

Sioux Falls Police Raises Its Hiring Standards

SIOUX FALLS (AP) — People wanting to work as a Sioux Falls Police officer now have to meet higher standards.

Police Capt. Mark Jensen says that it's no longer enough to have graduated high school or received a GED. Applicants now must have had about two years of college, law-enforcement experience or military experience before they'll be considered for a job.

Jensen says that police work is evolving, and a lot of the work done now requires technical know-how on computers or more advanced problem solving than in years past.

He says, "We felt that someone with experience and education would be more qualified."

The department has about 230 officers. It's looking to hire four officers in August. Testing for the positions begins in February.

Deceased S.D. Lawmakers Remembered

PIERRE (AP) — The South Dakota Legislature has honored six former state lawmakers who died in the past year.

Members of the House and Senate met in a joint session Thursday to hold a special memorial service for their deceased colleagues. The Legislature holds the service each year.

Those honored Thursday and their chamber and years of service were: Thomas Bergan of Florence, House 1955-1956; Benny Gross of Blunt, House 1969-1986; Cortland Johnson of Baltic, House 1959-1960; Dale Kringen of Madison, House 1993-1996; Keith Paisley of Sioux Falls, House 1981-1984 and Senate 1985-2000; and Gordon Pederson of Wall, House 1977-1998 and 2001-2008.

Neb. Man Accused Of Arson Attempt In Norfolk

NORFOLK, Neb. (AP) — A 28-year-old Norfolk man has been accused of attempted arson.

Police say Spencer Oxford was arrested early Thursday morning after he was pulled over for speeding. Police say Oxford was racing from the neighborhood where a man had called police to report that his bedroom window had been broken.

Officers sent to the home found a jar containing two large fire-works with a rag and fuse sticking out of the jar top. Outside the bedroom officers found a lighter.

Oxford remains in custody. The case isn't listed yet in online court records.

Lawmakers To Resume Debate On Robocalls

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Nebraska lawmakers have failed to reach a vote on a measure that would reduce the number of government agencies regulating political robocalls.

Lawmakers adjourned shortly before noon Thursday, following more debate on the measure (LB418) by Omaha Sen. John Nelson. The bill would limit oversight of such calls to the Nebraska Accountability and Disclosure Commission. Debate resumes Friday.

The commission is one of two agencies that currently regulate such calls, and supporters of Nelson's bill say it would remove a layer of bureaucracy. But critics say the current system is more transparent and doesn't pose an unnecessary burden on groups that make the calls.

Omaha Sen. Heath Mello has said the bill would make it easier for groups to make calls that consumers hate. Other states have banned robocalls.

Delinquent Taxpayers Could Be Listed Online

PIERRE (AP) — South Dakota's top 100 delinquent taxpayers could be listed on the Internet if the Revenue Department gets its way.

A House committee began to weigh the request Thursday but instead rescheduled a hearing on the matter because committee members felt the wording was too vague.

The Revenue Department's Jan Talley says this list would create an incentive to pay taxes owed after other means have been exhausted.

Those listed would have 90 days to begin payments before their names appear online.

Talley says the top 100 owe \$5.6 million to the state. She says the proposal would be a "method for us to collect dollars."

A new date for the hearing hasn't yet been set.

Sanford Says Helicopters Will Improve Care

SIOUX FALLS (AP) — Officials from Sanford Health say a fleet of three new helicopters will increase patient care and safety.

KELO television reports that starting next month, patients will be taking off in a new EC145 helicopter.

One will be used in the Sioux Falls area, and the other two in the Fargo, N.D., area.

Sanford director of intensive air Mike Christianson says that instead of opening from the side, the new helicopter has a rear entrance. The stretcher also rolls out, rather than having to transfer patients to another bed.

Christianson says that makes it easier to load in and out, and more comfortable for the patients.

Pilots are already training.

The new helicopters also have autopilot, which officials say is like having a second pilot in the aircraft.

Neb. Man Pleads No Contest In Attack On Boss

COLUMBUS, Neb. (AP) — A Platte Center man has pleaded no contest to reduced charges in an attack on his boss in a paycheck dispute.

