

## Inmate Dies Of Apparent Suicide

PIERRE (AP) — The South Dakota prisons agency says an inmate has died of an apparent suicide.

The Department of Corrections on Friday said 33-year-old Heidi VandenBosch was found unresponsive in her cell at the South Dakota Women's Prison in Pierre on Wednesday. She was transported to a local hospital and later airlifted to a Sioux Falls hospital.

VandenBosch was serving a seven-year sentence for a first-degree burglary out of Minnehaha County.

The agency says VandenBosch was a registered organ donor and her family is making the arrangements to fulfill her wish.

The agency says her death is under investigation and an autopsy is planned.

## Hearings Set For Teens In Guard Case

GERING, Neb. (AP) — Court hearings have been set for two teens charged as adults in the strangulation of a jail guard.

Scotts Bluff County Attorney Doug Warner says a March 17 preliminary hearing has been set for 16-year-old Dylan Cardeilhac, of Torrington, Wyo. He is charged as an adult with first-degree murder in the Valentine's Day death of 24-year-old Scotts Bluff County Detention Center guard Amanda Baker.

Warner says 16-year-old Guy Eagle Elk, of Lisco, was to appear in court Friday for a bond hearing. He is charged as an adult with aiding and abetting Baker's death.

Investigators say Cardeilhac lured Baker into his cell on Feb. 14, then choked her before taking her keys in an attempt to escape. Police say Eagle Elk advised Cardeilhac on how to choke the guard.

## Neb. Attorney Disbarred From Practice

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — The Nebraska Supreme Court has disbarred a former western Nebraska county prosecutor who, as a private attorney, mishandled clients' money.

The state's high court said Friday that former Deuel County Attorney Doug Palik voluntarily surrendered his license to practice law in Nebraska.

In 2012, Palik had his law license suspended for one year for mishandling the administration of a woman's estate and lying for months to cover his mishandling of the case.

On Friday, the state's high court said Palik surrendered his license last year after a new grievance was filed against him. He admitted that he had commingled clients' money with that in his personal accounts and that in three instances over an 11-year period, he had mismanaged clients' funds in three different states.

## Rodeo Seeks Approval, Help To Upgrade

BELLE FOURCHE (AP) — One of the oldest annual outdoor rodeos in the country is seeking the help and approval of a western South Dakota city to upgrade the facility.

Representatives of the Black Hills Roundup Rodeo say the facility is in need of renovations after 95 years in operation. It draws thousands of people to Belle Fourche every 4th of July weekend.

Rodeo representatives say the outdated bucking chutes have to be replaced. They told city officials this week the project could cost up to \$45,000. The cost will be split between the high school rodeo committee and the Black Hills Roundup.

But they say they need the city to help dismantling the chutes.

The Black Hills Pioneer reports the mayor says a city committee will work on assisting with the renovations.

## Bill To Limit Occupation Taxes Advances

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Cities that don't already impose occupation taxes on alcohol, tobacco and motor-vehicle fuels would be banned from doing so in the future, under a bill that won first-round approval from Nebraska lawmakers.

The bill that advanced Friday was originally aimed at Omaha's new tobacco tax, but a compromise will allow the city to impose the tax until it expires.

City officials have promised lawmakers that the tax will sunset once it generates \$35 million, or by 2022 at the latest. The revenue will help pay for a new cancer research center at the University of Nebraska Medical Center.

Sen. Bob Krist of Omaha says he agreed to the compromise after city officials stated publicly that the tax was temporary.

## 4G LTE Network To Cover Reservation

STIOUX FALLS (AP) — A new wireless broadband service will soon cover the Crow Creek reservation.

The Crow Creek Sioux Tribe on Friday announced that Native American Telecom will operate a 4G LTE service in the reservation in central South Dakota.

Crow Creek Chairman Brandon Sazue says the move is a "historic" step in the tribe's embrace of new technology. Sazue says people living in the reservation often find themselves without access to various basic necessities that people in the rest of the country take for granted including communications services.

Native American Telecom is a tribally-owned telecommunications company. It provides fixed broadband and telephone service to more than 150 customers in the Fort Thompson community on the Crow Creek reservation.

The 400-square-mile reservation is located about 26 miles northwest of Chamberlain.

## Columbus Considers Staffing Changes

COLUMBUS, Neb. (AP) — The City Council has decided to extend health insurance coverage to early morning staffers at the Columbus Aquatic Center, despite the costs.

The Columbus Telegram says the council voted for the measure earlier this week after discussing staffing changes and cutting hours instead.

Under federal Affordable Care Act rules, the city must offer health coverage to the two full-time workers on the morning shift. But the insurance costs, which could reach an additional \$36,000 annually, raised questions about whether the morning pool hours should be available to the relatively few swimmers involved.

City Administrator Joe Mangiamelli says a Columbus Family pool planned for Columbus Community Hospital's new health and wellness center could draw swimmers away from the aquatic center, thus reducing the city's staffing requirements.

## Neb. Mt. Lion Hunting Ban Advances

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — A bill to end Nebraska's mountain lion hunting season has cleared a first-round vote in the Legislature.

Lawmakers advanced the measure Friday on a 31-5 vote. Sen. Ernie Chambers says he introduced the bill because the animals were native to the region, and they pose no real threat to humans. He says hunters only want to kill them for sport.

Opponents say the mountain lion population should be regulated by experts at the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission.

The bill includes exceptions that allow farmers and ranchers to kill mountain lions that threaten their property. People could also kill the animals to defend themselves if attacked.

Two more votes are required before the bill goes to Gov. Dave Heineman.

