

Report: Consumer Spending Up In Neb.

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — A new federal report says consumer spending in Nebraska rebounded in the years after the recession and outpaced the national average. The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis says per-capita spending in Nebraska jumped 12.5 percent between 2009 and 2012. The national average was 10.7 percent during that period. The state-by-state breakdown shows Nebraska's per-capita spending was third among seven states in the Plains. The highest growth in the region and nationally was in North Dakota, where consumer spending grew 28 percent in the midst of that state's oil boom. Nebraska also trailed South Dakota, but came in higher than Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota and Missouri. Spending in Nebraska dipped slightly in 2009 compared to the previous year, but then resumed its growth.

Inmate Seeks Help From Court

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — A Beatrice man is asking the Nebraska Supreme Court to intervene in the state's decision to return him to prison after officials determined he was released too early. The Lincoln Journal Star reports 40-year-old Kena Jackson is objecting to his return to prison. In documents filed Thursday, his lawyer Jerry Soucie notes Jackson was returned to prison without going before a judge or receiving a hearing. Soucie says Jackson had worked full-time since being released from prison Nov. 23 after serving time for a drug conviction. Although he was eligible for parole in November, officials released him with no supervision. Jackson is now being held at a McCook work camp. He was among 45 inmates sought by the state after media reports of improper sentences.

Scammers Making Calls To Residents

SIoux FALLS (AP) — The South Dakota Fraternal Order of Police says scammers pretending to be members of the organization are reportedly calling residents asking for money. The organization says it is assisting the South Dakota Attorney General's office in an investigation into possible fundraising companies illegally making calls using the group's name. Mike Walsh is the organization's state president. He says representatives do make fundraising, sponsorship and advertising calls, but they are accompanied by a "caller ID" based in South Dakota. Walsh says the group always mails some materials before accepting any pledges. Con artists often request money to be transferred or mailed to addresses out of the state.

Neb. Judge Calls For Explanation

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — A judge has ordered state psychiatric hospital officials to court next week to explain why the Lincoln hospital can't house and treat a man convicted of killing four Omaha people last summer. Douglas County District Judge Peter Bataillon (buh-TAL'-yuhn) issued the order during a hearing Thursday — more than two weeks after he ordered Nikko Jenkins to the state's psychiatric hospital in Lincoln for treatment. But in a letter sent to the judge last week, the Lincoln Regional Center said it doesn't have adequate security or a bed for Jenkins. Jenkins was convicted earlier this year of four counts of first-degree murder but was declared incompetent to face the sentencing portion of his case.

Woman Gets Probation In Collision

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — A 82-year-old woman has been given two days in jail and two years of probation for a March crash that killed a bicyclist on the west side of Omaha. Ruth Jeffers, of La Vista, was sentenced on Thursday. She'd pleaded guilty to misdemeanor vehicular homicide. Authorities say Jeffers swerved across a traffic lane on March 13 and struck 56-year-old Jim Johnston. He later died at a hospital. Prosecutors say Jeffers swerved to avoid a stopped car in front of her. Jeffers must serve her first day of jail time on March 13, 2015, and her second on March 13, 2016. The judge also ordered Jeffers to write a letter to Johnston's wife, perform 200 hours of community service, pay \$3,000 restitution and pay a \$1,000 fine.

Funeral Set For GI Killed In Afghanistan

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — A Lincoln funeral has been scheduled for a 30-year-old Army soldier who died in Afghanistan. The Defense Department says Staff Sgt. Benjamin Prange died July 24 after the vehicle he was riding in hit an explosive device. His funeral is scheduled to begin at 10 a.m. Friday at Southwood Lutheran Church. Interment with full military honors will follow at Lincoln Memorial Park Cemetery. Prange grew up near Roca and Hickman and attended Norris High School. He is survived by his wife, Liz Prange, and their two sons. He was assigned to 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division at Fort Collins, Colorado.