Twenty-eight-year-old Michael Dennis was accused of threatening to shoot his boss, Joshua Slonecker, with a shotgun and then using the gun to hit him last September.

The *Columbus Telegram* says Dennis pleaded no contest on Tuesday to attempted second-degree assault and terrorist threats in Platte County District Court. He faces up to 5 years in prison on each charge when he's sentenced on Feb. 17.

Dennis had been charged with use of a deadly weapon to commit a felony and second-degree assault.

Neb. Gov. Disappointed With Keystone Decision

BY GRANT SCHULTE

Associated Press

LINCOLN, Neb. — Nebraska Gov. Dave Heineman expressed concern Thursday that a federal decision to reject the Keystone XL pipeline could create legal problems for the state.

Heineman told The Associated Press that state agency officials are examining what the U.S. State Department ruling could mean for a Nebraska-based environmental review of the project.

Pipeline developer TransCanada agreed to the review last year, and company officials said they would voluntarily reroute the line following a public outcry over its path through Nebraska's sensitive Sandhills region. The review was estimated to cost the state as much as \$2 million, which supporters said was necessary to ensure public confidence in the process.

Lawmakers also passed a measure last session that would subject future pipeline projects to a state review. It's unclear whether that law would apply to the Keystone XL, if the company reapplies for a permit, or how the federal denial affects Nebraska's environmental study.

"It certainly appears to complicate things, without question," Heineman said. "We're going to try to talk to lawyers and figure out the exact legal meaning of what the president did — what impact it has on Nebraska legally."

Heineman, who supports the project but opposed its route through the Sandhills, said



Heineman

he was disappointed with the Obama administration's decision to reject the \$7 billion pipeline proposal. He said President Barack Obama should have issued a "conditional yes," to give Nebraska the time to complete its review.

"If they would use a little common sense up there at the White House, I think TransCanada was perfectly willing to take the risk" that would come from undergoing the state environmental review, Heineman said.

State Department officials have said they need to look at the entire project, given its potential long-term impact.

Jim Bunstock, a spokesman for the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality, said agency officials have not determined how to proceed and will likely need direction from the Legislature.

"We're trying to figure it out," he said. "Our charge in this process came from the Legislature. Right now, we need to determine where we are and what happens next."

The pipeline would have carried up to 700,000 barrels of crude a day from Alberta's tar sands to Texas Gulf Coast refineries. The route was slated to cross six states — Montana, South Dakota, Kansas, Nebraska and Oklahoma and Texas — but had stirred fears about a contamination threat to the Ogallala aquifer, a key water source for eight states.

Obama blocked the \$7 billion Keystone XL

pipeline on Wednesday, at least temporarily, but Republicans signaled their intention to try again to force the issue. Rep. Fred Upton, R-Mich., chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, has said he will call Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, who recommended Obama's rejection, to testify at a hearing as early as next Wednesday, the day after Obama gives his State of the Union address before a joint session of Congress.

Republicans are looking to drive a wedge between Obama and two key Democratic constituencies. Some labor unions support the pipeline as a job creator, while environmentalists fear it could lead to an oil spill disaster.

Pipeline opponents in Nebraska celebrated Wednesday's announcement, though some rural landowners said they were concerned that TransCanada had invested too much in the pipeline to surrender.

"We know this is just another battle in the war," said Terry Frisch, a Sandhills rancher who helped fight the project. "We know this isn't over yet."

Frisch, a registered Republican, said he was grateful for the Obama administration's decision and felt increasingly alienated from GOP lawmakers who have pushed the project.

"We appreciate what he's done," Frisch said of the president. "We know he's going to take a tremendous amount of heat for it. But (people who support the pipeline) need to come out here physically, and see what's here."

S.D. Surpasses N.D. As Top Sunflower Producer

BY BLAKE NICHOLSON

Associated Press

BISMARCK, N.D. — South Dakota farmers can boast for the first time in recorded history that they are the nation's top sunflower growers, although producers understand those bragging rights aren't likely to last.

