

Neb. Winner-Take-All Proposal Stalls

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — A proposal to reinstate the winner-take-all system for Nebraska's presidential electors has stalled in the Legislature.

Supporters on Tuesday fell two votes short of the support needed to overcome a filibuster by senators who opposed the bill. The 31-18 vote effectively kills it for the rest of the year.

Nebraska and Maine are the only states where it's possible to split electoral votes between opposing presidential candidates, though other states have considered the practice. Two of Nebraska's electoral votes are awarded to the statewide winner, while the remaining three are distributed by congressional district.

The state split its electoral votes for the first time in 2008, when Democrat Barack Obama captured one from the 2nd congressional district in Omaha on his way to the presidency.

Governor Signs Gas Tax Hike Measure

PIERRE (AP) — South Dakota Gov. Dennis Daugaard has signed a measure that increases funding for road and bridge projects, while also hiking the state's fuel taxes by 6 cents per gallon.

Daugaard signed the proposal into law Tuesday. The measure is expected to raise tens of millions of dollars in road and bridge funding through increases in fuel taxes, fees and other assessments.

The measure increases license plate fees by 20 percent and the state's motor vehicle excise tax from 3 percent to 4 percent. It also brings the maximum speed limit on South Dakota's interstates to 80 mph.

The scope of the fuel tax hike had been the main sticking point in negotiations among lawmakers, who approved the measure Friday.

Most of the measure's provisions will go into effect April 1.

SD Animal Rabies Cases Down In 2014

PIERRE (AP) — The number of animal rabies cases has dropped in South Dakota for the second consecutive year.

Health officials say 21 cases were reported in 2014, that's down from 28 in 2013. The two-year decline comes after the state experienced a spike in cases.

State epidemiologist Lon Kightlinger says rabies is a cyclical disease with cases periodically rising and falling. The state saw 60 cases of rabies in 2012 and 40 in 2011.

Kightlinger says rabies vaccination of pets is always important.

Rabies was detected in 2014 in three domestic animals and 18 wild animals. The domestic animals were a cow, a cat and a goat. Skunks accounted for 12 of the wild animal cases, while the other six were bats.

Skunks are the primary reservoir of rabies in South Dakota.

Tyson Reveals \$47 Million Plan In Neb.

LEXINGTON, Neb. (AP) — Tyson Fresh Meats, Inc. has revealed a \$47 million expansion of its existing beef processing plant in central Nebraska.

Officials with the Tyson Foods, Inc. subsidy announced the plan Tuesday, which will involve construction of an additional warehouse at the company's Lexington location. Officials say the development isn't expected to add new jobs at the plant.

Construction is slated to begin this spring, with completion in mid-2016.

Steve Stouffer, president of Tyson Fresh Meats, says the project is meant to improve the capacity of the plant's boxed beef storage and distribution systems. He says the expansion is crucial for continued operational success.

Stray Dogs Gathered After Woman Dies

ROSEBUD, S.D. (AP) — Stray dogs are being rounded up on the Rosebud Indian Reservation after an attack that killed a woman.

Authorities say 49-year-old Julie Charging Whirlwind died Saturday after being surrounded by a pack of dogs and mauled.

The *Rapid City Journal* reports that Tribal Council members on Monday authorized tribal police to work with state wildlife officials to round up stray dogs that are deemed dangerous. The dogs will be impounded or killed.

The death of Charging Whirlwind comes just a few months after the Nov. 18 death of 8-year-old Jayla Rodriguez, who was killed by dogs while she was sledding on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. Both reservations are in southwest South Dakota.

State Employees Could See More In Meal, Mileage Reimbursements

BY BOB MERCER
State Capitol Bureau

PIERRE — The state Board of Finance held a public hearing Tuesday on increased reimbursement rates for a variety of meal and mileage expenses that state government employees incur on official duty.

The board didn't receive any written comments about the proposal and heard from one person at the hearing.

"We think it's been a long time coming," said Eric Ollila, executive director for the South Dakota State Employees Organization.

The board by law must keep the comment period open for 10 additional days before making a decision.

The consensus was that a special meeting could be held in about two weeks to adopt the changes.

That would allow the draft rules to be submitted in time for the April 20 meeting of the Legislature's rules review committee.

The panel of six legislators looks at whether the official process has been properly followed and whether to give final clearance.

Jason Dilges, state commissioner of finance and management, said the new reimbursement rates should be in place before the July 1 start of the new fiscal year.