# Death Penalty Repeal Rejected

BY CHET BROKAW

Associated Press

PIERRE — South Dakota should keep the death penalty, a deeply split legislative panel decided Friday after hearing emotional testimony on either side of the issue from families whose loved ones were killed.

The House State Affairs Committee voted 7-6 to reject a measure that would have banned the death penalty in future cases. The measure sought to leave in place the death sentences of the three convicted murderers on South Dakota's death row, but prosecutors said the bill's language might have allowed those three to avoid execution.

Rep. Steve Hickey, R-Sioux Falls and the bill's main sponsor, said he previously supported the death penalty but changed his mind after contemplating how that meshed with his opposition to abortion and his belief that God can redeem even those who commit horrible crimes.

"If human life is sacred, it is always sacred," said Hickey, who is also a pastor.

The three men on South Dakota's death row are: Charles Russell Rhines, convicted of the 1992 slaying of Donivan Schaeffer, 22, during the burglary of a Rapid City doughnut shop; Briley Piper, convicted of the 2000 killing of Chester Allan Poage, 19, near Spearfish; and Rodney Berget, an inmate convicted of the 2011 killing of Sioux Falls prison guard Ronald Johnson during a botched escape attempt.

Johnson's widow, Lynette Johnson, cried Friday as she told the committee that Berget and Eric Robert, who has already been executed for the crime, ripped her family's life apart when they killed her husband. She said such inmates must be executed because they could kill other staff or inmates if they remain in prison on life sentences.

"I'm begging," Lynette Johnson told the committee. "Keep the death penalty. Keep the death penalty there for the safety of those officers."

Attorney General Marty Jackley said 32 states and the federal government allow the death penalty. South Dakota rarely imposes the death penalty, he said.

"There are simply those cases so vile, those individuals that are so dangerous, that in order to protect innocent life, you have no choice but to take life," Jackley said.

Some convicts are likely to kill again in prison if they get life sentences, the attorney general said.

Hickey said he does not believe the death penalty deters others from committing crimes, improves public safety or saves money in the prison and court systems. A life sentence without parole should keep people locked up in small cells, he said.

"Taking away a person's life but not their breath puts the excruciating back in the maximum life sentence," Hickey said.

Ed and Peggy Schaeffer said the death penalty is appropriate justice for some murderers, including the man

who killed their son.

"These felons made their choice," Peggy Schaeffer said. "Now they should have to face the consequences."

But Leonard Eberle of Rapid City, whose son was abducted and killed three decades ago, said he initially wanted his son's killer executed but eventually changed his mind. He said such killers should just be locked up for life.

"Killing is not the answer," Eberle said.

Former South Dakota attorneys general, Mark Meierhenry and Roger Tellinghuisen, said they used to support the death penalty but have changed their minds. Tellinghuisen said it often leads jurors, lawyers and others into therapy after the stress of a death penalty case. Meierhenry said the death penalty is applied unevenly because it is sought in some cases only because a politically ambitious prosecutor wants attention.

Jackley said prosecutors, defense lawyers, trial judges, juries and appeals courts make sure the death penalty is used appropriately.

Jackley said the bill sought to keep in place any death sentence imposed before July 1 this year, but that language might let the three on death row avoid execution. Those inmates are still pursuing appeals, and their lawyers could argue a death sentence is not imposed until a judge finally signs a death warrant, he said.

## South Dakota Panel OKs Human Trafficking Bill

BY NORA HERTEL

Associated Press

PIERRE — One of three bills regarding human trafficking passed the South Dakota House Judiciary Committee on Friday, a measure that would help victims sue their perpetrators.

The two rejected measures doubled efforts already in place, lawmakers said, one requiring the state to make a plan to assist victims and educate the public and the other allowing the state courts to clear convictions committed as a result of trafficking, such as prostitution.

"Each one is as crucially important as the next," said Rep. Jenna Hagggar, the sponsor of all three bills, "and they tackle different perspectives on the bigger statewide issue of human trafficking."

But the Sioux Falls Republican was successful only with the one that helps victims form a civil case and file for damages against their trafficker. Hagggar said she was disappointed with the results.

"We need to start helping them before they're prosecuted," she said.

Several groups spoke in support of all three bills, including the South Dakota Family Policy Council and Concerned Women for America.

"It's a form of slavery. It's force, fraud or coercion," said Mark Chase of the Family Policy Council. "It can't be happening in our state, but it is. It's happening."

Rep. Scott Craig, R-Rapid City, spoke in support of the legislation. He gave examples of several human trafficking arrests that took place at last

year's Sturgis Motorcycle Rally.

The panel voted 8-4 to kill a bill that would have helped victims to clear their records of crimes committed while they were trafficked. Joezy Guest, a victim of human trafficking, testified Friday about this topic.

"If you look at my record it's not pretty," Guest said. She spoke of using drugs to numb the pain of her experience and spent 7 months in jail for her crimes. She said criminal records make it hard for victims to get safe and affordable housing and good jobs.

Opponents said there are other policies in place to pardon these victims already. Paul Bachand of the State's Attorneys Association said prosecutors have no interest in charging victims with crimes.

The state Department of Social Services stood as the

only opponent to Hagggar's victim services and education bill, in which the department would have had to collect and report human trafficking data in the state, as well as train law enforcement and create a public awareness campaign.

Deputy Secretary Lynne Valenti said South Dakota already does or would be able to provide the services out-

lined without legislation.

"We don't need a law to tell us to do what we are already doing," Valenti said, noting they added a page to their website on trafficking since learning of the bill.

Several committee members agreed with Valenti, saying they didn't want redundant statutes, and voted 10-2 against the measure.

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