

### S.D. Lawmakers Like Governor's Reform Plan

PIERRE (AP) — South Dakota legislative leaders are joining with Gov. Dennis Daugaard to propose changes in the state's criminal justice system.

Daugaard in his State of the State speech Tuesday outlined proposals to cut prison costs by treating more criminal offenders outside prison walls. He says public safety also will be improved by treating more offenders in intensive probation, parole and other community supervision programs.

Daugaard, Supreme Court Chief Justice David Gilbertson and legislative leaders appointed a panel that made the recommendations.

Senate Republican Leader Russell Olson of Wentworth says it's good to start a legislative session with a nonpartisan plan backed by all three branches of government.

House Democratic Leader Bernie Hunhoff of Yankton says the criminal justice reforms are needed because the current system is not working.

### Neb. Sees Hottest, Driest Year On Record

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — A national report says Nebraska was one of two states that experienced its hottest and driest year on record in 2012.

The *Omaha World-Herald* reports the State of the Climate Report released Tuesday shows Nebraska and Wyoming broke their state records last year.

The National Climatic Data Center's report shows the average annual U.S. temperature was 55.32 degrees Fahrenheit. That's a full degree Fahrenheit warmer than the old 1998 record.

Iowa saw its second warmest year on record. It also had its 11th driest year.

U.S. temperature records go back to 1895. The yearly average is based on reports from more than 1,200 weather stations across the Lower 48 states.

### S.D. House Elects Rep. Brian Gosch As Speaker

PIERRE (AP) — Republican Rep. Brian Gosch of Rapid City has been elected speaker of the South Dakota House of Representatives.

As South Dakota's legislative session started Tuesday, the House also elected Rep. Dean Wink of Howes as speaker pro tem, which puts him next in line to be speaker in two years.

The Senate elected Sen. Corey Brown of Gettysburg to be president pro tem. That means he will preside over the Senate when Lieutenant Gov. Matt Michels is absent.

### Omaha Mayor Pushes 'Truth In Sentencing' Bill

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — Omaha Mayor Jim Suttle says good-behavior furloughs given to violent inmates may help keep the peace inside Nebraska's prisons, but it is disrupting the peace and safety of Omaha residents.

On Tuesday, the mayor, Omaha Police Chief Todd Schmaderer and other city officials announced plans to seek legislation that would limit furlough and good time privileges to violent criminals. The so-called truth-in-sentencing bill would deny furloughs from prison for violent and repeat offenders and those convicted of gun and gang crimes.

It also would require corrections officials to notify police in metropolitan cities when inmates are being furloughed.

The proposal follows recent high-profile incidents involving furloughed inmates, including the September shooting death by police of an inmate who was on a two-day furlough from the state penitentiary.

## S.D. Jail Escapee Arrested After Day On The Lam

BY BLAKE NICHOLSON  
Associated Press

BISMARCK, N.D. — A Kansas man who broke out of jail for the second time in seven years Tuesday was found and arrested about 125 miles away in Sioux Falls, S.D., authorities said.

Charles Beene, 45, had escaped earlier in the day from a jail in Huron, S.D., where he'd been held since leading police on a chase in December. He was taken into custody without incident about 6:40 p.m. after authorities received at least two calls about possible sightings, Sioux Falls police Sgt. David Osterquist said in a statement. Beene was located inside a truck that had been associated with him, Osterquist said.

Beene broke out of a county jail in North Dakota about seven years ago and later made an unsuccessful attempt to escape from the State Penitentiary.

His latest escape came while Beene was outside his cell on cleaning detail about 12:30 a.m., when he accosted a guard with a makeshift gun, Solem said. Guards did not get a good look at the hand-made weapon but evidence found later in Beene's cell indicated it might have been made from materials such

as a metal tube and rubber bands, he said.

"This guy, he had been in prison for 20 years. He's real resourceful," Solem said. "If the thing actually worked, who knows? But it was enough to make our guard believe it would work."

Solem said Beene produced a .45-caliber bullet, handed it to the guard and then told the guard he had another bullet in the makeshift gun and would kill him if the guard did not let him go.

Another guard confronted Beene, who had his weapon held to the first guard's stomach, Solem said.

"It's kind of like a bank robbery — when somebody has a gun pointed at you, you do what you've got to do," the sheriff said. "The guard released him."

