryan McCandless and Nick Armstrong were killed after a man pulled a handgun and opened fire during what authorities described as a routine stop in Rapid City on Aug. 2, 2011. The Rapid City police department chose James Van Nuys to create the memorial. The mixed-medium sculpture will feature two bronze eagles soaring above granite pillars and curved stainless-steel shafts. "Eagles are a police symbol, and this is basically sort of an abstract symbol of the department itself and the two officers who died," Van Nuys told the *Rapid City Journal* as he studied the details on one of the partially completed eagles in his studio. "It will memorialize the two officers, of course, but more than that the police department in general, and just what they do for us." He said the "somewhat exaggerated texture" of the feathers and other eagle parts will present themselves well as the focal point of the 10,000-pound, 14-foot-tall work. The project, which is expected to be completed next summer, is being done in collaboration with sculptor Dale Lanphere, an expert in stainless-steel fabrication. "When you put up a piece of public art that thousands of people will see, it has to be your best effort," Van Nuys said. "I hope it will say something on behalf of the community and contribute to the appreciation by the community of these officers and what they do."

A third officer, Tim Doyle, was injured in the shootout. He has recovered and returned to work.

Man Sentenced For Stabbing Son

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — A 60-year-old man from northeast Nebraska has been sentenced to nearly three years in prison for stabbing his adult son with a kitchen knife. The U.S. Attorney's Office announced Friday that Judge Lyle E. Strom sentenced Mark Phillips, of Walthill, to 33 months in prison. He had been found guilty of assault with a dangerous weapon. Walthill stabbed his adult son in the chest on Sept. 21, 2012, in the family home in Walthill, about 65 miles north of Omaha. His son was treated for the wound and released. The federal government had jurisdiction because the crime was within the Omaha Indian Reservation.

Digital Camera Aided In Hiker Search

CRAWFORD, Neb. (AP) — Rescuers credit a digital camera for finding a father and son who became lost while hiking in northwest Nebraska. KNEB radio reports a man and his teenage son, both from Lincoln, were hiking Thursday when they got lost in the Toadstool Geologic Park area northwest of Crawford. When they didn't return, the man's wife sought help. Authorities from the sheriff's offices in Dawes and Sioux counties responded and formed search teams. After about two hours, a team spotted flashes of light in the distance. When searchers investigated, they found the father and son. They were using a digital camera flash to light their way. Dawes County Sheriff's deputy Scott Swickard says the hikers, whose names weren't released, became turned around in a thunderstorm. They suffered only bumps and bruises.

Ex-Co. Attorney Granted New Theft Trial

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — The Nebraska Supreme Court has overturned a theft conviction for former Keith County Attorney Blake Edwards. Edwards was accused of misappropriating money that came from fees for a county drug diversion program he had set up and controlled as the county's top prosecutor. He was convicted last year of one count of theft and sentenced the three years of probation. Both Edwards and the state appealed. The state argued Edwards' sentence was too lenient. Edwards argued, among other things, that a jury instruction that said he "must prove all of the elements" of his defense or be found guilty erroneously put the burden of proof on him. On Friday, the state's high court agreed with Edwards, saying prosecutors carry the burden to prove all elements of the crime charged.

South Dakota Panel OKs Rules For School Sentinels

BY CHET BROKAW
Associated Press



Jackley

PIERRE — A South Dakota commission unanimously approved rules Friday for training teachers, other school staff members or volunteers to carry guns in schools under a state law aimed at improving security. "We believe this package both carries out the directives of the Legislature and best protects our children under that scheme," Attorney General Marty Jackley said after the Law Enforcement Officers Standards and Training Commission passed the rules. While President Barack Obama and officials in many states sought to pass gun control measures after the Newtown, Conn., school shooting in December, the South Dakota Legislature instead passed a law that allows school districts to decide whether to arm school leaders in order to deter would-be attackers. Local law enforcement officials must approve a school's plan. Under the rules, the so-called school sentinels will undergo at least 80 hours of training in firearms proficiency, use of force, legal issues, first aid and weapons retention and storage. The rules will not take effect until September, so officials say the first training class probably won't be held until next summer — when teach-