North Dakota has worn the sunflower production crown since 1977, when the government started compiling data for the Dakotas. Last year, wet weather and flooding in North Dakota led to a drop of hundreds of thousands of planted acres, and production fell 39 percent to 766 million pounds. Farmers in South Dakota's prime sunflower region did not have similar production

problems and that state produced 777 million pounds of sunflowers, about the same as in 2010.

"I don't think it's so much that we had such a good year, but the problems that North Dakota had," said Tom Young, who has farmed for decades in central South Dakota's Sully County, the top-producing sunflower county in the nation. "It's a sad situation to see happen. While we like to have the notoriety of being No. 1, it's not the way we like to see it happen."

Planted and harvested sunflower acres in North Dakota last year fell by about one-third from 2010, USDA data show. That includes sunflowers grown for their oil — the majority of the crop —

and those that are grown for snacks or bird food. The production drop in North Dakota contributed to a 17 percent decrease in oil sunflower production nationwide to its lowest level in 21 years.

John Sandbakken, executive director of the North Dakota-based National Sunflower Association, said that drop in production would probably not translate to an increase in prices at grocery stores of goods that are made with sunflower oil, such as potato chips. Makers of those products use different oils based on price and availability, he said.

But the production drop is likely to buoy already strong market prices for farmers.

"Five years ago at this time,

we were at \$14 (per hundred pounds), and basically we've doubled in price," Sandbakken said. "And historically, (\$14) would have been an excellent price."

"Demand has not declined for sunflower products whatsoever," he said. "It would be a good situation for growers to plant sunflowers this year."

Barring another spring of historic flooding in North Dakota, sunflower acres are almost certain to rebound.

"We want to get back to that historical 1-1.3 million acres," Sandbakken said. "When you look at what we had for harvested acres last year, that's almost double. North Dakota will reclaim its No. 1 spot."

S.D. House Panel Kills Bill To Tax Coins, Currency

BY VERONICA ZARAGOVIA

Associated Press

PIERRE — The owner of a rare coin shop in Rapid City said he's relieved a South Dakota House Committee has killed a bill that would apply a sales tax to coins, currency and bullion.

"It would put me out of business," said Louis Anagnostopoulos while testifying against a House bill that would levy a 6 percent tax rate on sales of coins and metals at a hearing of the Taxation Committee on Thursday.

Would-be customers would either go online or buy from another state, he told the committee.

"If people brought gold in, it's not fair to them," Anagnostopoulos said. "We would have to sell out of state because no one is paying 6 percent tax when there are no extra fees online."

The bill would have repealed the July 2007 removal of state taxes on these collectibles.

Though a summer study committee recommended the repeal on tax exemptions, the house committee disagreed, voting 11-2 against it. The bill proposed a 2 percent city tax on top of the

state's 4 percent sales tax rate. Legislators couldn't agree on whether the coins and currency should be considered collectibles, which are taxed, or commodities, which aren't.

Wyoming, North Dakota, Iowa and Montana have no sales tax on rare coins and precious metals. Nebraska and Minnesota do.

Rep. Bernie Hunhoff (D-Yankton) said South Dakota's sales and use tax is very broad based, and that the tax should apply to retail purchases of coins for investments or collections.

The Revenue Department also supported the bill, estimating the state would bring in about \$32,000 a year from the tax.

"It's nice to add something once in a while to revenue," the department's Jane Page said. She said collectibles should all be taxed. "A rare penny from the 1700s is valued at over \$1 million — that's what we're talking about," she said.

But Anagnostopoulos said the 2007 exemption paved the way for him to open shop. He said gold and silver are commodities and shouldn't be taxed the same way collectibles such as stamps, old guns and art are.

Nebraska Bill Would Offer More Hunting Opportunities

BY MICHAEL AVOK

Associated Press

LINCOLN, Neb. — Nebraska hunters may soon be able to set their sights on new opportunities on certain state-owned lands.

A bill before the state Legislature would ensure that hunting, fishing and fur harvesting rights remain public on land managed by the Board of Educational Lands and Funds.

That board oversees about 1.3 million acres and rents agricultural land to 3,200 leaseholders.

Sen. Mark Christensen of Imperial said Thursday that his bill continues to allow agriculture land leases, but hunting rights on the land would stay with the people of Nebraska.

Christensen said most current private lease agreements separate land rights and hunting rights.

