

# Lottery Revenue Falls From 2013 Pace

BY BOB MERCER  
State Capitol Bureau

PIERRE — The 2014 budget year that ends June 30 hasn't been kind to the South Dakota Lottery.

Officials said Thursday revenue was down. The estimated total through June 14 from the three sets of games was nearly \$105.7 million. At the similar point one year ago it was \$107.5 million.

State government's 50 percent take from privately owned video lottery machines was almost \$91.6 million. That was about \$150,000 more than last year. But scratch-off ticket revenue at \$5.4 million was about \$800,000 behind and lotto revenue at about \$8.7 million was off \$140,000.

Director Norm Lingle told members of the state Lottery Commission that "most of the gaming jurisdictions are down" throughout the nation according to a consultant. Lingle said South Dakota's condition makes it "the exception" to what's happening elsewhere.

The Lottery Commission spent many hours in the past year building a

strategic plan to revive revenue, especially from video lottery.

Commissioner Doyle Estes of Hill City asked Thursday why there aren't more penny machines and more of the new slot-machine lineup games in video lottery establishments.

Lingle said there is hesitancy among most of the manufacturers to offer penny games.

Estes said the situation is frustrating. Penny slots are a success in Deadwood's casinos, he said.

There are 1,927 of the new lineup games in the marketplace for more than 21 percent of all video lottery terminals. They are more profitable, averaging \$62.63 daily in net machine income while traditional games average \$47.82.

Net machine income is the money after winnings are paid. Businesses added 355 of the lineup games in the past 11 months and two weeks. "We're not growing that type of machine very fast," Estes said.

Lingle replied that a consultant advised several years ago that growth of 500 in a year would be good. Deputy director Clark Hepper said there are 32 fewer video lottery establishments and about 150 fewer termi-

nals from one year ago but the lottery is making more money from them.

South Dakota will offer a new lotto game called Monopoly Millionaires' Club later this year as part of a national rollout. A ticket for the weekly-Friday drawings will cost \$5.

Sales director Joe Willingham said lotto would follow the strategy of scratch-off tickets with a wide range of price points.

Other lotto games sold in South Dakota cost \$1 or \$2 for the basic ticket.

Powerball sales are down 22 percent this year and most of South Dakota's other lotto games are off too, Willingham said.

"When Powerball sneezes, other games catch the cold," he said. "We're feeling it."

Monopoly Millionaires will offer a different jackpot structure. The basic jackpot will be at least \$15 million and no more than \$25 million, with 10 mini-jackpots of \$1 million apiece to start.

Willingham said he expects the South Dakota Lottery will be "a lot of new games" in lotto in the coming years.

## Pierre Flights Seeing Fewer Passengers

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Great Lakes Airlines is flying with a smaller number of passengers on flights in and out of South Dakota's capital city to try to reduce flight disruptions that have plagued Pierre in recent months.

Pierre Airport Manager Mike Isaacs says Great Lakes flights to Denver and Minneapolis are still on the same 19-passenger aircraft but are only carrying up to nine passengers per flight.

Delayed and canceled flights have been a problem in Pierre since late last year. Great Lakes officials have said the reason is new federal rules requiring more flying hours for pilots of the 19-passenger planes.

Isaacs says the reduction is temporary. He says the reliability of flights is more important now than the number of available seats.

## Schools Work With Students After Storms

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — University of Nebraska officials say they will work with students who have been affected by recent severe weather.

Several areas of the state have sustained significant damage in tornadoes and thunderstorms this year.

Financial aid officials at all four University of Nebraska campuses will waive some required documents if they can't be found and they may be able to recalculate a family's income to reflect storm losses.

Nebraska students who qualify for federal Pell grants might qualify for free tuition in the Collegebound Nebraska program if they experienced significant storm losses.

Interim NU President James Linder says financial aid officers will work to minimize how much the severe weather affects students' ability to attend college.

## Inmates Helping In Wessington Springs

PIERRE (AP) — Twenty minimum-security prisoners and three staff members from the State Penitentiary in Sioux Falls are continuing to help with cleanup from last week's severe storms.

Gov. Dennis Daugaard authorized the inmates to help out in Wessington Springs Thursday morning. Earlier in the week he ordered fifty minimum-security prisoners and five staff members to help out in the flooded town of Canton.

A tornado damaged dozens of homes and businesses in Wessington Springs on June 18.

The inmate crews are being supervised by the South Dakota Office of Emergency Management.

