

MIDWEST DIGEST

S.D. License Plate Design Won't Change

PIERRE (AP) — South Dakota lawmakers have decided to stick with the current license plate design for a while rather than spend money on a new one.

New license plates are usually designed and issued every five years, but the Legislature gave final approval Tuesday to a bill to eliminate the new-plate requirement in the five-year window that begins in January 2011.

Lawmakers are looking at different ways to save money because state finances are tight.

Seat Belt Law Fails In S.D. House

PIERRE (AP) — Another attempt to strengthen South Dakota's seat belt law has failed because the House refused to consider it.

The bill rejected Tuesday would have let police stop and ticket adult motorists solely for failing to buckle up.

A legislative committee rejected the idea early in the session. Rep. Joni Cutler, R-Sioux Falls, tried to revive it in the House on Tuesday as a way of bringing in more federal money.

Opponents argued that it's been rejected by the Legislature before. It was soundly defeated again.

Under current law, a motorist can be ticketed for failing to buckle up only if the vehicle has been stopped for another violation.

Lawmakers Approve Spending On R.C. Prison

PIERRE (AP) — Lawmakers have approved spending \$3.8 million in state and federal funds for a minimum security prison housing up to 400 inmates in Rapid City.

The money would be used to renovate a building on a site the Corrections Department purchased a year ago. But the use of that site is being challenged by a lawsuit against the state.

A bill approving the spending has cleared the Legislature and goes to the governor.

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NEB. LEGISLATURE

Voters May Get Chance To Drop Treasurer

BY NATE JENKINS
Associated Press Writer

LINCOLN, Neb. — Nebraska lawmakers want to put the state treasurer's office on the chopping block.

On Tuesday, they easily gave first-round approval to a measure that would go before voters in the November general election. If approved then, the office now held by Shane Osborn and that has been a stepping stone to higher office would be eliminated in 2015.

"From what I've heard, people are fed up with us not streamlining government," said Sen. Galen Hadley of Kearney. "Give it to the people to tell us yes or no."

It's unclear how much money, if any, would be saved by getting rid of the office that has existed for about 155 years. At the least, the salary and benefits of the officeholder — about \$117,000 — would be taken off the state's financial books, said Sen. Dennis Utter of Hastings, who introduced the measure.

But Utter is confident that the state would save significantly more because existing state

agencies could assume some of the duties without making many changes. In addition, he argued, the office isn't needed because it doesn't have any policymaking power.

During the debate on Tuesday, state Sen. Tom Carlson of Holdrege said Utter must be assuming that the current state treasurer "isn't doing anything." "You don't want to go there," he said to Utter.

Said Utter: "I'm not going there ... but I'm not arguing that."

Osborn vehemently disagrees even though he isn't seeking reelection. One of the primary jobs of the office is returning to people unclaimed property such as uncashed payroll checks and gift cards. The office has returned about \$43.5 million since Osborn took office in 2007.

The office also acts as the state's banker, receiving and disbursing state revenue, and does the same with child-support payments.

"It's important for people to have a person who they elected directly overseeing their finances," Osborn said. "Yes, a bureaucrat could perform" some

of the duties, "but I think having someone directly accountable ... makes the people involved with their government."

"The agencies don't respond as well to ... bureaucrats, as they do a constitutional officer," he added later.

Currently, treasurers are elected in 37 states and Utter said seven states don't have a treasurer. In some other states, legislatures select treasurers, and in some they are appointed by governors.

The treasurer's office currently has about 50 employees and a budget of \$26.5 million. Utter said about \$5.5 million of that goes to administration, and he believes some of that cost could be eliminated by axing the office.

Some lawmakers have their doubts that there will be savings, saying that cutting the office could actually enlarge state government.

"I think they're going to expand other areas of government to handle the duties," said Sen. Charlie Janssen of Fremont.

The proposed constitutional amendment must still pass two more rounds of debate before going before voters.

