

Man Creating False Checks Sentenced

BELLE FOURCHE (AP) — A South Dakota man at the center of an identity theft case has been ordered to spend 10 years in prison.

Authorities accuse 43-year-old Gregory Harrison of creating false checks, stealing people's identities and using the payroll accounts of businesses in the Rapid City area for his own benefit.

Attorney General Marty Jackley says Harrison was sentenced Wednesday on charges of aggravated grand theft and forgery.

The Belle Fourche man has also been ordered to pay more than \$13,000 in restitution.

Harrison's attorney could not immediately be reached to comment on the case.

Xcel Energy Restores Power To SD

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Xcel Energy has restored electricity to all customers able to receive power in the wake of strong storms that hit eastern South Dakota and southwestern Minnesota early Monday.

Winds gusting to 100 mph downed hundreds of power poles. About 8,000 Xcel customers in the region were left in the dark. The utility says more than 150 employees from the Dakotas and Minnesota worked to restore power.

The Pierre-Fort Pierre region in central South Dakota also was hit hard. The Capital Journal reports the city got 1.65 inches of rain, a record for the date. Strong winds damaged the roof at the state Capitol and led to some water damage on the building's fourth floor.

KCCR radio reports that the Pierre City Commission on Tuesday declared a state of emergency.

Payday Lending Gathers Signatures Soon

SIOUX FALLS (AP) — Backers of a measure that would cap money lenders' interest rates in South Dakota hope to start building support to get on the ballot soon.

Steve Hildebrand is among the group hoping to cap interest rates for lenders at 36 percent. He says the group intends to start gathering signatures in the next several days.

The measure's supporters must gather 13,871 signatures by Nov. 8 to get on the 2016 ballot.

The measure has already faced resistance.

Critics of the measure recently asked a judge to force the attorney general to rewrite the description of the ballot proposal to show that it would kill the industry in South Dakota.

The judge denied the request, but an attorney for a title loan company official says the judge's decision will be appealed.

Ruling Anticipated To Dismiss Lawsuit

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — A federal judge said he hopes to decide in August whether to dismiss a lawsuit against Nebraska college officials over the disappearance of a 19-year-old student.

Peru State College student Tyler Thomas disappeared in 2010 after leaving a party, and a death certificate was issued in 2013, though her body hasn't been found.

Her family filed a lawsuit for wrongful death against the Nebraska State Colleges Board of Trustees, which governs Peru State, and a man, who was a fellow student and suspected in Thomas' disappearance. The board is requesting the suit's dismissal.

The man, who was 29 years old then, had told authorities that he and Thomas had met before she went missing. He isn't charged in her disappearance and is currently serving a prison sentence for an unrelated sexual assault conviction.

The attorney representing Thomas' family said two female students at Peru State had filed sexual harassment complaints against the man in the weeks before Thomas disappeared. Administrators also were told by a sheriff's deputy that he had been accused of rape while he was enrolled at a different university.

Yet Peru State authorities allowed the man to continue living in the same residence hall as Thomas and other first-year students, the family attorney's said.

An attorney for Peru State argued that administrators didn't have enough information to suspect that the man had presented a threat to women at the college. The school acted appropriately to address the two sexual harassment complaints, and had conducted criminal background checks, which revealed no past convictions for sexual assault or felony crimes.

The man, now 33, is serving 15 to 20 years in prison for the 2008 sexual assault of a 15-year-old girl that occurred in Fremont. A jury had convicted him of rape in 2012.

State's New Center For Debt Collection Needs Contractor

BY BOB MERCER

State Capitol Bureau

PIERRE — The advisory group took steps Wednesday to seek proposals from vendors for establishing and managing the debt collection management system for state government.

The Legislature earlier this year gave Gov. Dennis Daugaard the green light for his administration to create the obligation recovery center for debts owed by citizens and businesses to state government agencies.

Vendors will be reviewed for their experience in working with state and local governments because of the sanctions contained in the new state law.

People who owe debts to participating government offices and haven't made payment plans would be prevented from registering motor vehicles, motorcycles and boats.

They also would be banned from re-

ceiving driver licenses and from obtaining hunting licenses, fishing licenses, camping permits and state park permits.

Rep. Jeff Partridge, R-Rapid City, said he's spoken with several county treasurers about their roles in the new approach.

"We should be able to look to the (state) Department of Social Services," suggested Jim Hood, a Spearfish lawyer representing the South Dakota Retailers Association on the advisory panel. "There's a procedure in place we could look to."

The new law provides authority for the state Bureau of Administration to set rules. There will be a need to work with county treasurers who handle the motor vehicle, motorcycle and boat licensing for the 66 counties.

"I think all of the concerns will be addressed in the rules promulgation process," Rep. Peggy Gibson, D-Huron, said. She is a member of the Legislature's rules review committee.

