

Testimony Ends In S.D. Murder Trial

HURON (AP) — Closing arguments are scheduled Friday in the trial of Edwin Thompson, who pleaded not guilty and not guilty by reason of insanity to second-degree murder. He is accused of stomping on 21-year-old Ryan Treadway during a fight in Huron in November 2009, resulting in fatal head injuries. KOKK radio reported that Thursday's testimony by defense witnesses and rebuttal testimony from the prosecution focused on Thompson's mental state. Friday's court session will mark the first time audio recording of circuit court proceedings will be allowed under new court rules. Performance Radio of Huron received permission for audio coverage in the Thompson trial.

Xcel Asks For Rate Hike In Southeast S.D.

SIOUX FALLS (AP) — Xcel Energy is asking for a 9.3 percent hike in electric rates for its 84,000 customers in Sioux Falls and surrounding areas of southeast South Dakota. The company said Thursday that the increase would add about \$7 to the monthly bill of a typical residential customer and raise \$14.6 million in revenue. Xcel said the money is needed to improve infrastructure, comply with new regulatory requirements, and respond to changes in the economy. The request for a rate increase will be decided by the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission.

Volunteer Help Center Closes In Aberdeen

ABERDEEN (AP) — A volunteer-run pregnancy help center in Aberdeen is closing after more than two years. The acting director of Birthright Inc., Emily Buttarro, told the *American News* that its services are no longer necessary because of social changes. She said women are now able to get support, counseling and other services elsewhere. Buttarro said because of that, the closing will have minimal effect in the community.

State Teams Survey Flood Damage In Neb.

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Two state teams are assessing damage to homes along the Missouri River in eastern Nebraska. The Nebraska Emergency Management Agency says the teams were conducting an aerial tour Thursday of damaged property reported to the state. Early reports indicate 115 houses have sustained major damage. The state continues to urge property owners to report damage to homes and businesses. Reports can be submitted online at www.nema.ne.gov/newsroom/home-damage-contact.html or by calling 855-211-2453 or 855-211-2454. NEMA's Cindy Newsham says the damage estimates could help the state get approval for individual aid.

S.D. Regents OK Academic Program Expansion

MADISON (AP) — A new minor in robotics is among the course expansions and new certificate programs approved Thursday by the South Dakota Board of Regents. The School of Mines and Technology in Rapid City will offer the minor in robotics starting in fall. Officials said the school currently offers a master's degree in robotics and intelligent autonomous systems, so all coursework needed for the new undergraduate minor is already in place. Black Hills State University received permission to provide its bachelor's degree in psychology to the new off-campus University Center in Rapid City.

Wells Fargo Cutting 49 Jobs In Sioux Falls

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Wells Fargo says it has cut 49 jobs in its financial card collections department in Sioux Falls. Spokeswoman Staci Schiller tells the *Argus Leader* that the cuts are related to the company's announcement last year that it would be eliminating its Wells Fargo Financial arm. In January, Wells Fargo announced it was eliminating 120 jobs in its student loan operations, including many in Sioux Falls, though the company expected to shift most of the employees over to other divisions.

S.D. Ups Vehicle Registration Fees

CHET BROKAW
Associated Press

PIERRE — South Dakota's annual vehicle registration fees are rising for the first time in more than a decade, providing more money for counties, cities and townships to take care of crumbling roads and bridges. The vehicle fee increase is likely to be one of the most noticeable of the more than 200 laws taking effect Friday at the start of the new fiscal year. Others likely to get attention are spending cuts for education and other programs. The South Dakota Legislature passed the increase in registration fees, commonly called license plate fees, by overriding a veto from Gov. Dennis Daugaard, who argued no tax or fee should be increased while the economy continues to struggle. Lawmakers said the fees, which were last raised in 1999, had to be increased because the old rates did not provide enough money to cover the cost of maintaining and fixing rural roads and bridges. County and township officials in particular pushed for the change. The new law raises the license plate fees in two stages. It will provide an extra \$18 million a year beginning this year and another \$13 million a year when the second stage takes effect in 2013. The \$42 fee for a typical car increases to \$51 this year and then to \$60 in 2013. Fees also would

be raised for noncommercial farm trucks, motor homes, travel trailers and motorcycles. The new law also reduces the number of vehicles that get a 30 percent discount on registration fees. The discount until now went to vehicles that were at least five years old, about 82 percent of all cars and trucks on the road. The discount now will go only to vehicles at least 10 years old, or about half those on the road. Even with the increase, South Dakota's registration fees will remain among the nation's lowest. Beadle County Highway Superintendent Jerry Bation said rural counties need the money because roads were damaged by the spring thaw and recent heavy rains. "This is definitely going to help," Bation said. "In Beadle County, we don't have very many good roads any more. They all got real bad." Bation said his road budget this year is about \$2.5 million, the same as in 2001, when costs were much lower. The county will get an extra \$250,000 in the first full year from the registration fee increase, he said. Registrations are staggered throughout the year based on the first letter of owners' last names. People can register vehicles up to 90 days early, and many did that in recent weeks to avoid the higher fees. "It's hard to gauge how many, but it's been busy all month," Hughes County Finance Officer Shellie Baumgart said.