Daugaard was visiting Wessington Springs Thursday to see the recovery progress and hold a briefing with reporters.

## AG Cautions About Utility Scam In SD

PIERRE (AP) — Attorney General Marty Jackley says South Dakotans should be cautious of callers claiming to be with local utility companies and threatening to turn off their electricity.

The scam artist says accounts are past due and without immediate action the utilities will be shut off.

Jackley says people who receive such a call should hang up and call their local utility company directly to ask about the status of their account.

He says people who have fallen victim to the scam should contact his office's Consumer Protection Division at 1-800-300-1986 or consumerhelp(at)state.sd.us.

## Nebraskan Fights Return To Prison

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — A 57-year-old Lincoln man has gone to court to keep from being sent back to prison because state officials had miscalculated his sentence.

The Lincoln Journal Star says Bruce Caton filed his action on Tuesday, asking a judge to reduce his sentence to 10 years.

He was released in October, having served 10 years of his sentence of 10 to 20 years. But he wasn't put on parole, because officials thought he'd served his full sentence. Now officials say he should have served five more years before discharge.

Caton is among dozens of prisoners mistakenly released early. The Omaha World Herald reported June 15 that prison officials didn't correctly calculate sentences for at least 101 inmates.

State officials are discussing legal steps needed to retrieve the inmates.

## Judge Delays Closing Of Argosy Casino

SIOUX CITY, Iowa (AP) — A judge has granted a temporary reprieve to the Argosy riverboat casino in Sioux City by delaying its closing.

Polk County District Court Judge Eliza Ovrum ruled Thursday to keep the floating casino open at least through July 10. A hearing is scheduled on that date for final arguments in the Argosy's appeal of the Iowa Racing and Gaming Commission's decision to close it.

The Sioux City Journal reports the Argosy was scheduled to close Tuesday. The commission recently refused to halt its order for the casino to close.

The Argosy's operator, Penn National Gaming Co., lost its bid last year to operate a land-based casino in Sioux City. A Hard Rock casino and hotel by another developer is scheduled to open later this summer.

# SDDOT Pushes Forward With Public Meetings

BY BOB MERCER  
State Capitol Bureau

PIERRE — While the federal funding level remains uncertain, the state Department of Transportation is pushing forward with its public meetings this summer about South Dakota's next highway plan. In a switch, one meeting will be converted to a statewide Internet session.

SDDOT officials announced the change Thursday to the state Transportation Commission.

"We're hoping we can get more participation on this," Joel Jundt said. He is the department's director of planning and engineering.

The schedule in recent years has been five community meetings. Typically 100 to 120 people attended in total, according to Jundt.

Four of the communities will host the meetings again this summer:

July 22 — Aberdeen, Ramkota Convention Center,

7 p.m. local;

July 23 — Sioux Falls, Ramkota Hotel, 7 p.m. local;

July 24 — Pierre, Ramkota Hotel, 7 p.m. local; and

July 29 — Rapid City, Ramkota Hotel, 7 p.m. local.

Last summer Mitchell hosted the fifth community meeting. Instead the fifth meeting will be converted to the webinar-style presentation on July 30 at 1:30 p.m. CDT.

DOT officials present their proposed four-year plan at the meetings and take public comments about it.

Known as the STIP — Surface Transportation Improvement Program — the latest proposal will cover the 2015 through 2018 construction years.

The plan is updated annually and occasionally adjustments are made during the year.

The webinar meeting will use audio-visual teleconferencing at various DOT and other locations across South

Dakota. The sites will be announced in the coming days.

"We're also working so you can log-on from your PC," Mike Behm said. He is a DOT manager for project development.

The 2015 construction program calls for overall spending of \$311.8 million. That includes \$222.7 million for highways, \$30 million for bridges, \$49.6 million for safety improvements and \$9.5 million for other work.

More than \$260 million is expected from federal sources and some \$50 million will come from state funding.

However, the federal highway account is projected to run short of money possibly as soon as late August, Jundt said.

He said members of Congress plan to complete work on temporary funding legislation by the end of August. That would ensure money through December.

"It would be great if we had a full year's appropriation," Jundt said. "But we'll

take what we can get."

This complicates the 2014-2015 improvement plan. "We can't bankroll it. There's not enough funds we have on the state side of the equation to fund those," Jundt said.

The standard process calls for contractors to bill DOT and be paid. DOT then bills the federal program.

A continuing shortfall could force a reduction of South Dakota's construction program for the coming year. There is enough state money to pay contractors for their work this summer and fall, according to Jundt.