Dilges said the state budget for fiscal 2016 that was approved Friday by the Legislature already reflects the estimated increases.

They total an estimated \$1,174,032. The sources would be \$234,011 of general funds; \$255,420 of federal funds; and \$684,601 of other funds.

Reimbursements for in-state meals currently are \$5 breakfast, \$9 lunch and \$12 supper. They would increase to \$6, \$11 and \$15. The total cost for those changes would be \$662,824.

Meal reimbursements on trips outside South Dakota currently are \$8

breakfast, \$11 lunch and \$17 supper. They would change to \$10, \$14 and \$21. The total for those increases would be \$249,712.

Highway Patrol officers would see their daily meal supplement increase to \$14 from the current \$12. The estimated total for the increase is \$67,020.

The meal rates last changed in 2005. Mileage reimbursements also would go up. The last time was 2008.

Using a personal vehicle when a state vehicle is available would be reimbursed at 23 cents per mile, a 3-cent increase. That would cost an additional \$76,752.

Using a personal vehicle when there isn't a state vehicle available would be reimbursed at 42 cents per mile, a 5-cent increase. That would cost an additional \$117,725.

The increases are estimates by Dilges' office.

Trial Starts For Neb. Funeral Protest Law

BY MARGERY A. BECK
Associated Press

OMAHA, Neb. — A Westboro Baptist Church member testified Tuesday that law enforcement officials often harass and even threaten members of her group for exercising their right to protest at Nebraska funerals.

Rebekah Phelps-Davis said on the first day of trial in Westboro's 2009 lawsuit challenging a Nebraska law limiting funeral protests that a law requiring demonstrators to stay at least 500 feet from a funeral service is selectively enforced, making it unconstitutional. The 2006 law initially created a 300-foot buffer, but that was later extended.

The Topeka, Kansas-based church protests at funerals throughout the country using anti-gay chants and placards because it believes God is killing U.S. military members and others for defending a nation that tolerates homosexuality.

Phelps-Davis said that in Nebraska, church members are often kept much farther from funeral services than counter-protesters, who are allowed to get as close as they want.

She testified that it's her job to contact law enforcement in the town or city where the church plans to protest. She first sends a letter to local law enforcement, then usually follows up with a phone call. After the protest, she sends law enforcement a thank-you note.

In 2006, she said, she contacted someone in the Merrick County Sheriff's Office to discuss a planned protest.

"He told me that if we step one foot in Merrick County, they would arrest us — that he has plenty of enforcement to carry that out," she said. When she protested that Westboro members couldn't be arrested for simply coming into the county, she said she was told, "We'll get you for something — a broken tail light, disturbing the peace — something."

The church did not picket at the Merrick County funeral because of the threat of arrest, Phelps-Davis said.

Under cross-examination, Assistant Nebraska Attorney General James Smith noted that all of Phelps-Davis' letters ask law enforcement to set up buffer zones between Westboro protesters and counter-protesters, implying that the request is no different than the state law's buffer zone between protesters and funeral goers.

Westboro has been protesting at funerals and other events around the country since 1991, but only drew widespread attention after it began protesting at the funerals of fallen soldiers in the post-9/11 wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Local jurisdictions and states soon began enacting laws to try to curtail such protests. Currently, 44 states and Congress have passed funeral-picketing laws, according to the First Amendment Center at Vanderbilt University.

Activists Rally Against Harassment At Hockey Game

BY JAMES NORD
Associated Press

PHILIP — A group of protesters demanded an apology Tuesday from the city of Philip and a resident for his alleged role in an incident at a Rapid City Rush hockey game in January where Native American students were reportedly subjected to racial slurs and sprayed with beer.

About eight demonstrators affiliated with the group United Urban Warrior Society gathered in Philip to call for the apologies. Philip resident Trace O'Connell, 41, has been charged in Rapid City with disorderly conduct and has an initial court appearance Wednesday. O'Connell has been out on a \$300 cash bond since being charged about a month ago.

Chaperones for the students from the American Horse School in Allen have said the children and their chaperones left the game early because of the harassment.

Activist Joye Braun of Eagle Butte said that along with the apology, Philip city officials should recommit to eradicating racism and a sense of "white superiority." She and other demonstrators said that O'Connell got off too easy with the misdemeanor charge.