Last winter's legislative session was dominated by budget issues, with the Legislature passing a \$3.9 billion budget that closely followed the governor's plan to cut spending to fix a \$127 million budget gap. Spending in most agencies was cut by 10 percent, but lawmakers found some one-time money to reduce the size of cuts in state aid to school districts to 6.6 percent. Schools are trimming programs and staff to cut costs. The budget also cuts reimbursements by 6.6 percent overall to medical facilities that provide services under Medicaid, the state-federal program that covers health care for low-income people. But the size of cuts to different kinds of facilities will vary according to how much they depend on Medicaid as part of their total revenue source. Some nursing homes will be cut by only 1.8 percent, while hospitals and some other facilities will see much larger cuts. And for the third straight year, state employees will get no pay raise. The Republican-dominated Legislature also passed Daugaard's plan to continue giving financial incentives to large industrial projects, but Democrats filed petitions seeking to suspend that law and force a statewide public vote on it. Secretary of State Jason Gant said his office would not finish checking whether sufficient valid signatures had been presented to refer the measure to a public vote in the November 2012 election by Friday.

Tribe Sues Nebraska Officials Over Doctor Riff

BY MARGERY A. BECK
Associated Press

OMAHA — An American Indian tribe is suing Nebraska health officials and the state attorney general, accusing them of ignoring a new provision in the federal health overhaul law that allows tribes to hire doctors not licensed by the state in which they practice. The Ponca Tribe of Nebraska and the doctor it hired, Rosa M. Huguet, filed the lawsuit Wednesday in Omaha's U.S. District Court. Huguet, who is licensed in Puerto Rico, was hired last July after the federal health care law was enacted as the director and only doctor of the tribe's Fred

LeRoy Health and Wellness Center in Omaha. Before enactment of the federal health care law, tribal doctors had to be licensed by the state within whose boundaries he or she would practice. The new law allows tribal doctors simply to hold a license in any of the 50 states, the District of Columbia or a U.S. territory, the lawsuit says. Despite that, state officials have refused to recognize Huguet and have ordered her to stop practicing, the tribe contends. "Plaintiffs have been left with no choice but to bring this action to force the defendant state officials to comply with federal law," the lawsuit says.

The lawsuit names various division heads of the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, members of the health agency's Nebraska Board of Medicine and Surgery and state Attorney General Jon Bruning. A spokeswoman for the state Health and Human Services Department said her agency hadn't been served with the lawsuit and hadn't reviewed it, and therefore could not comment on it. Bruning's office did not immediately reply to a request for comment. Messages left Thursday for Donald Lee, the chief operating officer of Tribal Health Programs, and the Ponca Tribe's attorney, Brad Jolly of Brighton, Colo., seeking comment were not immediately returned.

The tribe first experienced trouble over the hire of Huguet when it asked the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services to change paperwork to reflect Huguet's name and the new name of the clinic. In response to the request, the state's health licensing coordinator noted that Huguet did not have a Nebraska medical license, according to the lawsuit. The tribe pointed to the new provisions of the federal law, but several days later, the coordinator informed the tribe that the state agency's attorneys had determined that Huguet's Puerto Rico medical license was not sufficient.

Another Missouri River Levee Fails In Southwest Iowa

PERCIVAL, Iowa (AP) — The Missouri River breached another levee in southwest Iowa on Thursday, inundating yet more farmland but not prompting any new evacuation orders or flash flood warnings. The breach, about a mile northwest of Percival in Fremont County, had grown to about 200-yards-wide by 9 a.m., Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management spokesman John Benson said. Local emergency officials told the weather service that the breach is expected to flood areas that have already been evacuated between Interstate 29 and the river.

Percival sits just east of I-29, and about 16 miles northwest of Hamburg where a secondary levee was built in early June to bolster the town's defenses when floodwaters broke through another levee in northwest Missouri. The Army Corps of Engineers said Thursday's breach near Percival happened on the same levee, which stretches along the river from southern Iowa into northern Missouri. National Weather Service forecaster Josh Boustead said the new breach was discovered after the river level downstream at Nebraska

City dropped about 6 inches to 27.6 feet. The breach occurred shortly before 4 a.m. Residents in the area threatened by the breach were ordered to evacuate their homes last week, so authorities did not plan to issue a flash flood warning or evacuation order. Nevertheless, Fremont County officials planned to check the area for remaining residents. The floodwaters flowed into Percival shortly after noon Thursday. Percival resident Dave Lutz said he had never seen floodwaters this high in town. He was among the very last to leave Thursday when

he walked through nearly a half foot of floodwater to a waiting truck. The Iowa Department of Transportation extended the closure of Interstate 29 because of the breach near Percival. The interstate is now closed from exit 24 near Bartlett, Iowa, south to Rock Port, Mo. Local emergency management officials have said the water flowing through the breached levee near Percival could eventually join with the floodwaters from failed levees south of Hamburg. That would increase the pressure on Hamburg's new levee, which has held so far.