Beene had been in the jail since Dec. 3, when he was arrested following a chase with law enforcement officers from five counties and the South Dakota Highway Patrol. The chase ended when Beene crashed the pickup truck he had stolen from a dealership in Bismarck, N.D., in a field west of the South Dakota town of Alpena.

"We'd had no problems with him whatsoever" since the arrest, Solem said.

Beene also was involved in a chase with law enforcement officers in North Dakota in December 2005. He was caught and booked into the Richland County Jail but escaped later that month by using an iron post he apparently had wrenched from a piece of furniture to overwhelm a jailer. He stole a pickup from a farm and went on the lam for about 16 hours before he was caught.

In January 2006, he was sentenced to five years in the State Penitentiary in Bismarck, where he made an unsuccessful escape attempt in June 2010 — less than two months before his scheduled release.

Beene faced only prison discipline for the attempted escape and was released on schedule because he was wanted in Kansas for violating parole on felony convictions including aggravated robbery, said Tim Tausend, a spokesman for the North Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

Kansas Department of Corrections records show that Beene returned to Kansas and served about eight months in a state prison in Lansing before he was paroled again in April 2011. He absconded from parole last November and turned up in Bismarck a month later.

## New Nebraska Lawmakers Will Shrink Republican Edge

BY GRANT SCHULTE  
Associated Press

LINCOLN, Neb. — A Republican advantage in the officially nonpartisan Nebraska Legislature will shrink on Wednesday once newly elected state senators are sworn in, as lawmakers prepare for looming battles over taxes, spending and a proposal to expand Medicaid.

The Legislature will convene with 11 freshman lawmakers — nearly one-fourth of all members — which will give Democrats a net gain of two seats. The new balance will feature 30 Republicans, 17 Democrats and two independents.

Nebraska has long bucked traditional party politics, with lawmakers often forming coalitions by issue, geography or pressure from constituents. Republicans still outnumber Democrats nearly 2-to-1. And even on politically charged issues, such as health care and immigration, legislative votes don't

always fall neatly along party lines.

Still, the shake-up could increase the likelihood that lawmakers approve a measure to expand Medicaid coverage, despite opposition from the most conservative lawmakers and Republican Gov. Dave Heineman.

"We've gained a number of new, independent-minded legislators — people who I think are willing to really dig into the issues and buck the governor if need be," said Omaha Sen. Jeremy Nordquist, a Democrat. "That will certainly make the body as a whole more independent and more willing to work the issues through."

Heineman has argued that Nebraska still needs to improve its tax climate to entice new businesses that will help the economy grow, while keeping both young and old residents in the state. On Monday, the governor promised to increase funding for the University of Nebraska and the state's three public

colleges as part of his two-year budget package.

The biggest shakeup is the return of independent Omaha Sen. Ernie Chambers, who was elected after term limits forced him out of office four years ago. Chambers is known for his sharp questioning, which puts many lawmakers on the defensive, and for his encyclopedic knowledge of legislative rules that helped him single-handedly block measures he opposed.

The 38-year veteran lawmaker has said many bills approved in his absence weren't debated as aggressively as they should have been, and he promised to "do some cleaning up" once he's sworn in.

Chambers spent his long legislative career trying to eliminate capital punishment. While he never managed to get rid of it, he successfully filibustered and blocked bills that would change the state's method of execution, because he was convinced that the electric

chair would eventually be ruled unconstitutional.

The Nebraska Supreme Court proved him right in 2008, but lawmakers have since approved lethal injection for executions in his absence.

For their part, the freshman lawmakers plan to meet weekly once the session starts to discuss policy issues. Some of the new members are already talking about joining forces to develop a proposal to phase out state income taxes on military retirement pay and Social Security benefits.

"When things get hot and heavy, we want to make sure we're still talking to each other, keeping things as nonpartisan and cordial as possible," said Bill Kintner, a Republican from Papillion who will take the oath of office on Wednesday.

With a laugh, he added: "Right now, we're still on our honeymoon."

### OBITUARIES

#### Judith Knodel

Judith K. Knodel, age 67, of Lenexa, KS passed away unexpectedly Saturday, January 5, 2013 at her residence.