Playhouse Gets New State Lease

PIERRE (AP) — Lawmakers threw a lifeline to the Black Hills Playhouse by continuing its lease with the state while the theater raises money to fix buildings and infrastructure.

The nonprofit, summer stock theater has operated in Custer State Park for 64 years under a lease with the state Game, Fish and Parks Department. The lease expired last fall and state officials have opposed renewing it because they say the playhouse must first fix buildings and make other upgrades, particularly to the sewer system.

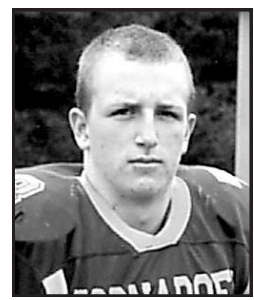
A measure the South Dakota House approved 65-4 Tuesday is a "last chance bill" for the playhouse, said Rep. Bob Faehn, R-Watertown. It extends the lease until September 2019 if the playhouse makes state-approved repairs and improvements by September 2012. If it doesn't, the lease is voided.



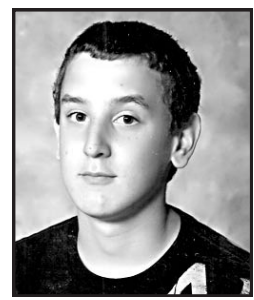
Kayla Jochims
School: Centerville High School
Age: 17 Grade: 11th
Parents: John & Cindy Jochims
Academic Achievements: 4.0 GPA throughout HS, Student of the Month 4 years in a row, Academic Letter, "A" Honor Roll, Yankton P&D A+ Student 3 years in a row
Extracurricular Activities: Band, Annual, Central Baptist, F.R.O.G., Youth Group, Chancellor Reformed Youth Group, Natural Helpers, Mission Trips
Favorite Subjects: Math & Science
Best School Memory(s): Marching competitions



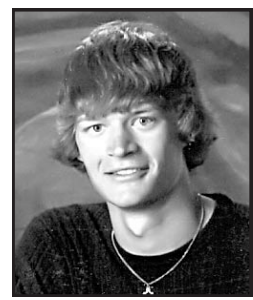
Samantha Blake
School: Centerville High School
Age: 16 Grade: 10th
Parents: Roger & Kathleen Blake
Academic Achievements: "A" Honor Roll, nominated for USD Young Leaders Award
Extracurricular Activities: Basketball, Volleyball, Track, Church Youth Group, Band, Marching Band, Natural Helpers, Student Aide in Library, Honor Band
Favorite Subjects: History
Best School Memory(s): When the girls basketball team went to state for the first time.



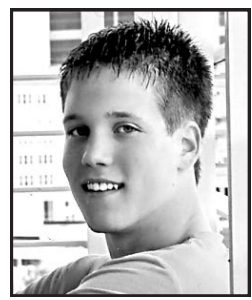
Brian King
School: Centerville High School
Age: 17 Grade: 11th
Parents: Roger & Julie King
Academic Achievements: "A" Honor Roll
Extracurricular Activities: Football, Basketball, Track, Band, Jazz Band
Favorite Subjects: Chemistry
Best School Memory(s): Beating Gayville-Volin in football.



Brandon Bennett
School: Centerville High School
Age: 17 Grade: 10th
Parents: Bruce & Staci Bennett
Academic Achievements: "A" Honor Roll
Extracurricular Activities: Basketball, Marching Band, Jazz Band, Concert Band
Favorite Subjects: Biology & History
Best School Memory(s): Trips with the marching band.



Evan Voog
School: Centerville High School
Age: 17 Grade: 12th
Parents: Bruce & Sandy Voog
Academic Achievements: "A" Honor Roll, Academic Letter, P&D A+ Student
Extracurricular Activities: Basketball, Football, FFA, Annual, National Honor Society, Band, Church, Youth Group
Favorite Subjects: Physics
Best School Memory(s): Cat dissections with my anatomy class friends.