Man Sentenced For Assaulting Officer

PIERRE (AP) — A Mission man has been sentenced to prison for assaulting a federal officer on the Rosebud Sioux Indian Reservation. U.S. Attorney Brendan Johnson says 33-year-old John Arcoren III bent and put pressure on an officer's arm during an incident on Jan. 11. The officer was face-down on the ground at the time. Arcoren pleaded guilty in May. He was sentenced this week to one year and four months in prison, to be followed by two years of supervised release.

Mascots To Celebrate SD's Birthday

PIERRE (AP) — The Mount Rushmore mascots will join in on the celebrations for South Dakota's 125th birthday. The oversize caricatures of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt and Abraham Lincoln — whose faces are on Mount Rushmore in the Black Hills — will visit Watertown on Aug. 17 to celebrate South Dakota's statehood. The celebration will include train rides, horseshoe tournament, a time capsule and a beard contest. There will also be an old-time classroom on display and an old-time photo booth. The event is scheduled for 2 p.m. at the Joy Ranch. More statehood celebrations can be found online at: http://125.sd.gov.

Consumer Spending In SD Ahead Of The Nation

BY REGINA GARCIA CANO
Associated Press

SIoux FALLS — South Dakota consumers felt comfortable opening up their wallets in the three years after the Great Recession ended in 2009, outpacing the nation's consumer spending growth by 4 percentage points. New economic data from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis released Thursday shows that consumer spending jumped 14.9 percent in South Dakota from 2009 through 2012, while the nation's grew by 10.7 percent. The bureau for the first time released state-by-state breakdowns of personal income, consumption and specific spending categories. The numbers point to substantial shifts in the U.S. economy since the recession ended.

Spending jumped 28 percent in North Dakota, the largest gain nationwide, from 2009 through 2012, the latest year for which figures are available. It surged nearly 16 percent in Oklahoma, and the next-largest increases were in South Dakota, Texas and West Virginia. South Dakota's per-person consumer spending in 2012 grew 3.5 percent over the previous year, according to the report. That is slightly stronger than nation's 3.3 percent growth in 2012, the most recent year for which figures are available. "Though this is just one indicator, it is another sign that South Dakota has a strong and growing economy," Kelsey Pritchard, spokeswoman for Gov. Dennis Daugaard, said in a statement. "Just this week, Gov. Daugaard was in New York to spread the word about South

Dakota's economic strength and business-friendly climate." South Dakota's per capita consumer spending hit a pre-recession high of \$31,597 in 2007. But by 2012, each South Dakotan spent \$37,036 on average on consumer goods and services compared to \$35,498 for the nation. Of that amount, almost \$5,000 was spent on housing, about \$7,100 on health care and about \$2,900 on groceries and other off-premises food and beverages. The average South Dakota consumer had one of the highest per capita expenditures — \$2,521 — on gas and energy goods in 2012. The state trailed only North Dakota (\$3,916) and Wyoming (\$3,475). The national average was \$1,328.

GFP Releases Limits For Ducks, Geese Hunt

BY BOB MERCER
State Capitol Bureau

FORT PIERRE - Populations of ducks and geese are strong enough to sustain larger harvests by hunters in South Dakota this fall, the state Game, Fish and Parks Commission decided Thursday. Commissioners unanimously approved letting hunters take a bonus of two blue-winged teal during the first 16 days of the season in each of the state's three zones. The bonus is in addition to the standard daily bag limit of six ducks. Hunters also can shoot up to 50 snow geese or other light geese apiece

per day. That is an increase from the 20 daily last year. Another change calls for the goose season along much of the Missouri River to run through Sunday, Feb. 15, 2015, rather than close on a Friday like last year. The goal is to give hunters an additional final weekend of opportunity while Canada geese are still staging in large numbers on the river and neighboring ponds and feeding in crop fields along the river. That switch means the goose season will open on Monday, Nov. 3, in the Missouri River unit rather than on a Saturday. Commissioner Jim Spies of Water-

town asked why green-winged teal weren't part of the duck bonus. "You can't tell the difference when they're coming at you," Spies said. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service position is that green-wing teal populations aren't large enough yet for a bigger harvest, even though South Dakota suggested it, according to Chad Switzer, a state Wildlife Division official. "Hunters are going to have to know what ducks they're shooting," Switzer said. The blue-winged teal bonus is a three-year experiment, he said. Commission chairman John Cooper of Pierre offered advice to Spies. "Anything that comes by with green, don't shoot it," Cooper joked.

