

## Park Fire Probe Concludes Results

RAPID CITY (AP) — A report on a wildfire in Wind Cave National Park in April concludes the park underestimated how dry conditions would affect efforts to control an escaped fire.

The Cold Brook Fire began as a prescribed burn. It escaped containment in high winds and grew to about 10 square miles. There were no injuries, and no damage to structures or private property.

Chief Interpreter Tom Farrell said at the time that weather conditions were appropriate for a prescribed burn. The report by an interagency team at the request of the National Park Service acknowledged that and said staff had necessary training. But investigators also found there weren't enough resources on the fire's eastern side to control the escaped fire.

Park Superintendent Vidal Davila says officials want to learn from the incident.

## Omaha Tribe Member Gets Prison

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — A member of the Omaha Tribe of Nebraska has been sentenced to more than three years in prison on a sexual abuse charge involving a 9-year-old girl.

U.S. Attorney Deborah R. Gilg in Nebraska says 23-year-old Lawrence Merrick, Jr., of Winnebago, was sentenced Friday to 37 months in prison on a charge of abusive sexual contact with a child. He was ordered to serve five years of supervised release and to register as a sex offender.

Merrick is accused of entering a residence at the Winnebago Reservation in April 2014 and rubbing the buttocks of a 9-year-old girl who was sleeping. The girl woke up and told her mother while Merrick fled the home.

## New Domes Installed Atop Corn Palace

MITCHELL (AP) — Three new domes have been put in place atop the Corn Palace tourist attraction in Mitchell.

The domes are part of a \$7.2 million makeover of the building that's billed as the world's only palace dedicated to the grain.

The installation of the domes was delayed when city officials sought assurance that they could withstand South Dakota's weather. Crews last week added reinforcements.

About 200,000 tourists annually visit the Corn Palace, which is decorated inside and outside with murals made from about 275,000 ears of corn of various sizes and colors.

The upgrade includes the new domes as well as new lighting, larger murals, exhibit space, a theater and a walk-out balcony above the marquee. Work began in June 2014. Most of the work should be done this week.

## Signs Of Drought Being Reported

FARGO, N.D. (AP) — Parts of eastern North Dakota received up to an inch of rain over the past week, but dry conditions and signs of drought are being reported in the west.

The Agriculture Department says in its weekly crop report that soil moisture statewide still is in good shape. Topsoil moisture is rated 89 percent adequate to surplus, and subsoil moisture is 93 percent in those categories.

The report says North Dakota's staple spring wheat crop is maturing at a pace ahead of last year. Eighty-four percent of the crop is rated in good to excellent condition.

Pasture and range conditions statewide are rated 78 percent good to excellent. Stock water supplies are 96 percent adequate to surplus.

## Ground Broken For Spanish School

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Public school leaders in Sioux Falls have broken ground for a \$10.9 million school for Spanish immersion students.

The district's growing Spanish immersion program serves more than 400 elementary school-age students. It currently operates out of two elementary schools.

The new school is being built on the site of an old elementary school. It's slated to open in the fall of 2016.

Funding for the school was jeopardized earlier this year when state lawmakers proposed limits on school property taxes dedicated to capital projects. Legislators couldn't agree on the terms of the proposal, and the measure failed.

## Man Gets 30 Years To Life For Slaying

NORTH PLATTE, Neb. (AP) — A 46-year-old man has been given 30 years to life for killing a Colorado man at a camp for transients in western Nebraska.

David Saxton was sentenced on Monday in Lincoln County District Court. He'd pleaded guilty to second-degree murder in the slaying of 43-year-old Lonnie Sanchez, of Hoehne (HOH'-nee), Colorado.

Sanchez's body was found last September near the camp along the South Platte River near the city of North Platte. Authorities say he was beaten to death by Saxton and another man, 31-year-old Randy Nevsimal. Nevsimal has pleaded not guilty to a charge of second-degree murder.

In April another co-defendant, Maybelle Collins, was given 364 days in jail. She'd been convicted of false reporting.

# Nebraska Trial Set Over Land Seizures For Oil Pipeline

O'NEILL, Neb. (AP) — A judge has scheduled an October trial on a Holt County lawsuit aimed at keeping TransCanada Corp. from seizing land to build the Keystone XL oil pipeline.

At a hearing in on Monday in O'Neill, District Judge Mark Kozisek set the nonjury trial date of Oct. 19.

Seven Nebraska landowners filed lawsuits after the state Supreme Court tossed an earlier, similar lawsuit, with three justices saying the plaintiffs in the case didn't have standing to sue because they didn't prove TransCanada was seeking their land.