Jack Foley
School: Centerville High School
Age: 17 Grade: 12th
Parents: Steve Foley & Gretchen Brue
Academic Achievements: "A" Honor Roll, KSFY Scholar of the Week, Student of the Week
Extracurricular Activities: Basketball, Track, Football, Golf, Band, National Honor Society, Natural Helpers, Annual, Oral Interp
Favorite Subjects: Anatomy & AP English
Best School Memory(s): Having fun in science labs, and band with friends.

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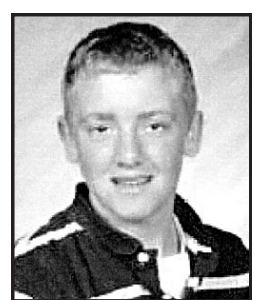
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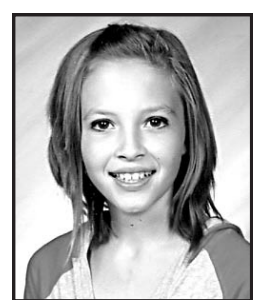
Taylor Anderson
School: Gayville-Volin
Age: 16 Grade: 11th
Parents: Stuart & Samantha Anderson
Academic Achievements: Keeping my grades up, not having to take semester tests
Extracurricular Activities: Volleyball, Basketball, Dance, Track, Golf
Favorite Subjects: History
Best School Memory(s): Seeing our 2009 boys track team win state in Rapid City! :)



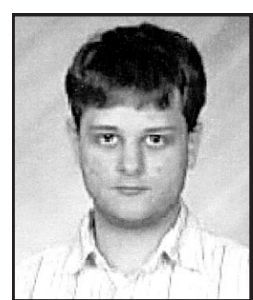
Johnathan Guy
School: Gayville-Volin
Age: 14 Grade: 9th
Parents: Joe Guy & Andrea Guy
Academic Achievements: Honor Roll
Extracurricular Activities: Football, Track & Field, Baseball, Weight Lifting
Favorite Subjects: Math
Best School Memory(s): There isn't a specific one because I always make new memories.



Luke Buffington
School: Gayville-Volin
Age: 16 Grade: 10th
Parents: Larry & Cheri Buffington
Academic Achievements: High Honor Roll since 6th grade
Extracurricular Activities: Football, Basketball, Track & Field, Cross Country, Oral Interp, School Play, Science Olympiad, Quiz Bowl, Student Council, Student Gov't
Favorite Subjects: World History & Chemistry
Best School Memory(s): Winning last year's state track meet (as a relay alternate), and locking it up with a 200m win by Kevin Kellum.



Kelia Barta
School: Gayville-Volin
Age: 13 Grade: 7th
Parents: Mindy & Tommy Huether
Academic Achievements: P&D A+ Student of the Week 3 times, High Honor Roll
Extracurricular Activities: Varsity & JV Basketball, Track, Cross Country, Volleyball, Student Council, Bowling
Favorite Subjects: Social Studies
Best School Memory(s): Qualifying for state cross country, and finding out I made varsity basketball this year as a 7th grader.



Donald Crump
School: Gayville-Volin
Age: 18 Grade: 12th
Parents: Howard Crump Jr. & Joanna Ohlssen-Crump; Guardian - Jerry Peterson
Academic Achievements: High Honor Roll & Honor Roll
Extracurricular Activities: Basketball (9th)
Favorite Subjects: Math, Science & Computers
Best School Memory(s): Coming to Gayville-Volin High School and making friends fast and easy.



Rachel Pokorney
School: Gayville-Volin
Age: 13 Grade: 8th
Parents: Steve & Kay Pokorney
Academic Achievements: Honor Roll
Extracurricular Activities: Basketball, Volleyball, Golf, Softball, Quiz Bowl
Favorite Subjects: Math
Best School Memory(s): Band with Brittany & Bailey! :)

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