

### Suspect Denies Abuse In Toddler Death

SIoux FALLS (AP) — A man charged with killing the 2-year-old son of Minnesota Vikings running back Adrian Peterson in South Dakota last fall says the child choked on strawberry fruit snacks while he was in the bathroom. The *Argus Leader* reports Joseph Patterson, 28, is facing second-degree murder, manslaughter and aggravated assault charges in the death of two-year-old Tyrese Ruffin. Patterson gave his version of events through his lawyer as he appeared in court Thursday for a motion hearing. Prosecutors want jurors to hear evidence from previous accusations of child abuse against Patterson. Defense lawyer Tim Rensch says the similarities aren't clear enough to allow the prejudicial testimony. Patterson remains in custody on a \$1 million cash bond. He was arrested again in June following accusations that he assaulted the boy's mother.

### Boyfriend Charged In SF Stabbing Death

SIoux FALLS (AP) — A Sioux Falls man has been charged with murder and manslaughter for allegedly killing his 21-year-old girlfriend in a domestic dispute. Authorities have charged 28-year-old Michael Martinez with second-degree murder and first-degree manslaughter. Police allege that Martinez stabbed twenty-one-year-old Beverly Guerra with a kitchen knife during an argument. She was found in an apartment with multiple stab wounds around 2:30 a.m. Thursday, and pronounced dead by medical personnel. The *Argus Leader* says Martinez appeared in court Thursday and is being held on a \$1 million bond. Guerra's 3- and 6-year-old children were in a back room. They were put in the custody of social service officials. It is the city's third homicide this year.

### Man Gets 9 Years In Child Porn Case

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — A 40-year-old Lincoln man has been given nine years in federal prison for receiving child pornography. Prosecutors say David Romanski was sentenced on Wednesday in U.S. District Court in Lincoln. He must also serve five years of supervised release after he leaves custody, and he must register as a sex offender. Prosecutors say he'd received pornography from about October 2008 until sometime in May last year. Investigators say they found on Romanski's computer and other devices more than 1,300 videos depicting sexually explicit conduct of children under the age of 18, including a number of videos that were shared on a peer-to-peer network.

### Congress OKs Cemetery Bill

RAPID CITY (AP) — Congress has passed a bill transferring the ownership of nine historic cemeteries in the Black Hills of western South Dakota from the U.S. Forest Service to local communities. Sen. John Thune and Rep. Kristi Noem say the communities have managed the cemeteries for generations, and the federal ownership created headaches for the communities and an unnecessary liability for the Forest Service. The bill is awaiting presidential approval after passing the Senate on Wednesday. The House approved it in May. The legislation changes the ownership of the Englewood, Galena, Hayward, Mountain Meadows, Roubaix, Nemo, Rockerville, Silver City and Cold Springs cemeteries.

### Transportation Needed For Homeless

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Lincoln district officials are hoping to acquire more buses and vans so the district no longer has to use taxis to take homeless children to and from school. The *Lincoln Journal Star* says federal law requires that public schools pay transportation costs to get students to and from their home school when they become homeless. The vans and buses would cost \$244,000 to \$304,000, which would be offset by savings on transportation costs. Officials would use savings from this year and next year's budgets to buy the vehicles. Associate superintendent Liz Standish estimates that the vehicles would pay for themselves over the next seven years. The purchase proposal is under consideration by the school board.

### Lion Reports Investigated In Sioux Falls

SIoux FALLS (AP) — South Dakota wildlife officials are investigating reports of a mountain lion roaming in western Sioux Falls. People who live along Silver Creek have reported sightings. Mark Kantack told the *Argus Leader* newspaper that he saw the lion on Monday night beneath a tree near his deck. "I tried to scare it off, and it just kept staring at me," he said, adding that he's worried about the safety of children who like to fish in the creek. Lion sightings have become more common throughout South Dakota as the animals have moved out of the western Black Hills in search of new territory. If the sighting is confirmed, it would be the first in the state's largest city. Greg and Linda Andersen, who also live along Silver Creek, are convinced they saw the lion last month. They reported the sighting to the state Game, Fish and Parks Department. "They said maybe it was a bobcat, but it was no bobcat," Greg Anderson said. "They told my wife it was a coon, but we used to coon hunt, and it wasn't a coon." Game, Fish and Parks officials said they have not found any tracks or other evidence of a lion in the area. They have now set up a camera in Kantack's backyard. "We want to make sure that if there is one, we know about it," conservation officer Jared Hill said.

