the midwest

PAGE 8

Woman Accused Of Poisoning Mom

BEATRICE, Neb. (AP) - A woman in southeast Nebraska has been accused of putting carpet cleaner into her boyfriend's mother's drink in an attempt to poison her.

Court documents say 25-year-old Amanda J. Nelson. of Beatrice, was arrested Thursday on suspicion of assault after local authorities responded to a verbal disturbance at a residence. A woman there claimed her tongue went numb after drinking tea she had in the refrigerator. She threw up the drink.

Authorities say Nelson was angry with the woman. They say Nelson told officers she put carpet cleaner into the drink to poison the woman.

The Beatrice Daily Sun reports Nelson appeared in Gage County court Thursday. Records do not list an attorney.

Man Accidently Shoots Fisherman

REDFIELD, S.D. (AP) — Police in Spink County say a man who was taking aim at some gophers in his yard accidently shot a 20-year-old fisherman from Redfield.

Authorities say the 20-year-old man was fishing at Turtle Creek when he was struck by a stray round from a 22-caliber weapon. He was treated at the Redfield Hospital. He's expected to make a full recovery.

KDLT-TV reports the Spink County Sheriff's Office and the state Department of Criminal Investigation looking into the matter.

Refined Coal System Finished

HASTINGS, Neb. (AP) — A crew is finishing the installation of a refined coal system at the Whelan Energy Center transfer tower, moving Hastings Utilities closer to meeting an important Environmental Protection Agency standard.

Treating the coal means the coal-fired plant near Hastings addresses the agency's Mercury and Air Toxic Standards, which has a 2016 deadline. The refined coal process reduces nitrogen oxides, mercury and sulfur dioxide emissions, the Hastings Tribune reported.

"Mercury is the main driver for why we're looking at this process," Hastings Utilities Al Meyer said. "...The primary source of mercury control was carbon injection.'

He said the refined coal process will help mitigate the use of carbon, which can be costly.

Hopefully, we can save money in controlling our emissions by using this process versus using something like carbon injection," Meyer said. He put savings of "at least several hundred thousands of dollars" versus using the carbon injection process only.

The refined coal construction job is the second for Springfield-based company CETC. It has other jobs lined up at power plants in Missouri, Maryland, Ohio and Puerto Rico.

Construction began at the Whelan Energy Center transfer tower in late 2014. It installed equipment at the tower's top to mix chemicals that control mercury, sulfur dioxide and nitrous oxide.

Trail Of Governors Statues Unveiled

PIERRE (AP) — South Dakota is unveiling three more bronze statues of its former governors.

KCCR-AM reports that statues of former Governors George T. Mickelson, Charles Herried, and Richard Kneip will be revealed Friday afternoon in the Capitol rotunda.

The statues are the newest additions to the state's Trail of Governors series. The statues are scheduled to be placed in their permanent positions around the city when the ceremony concludes.

The newest additions mean Pierre now has statues of a dozen former Governors.

Farmer Hopes To Harvest Oil On His Land

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — A southeastern Nebraska farmer hopes to harvest oil that's oozing out of his land.

The Lincoln Journal Star reports that Alvin Simon says he has known for decades about a possible "river of oil" underneath his Richardson County land. He thought about acting on it around 20 years ago, getting his land tested before putting it

in the Conservation Reserve Program. Colorado-based Orion Geophysical Consulting told him in

South Dakota **Rancher Indicted For Falsely Claiming Cattle Died In Storm**

BY JAMES NORD Associated Press

PIERRE — The indictment of a South Dakota man for falsely claiming he lost more than a hundred cattle during the autumn blizzard of 2013 could be the first such case from the storm, which devastated ranchers in the western part of the state.

Karl Knutson, of Vale, pleaded not guilty last month to felony counts of making a false claim and making a false statement to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. A trial is scheduled for July.

The indictment alleges Knutson sub-mitted a claim in May 2014 to the USDA's Farm Service Agency for the loss of 129 head of cattle in the October blizzard even though he actually lost at most 13. It also claims Knutson in August 2014 told the agency in "a handwritten invoice" that he paid \$135,350 for 103 head of cattle

that he didn't actually buy. Knutson, 27, referred a request for comment Friday about the indictment to his public defender, who didn't immediately respond to telephone messages. South Dakota U.S. Attorney Randy Seiler and a spokesman for the USDA Office of Inspector General, which investigated the case, declined to comment.

South Dakota Stockgrowers Association Executive Director Silvia Christen, who was unfamiliar with Knutson's indictment, said she hadn't heard of any other cases like it coming from the 2013 storm, which is estimated to have killed more than 50,000 livestock and left ranchers in the western part of the state reeling financially.

"I think we can be proud of South Dakota that we haven't seen more of these types of cases," Christen said.

The 2014 federal farm bill authorized federal aid for the disaster-stricken

ranchers, and Christen's group, the South Dakota Cattlemen's Association and the South Dakota Sheepgrowers Association set up a fund that ultimately raised more than \$5 million for the cause.

Joe Carley, of Philip, who estimated he lost more than 130 cows and calves to the blizzard, said the outpouring of support from the state and across the nation was "humbling.'

He said the allegations against Knut-son are disappointing if they're true. Carley received federal aid after the blizzard, and he said cases such as this could make the process more difficult for ranchers in the future.