OBITUARIES

Sylvia Patton

UTICA — Sylvia Patton, age 86, of Utica, SD passed away surrounded by her family Wednesday, June 29, 2011 at Avera Sister James Care Center, Yankton, SD. Funeral services will be 10:30 a.m. Saturday, July 2, 2011 at the Opsahl-Kostel Funeral Chapel, Yankton, with Rev. Ron Johnson officiating. Visitations will be from 2:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Friday July 1, 2011, with family present from 6:00-9:00 p.m., a prayer service will be held at 7:00 p.m. at the Opsahl-Kostel Funeral Home and Crematory, Yankton. Visitations will resume one hour prior to the service at the funeral home. Pallbearers will be her 6 grandchildren and honorary pallbearers will be her 13 great-grandchildren. Sylvia was born on August 16th, 1924 to Frank and Tillie (Hlavac) Kralicek on the family farm, rural Yankton. She attended school at Pleasant Hill Country School, northwest of



Patton

Yankton. She married Melvin Patton on February 11, 1947 in Yankton. To that union two children were born, Janice and David. Together, they farmed two miles south of Utica their whole married life. Sylvia was diagnosed with ovarian cancer on February 11, 2010 and fought a brave fight to the end. Sylvia will be remembered for always putting her family first, and for her hospitality to anyone who walked into their home. She always had the coffee on and a five course meal ready to be put on the table. Sylvia is survived by her husband of 64 years, Melvin, Utica; daughter, Janice (Frank) Vellek, Yankton; son, David, Utica; grandchildren and families: LeeAnn (Randy) Freng and their children, Katie and Karlie, Lisa (Rob) Barger and their children, Kayla, Austin, and Dillon, Michelle (Jim) Stucky and their

children, Jake, Jared, and Marissa, Mark (Tami) Vellek and their children, Payton and Tori, Richard (Brenda) Vellek and their children, Jordynn, Dawson and Easton, and Kristi Patton; as well as sister, Lorraine (Herma) Schwarz, Tyndall; sisters-in-law: Dorothy Kralicek, Yankton and Lola Becvar, Tyndall; and brother-in-law, Paul (Sonny) Sangster, Wakonda; special friends Renee Jensen and Patty (Payne) Karell, and many nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents, brothers: Don, Ernie, and Roland, and sisters, Arlene Brewer and Helen Spence.

Yankton Press & Dakotan
July 1, 2011

Suzette Thompson

BLOOMFIELD, Neb. — Suzette Burbach Thompson, 54, died Wednesday, June 29, 2011, at Clarkson Medical Center, Omaha, Neb. Funeral services are at 10 a.m. Saturday at Abundant Life Christian Center, Neligh, Neb., with graveside services at 2 p.m. on Saturday at Bloomfield Cemetery. Visitation is 6-8 p.m. tonight (Friday) at Brockhaus Funeral Home, Bloomfield.

Friday, May 27, 2011.

Elenora was cremated and a Funeral Mass of Christian burial will be held at 10:30 a.m. Tuesday, July 5, at St. Joseph Catholic Church, Elk Point. The family will be present one hour before with rosary said at 10 a.m. Burial of ashes will be in St. Joseph Catholic Cemetery. Kober Funeral Home, Elk Point, is in charge of arrangements.

John Burke

OMAHA, Neb. — John Burke, 91 of Omaha, Neb., and formerly of Coleridge, Neb., died Thursday, June 30, 2011, at the Im-

manuel Fontenelle Home, Omaha. Funeral services are pending at Wintz Funeral Home, Coleridge.

Peggy Machmuller

ABERDEEN — Peggy R. Machmuller, 55, of Aberdeen died Tuesday, June 28, 2011, at her friend's home at Richmond Lake. Memorial services are at 11 a.m. Saturday at Bethany Reformed Church, Canton. The Rev. Al Richardson will officiate. Carlsen Funeral Home and Crematory, Aberdeen, has been entrusted with arrangements.

Helen Deuschle

Helen Deuschle, 97, of Yankton died Thursday, June 30, 2011, at Avera Sacred Heart Hospital, Yankton. Funeral services are at 11 a.m. Tuesday at Opsahl-Kostel Funeral Chapel, Yankton, with the Rev. Mark Lichter officiating. Burial will be in the Garden of Memories. Visitations are 7-9 p.m. Sun-

day at the funeral home, with a 7:30 p.m. prayer service. Visitations will resume one hour prior to the service at the funeral home.



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On July Fourth, we celebrate the birthday of the United States of America, and all the great things our nation represents. We're proud of our country and the values it upholds, and we gratefully salute the brave men and women of our Armed Forces who fight to defend America and her ideals. God bless the U.S.A. *Wishing You and Yours a Safe and Happy Independence Day Weekend!*

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