In January TransCanada filed legal papers in nine Nebraska counties to invoke eminent domain for land that's needed to construct, operate and

maintain the pipeline. It would go from Canada through Montana and South Dakota to Nebraska, where it would connect with existing pipelines to carry more than 800,000 barrels of crude oil a day to refineries along the Texas Gulf Coast.

The TransCanada filings prompted the lawsuit in Holt County and a similar one York County. Both challenge the company's legal authority under state law to use eminent domain. Judges in both counties later barred TransCanada from proceeding with any eminent domain actions until the legal challenges have been completed.

Environmentalists and other opponents have argued that any leaks could contaminate water supplies and that

the project would increase air pollution around refineries and harm wildlife. Supporters have said those fears are exaggerated, that the pipeline would create jobs and that it would ease American dependence on oil from the Middle East.

The pipeline, first proposed in 2008, still requires presidential approval because it crosses an international border. Nebraska Gov. Pete Ricketts announced Monday that his office had sent a letter to President Barack Obama, urging him to issue a pipeline permit.

Earlier this year, Congress approved legislation to build the pipeline. The president vetoed the bill, and the GOP-run Senate failed to override the veto in March.

## Some Victims Identified In Midwest Plane Crash

BY GRETCHEN EHLKE  
Associated Press

Two teenagers from Mexico were among the seven people killed when two small planes crashed separately within hours of one another in western Wisconsin and southwestern Minnesota, authorities said Tuesday.

A fixed-wing plane carrying three people crashed in a cornfield in southwestern Minnesota on Monday night, according to the Pipestone County Sheriff's Department. The pilot, Steven Christensen, 59, of rural Pipestone, and passengers Marcos Favela, 18, of Torreon, Mexico and an unidentified girl, 13, of Guadalajara, Mexico, died

when the aircraft went down near Pipestone about 8 p.m., sheriff's officials said.

Travis Jasper said he and his construction crew were finishing work for the day near the crash site when he heard what sounded like a plane in trouble.

"(I) heard it spitting and sputtering. It fired up a couple times and then I thought I heard a car door slam," Jasper told KSFY-TV. "A couple minutes later I seen the neighbor at the corner and he's like, I think a plane just went down, and I said yah, I think the same thing."

Jasper said he and his crew jumped on top of their vehicle to try to spot the plane in the cornfield.

In Wisconsin, four people died when a single-engine Beechcraft crashed and caught fire in a field near Amery, Wisconsin, about 50 miles northeast of Minneapolis, about 5:30 p.m. Monday, Polk County sheriff's officials said. Firefighters extinguished the blaze, which scorched the surrounding field, and found the victims inside.

Karen Olson said the plane crashed on her property about 200 yards from her home.

"I thought it was a helicopter flying overhead," Olson said. Her property is in the flight path for medical helicopters flying to the nearby Amery Regional Med-

ical Center, she explained. Then she heard her neighbor pounding on her door.

"He just said, there's an airplane that went down in your field and the field is on fire," Olson said. "All I could see was smoke."

Authorities haven't yet said where the planes might have been flying or the location of their departures. The Federal Aviation Administration and the National Transportation Safety Board have launched investigations.

"We'll document the scene, examine the wreckage of the aircraft and later move it to a secure facility," NTSB spokesman Keith Holloway said of the Wisconsin crash.

## Dakota Hospital Foundation Grant Awarded To Music Boosters

VERMILLION – Dakota Hospital Foundation has awarded the Vermillion Music Boosters a \$5,000 grant to partially fund the purchase of a new equipment trailer.

The Music Boosters applied for grant funding to Dakota Hospital Foundation (DHF) during the open grant period in April of this year. The grant requested funds to assist with expenses related to the equipment trailer and needs for new or replacement instruments in the VHS Music Department.

"My favorite thing to do as a parent is support my kids in what they love to do—Music Boosters has been a great place to join other parents in doing just that. And now, seeing this kind of support from the Dakota Hospital Foundation makes me so proud to be a part of this community."

"We are so excited that this request became a reality so quickly. The new trailer will not have time to gather dust—I can't wait to break it in for marching band season," said Lisa Swanson, President, Vermillion Music Boosters.

"DHF is very pleased that our contribution resulted in the Music Boosters being able to purchase the trailer.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

We are happy to support the young musicians in our community," said Lisa Ketcham, President, Dakota Hospital Foundation Board.

Funds for this grant were payable through the Vermillion Public Schools

Foundation for benefit of the Vermillion Music Boosters.

