

**Neb. Man Is Sentenced For Tax Issue**

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — A northeast Nebraska man who already has paid nearly \$202,000 in restitution has been given six months of home confinement for cheating on his federal income taxes.

The *Norfolk Daily News* reports that 68-year-old Robert Morris, of Laurel, also was sentenced on Friday to a day in custody and 100 hours of community service and fined \$40,000.

Prosecutors say that from 2007 through 2012, Morris underreported a total of more than \$1 million in income on his federal tax returns, resulting in avoidance of federal income taxes totaling nearly \$202,000.

U.S. District Judge John Gerrard cited Morris' poor health for not sending him to prison.

**Assistance Available For Oglala Sioux**

PIERRE (AP) — Members of the Oglala Sioux Tribe who became unemployed due to severe storms on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in May are eligible for disaster assistance.

South Dakota's Department of Labor and Regulation announced the availability of disaster unemployment assistance on Monday for tribal members whose employment, self-employment or prospective employment was lost or interrupted as a direct result of straight-line winds and flooding.

Claims must be filed by Sept. 16.  
Free re-employment assistance also is available through local offices of the Labor and Regulation Department.

**ND Crews Set To Assist In SD Recovery**

RAPID CITY (AP) — Authorities in western South Dakota say first responders from North Dakota will assist in the recovery of the body of a woman who went missing in a reservoir after a boat crash.

The Pennington County Sheriff's Office says the North Dakota first responders are bringing an underwater inspection system with a variety of capabilities to help find the body of 33-year-old Gabrielle Fisher. Authorities are describing the effort as a body recovery operation.

The Rapid City woman was one of two people on a boat that collided with a personal watercraft Friday in Pactola Reservoir.

The sheriff's office says the personal watercraft driver is facing boating under the influence and manslaughter charges.

The North Dakota first responders are from the Burleigh County Sheriff's Department and the Bismarck Rural Fire Department.

**1 Killed, 1 Hurt In Collision Near Omaha**

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — Authorities say one driver has been killed and another injured in a collision on the west side of Omaha.

Douglas County Sheriff's Office says the accident occurred around 7 p.m. Sunday, when a westbound vehicle crossed a median and slammed into an eastbound vehicle.

The Sheriff's Office says the driver of the westbound vehicle died at the scene. He was identified as 27-year-old Noah Peterson, of Valley. The other driver was flown to CHI Health Creighton University Medical Center in Omaha. He was identified as 38-year-old Paul Howey, of Pierce.

The collision is being investigated.

**Swarm Of Birds Draws In Spectators**

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — Spectators have gathered to watch tens of thousands of birds swirl like black leaves in the sky to roost in a row of ash trees in Omaha.

Each evening in late summer, numerous purple martins and a lesser number of grackles and starlings swirl around the trees located along a street at the Nebraska Medical Center to eventually settle for the night, the *Omaha World-Herald* reported.

Several dozens of people, including the Omaha Youth Birding Group, stood nearby to watch the cloud of birds on Saturday.

"It is pretty unbelievable to see this," Loren Padelford said as platoons of birds swarmed low, lifted up and swirled back around. "And this is so close to home."

Tisha Johnson, a volunteer master naturalist and an educator at Fontenelle Forest, described the birds' chatter like a rushing waterfall, calling the sound like "nothing else."

This roost, known as the Midtown Martin Mecca, is among the confirmed sites on the national list kept by the Purple Martin Conservation Association. Omaha birder Jim Ducey estimated that 20,000 to 30,000 martins were at the Saturday roost.

**Nebraska**

**Study Suggests Link Between Nitrates, Uranium Contamination**

BY JOSH FUNK  
Associated Press

OMAHA, Neb. — A new study suggests that nitrates may play a key role in increasing uranium contamination in groundwater.

The researchers from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln estimate that nearly 2 million people in California and the Great Plains live over groundwater that has been contaminated with uranium, which can cause health problems.

The study found that 78 percent of the groundwater samples that showed unsafe levels of uranium were from areas with high levels of nitrates, which typically come from nitrogen fertilizers and animal waste.

"If the problem is this widespread, more research needs to be done," said UNL assistant professor Karrie Weber, who led the research.

Environmental Protection Agency rules say that uranium shouldn't

**"If the problem is this widespread, more research needs to be done."**

KARRIE WEBER

exceed 30 micrograms per liter in drinking water. Weber's research found examples in California well above that threshold.

Prolonged exposure to high levels of uranium in water has been linked to kidney problems and increased cancer risk.

Some studies have also suggested that uranium might accumulate in certain crops if they are irrigated with contaminated water.

Weber said groundwater samples aren't always tested for uranium making it harder to study. She said the lack of testing also raises safety concerns because smaller communities and rural

families often use well water without treating it.

Weber said the nitrates moving through the soil can convert uranium from a solid state to a soluble form that can contaminate groundwater.

"As nitrates come into the system, they are increasing the concentration of uranium in the water," Weber said.