"We feel we can absorb this through at least September," he said.

Rationing last happened eight years ago. SDDOT received two letters recently from federal highway officials stating that rationing could occur.

"Our concern is next construction season," Jundt said.

# Oil Train Dangers Extend Past Bakken

BY MATTHEW BROWN  
Associated Press

BILLINGS, Mont. — The dangers posed by a spike in oil shipments by rail extend beyond crude from the booming Bakken region of the Northern Plains and include oil produced elsewhere in the U.S. and Canada, U.S. safety officials and lawmakers said.

Acting National Transportation Safety Board Chairman Christopher Hart said all crude shipments are flammable and can damage the environment — not just the Bakken shipments involved in a series of fiery accidents.

Hart cited recent derailments in Mississippi, Minnesota, New Brunswick and Pennsylvania of oil shipments from Canada. He said those cases exemplify "the risks to communities and for the environment for accidents involving non-Bakken crude oil."

Hart's comments were contained in a letter to U.S. Sens. Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley obtained by The Associated Press. They add to growing pressure on federal regulators to improve oil train safety in the wake of repeated derailments, including in Lac-Magentic, Quebec, where 47 people were killed in a massive conflagration last July.

Citing the highly volatile nature of Bakken oil, Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx last month ordered railroads to notify states of shipments from the region so firefighters and first responders can better prepare for accidents.

But Wyden and Merkley told Foxx on Thursday that the order leaves emergency personnel in the dark on oil shipped from outside the Bakken region.

The Oregon Democrats urged Foxx to expand his order to cover crude from all parts of the U.S. and Canada. They also pressed for the 1 million-gallon minimum threshold in Foxx's order to be lowered to include smaller shipments.

"With the exception of the Lac-Magentic accident, every accident involving crude oil, ethanol and other flammable materials since 2006 has resulted in a hazardous materials release of less than 1,000,000 gallons," Wyden and Merkley wrote to Foxx in a letter.

They said the derailments cited by the transportation safety board show that trains carrying non-Bakken crude or less than 1 million gallons pose the same "imminent hazard" that Foxx has ascribed for Bakken oil.

Bakken oil on average travels more than 1,600 miles to reach its destination, transportation officials said. That's much further than oil from some other parts of the country.

U.S. transportation officials said the lengthier journey increases the overall risk exposure for Bakken oil — and is one reason it's being treated differently than other hazardous cargos.

Representatives of the oil industry and officials in North Dakota also have complained about Bakken oil being singled out by regulators — although for opposite reasons. The American Petroleum Institute and American Fuel and Petrochemical Manufacturers have argued Bakken oil is no more volatile than other light, sweet crudes.

# Garcia To Stand Trial On Attempted Break-In

BY MARGERY A. BECK  
Associated Press

OMAHA, Neb. — A former doctor accused of killing four people with ties to an Omaha medical school will stand trial on an additional charge of attempted burglary related to an attempted break-in last year at the home of a Creighton University Medical School professor.

Anthony Garcia was bound over for trial Thursday following a preliminary hearing on the charge.

Forensic evidence links Garcia to the attempted May 2013 break-in at the home of Creighton pathologist Chhanda Bewtra, prosecutors said Thursday in court. That includes searches for Bewtra's Omaha address on a computer tablet that Garcia owned, they said.

Garcia, 41, of Terre Haute, Indiana, already faces trial on four counts of first-degree murder and various weapons counts. He is accused of fatally stabbing Thomas Hunter, the 11-year-old son of Creighton pathologist William Hunter, and the family's housekeeper, Shirlee Sherman, in 2008.

Garcia also is charged in the May deaths of Creighton pathologist Roger Brumbach and his wife, Mary.

Authorities say Garcia was motivated by revenge. Roger Brumbach and William Hunter had been instrumental in firing Garcia from Creighton's pathology program in 2001.

## Independence Day Deadlines

The Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan will be closed Friday, July 4th, for the Independence Day holiday.

The following deadlines will apply:

Saturday, July 5 newspaper — 5 p.m., Tuesday, July 1

Monday, July 7 newspaper — 5 p.m., Tuesday, July 1

Tuesday, July 8 newspaper — 5 p.m., Wednesday, July 2

Out On The Town, July 8 & 10 — 5 p.m., Wednesday, July 2

Wednesday, July 9 newspaper — 5 p.m., Thursday, July 3

There will be no newspaper on Friday, July 4, 2014.

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