

Neb. State Pop. Data Show Growth In Cities

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — New state population data show Omaha has continued its slow-but-steady growth since last year's official census head count.

Department of Revenue spokeswoman Deepa Buss said Thursday that the populations were derived from 2010 U.S. census data and a review of city annexations that took place over the last year. The Nebraska Department of Revenue reported the new numbers this week.

The numbers show Omaha's population grew 1.5 percent, to nearly 417,000 this year. Aida Amoura, a spokesman for Mayor Jim Suttle, said annexations played a large role in the city's growth. Suttle and other city officials have said they plan to get more aggressive with annexation.

State agencies use the numbers when determining grant money that cities can receive for roads, economic development and other projects.

USD To Offer New 'Green' Degree

VERMILLION (AP) — The University of South Dakota is starting a program that specializes in developing renewable energy and preserving natural resources.

The college will offer a Bachelor of Science and a Bachelor of Arts in Sustainability.

USD officials say the program will focus on South Dakota industries such as wind energy, hydroelectric power, geothermal energy, biofuels and construction.

The program will begin in the fall of 2012.

Man Kills Mountain Lion Kitten In Home

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — Authorities say a rural western North Dakota man shot and killed a 38-pound mountain lion kitten that had wandered into his home.

Chief game warden Robert Timian says the homeowner discovered the mountain lion on his couch after returning to his farmstead northwest of Grassy Butte on Wednesday. The man grabbed a .22-caliber pistol near his doorway and shot the animal.

Timian says the homeowner left his garage door open during the day and the door from the garage to the house was open when he returned. The lion had killed four domestic cats.

Timian says it's possible it was attracted by the cat scent.

Timian says it's a very unusual situation. He says the homeowner wasn't likely in any danger, but was "well within his rights" to kill it.

Teen Charged In Death Of Infant Girl

RAPID CITY (AP) — South Dakota authorities say a 14-year-old boy has been charged with second-degree murder in the death of a one-year-old girl.

The Pennington County Sheriff's office says the infant was transferred on Dec. 17 from Rapid City Regional Hospital to Sanford Children's Hospital in Sioux Falls. She died on Tuesday.

Authorities say the teen was arrested Wednesday afternoon. He's being held in the Western South Dakota Juvenile Services Center in Rapid City.

Juvenile court proceedings are closed to the public.

Neb. Man Nabbed By Officers At Event

GRETNA, Neb. (AP) — Authorities say a Nebraska man's attempt to steal a DVR player from a Wal-Mart was foiled by more than a dozen officers standing just feet away for a holiday charity event.

Sarpy County sheriff's investigators say between 15 to 20 deputies were at the store in Gretna on Wednesday night helping less fortunate children pick out gifts.

KETV in Omaha (<http://bit.ly/scy0EH>) reports deputies were getting their picture taken with someone dressed as Santa Claus when an alarm went off.

Lieutenant Dan Shukis says deputies saw a man pull the DVR player out of his pants, throw it aside and run outside to a vehicle.

Authorities arrested the suspect, identified as 49-year-old David Sherman.

Feds: Nebraska Man Operated \$1.4 Million Health Care Scam

BY GRANT SCHULTE
Associated Press

LINCOLN, Neb. — A man who ran the business operations of a Nebraska health care provider bilked Medicare, the state's Medicaid program and private insurers out of nearly \$1.4 million while defrauding a local bank, prosecutors say.

Federal prosecutors charged Mark Koehler of Norfolk this week with health care and bank fraud for the alleged scam between 2007 and 2010.

Koehler worked as the business manager for Heartland Physical Therapy in Norfolk, according to documents filed in U.S. District Court of Nebraska. His job included filing reimbursement claims to Medicare, Nebraska Medicaid and private insurers for physical therapy services.

Prosecutors say Koehler also defrauded BankFirst of Norfolk by including the false billings in reports that were used to collect cash advances. They say bank officials relied on the inflated re-

ports when they advanced Heartland Physical Therapy about \$500,000, which the company should not have received. The amount shown in the company's accounts receivable reports determined how much the bank was willing to advance.