### Man Found In Elkhorn River Drowned

NORFOLK, Neb. (AP) — The Madison County coroner's office says a man whose body was found in the North Fork of the Elkhorn River drowned. The coroner's office said in a news release issued Thursday that 52-year-old Jeffrey Planer, of Norfolk, died of asphyxia by drowning. The circumstances surrounding Planer's death are still being investigated. The coroner's office says toxicology test results won't be available for a few weeks.

### No Charges Filed For Prison Shooting

YORK, Neb. (AP) — No charges will be filed against a former staffer who shot herself in the chin while in the lobby at the state prison in York. Authorities say 49-year-old Robin Staehr, of York, walked into the prison lobby on May 24, demanding to be let inside. Then she shot herself with a .22-caliber rifle. She was soon captured and taken to a Lincoln hospital. Staehr had resigned from her job at the women's prison in 2005. York County Attorney Candace Dick told the *York News-Times* that state statutes aren't applicable in the case and that every effort was being made to ensure that Staehr didn't pose a threat to anyone else. Authorities said shortly after the incident that it was believed Staehr was intoxicated that day.

# Daugaard Appoints His Lawyer To State's Judicial Commission

BY BOB MERCER  
State Capitol Bureau

PIERRE — There is a new member for South Dakota's official panel that screens applicants and makes recommendations to the governor for appointing circuit judges and state Supreme Court justices. Gov. Dennis Daugaard chose his legal counsel and aide Jim Seward to start a four-year term on the Judicial Qualifications Commission effective July 7. Daugaard's appointment of Seward comes at an important time. Supreme Court Justice John Koenkamp of Rapid City has submitted his official intention to retire Dec. 31 after 20 years on the state's high court. Koenkamp represents the Supreme Court district for Lawrence, Pennington, Custer and Meade counties. State law requires the governor to fill vacancies on the Supreme Court and in circuit courts from recommendations made by the Judicial Qualifications Commission. The commission must submit at least two recommendations for a vacancy. The commission was created by a state constitutional amendment in 1972. It has seven members: Two citizens appointed by the governor; two circuit judges appointed by the court system; and three lawyers selected by members of the State Bar. Seward, a former private attorney and Butte County state's attorney, re-

places Tom Dravland of Pierre. Seward is a lieutenant colonel in the South Dakota National Guard and prosecuted court martial cases while stationed in Afghanistan in 2004-2005. While on Daugaard's staff, Seward served as chairman of the group that assembled major changes in South Dakota's criminal courts system that were approved by the Legislature in 2013. He is now chairman of the oversight council that reviews the changes made in operation of criminal courts and sentencing. Dravland served since Nov. 24, 2010, when then-Gov. Mike Rounds appointed him during the final months of the Rounds administration. Dravland was Rounds' chief of staff at the time and was the former commander of the South Dakota Highway Patrol and former secretary of public safety. Some of the criteria for the commission were rewritten by the Legislature in 2013. Those changes came after Scott Heidepriem, the Democratic opponent of Republican Daugaard in the 2010 governor's election, was named to one of the State Bar's three seats on the commission. Lawmakers added the requirement that the three lawyers on the commission be elected by a majority of State Bar commissioners, rather than appointed by the State Bar president. Legislators also removed a requirement that the governor's appointees be

non-lawyers. That second change in turn opened the way for Daugaard to appoint Seward a year later. "The governor wants one of his two appointees to be an attorney, now that the Legislature has changed the law to allow him to appoint an attorney," Tony Venhuizen, a spokesman for Daugaard and a lawyer, said. "The governor trusts Seward to serve on the JQC and to help evaluate whether applicants for judicial office are qualified," Venhuizen said. Dravland succeeded Arne Brown of Brookings on the commission. Brown, who served 12 years in the Legislature, was a strong political ally of Rounds. Brown and Rounds served together one term in the Senate, and Brown was the Senate president pro tem during Rounds' first two years as governor. Rounds appointed Brown to the commission in July 2006 after Brown had retired from the Legislature. Dravland's four-year term on the commission officially expired June 30. Members can serve two consecutive terms. Venhuizen said Daugaard selected Seward for much the same reason as Rounds appointed Dravland. "Tom has done a good job and I know the governor appreciates the time and effort he committed," Venhuizen said. The governor's other citizen member on the commission is Mark Roby of Watertown. Daugaard appointed Roby, who isn't a lawyer, in 2013.

