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Neb. GOP Challenging Kerrey Candidacy

BY MARGERY A. BECK
Associated Press

OMAHA, Neb. — The Nebraska Republican Party announced plans Tuesday to go to court to challenge Democratic U.S. Senate candidate Bob Kerrey's voter registration and try to keep him off the primary ballot.



Kerrey

The party previously filed a complaint with Nebraska Secretary of State John Gale questioning Kerrey's voter registration. Kerrey, who has lived in New York since 2001, first listed his sister's Omaha home as his address on Feb. 28, the same day he announced his candidacy. He changed it the next day to the address of an Omaha friend and campaign donor where he's staying in a guest home.

Gale determined Kerrey would remain on the May 15 primary ballot because the U.S. Constitution requires only that senators be a resident of the state they serve by the time they're elected. But the Republican secretary of state also wrote in a four-page opinion that he believed Kerrey violated a state law that requires candidates to be residents of the county in which they register to vote.

"The facts are clear: In a botched attempt to transform himself from a Greenwich Village New York resident to a Nebraska resident literally overnight, Bob Kerrey provided false information under oath on his signed voter registration and candidate filing application, and failed to meet Nebraska's standard for appearing on the ballot," State GOP Chairman Mark Fahleson said in a statement.

Fahleson said the party would file a petition Tuesday in Lancaster County District Court asking that a judge review Gale's opinion allowing Kerrey on the primary ballot.

Kerrey, a former Nebraska governor and 1992 Democratic presidential candidate, is seeking the seat he held for two terms from 1989-2001. The seat is now held by Sen. Ben Nelson, the state's lone congressional Democrat.

Kerrey said Tuesday that he was disappointed by the GOP's challenge, and added that some

KERREY | PAGE 13

Bon Homme Enacts Burn Ban

Unauthorized Burning Prohibited Indefinitely

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF
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TYNDALL — Bon Homme County has enacted an immediate burn ban, which will remain in effect until further notice.

The resolution was unanimously passed and signed Tuesday morning by Bon Homme County commissioners John Pesek (chairman), John Fathke, Michael Soukup, John Hauck and Russell Jelsma.

"There are some burns that are authorized, but people need to get a hold of myself and their local fire chief," said Bon Homme County emergency manager Jon Vavruska.

In passing the burn ban resolution, the commissioners consulted with Vavruska, who had consulted with local fire officials and law enforcement officials in regard to the severity of the issue.

The burn ban carries a fine not to ex-

ceed \$200 for each violation or by imprisonment, if found in violation of the resolution, in accordance with state law.

The individual(s) responsible for setting the fire will bear the costs for suppressing any fire, including response fees, mutual aid assistance and compensation to the firefighters for the time away from their employment.

For the purposes of the burn ban resolution, "open burning" is defined as any outdoor fire, including but not limited to, campfires, warning fires, charcoal grill fires or prescribed burning of fence rows,

fields, wild lands, trash and debris.

The resolution excludes fire contained within liquid-fueled or gas-fueled stoves, fireplaces within buildings, charcoal grill fires at private residences and permanent fire pits or fire grates located on supervised developed picnic ground and campgrounds.

Vavruska said he has received calls from fire chiefs in Bon Homme County about controlled burns for Conservation

BAN | PAGE 13

INTENSE INSTRUCTION



RANDY DOCKENDORF/P&D

Menno band director Gwen Wenisch demonstrates a trumpet part during Tuesday's concert band practice for the upcoming National Festival of States in Washington, D.C. The Menno band was selected as the lone entry to represent South Dakota in the event, which runs throughout the year. The major trip is the first of its kind for the band.

Menno Band Chosen As Lone S.D. Entry For National Festival Of States

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF
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MENNO — During an intense practice, Menno band director Gwen Wenisch pressed her concert band to reach the next level.

She quickly moved them from one song to the next, offering encouragement, critiques and praise.

"Great job, guys," she said as the practice ended. "We accomplished a lot in 30 short minutes."

The school year may be winding down, but the Menno concert band is gearing up for a major performance. The 48-member band — comprised of students in grades 7-12 — has been selected as South Dakota's lone entry in the 2012 National Festival of States in Washington, D.C.

It's the first band trip of its kind for the Menno school,

OUR TOWNS

Hutchinson County

Wenisch said. "I hope it expands the students' horizons," she said.

The Menno band departs May 30 for

Washington and arrives back in Menno June 4. The band has prepared a 45-minute concert of eight songs, including a number of patriotic selections.

While in the nation's capital, the band will first perform at the Armed Forces Retirement Home for retired military veterans. The band will give its second performance at Lincoln Memorial.

"I'm really looking forward to being able to perform at

MENNO | PAGE 13

Some Midwest Farmers Taking Advantage Of Warm Weather

BY STEVE KARNOWSKI
Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — Mike Bergeron started sowing wheat on his farm in northwestern Minnesota on St. Patrick's Day. One week earlier, he was towing two of his daughters on a sled behind his snowmobile.

Bergeron and his business partner Jon Ross are among at least a few farmers in the Upper Midwest taking advantage of an unusually mild and dry winter to start planting spring wheat in mid-March. While there could still be a bad frost, they're taking a calculated risk that the early start will let them reap a bigger crop this summer.

"It's crazy, isn't it?" Bergeron said with a laugh on Tuesday, the official first day of spring.

Experts said that while it's rare for farmers in the Upper Midwest to plant this early, it's not crazy.

"We're still on the early side, but that's the key to having a good wheat crop — it's planting early," said Doug Holen, a University of Minnesota Extension educator based in Morris. He said he knows of wheat growers in other parts of Minnesota who also have started planting.

Wheat yields tend to be better in cooler weather partly because wheat makes more efficient use of soil moisture the earlier it gets planted. Wheat and other small grains such as barley and oats also aren't as susceptible to frost damage as corn and soybeans.

Those farmers are sitting tight because planting before mid-April doesn't normally benefit their crops, said Darrell Good, an agricultural economist at the University of Illinois. The key with corn is avoiding late frosts and getting enough warm days over the season, while soybeans have a shorter growing season there's no urgency to get them planted early, he said.

While Kansas is often the country's top wheat producing state, it grows winter wheat that's planted in the fall because its summers are too hot and dry. North Dakota, Montana and Minnesota typically are among the spring wheat leaders.

Joel Ransom, an extension agronomist at North Dakota State University in Fargo, said

FARMERS | PAGE 13

Firearm Threat Prompts VPD Response

VERMILLION — The threatened use of a firearm mid-Tuesday afternoon prompted law enforcement personnel to block off a large portion of Vermillion's Main Street from the corner of Hall and Main, located in the western portion of the city, all the way down the bluff past Valiant Vineyards to the intersection of Main and Cherry streets west of Vermillion.

"Law enforcement was called to a residence in which a gun was threatened to

be used, and right now, officers have the residence secured," Vermillion Police Detective Robin Hower told the *Plain Talk* at approximately 3:30 p.m. Tuesday.

He did confirm that an individual was still in the residence, which is located in the vicinity of Bunyan's Restaurant at 1201 W. Main Street.

"There's not a whole lot I can say right now because of the ongoing action that is being taken," Hower said.



TIME WITH BIG JIM

A man spends time Tuesday afternoon along the James River north of Yankton. The day provided a cooling experience in contrast to the weekend temperatures in the 80s. Tuesday saw a high of 57 degrees, and while it was the lowest maximum temperature Yankton had experienced since March 11, it was still 12 degrees above the normal high. The forecast calls for a return back into the 60s for the rest of the week, with a projected high of 73 for Sunday. For more weather details, see page 2. (Randy Dockendorf/P&D)



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