"It will be very much vetted when we

get to the rules promulgation," Gibson said.

Sen. Terri Haverly, R-Rapid City, said she spoke with private collection agencies in her area. They wondered whether citizens would be able to easily find the status of their debts to the government.

The advisory group issued a request for information from potential vendors. The next step is to request formal proposals from vendors interested in the state contract to run the new system.

"My goal would be to have in the next couple weeks a RFP for you to approve," state Finance Commissioner Jason Dilges told the group. He said it could be publicly available the week of July 13.

Vendors would then get three weeks to submit their formal responses.

"The faster the better, as far as I'm concerned," Partridge said.

The advisory group met in executive session to review information received from vendors about their interest.

EPA Hears From Hundreds On Renewable Fuels Plan

BY BILL DRAPER

Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — A federal proposal to reduce the amount of renewable fuels required in gasoline would have a stifling impact on the ethanol industry and goes against the intentions of Congress when it set the standards eight years ago, opponents of the suggested changes said.

The Environmental Protection Agency announced plans last month to reduce renewable fuels requirements by 4 billion gallons in 2015 and nearly 5 billion gallons in 2016. It is conducting a public hearing on Thursday in Kansas City, Kansas, before making a final determination on the standards in November.

The proposed new standards would require 16.3 billion gallons of renewable fuels to be used this year, down from 20.5 billion set in 2007, and 17.4 billion gallons next year, down from the 22.2 billion gallons stipulated by Congress.

Chris Grundler, director of the EPA's office of transportation and air quality, said 250 people have signed up to testify at the Jack Reardon Center. Because of the number of those wanting to speak, the EPA is bringing in a second panel so the hearings can be conducted in two separate groups. They are the only public hearings planned on the issue before the EPA announces its decision.

Unless the requirements are reduced, Grundler said, there's no way the stand-

ards can be met in the next few years.

"There would be widespread noncompliance, and the EPA is not in the habit of putting out standards we don't think are achievable," he said.

The 2007 renewable fuels law was intended to address global warming, reduce dependence on foreign oil and bolster the rural economy by requiring a steady increase in the overall amount of renewable fuels such as ethanol blended into gasoline over time.

Environmental groups have argued that not only does ethanol add to global warming by removing millions of acres of land from the Conservation Reserve Program for use in corn production, but it also has caused a sharp increase in food costs worldwide as more of the U.S. corn supply is used for fuel.

While the EPA's proposal would reduce the requirements through 2016, Grundler said it still calls for the kind of growth in renewable fuel volumes envisioned when the law was passed.

The EPA contends it is allowed to reduce the volumes under the law because of limitations on the amount that can be consumed because of infrastructure inadequacies, and because of the industry's inability to produce enough non-ethanol fuels to meet the requirements.

"Granted, we are not growing them as fast or as large as Congress anticipated, but they are still growing, just at a different pace than what was expected in 2007," he said.

Opponents of the RFS changes will

hold a massive rally Thursday at a nearby park where at least two governors — Iowa Gov. Terry Branstad and Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon — plan to speak.

Organizers said members of the agricultural youth organization FFA will be bused in from outside the state, and members of the National Corn Growers Association from several states, including Nebraska, Iowa, Illinois and Missouri, also are expected to attend.

NCGA president Chip Bowling said EPA's proposal will hurt the ethanol industry and everyone connected to it by removing incentives to build up the infrastructure to handle higher volumes.

Industry growth will be sharply curtailed if retailers and oil companies aren't required to increase the use of renewable fuels in their gasoline, Bowling said, which is exactly what Big Oil wants.

"We're the little guy going against the big guy," he said. "Anytime we're displacing 10 percent of their production, they don't like it."

Grundler said it's the first time in his nearly 35 years with the EPA that he's been accused of being in bed with the oil industry.

Chet Thompson, president of the American Fuel and Petrochemical Manufacturers, said any suggestion that the EPA is on his industry's side is laughable.

"The EPA is doing what it is doing because it's undeniable there's a lack of demand and infrastructure out there to meet the statutory requirement," he said. "It's that simple."

Omaha Takes Over Cleanup Efforts At Superfund

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — The city of Omaha will take over cleanup efforts from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in removing contaminated soil from the lead Superfund site.

The federal agency, after 15 years, is ending the most intensive part of its cleanup efforts at the site across eastern Omaha, the *Omaha World-Herald* reported.

Omaha city officials say they want to use a more down-to-earth approach

in reaching out to the remaining 1,000 property owners with potential lead soil problems.

City Planning Director James Thele said the city can do a better job at personal outreach. He said some of the "legalese" handouts from the EPA might have confused some people.

"I think we'll have a better opportunity because we're Omahans," he said. "We're from Omaha. We talk the same language."