Dakota Hospital Foundation held an open grant period from April 1 – 30, 2015. Five grants applications were received and three were awarded for a total

of \$9,500. The next open grant period for DHF will be October 1 - 31, 2015. Learn more at sanfordvermillion.org/foundation.

# Adventures In Eating Start Meaningful Relationships

BY DR. MIKE ROSMANN  
Sponsored By L&C Behavioral Health

So long expensive big city and foreign restaurants! Some of the best and most affordable cuisine anywhere is found in farm homes and agricultural communities.

Food is understandably a big deal for farmers and the communities where agricultural goods are produced and processed for markets. Not only do people involved in agriculture have their livelihoods linked to most of the delicious foods diners seek, they also prepare and appreciate really, really good food themselves.

One evening last week, the group of gastronomic adventurers to which Marilyn and I belong met for another of our delectable monthly dinners, along with sampling fine wines from around the world and large doses of informative conversation and hearty laughter.

There are four couples in our loosely organized club that meets at one of our homes each month and occasionally at a restaurant we select by consensus for its reputed tasty offerings and to explore interesting new menus. We call ourselves the Gastronomauts.

Each couple tries to

outdo the others with delicious and unusual entrees and main courses. Sorry you meat and potatoes lovers only.

The men and women in our group share in the selection and preparation of items. Often the hosts prepare histories of the food and the region of the world which inspired the menu.

The culinary creations of the chefs in our group compare favorably with those of the best restaurants in Paris, San Francisco, Munich and other regions reputed for their tasty offerings on cable television food shows and internet recipe sites. The Gastronomauts occasionally draw ideas from these sources and from visits to various countries and unusual eateries.

A few of the many delicacies we have tried are smoked lamb shanks, an entire meal of various dishes involving gorgonzola cheese, grilled mahi-mahi,



Dr. Mike  
**ROSMANN**

Indonesian spring rolls, salted caramel ice cream, Thai coconut soup, Tandoori chicken hors d'oeuvres, Iberian prosciutto, Moroccan tagine and Scottish haggis.

We periodically savor the simple but scrumptious meals most of us grew up eating. Frequently the menu includes items Gastronomauts have grown ourselves.

We also like to compare food items. We voted on which locally-caught fish (bluegills, bass and crappies) was tastiest, all fried in the same batter. Three people apiece voted for crappies and bluegills, two for bass.

We compared roasted antelope, elk, bison and venison. We conducted taste tests of marinated pheasant, duck and goose breasts.

We relished appetizers of lamb, pork and beef backstraps, thinly sliced and grilled. We experimented with batter-fried squash blossoms and raw flower petals of several types.

We evaluated dishes of wild rice (which isn't a variety of rice), brown, short grained, and long white rice. We tried Peruvian quinoa, Ethiopian couscous and Ecuadorean amaranth. We compared wines, beers, and coffees from every continent except Antarctica.

While partaking together is the impetus for the Gastronomauts, it's more than our shared culinary experiences that holds us together. Over the years we have come to count on each other for advice and support when needed. We are friends.

The people in our group have mostly farm and rural roots, but we cut across occupational, political, religious and ethnic spectra. We all have grown children, many of whom participate in the dinners from time to time. Occasionally invited visitors join us, such as house guests.

We think we sing the Doxology in four part harmony together so well that it has become our favorite prayer prior to beginning dinner. We greet each other and say goodbye with hugs.

Farm people are accustomed to great dinners. I fondly remember the noon meals that harvest and haying crews had together when I was part of the crew.

Usually we were so full after dinner that we had to nap a while before going back to work. We never called it lunch; that came midafternoon. It's too bad we don't have threshing and haying crews anymore.

Still however, farm com-

munity potlucks, neighborhood dances and parties for no other reason than to get together are part of the country traditions of rural America.

The first few Thanksgiving celebrations of European colonists with Native Americans exemplify the sharing of food and cultures. These celebrations in both Virginia and Massachusetts contributed to mutual respect among the new immigrants and native people but the cordial cross cultural exchanges didn't continue beyond the first few years.

It's never too late to begin communal traditions. Enjoying company together over food is a good starting point.

I wish neighborhoods everywhere would hold

dinners together and invite people of all backgrounds. Perhaps if people of all racial, religious, political and social strata would establish traditions of sharing food and relationships together, like the first few Thanksgivings, these events would help Americans bridge the many divisions that we now experience in our country.

Enjoying our food and drink together can initiate the sharing process. Friendship, understanding and respect are the likely outcomes.

*Dr. Mike and his wife live on their farm at Harlan, Iowa. He likes hearing from readers. Contact him at: www.agbehavioralhealth.com.*

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