Koehler routinely included the "phantom billings" in the company's daily reports to the bank, Assistant U.S. Attorney Alan Everett said in court papers.

A woman who answered the phone Thursday at Heartland Physical Therapy's Norfolk office said Koehler hasn't worked for the company for nearly two years. She declined to comment further. Koehler's home phone number was unlisted.

Prosecutors say Medicare, the federal health care program for the elderly and disabled, paid more than \$190,000 to Heartland Physical Therapy for services not provided. The company received more than \$279,000 from Nebraska Medicaid, a program for low-income residents, and more than \$931,800 from private

insurers, according to court documents.

Heartland Physical Therapy runs offices in Norfolk, Pierce and Humphrey, according to its website.

In September, Nebraska Attorney General Jon Bruning announced a settlement with a health care company that was to return \$275,000 to the state's Medicaid program.

The settlement revolved around allegations that Maxim Health Care Services, Inc. submitted claims for services not rendered and did not provide documentation. The investigation began with a whistleblower lawsuit filed in U.S. District Court that alleged a number of false claims filed on behalf of a single Medicaid recipient. The settlement totaled \$130 million and involved 41 states.

Since its inception in 2004, the state's Medicaid Fraud and Patient Abuse unit has recovered more than \$39 million from violating service providers and drug companies.

Group Says Omaha Naval Park Must Be Cleaned Up

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — Omaha officials and a group that leases a park with military displays and a nearby marina from the city are at odds over the property's future after a summer of record flooding on the Missouri River.

Freedom Park is dotted with displays in various states of disrepair, and Sandpiper Cove is a mess of damaged docks, walkways and waterlogged buildings, KETV-TV (<http://bit.ly/uKOBOI>) reported Thursday.

John Portera of the USS Hazard Corporation, which leases the park and marina, said the city is not doing enough to clean the property up.

"It's appalling," he told the television station.

The corporation leases 67 acres from the city. Omaha then leases back the 15 acres on which Freedom Park sits. The park, which has been closed since the flooding, is home to the USS Marlin SST-2 Submarine and the USS Hazard AM-240 Minesweeper, as well as a jet fighter and other aircraft.

"The city of Omaha has an ob-

ligation to protect its investment," Portera said. "That investment pertains to 67 acres."

The City Council on Tuesday approved a plan to remove sand and silt from displays in Freedom Park so they can be inspected, KETV reported. Portera said the sand and silt needs to be removed as soon as possible.

City officials contend doing the work in the winter doesn't make sense.

"We've taken a strategic look at this and we're only doing the areas around the artifacts, so that if the wind comes up and we have a bad winter, we won't have wasted a lot of money," said Melinda Pearson, who's with the city Parks and Recreation Department.

As for Sandpiper Cove, the city told Portera during Tuesday's meeting that it can't be repaired.

"It is 100 percent damaged," said Rick Cunningham with the city's Planning Department. "It cannot be reconstructed because it is a nonconforming use at this point, based on our ordinances."

CHECK OUT OUR HOLIDAY LINEUP

New 2012 Chevrolet's...Chevrolet 100 Years Strong

2012 Chevrolet Sonics

• CD Player
• Automatic

Starting at...

\$15,490*

AND 2.9% up to 60/mos+

#2404

2012 Chevrolet Cruzes

• 36 MPG or more!
• Automatic

Starting at...

\$16,990*

AND 2.9% up to 60/mos+

#2417

2012 Chevrolet Malibus

• LT's • 33 MPG
• Silver, Mocha or Gold

4 Choices Starting at...

\$18,990*

AND 2.9% up to 60/mos+

#2330

2012 Chevrolet Impalas

• LT • Bench Seat
• 3.6L V6

Starting at...

\$22,490*

AND 2.9% up to 60/mos+

#2473

3-2012 Chevrolet Camaros

• 2SS's
• 2-45th Anniversary
• 2 Convertibles

\$3,000 OFF

MSRP

AND 2.9% up to 60/mos+

#2219

2012 Chevrolet Traverses

• FWD
• LS

2 Choices Starting at...

\$25,990*

• AWD • LS • White, Blue or Silver

3 Choices Starting at...

\$27,990*

AND 2.9% up to 60/mos+

2012 Chevrolet Avalanche

• 4WD • All Star Edition
• LS

• Victory Red

\$7,000 OFF

MSRP

AND 2.9% up to 60/mos+

#2335

2012 Chevrolet Suburban

• 4WD • LS
• 6 Speed Auto

Only...