## Neb. Storms Caused \$13M In Property Damage

BY GRANT SCHULTE  
Associated Press

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Tornadoes and thunderstorms that pummeled Nebraska last month caused an estimated \$13.2 million in damage to roads, bridges, utilities and other public property, a state emergency spokeswoman said Thursday. State officials will use the preliminary estimates when applying for federal assistance to cover the damage in 12 counties, said Jodie Fawl, a spokeswoman for the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency. Stanton County in northeast Nebraska was the hardest-hit, with \$4.23 million in public property damage. The Stanton County town of Pil-

ger, devastated by a tornado, accounted for \$2.6 million of that damage. The state's public damage estimate doesn't count private property, so the total cost is likely far greater. NEMA spokeswoman Jodie Fawl said officials are still tallying that number. Gov. Dave Heineman is expected to submit the estimates to the Federal Emergency Management Agency's regional office in Kansas City, which will then forward them to the president for consideration. "We've had a lot of storms this year, and there's potential for more," Fawl said. The counties with damage were Cedar, Cuming, Dakota, Dixon, Franklin, Furnas, Harlan, Kearney, Phelps, Stan-

ton, Thurston and Wayne. The damage estimates include the cost of debris removal, emergency protective services, and damage to roads and bridges, public buildings, utilities, parks and recreational facilities. Utilities accounted for the largest cost, at \$9.2 million. Between 75 and 80 percent of Pilger was damaged by the June 16 tornado, one of four twisters in the storm front that swept across northeast Nebraska that day. The Pilger tornado was later confirmed as an EF4, which has wind speeds of 166 to 200 mph. Two people were killed in the storm, a 5-year-old girl in Pilger and a 74-year-old man who was driving a few miles

east of town in Cuming County. Nearly two dozen were injured. The storm severely damaged a local middle school in Pilger, the fire station, grain bins and most of the south end of Main Street. Fawl said the federal government typically responds within a month, once the state submits its damage estimates. Nebraska can also submit damages for uninsured private property, she said, but historically, the federal government has been more willing to offer payment for damaged public property. The cleanup effort has relied heavily on volunteers who poured into the area from Nebraska and neighboring states.

### Texas Company Proposes Oil Pipeline Through Iowa

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — A Texas company wants to build a 1,100-mile pipeline that would cut diagonally across Iowa from northwest to southeast and carry millions of gallons of crude oil a day extracted from western North Dakota's oil fields. Dallas-based Energy Transfer Partners LP said the proposed 30-inch diameter pipeline would initially have the capacity to carry 13 million gallons daily but that could be increased. The company said in a statement it is a cost-effective and environmentally responsible way to reduce the reliance on truck and rail transportation. The company said wants to have the pipeline in service by the end of 2016. Its board has approved the pipeline, and the company has begun ordering steel and negotiating construction contracts. The Iowa Utilities Board, which has regulatory oversight of pipeline projects, has not yet received the required petitions from the company. Those are necessary to begin a formal permit review process, spokesman Rob Hillesland said. Crude oil pipeline construction in Iowa is regulated by a section of the Iowa Code that requires the company to hold informational meetings in each affected county at least 30 days before filing a petition seeking a permit. A map of the pipeline proposal shows it would begin in western North Dakota, head southeast through South Dakota and enter the northwest corner of Iowa. It would cross 17 Iowa counties passing near Sioux Center and Storm Lake and cutting between Ames and Ankeny and toward Keokuk in the state's southeast corner. After leaving Iowa, it crosses the Mississippi River and ends in Patoka, Illinois.

Welcome to the World

The following babies were born at Avera Sacred Heart Hospital in June 2014:

ALLISON	EMMETT	LANTRY	SPENCER
ARIA	EVALYN	LEDGER	SUTTON
ARIEL	HARRISON	LEVI	TANNER
AVA	INDICA	MARGARET	TATE
AVERY	ISABELLA	PAIZLEIGH	TAYLOR
BEATRICE	JOLIEE	PRESLEY	TAYTEM
BRADLEY	J'SAIAH	RACHEL	WAKIYAN MAZA
CASSIUS	KADEE	RILEY	WESTON
DANIELLE	KALEA	SAWYER	YSABAL
DARIUS	KARISSA	SIENNA	
EASTON	KNOX	SIMON	

Avera Sacred Heart Hospital  
www.AveraSacredHeart.org