"We pride ourselves on being honest, and a handshake means everything, you know, and that's how we do business around here," Carley said. "So when somebody goes and screws around with the system like that, it makes it harder for everybody else for next time."

SD Voters Might Be Asked To Broaden **Referral Power, Protect Initiated Laws**

BY BOB MERCER

State Capitol Bureau

PIERRE — A potential amendment to the South Dakota constitution would allow voters to refer any law approved by the Legislature including spending measures and emergency acts that currently are off limits.

Those spending and emergency acts however would still take effect and remain law until voters decided their fate in the next general election. That could be more than a year later.

The proposal from Douglas Kronaizl of Vermillion also would create a new limit on the Legislature's ability to amend or repeal an initiated law already approved by voters.

Legislators would need a two-thirds majority in each chamber to take action to

change or erase an initiated law. Kronaizl said he is responding to two actions by Republican legislators during the 2015

session. One was an attempt by Sen. Corey Brown, R-Gettysburg, to double the number of signatures necessary for a referral or an initiated measure.

Brown's bill contained an emergency clause, which meant

it couldn't be referred to a statewide vote.

Facing criticism of both the idea and the emergency tactic, Brown had the legislation set aside.

The other action by the Legislature that Kronaizl found offensive was approval of a youth minimum wage at \$7.50 per hour for workers younger than age 18. The youth wage came just months after voters in the November 2014 election increased the minimum wage to \$8.75 per hour with an automatic annual inflation increase. Kronaizl said he submitted the final paperwork for his proposed amendment to the South Dakota Secretary of State office on Wednesday. He will need to submit valid signatures of 27,741 registered South Dakota voters no later than Nov. 8 of this year to make the November 2016 general election ballot.

preservation of the public peace, health or safety, support of the state government and its

institutions. Kronaizl's amendment would allow such laws to be referred if a petition carrying the required number of valid signatures is filed within 90 days after the law goes into effect, according to Jackley.

The referred law remains in effect unless repealed by majority vote at the following general election," Jackley said. Jackley further noted "refer-

rals under this amendment may conflict with current state election laws and may violate federal absentee voting laws." An emergency clause in a

piece of legislation typically means the law takes effect upon receiving the governor's signature or earlier than the standard 90 days after the end of legislative session.

The same two sets of proposed changes in Kronaizl's constitutional amendment would apply to municipal governments as well.

South Dakota already has a one-year waiting period prohibiting municipal governments from changing local ordinances approved by voters.

Kronaizl said the municipal limit steered him toward offering a higher hurdle for the Legislature to act.

He said his goal is a "legislative tampering clause" similar to provisions in Nebraska and North Dakota.

"I find solace in the fact that states have introduced this language to their respective constitutions before us without ever running into any crises,' Kronaizl said.

"I also believe that South Dakotan voters would readily understand the danger in referring a budget bill," he continued.

Kronaizl said there wouldn't be a purpose to referring a budget measure passed during an off-election session of the Legislature, because the budget year would already be completed before the referral vote.

He acknowledged there could be a referral of a budget measure passed by the Legislature during an election year.

But there would be a tight window of time and the referral would need to be completed before the 90-day window closed in order to appear on the ballot.

The reason is federal voting requirements dictate when absentee ballots must become available.

What isn't clear is what would happen if voters rejected a budget measure.

Kronaizl said the Legislature could meet the next day to approve a substitute budget for the remaining seven months of that budget year.

Three referrals are under way for laws passed by the 2015 Legislature. One is the youth wage. Another is a broad package of changes in election laws. The third would broaden the definition of veteran.

Those referral efforts each requires a minimum of 13,871 valid signatures of South Dakota registered voters to be submitted no later than 5 p.m. CT on June 29 to the secretary of state.

If the referral petition is successful, the law would be placed on hold until the November 2016 election so voters can decide whether to accept or reject it.

None of those three measures carried an emergency clause.

Kronaizl's amendment would affect only those spending measures and emergency acts that currently can't be referred.

His proposed amendment and the attorney general's explanation are at https:// sdsos.gov/elections-voting/ assets/2016_CA_RefandInitative-Process.pdf.

SIOUX who charg nearly \$28 happen ha months in Foley told his crime a prison s lack of a c sumption nonviolen due to tra reported. I'd send ye Nills on Ťl courthous

1994 that it didn't find high enough levels of petroleum to warrant further investigation. But it said that it didn't mean there wasn't the possibility of oil and gas pools in deep formations.

Simon says the oil began appearing on his land following heavy rainfall this spring. He says he has invited oil companies to take a look at his

land.

Clerk Brought White Powder To Capitol

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — A former Iowa legislative clerk has been indicted on suspicion of bringing white powder to the state Capitol in 2012, a move that halted floor debate and forced a building lockdown.

U.S. Attorney Nicholas Klinefeldt says Michael Dekota McRae was indicted on a charge of false information and hoaxes. He was arraigned Friday and released. Court records show he has pleaded not guilty. McRae doesn't have a public phone listing, and a message

left for his attorney seeking a comment wasn't immediately returned.

McRae is accused of writing a threatening letter and placing it in an envelope that was later opened near the desk of Democratic Rep. Ako Abdul-Samad. The envelope contained white powder.

House debate was halted and the Capitol was closed. Tests determined the powder was harmless.

State Attorney General Marty Jackley has reviewed the amendment's wording and delivered his official ballot explanation for it.

The state constitution currently prohibits referral of laws "necessary for the immediate