Thele said the federal agency has

tested around 40,000 properties so far and has cleaned up around 15,000. The city will have around seven years to take care of the last 1,000. The EPA will continue to fund the cleanup efforts by up to roughly \$30 million.

Most of eastern Omaha has been considered a superfund site by the EPA because of the extent of lead contamination, which can endanger children's health, causing decreased intelligence, slow growth and behavior problems.

OBITUARIES

Leona Soukup

Memorial Services for Leona Soukup, 74, of Wagner will be 10 a.m., Monday, June 29, 2015 at St. John's Catholic Church in Wagner. Rosary/Wake services are 7 p.m., Sunday at the church. Inurnment is in St. John Catholic Cemetery, rural Wagner.



Soukup

Crosby-Jaeger Funeral Home in Wagner is in charge of arrangements.

Leona Soukup was born March 19, 1941 in rural Wagner, the daughter of John and Beatrice (Dolezal) Soukup. She died May 12, 2015 at her home in Wagner.

Leona attended grade school at Bryan 1 Country School. She graduated from Wagner High School in 1959. She worked at the Hinkhouse Cafe and Charlie's Cafe during high school. After graduating, she went to work at the Good Samaritan Home as an aid and worked in the laundry department for 45 years, from August of 1966 to September of 2011.

Leona will be remembered for her love of flowers,

gardening, car races, computer games, doing puzzles, fishing and family get togethers. She also taught herself how to play the piano.

Thankful for having shared her life are her two brothers: Raymond J. and wife Bonnie Soukup of Wagner, Eugene D. and wife Rebecca Soukup of Butte, NE; a sister, Betty Reiser and husband Charles of Omaha, NE; and many nieces, nephews and great nieces and nephews.

Leona was preceded in death by her parents, significant other Frances "Pancake" Mach, and niece Rachel Soukup.

Yankton Press & Dakotan

June 25, 2015

Shirley Bogue

Shirley Bogue, 96, of Hideaway Acres, Crofton, Nebraska, passed away on Wednesday, June 24, 2015, at her home.

The family will receive friends from 4-6 p.m. Friday, June 26, at the Wintz & Ray Funeral Home in Yankton, with a time of sharing around 5 p.m. Private family burial will be in the Yankton Cemetery.

To send an online message to the family, visit www.wintz-rayfuneralhome.com.

Ruth Howey

Ruth E. Howey, age 86, of Watertown, SD, passed away on Tuesday, June 23, 2015, at a local care center in Watertown, SD.



Howey

Funeral services will be at 1:30 p.m. on Friday, June 26, 2015, at the Crawford-Osthus Funeral Chapel in Watertown. Pastor Scott Dempster will officiate.

The family is requested to meet at the chapel on Friday by 1:00 p.m. for a prayer service.

Visitation will be at the Crawford-Osthus Funeral Chapel in Watertown on Thursday from 4 to 7 p.m. and prior to services at the chapel on Friday.

Burial will be at the Mt. Hope Cemetery in Watertown. Honorary pallbearers will be the staff at Jenkins Living Center, Chasity Finck and Ron De Kam. Active pallbearers will be Vic Raastad, Seth Schamens, Kirk Schamens, Brent Schamens, Troy

DeBerg and Cully Simon.

Ruth was born on May 22, 1929, in Codington County, SD, to Jacob and Lillian (Bode) DeBerg. She attended Happy Home #9 Country School. She played softball avidly, winning a state championship in 1952.

On September 1, 1955, Ruth married Morton Howey in Watertown, SD. They made their home in Watertown, where Ruth was a homemaker and raised her family. Morton passed away January 27, 1983. Ruth continued to make her home in Watertown.

She was a member of Cornerstone United Methodist Church in Watertown. She enjoyed the Minnesota Twins

baseball team, watching the Minnesota Vikings, and playing softball when she was younger. She liked writing, gardening, flowers and traveling.

Ruth is survived by one son, Mark Howey of Gayville, SD; three daughters: Barb Howey of Watertown, Pam (Brian) Bard of Britton, SD, and Wanda Howey-Fox of Yankton, SD; one brother John (Avis) DeBerg of Watertown; one sister Gertrude Jipp of Watertown; two grandchildren: Levi Bard and Derek Fox; and two great-grandchildren: Alexis Bard and Connor Fox.

She was preceded in death by her husband Morton; her parents; five brothers; and three sisters.

Yankton Press & Dakotan

June 25, 2015

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Joseph Sippel

Joseph Sippel, 81, of Vermillion passed away Wednesday, June 24, 2015, at Avera Sister James Care Center in Yankton.

Memorial services are 11 a.m. Tuesday, June 30, at First United Methodist Church in Vermillion with the Rev. Rick Pittenger officiating.

Arrangements are under the direction of the Wintz & Ray Funeral Home and Cremation Service in Yankton.

To send an online message to the family, please visit www.wintzrayfuneralhome.com.

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