"It's getting to be a common thing," he said. "I just signed my first lease this year to farm ground and not get the hunting rights with it. I didn't want to do it, but it came down to: Do you want the land or don't you?"

Christensen said many hunters are having trouble finding places to hunt, and preserving hunting rights on state-owned land would

open up new opportunities for outdoorsmen statewide.

And, because many private leases separate land and hunting rights, it makes sense to preserve hunting rights for the public, he said.

"It's already split now, so I'd give (the education and lands board) the control," Christensen said.

Under the measure, the board would have the power to create rules to manage hunting on the state-owned land. It would set up regulations aimed at alerting tenants to hunting rights changes and preventing hunters from crossing private property without permission.

Christensen said much of the land covered in the bill is in western Nebraska, and he expects that some won't like his plan.

"There will be some opposition, because people don't want other people controlling hunting rights," he said.

The Board of Educational Lands and Funds was established to serve as trustee of land given to the state in 1867 by the federal government.

Money from land rent and sales goes to a trust that helps fund K-12 public schools statewide.

OBITUARIES

Marvin Edwards

Marvin L. Edwards, 61, died on Tuesday, Jan. 17, 2012 at Avera Sacred Heart Hospital in Yankton.

Services will be 1:00 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 21 at Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Sioux Falls.

Visitation begins at 5:00 p.m. Friday, Jan. 20 at George Boom Funeral Home, where the family will greet friends from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

In the early 1980's, Marvin began his career with Prince Manufacturing in Sioux City, IA as a purchasing agent. He was currently the plant manager of Lewis and Clark Hydraulics in Yankton, SD.

Grateful for having shared his life are his wife, Julene; two sons, Jeremy Edwards, Grand Rapids, MI, Brian (Kristin) Edwards, Zealand, MI; three grandchildren and a grandchild on the way; and seven siblings. Marvin was preceded in death by his parents and a brother, Gary Edwards. A

complete obituary and online registry is available at www.georgeboom.com.

Yankton Press & Dakotan
January 20, 2012

Alvina Frier

WAKONDA — Alvina E. Frier, 92, of Wakonda, SD died Wednesday, January 18, 2012 at Wakonda Heritage Manor Nursing Home in Wakonda.

Funeral services will be 11:00 a.m. Saturday, January 21, 2012 at the First Lutheran Church in Wakonda. Burial will follow in the Union Cemetery rural Wakonda.

Visitation will begin one hour prior the funeral services on Saturday.

Alvina Elizabeth Jerke was born March 1, 1919 to Gottfried and Elizabeth (Lemke) Jerke in Delmont, SD. She was baptized and confirmed in the Lutheran Faith. She graduated from Tripp High School in 1938 before attending Sacred Heart in Yankton. She graduated with her nursing degree in 1941.

Alvina married Everett L. Frier April 5, 1942. They had one daughter, Sharyl. The Friers lived

on the family farm in Wakonda before building a new home in town in 1979.

In her spare time Alvina enjoyed ceramics, china painting, quilting and attending activities involving her grandkids. She was an active member of First Lutheran Church.

She was preceded in death by her parents, husband Everett, grandson Justin, two sisters and four brothers.

Survivors include her daughter Sharyl (Jerry) Loen of Wakonda, three grandchildren; Stacey (Tony) Burke, Luke (Kristy) Loen, Alissa (Jamie Lennon) Loen and three great-

grandchildren; Ari, Ava and Elyse also one sister-in-law Lorene Jerke of Delmont, SD and several nieces and nephews.

For obituary and online condolences visit hansenfuneral-home.com

Yankton Press & Dakotan
January 20, 2012

Barbara Buggs

Barbara Buggs, 35, of Yankton died unexpectedly Tuesday, Jan. 17, 2012, in her residence.

Funeral services are pending with Opsahl-Kostel Funeral Home & Crematory, Yankton.

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Jean Cowman

Jean Marie Cowman, 74, of Yankton died Thursday, Jan. 19, 2012, at Avera Sacred Heart Hos-

pital, Yankton.

Arrangements are pending with Wintz & Ray Funeral Home and Cremation Service, Yankton.

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