Funeral services will be 10:30 a.m. Friday, January 11, 2013 at St. John's Lutheran Church, Yankton, SD with Rev. Dave Gunderson officiating. Burial will be in the Gayville Cemetery, Gayville, SD.

Visitations will begin at 5:00 p.m. Thursday, January 10, 2013 at the Opsahl-Kostel Funeral Home & Crematory, Yankton, with a Scripture service at 7:00 p.m. Visitations will resume one hour prior to the service at the church.

Pallbearers are Eugene List Jr., Donavon List, Darwin List, Cory Knodel, Rick Werkmeister, Christopher List, Michael List and John Knodel. Honorary pallbearers are her God children,



Knodel

nieces and nephews.

Judith was born July 4, 1944 in Yankton, SD to Edwin Wilson and Mercedes Helen (Lee) List. She was baptized in St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Scotland. She graduated from Scotland High School in Scotland, SD in 1962 and graduated from Springfield College and Southern State Teacher's College in Springfield, SD. She married Kenneth H. Knodel on July 23, 1966 at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Scotland, SD. She worked at the State Hospital in Yankton, a lawyer's firm in Yankton as an Administrator, and was in charge of the Press Department at the Sun Publications Newspaper in Overland

Park, KS from 1972 to 1982. She was a school teacher for the Shawnee Mission School District in Kansas from 1986 to 1994, and Johnson County Community College as an Administrative Assistant from 1994 to 2013.

Judith loved spending time with her husband and her two sons. She was very involved with her sons' sports activities, such as softball, soccer, and basketball. She also served on the committee for the Boy Scouts as a recorder and was known as "The Eagle Lady" for helping the children through the many courses of the rank of Eagle Scout. She was active in many church activities, such as assisting her sons in ushering and other youth group activities.

Judith will be remembered for her devotion and love to her family.

She is survived by her two sons, Jeffery Harold and Robert Alan, both of Lenexa, KS; brother, Gary Edwin (Tina) List of Lawler, IA; sister, Lynnette Ann (David) Bue of Yankton, SD and many nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Edwin Wilson and Mercedes Helen List, and husband, Kenneth.

Judith was a kind and loving wife and mother and will be cherished by her two sons for evermore.

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January 9, 2013

**PSAHL-KOSTEL**  
FUNERAL HOME & CREMATORY INC.  
Online condolences at:  
www.opsahl-kostelfuneralhome.com

#### Alvin Weber

Alvin A. Weber, age 73, of Menno, SD passed away unexpectedly early Saturday morning, January 5, 2013 at the Chandler Regional Medical Center, Chandler, AZ.

Funeral services will be 11:00 a.m. Friday, January 11, 2013 at Grace Lutheran Church, Menno, with Rev. Theresa Jacobson officiating. Burial will be in the Unity Cemetery, rural Freeman, SD at approximately 1:15 p.m. Friday afternoon.

Visitations will be from 5 to 8 p.m. Thursday, January 10, 2013 at the Aisenbrey-Opsahl-Kostel Memorial Chapel, Menno, and then one hour prior to the service at the church.

Alvin was born on March 12, 1939, in rural Freeman, SD, to Raymond and Lillian (Roth) Weber. He was a farmer/rancher on the family farm in Freeman all of his life.

Survivors include his wife of 43 years, Judy (Guthmiller), their daughters Tanya (Bill) Karas of Chandler, AZ, and Tracie Weber (Gil Torres) of Tucson,



Weber

AZ. He is also survived by sisters Darlene (Ralph) Schulenberg and Celeste (Marlin) Herboldt, brother Delano (Arlene) Klaudt, and brother-in-law Marvin (Vernette) Guthmiller.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Raymond Weber and Lillian Nusz, brothers Glen Weber and Archie Klaudt, sister-in-law Eileen Klaudt, sister Janice (Kludt) Johnson, parents-in-law, Reiny and Vera (Schnabel) Guthmiller.

Memorials may be directed to the Sun Lakes, AZ, Fire Department.

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**AISENBREY PSAHL-KOSTEL**  
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Online condolences at:  
www.opsahl-kostelfuneralhome.com

#### Alice Johanson

Alice Agnes (Solomon) Johanson passed away Monday, January 7, 2013, on her 94th birthday at Avera Sacred Heart Hospital in Yankton South Dakota.