Preserve Operators Want Game, Fish & Parks To Allow Hunters To Shoot Unlimited Pheasants

BY BOB MERCER
State Capitol Bureau

FORT PIERRE — Sal Roseland, whose family runs a farming and hunting operation near Seneca, asked the state Game, Fish and Parks Commission on Thursday to consider a \$120 surcharge for hunters who want to take more than 20 rooster pheasants a day at licensed private preserves in South Dakota. The daily maximum set by the commission is 20 per hunter at preserves. Roseland said the additional revenue would be dedicated to preserving and restoring public habitat for pheasants. Last month he presented a

petition to the commission asking that the 20-bird limit be lifted altogether for preserves. But Thursday, he withdrew the original petition and briefly offered a modified version calling for the \$120 extra fee. The \$120 plan didn't land well with many of the commissioners. Some questioned why Roseland was getting ahead of the governor's pheasant task force, whose members plan to deliver recommendations and a final report later this month or in September. Several commissioners, Paul Dennert of Aberdeen and Barry Jensen of White River, however said Roseland's \$120

surcharge could be a good move. "There's not many farmers out there who are going to give up acres of land for pheasant habitat without being reimbursed for it," Dennert, a retired farmer, said. The commission's chairman, John Cooper of Pierre, advised Roseland that it might be better to engage in further negotiations, including with the state Wildlife Division and other parties who would be interested, such as the South Dakota Wildlife Federation and more preserve operators. "I don't know if you're going to sell this. So if you want us to do this, you're rolling the dice," Cooper told Roseland about proceeding with the \$120. The surprise was that Roseland's idea appeared to have the backing of Gov. Dennis Daugaard's administration. Accompanying Roseland was Nathan Sanderson, an aide to the governor. "We proposed the \$120 fee," Sanderson told the commission. "Who knows exactly where the sweet spot is — \$120 seemed about right." Roseland described the \$120 as a voluntary fee or tax "like smoking." While the support wasn't there yet, Roseland seemed to get a foot in the door. "If this isn't it, let's have a discussion what is," Sanderson told the commission.

Man Wants 'Prayer Rock' Moved To Crazy Horse

SIoux FALLS (AP) — A Sioux Falls man is pushing to move a 3-ton boulder known as a "prayer rock" from a local museum to the Crazy Horse Memorial in western South Dakota. The rock gets overlooked at the Pettigrew Museum and would be better placed at the memorial being built in the Black Hills to the Oglala Lakota warrior, said Richard Perkins, an artist who has had a lifelong interest in artifacts and hieroglyphics. "Nobody really sees it," he told the Argus Leader newspaper. Richard Pettigrew, who lived from 1848 to 1926, was a businessman, lawyer, surveyor and U.S. senator. He came across the granite boulder near the north-central South Dakota town of Everts, and moved it to Sioux Falls in 1925. The rock has the impression of human hands and is believed to have been used by Native Americans to worship. "There are two adult hand prints facing up, one hand print facing down," Perkins said. "Below that is a child's footprint. Over the years as nomadic tribes went by, they would dedicate and rededicate themselves by placing hands and feet there before the spirits or whoever they worship." The museum's governing board is considering Perkins' proposal, which Museum Di-

rector Bill Hoskins called unusual. "We get a request that something be returned to a family once every five years. But for requests by guys off the street, for us to take something out of the collection, this is probably the first one in 30 years," Hoskins said. The Crazy Horse Memorial

Foundation would "place it in a significant place of honor" if the museum agrees and Perkins handles the delivery, said the foundation's president and chief operating officer, Laurie Becvar. Perkins said he has spoken with a Sioux Falls bank about supporting the project, which he estimates would cost no

more than \$4,000. Hoskins thinks that estimate is low. Officials a few years ago paid \$6,000 to move the rock away from the street curb — a distance of only about a dozen feet, he said. The distance between the museum and the memorial is about 350 miles.

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