ers and others have time for the two-week course. Only those approved by a school board and local law enforcement officials could be trained to have guns in schools. Officials have said the fee charged to school districts for the initial 80-hour course is expected to be \$700. To retain qualifications, sentinels would have to complete another eight hours of training each year. Jackley said no school district has formally notified the state it plans to arm teachers and others under the law. "I've had some just general inquiries from school board members regarding the process, but no official indication any school board was moving forward through a resolution at this point," Jackley said. He's a member of the commission, which also includes state, local and federal law enforcement officials and prosecutors. Hughes County Sheriff Mike Leidholt, another member of the commission, said he thinks the group did a good job of writing the rules as required by the law passed by the Legislature. "I'm a big proponent of local control," Leidholt said. "In certain instances, I think it could be a viable option. But most

school districts aren't going to be interested, I believe." Supporters of the law argue the program might be needed in rural areas where law enforcement agencies are located miles from schools. Associations representing school boards, school administrators and teachers opposed the measure during the legislative session, contending that armed teachers or volunteers could increase the danger of accidental shootings or create problems if students find a sentinel's gun. Wage Pogany, executive director of the Associated School Boards of South Dakota, said after Friday's meeting that opponents of the law would rather have actual police officers in schools. "I think there's still some concern about whenever you place a gun in a school what can happen with children there," Pogany said. The Law Enforcement Officers Standards and Training Commission originally planned to certify school sentinels in a process similar to how actual law officers are licensed, but had to drop the certification because it's not authorized in the law. A certification would have allowed the state commission to remove a sentinel at any time for misconduct, but that will now be up to local school boards and law enforcement agencies.

South Dakota

Fed Advice Sought On NA Voting Sites

BY CHET BROKAW
Associated Press



Gant

PIERRE — South Dakota Secretary of State Jason Gant said Friday he still intends to seek a federal commission's opinion on setting up satellite absentee voting offices on three Native American reservations, even though that commission likely cannot respond. The State Election Board declined Wednesday to go on record in support of the plan to set up the three voter registration and absentee voting stations after Gant, the board's chair, said he first needed to ask the U.S. Election Assistance Commission whether federal funds can legally be used for the stations. However, the commission cannot issue such advisory opinions because the four commission seats are vacant, *The Argus Leader* reported Friday. Commission spokesman Bryan Whitener told the newspaper by email that the commission needs a quorum to set rules and guidelines at the highest level. "One example," Whitener said, "would include issuing formal advisory opinions." The National Association of Secretaries of State repeatedly has called for the elimination of the EAC. Gant is treasurer of that association and is a member of a committee called the Task Force on the Disposition of EAC Duties. The EAC's website shows there are more than a dozen pending requests for advisory opinions, some of them several years old, *The Argus Leader* reported. Gant on Friday said the federal Help American Vote Act designates the EAC as the only agency that can answer questions about the use of money provided to states to improve access to voting. Asked if he knew the EAC is inactive, Gant said the state still has to ask the commission's opinion on spending

money on the three proposed satellite offices. If the EAC declines to answer, then we'll move forward," Gant told *The Associated Press*. Gant refused to say whether he would support using federal funds to support the satellite offices if the federal commission offers no guidance. "There are a lot of options that will be on the table once the EAC has responded. Until then, I don't think we need to speculate about different scenarios. We need to do one step at a time," Gant said. On Wednesday, the voting advocacy group Four Directions Inc. asked the state

Board of Elections to support using Help America Vote Act money to open satellite voter registration and early voting offices in Fort Thompson on the Crow Creek Reservation, Eagle Butte on the Cheyenne River Reservation and Wamblee on the Pine Ridge Reservation. All three predominantly Native American towns are located far from courthouses in county seats where in-person absentee voting takes place. At issue is whether a Native American community is eligible for the federal money if it is located in a county with a courthouse. Federal funds have been used in the past for satellite offices in Pine Ridge Village on the Pine Ridge Reservation and Rosebud Village on the Rosebud Reservation, which are both in counties without courthouses that contract with adjoining

counties for election services. The Board of Elections voted 4-3 Wednesday against a plan to support the satellite voting stations, contingent on the EAC's approval, after Gant urged that the state first ask the federal commission whether federal funds can be used for the three stations in counties with courthouses. Elections Board member Linda Lea Viken, a Rapid City lawyer, said she believes the board should meet again to discuss the issue. She said she is surprised that Gant did not tell the board that the federal commission has not issued any opinion in recent years because the commission seats are vacant. "Frankly, I'm in part embarrassed," Viken told *The Associated Press*, noting that the board discussed the issue without having accurate information.

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