Data from roughly 275,000 samples from two of the nation's largest aquifers — the High Plains aquifer and the Central Valley aquifer in California — were examined for the study. Those two underground stockpiles supply water for irrigation and many communities rely on the aquifers for drinking water.

The High Plains Aquifer stretches underneath some 174,000 square miles in parts of South Dakota, Nebraska, Wyoming, Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma, New Mexico and Texas.

The study was published in the August edition of the journal *Environmental Science and Technology Letters*.

**20 Years Added To SD Inmate's Prison Term In Cellmate's Killing**

BY REGINA GARCIA CANO  
Associated Press

SIoux FALLS — A South Dakota inmate already serving a 75-year sentence must spend an additional 20 years in prison for strangling his cellmate to death with a homemade rope last year at the state penitentiary in Sioux Falls.

The sentence against 29-year-old Douglas Ipsen on a first-degree manslaughter charge in the death of convicted killer Kent Davidson came Monday in Sioux Falls. Judge Susan Sabers ordered the sentence after an emotional Ipsen explained that he assisted Davidson in killing himself at his request.

"When Kent asked me to kill him, I was very hesitant," Ipsen said. "I spent months pushing him off, telling him that I didn't want to do it."

But Ipsen said he also had been suicidal from a young age, and he eventually relented and agreed to help Davidson die. State law does not allow for assisted suicide.

"It really was the hardest thing that I ever had to do," Ipsen said.

The 37-year-old Davidson, whose body was found in his cell, died from strangulation and asphyxia, according to his death certificate. He was hurt late on Sept. 7 and died early on Sept. 8. Authorities said a bedsheet was used in the slaying.

Davidson was serving a life sentence

after pleading guilty to first-degree murder in the 2013 shooting death of his former fiancée, 26-year-old Crystal Schulz.

Prosecutor Doug Barnett rejected the possibility of an assisted suicide and asked Sabers to sentence Ipsen to the maximum penalty of 50 years for the manslaughter charge. But Sabers handed Ipsen a 30-year sentence with 10 years suspended after explaining that the case did not have aggravating facts that would grant the maximum sentence.

Sabers explained the evidence did not show that Davidson fought back when Ipsen strangled him and did leave a handwritten note addressed to South Dakota Department of Corrections employees stating that he was "suicidal," had been denied help many times, and had decided to take matters into his own hands.

"Mr. Davidson himself was suicidal, you struggle with that as well, and perhaps this will shine some light on the concept of putting two suicidal individuals together in a jail cell and perhaps that's part of what went wrong here," Sabers said.

The South Dakota Department of Corrections had deemed Ipsen a "low moderate" risk, while Davidson was assessed as a "moderate" risk. The men became cellmates April 30, 2014.

Ipsen is serving 60 years for first-degree rape of a child and an additional 15 years for sexual contact with a child under the age of 16, both in Butte County. He arrived at the penitentiary on September, 2010.

**Powerball Changes Boost Prize Odds, But Create Longer Shot At Jackpot**

PIERRE (AP) — New rules for Powerball in South Dakota mean players have a better chance of winning a prize at the expense of a longer shot at the jackpot.

The Legislative Rules Review Committee approved changes to the game Monday. The rules were first authorized by the state Lottery Commission and are set to take effect in October.

The new rules mean the overall odds of winning a prize will be one in about 25 instead of one in about 32. But a shot at winning the jackpot will increase to one in 292 million. That's up from one in 175 million.

The \$10,000 third prize is jumping to \$50,000. The changes also mean players can buy up to 10-times multipliers applicable to many prizes.

The initial jackpot stays at \$40 million.

**Local News! The P&D**

**Huge Salmon Drawing Anglers To Lake Oahe**

PIERRE (AP) — Anglers are catching salmon fever on Lake Oahe in the Dakotas.

They are driving hundreds of miles to the Pierre-Fort Pierre area in South Dakota as reports of whopper chinook salmon roll in, the *Pierre Capital Journal* reported.

Gordy Samson, of Highmore, hauled in a 24-pound, 5-ounce monster late last week that appears to be a South Dakota record.

"It looked like it was six feet long in the water," he said.

The state record verification process likely will happen this week, said South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Fisheries Biologist Bob Hanten.

It took Samson about 15 minutes to wrestle the brute into the boat.

"We just got on the water," he said of himself and his fishing partner. "It was just unreal — we weren't fishing more than five minutes."

State wildlife officials say baitfish conditions have been almost ideal for growing big salmon, and several anglers have reported catching fish over 20 pounds this summer — including two Pierre children who landed one weighing more than 23 pounds.

Bait shop owner Dan Miller said that since mid-July, he's weighed at least a dozen salmon over 15 pounds, and a half dozen more just shy of the mark.

"It could last another six weeks depending on the water temperatures," he said.

The Lake Oahe reservoir on the Missouri River stretches about 230 miles from Pierre to Bismarck, North Dakota.



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