A funeral service will be held at 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 9, 2013, with a visitation from 1:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m. at the Kober Funeral Home, Vermillion, South Dakota, with Pastor Steve Miller officiating.

A committal service will take place immediately following the service at Bluff View Cemetery in Vermillion.

Alice was born on January 7, 1919, on a farm Northeast of Vermillion.

Alice married Eric Johanson on February 7, 1954. After marrying, the couple moved to Greenfield, South Dakota, where they lived until returning to Vermillion in 1983.

Alice was a life member of the Vermillion Senior Citizens Center and an active member of the V.F.W. Auxiliary Post 3061.

In her free time Alice was an avid card player and travelled all over to catch a BINGO game.

She is survived by her sister, Lena Rosenbaum of Yankton, South Dakota; as well as several nieces, nephews, great-nieces and great-nephews.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Eric Johanson, and her sister, Nettie Hughes.

Services have been entrusted to Kober Funeral Home.

Condolences may be posted online at www.koberfuneralhome.com.

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#### Earl Knutson

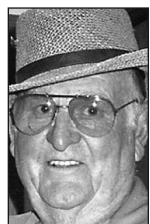
Earl Martin Knutson, 94, of Vermillion, South Dakota, passed away Sunday, January 6, 2013, at Sanford Vermillion Hospital.

A visitation and video tribute will be held from 6:00 - 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 10, 2013, with a prayer service to begin at 7:00 p.m. at Bergen Lutheran Church, in rural Meckling, with Pastor Ralph Egbert officiating.

A funeral service will be held at 10:30 a.m. on Friday, January 11, 2013, at Bergen Lutheran Church with a committal ceremony held immediately after at Evergreen Cemetery, rural Meckling, South Dakota with military honors conducted by Vermillion Clay County Post #3061.

Pallbearers for the service are John Harrenga, Bret Harrenga, Matt Knutson, Josh Dutcher, Dan Dutcher, and Adam Knutson (In Memory).

Earl was born on August 12, 1918, in rural Vermillion to Mar-



Knutson

tin and Emma (Lund) Knutson.

In 1942 he enlisted in the U.S. Navy where he served in both the Pacific and European theatres.

After his honorable discharge from the military, Earl moved to Fresno, California, where he worked as a carpenter and also owned a vineyard.

Earl married the love of his life, Betty, on January 3, 1981, and they remained happily devoted to one another until his passing.

In his free time Earl loved to spend time at Vermillion Senior Citizens Center, attend Navy reunions, play BINGO, participate in adopt-a-grandparent, camping, discuss politics, and spend time with his grandchildren.

Earl was also very active in his community, maintaining active memberships to the V.F.W., Bergen Lutheran Church, Clay County Ramblers, Evergreen Cemetery Circle, and the Carpenters Union.

Earl is survived by his wife, Betty; his children, Marty (Chris) Knutson, Tom (Denise) Knutson, Lowell (Cindy) Knutson, Jerilyn Wimer, Dale (Connie) Dutcher,

and Jim Harrenga; many grandchildren, nieces, nephews, and great grandchildren; and his sisters, Gladys Ryken, and Marlene Imperatrice.

Earl was preceded in death by his daughter, Gail Harrenga, his parents, Martin and Emma (Lund) Knutson, his grandson, Adam Knutson, his brothers, Henry Knutson, and Arnold Knutson; and his sister, Maxine Sundborg.

Services have been entrusted to Kober Funeral Home of Vermillion, South Dakota.

Condolences may be posted online at www.koberfuneralhome.com.

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#### Celia Thomas

Celia A. Thomas, 24, of Santee, Neb., died unexpectedly at her home on Tuesday, Jan. 8, 2013.

Opsahl-Kostel Funeral Home and Crematory, Yankton, s in care of the arrangements.

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#### Rev. Henry Roemer

Funeral services for Rev. Henry Roemer, 94, of Tripp will be held at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, January 12 at Frieden's Reformed Church in Tripp. Interment will follow in Frieden's Reformed Cemetery, Tripp.

Visitation will be held on Friday from 3:00 p.m. until a 7:00 p.m. prayer service at the Goglin Funeral Home in Tripp.

Rev. Roemer passed away on Monday, January 7, 2013 at the Good Samaritan Society of Tripp.

Online condolences may be sent at www.goglinfh.com.

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