\$39,990*

AND 2.9% up to 60/mos+

#2419

2012 Chevrolet Equinoxes

See Our Selection Online
www.NorhtownUSA.com

\$2,000 Discount

AND 0% up to 36 mos+

OR 2.9% up to 60/mos+

Only 19 Available

Starting At **\$22,260!**

New 2012 GMC's...GMC We Are Professional Grade

2012 GMC Terrains

• Back Up Camera
• Silver • Fog Lamps

2 Choices Starting at...

\$23,990*

AND 2.9% up to 60/mos+

2012 GMC Acadias

Starting at... • FWD • White

\$29,490*

• AWD • Silver & Gold

2 Choices Starting at...

\$31,490*

AND 2.9% up to 60/mos+

2012 GMC Canyon

• Crew Cab • SLE2
• 4WD

\$3,500 OFF

MSRP

AND 2.9% up to 60/mos+

#2394

NEW 2011 CLOSEOUTS – SAVINGS & DISCOUNTS UP

'11 Chevrolet Silverado 1/2 Ton Crew Cab 4WD Z71 LTZ

#2009, black, leather, LTZ Plus Pkg., Z71 Appearance Pkg., **Hail.....\$45,415.....\$28,990**

You may qualify for additional rebates! See dealer for details.

• GM Card • USAA • Credit Union Discount • NAHB • Farm Bureau • Private Offers • College Discount • Business Choice • And Many More!

*Prices do not include \$75 doc. fee. After rebates, -WAC

2-2011 Chevrolet Malibus

• LT – 30,000 miles
• LS – 20,000 miles

Only...

\$14,990*

Or *209/mo*

8-2011 Chevrolet Impalas

• 4 LS's • 4 LT's • Some with leather

Variety of Colors

4 Choices Starting At...

\$14,990*

Or *209/mo*

5-2011 Chevrolet Cruzes

• 3 LT's • 2 LTZ's with leather

Starting At...

\$15,990*

Or *219/mo*

2011 Buick LaCrosse

• CXL • White Diamond
• Balance of 4 yr/50,000 mile warranty

Starting At...

\$23,990*

Or *349/mo*

2011 Buick Lucerne CXL

• White • Leather
• Balance of 4 yr/50,000 warranty

Only...

\$24,990*

Or *359/mo*

9-2011 Chevrolet Traverses

• AWD • Cloth & Leather • Some with sunroofs, quads & DVD's

Starting At...

\$22,990*

Or *329/mo*

3-2011 Chevrolet Tahoes

• 4WD • LT's • 2 Maroon, 1 Silver, Leather & Nicely Equipped • Some with sunroofs & DVD's

Starting At...

\$33,990*

Or *499/mo*

5-2011 GMC Acadias

• AWD • SLT's • 9,000-19,000 miles

Leather • Some with sunroofs

Starting At...

\$31,990*

Or *469/mo*

2011 GMC Yukon XL

• 3/4 Ton SLT • 6.0L V8

Leather, Navigation • DVD, Loaded

Only...

\$42,990*

3.9% up to 72mo*

We Will Be Closed Saturday, December 24th In Celebration of the Holiday Season

Weekly Service Center Savings Call 605-665-4500

Wheel Alignment Only \$39.95 for most vehicles. By appointment only. Limited to 4 per day. Week of December 26th

Come Check Out Our New Location! One Mile North of Walmart

3.9% APR up to 72 Months on Special Purchase Groups!*
+3.9% APR for 72 months. \$2,000 cash or trade. WAC.



Norhtown
CHEVROLET • BUICK • GMC • CADILLAC

See Us On Facebook.com/NorhtownUSA

3818 Broadway, Yankton, SD



605-665-4500

888-876-7705

www.NorhtownUSA.com