"I don't think it's fair that people can get away with things like this. It's not fair to these kids," Tashunka Wakinyan Means of Eagle Butte said. "They get treated like

that, and he just gets a slap on the wrist for disorderly conduct? That's a hate crime. That's racism."

O'Connell's attorney, Patrick Duffy, has said that his client disputes the charge and that he did not use racial slurs or spray beer on the students. Duffy wouldn't go into details about what happened during the game, saying O'Connell's side of the story would come out in court.

Philip Mayor Mike Vetter took the microphone briefly at the small rally after activists asked if any Philip residents would like to speak. He said the city doesn't condone racism, but said in an interview that he's reserving judgment about whether to apologize.

"As far as making an official apology, I don't think that it is in our best interest right now as a community to apologize for something that hasn't been brought to trial yet," Vetter said.

Shortly after O'Connell was charged, Oglala Sioux Tribal President John Yellow Bird Steele sent a letter to U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder and President Barack Obama asking for a federal investigation into the reported harassment.

Yellow Bird Steele said Tuesday that federal authorities are requesting to review all the documents related to the investigation conducted by Rapid City authorities and haven't yet decided whether to launch an inquiry of their own.

THE AWARD-WINNING PRINT & ONLINE FAMILY FEATURE

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India Welcomes with Color!

In India, many people welcome guests to their homes with a **rangoli**. This is a colorful design made on the floor in front of the door. These designs are found all across India.

How to Make a Rangoli

A rangoli is **symmetrical**. That means if you drew a line down the middle, the design is the same on each side. To draw a rangoli, it helps to use graph paper.

1. On a piece of paper draw two crossed lines in the center of the paper, dividing the paper into four equal parts.
2. Start your drawing on one of the lines, and only draw it on one half of the paper. Keep your design small and simple.
3. Repeat the same drawing on the other side. Then fill your design with color using crayons, chalk, colored pencils or markers.

Each rangoli has an exact duplicate on the left side of the page — except one. Can you find the pair that do not match?

Standards Link: Mathematical Reasoning: Complete simple patterns.

India: Big and Beautiful

The country of India is big! It is the 7th largest country by area in the world. It's about a third the size of the United States.

The Himalayan mountains form India's northeastern border. In Sanskrit, *hima* means **snow** and *alaya* means **abode**. Why do you think the people called these tall mountains a "snow abode"?

Three major bodies of water border India. Can you unscramble the names of these bodies of water and write them on the map?

1 DINANI CONAE 2 BARNIAA EAS
3 YAB FO GABLEN

Standards Link: Reading Comprehension: Use the skills and strategies of the reading process to follow written directions.

Extra! Extra! City Search

Find the letters that spell the names of each of the following Indian cities in the newspaper headlines. Cut them out and glue them onto a sheet of paper.

Delhi
Mumbai
Bhopal
Jaipur
Bangalore

Standards Link: Spelling: Spell grade level appropriate words correctly.

Kid Scoop Puzzler

The blue wheel in the white strip of the flag of India is called **Ashoka Chakra**. It has 24 spokes and represents the eternal wheel of law.

Fill in the missing vowels below to reveal what the colors of India's flag symbolize.

ORANGE: C _ _ R _ GE AND S _ CR _ F _ CE
WHITE: TR _ TH AND P _ R _ TY
GREEN: F _ _ TH AND GR _ WTH

Double Double Word Search

Find the words in the puzzle. Then look for each word in this week's Kid Scoop stories and activities.

HIMALAYAS	S	L	B	N	G	I	S	E	D	E
BANGALORE	A	A	I	G	B	L	R	E	A	R
SANSKRIT	N	U	Y	U	W	O	N	S	A	O
RANGOLI	S	Q	T	A	O	G	I	R	H	L
CHAKRA	K	E	F	L	L	N	K	T	H	A
DESIGN	R	U	F	L	B	A	U	I	I	G
MUMBAI	I	F	L	A	H	R	M	D	M	N
INDIA	T	N	Y	C	T	D	N	I	A	A
FLOOR	M	U	M	B	A	I	I	A	H	B
EQUAL										
TRUTH										
HIMA										
HALF										
SNOW										
BAY										

Standards Link: Letter sequencing. Recognized identical words. Skim and scan reading. Recall spelling patterns.

FROM THE Kid Scoop LESSON LIBRARY

Mystery Places in the News

Select a place mentioned in today's newspaper. Write three to five clues about this place. Give your clues to a pal and see if they can figure out the place you selected.

Standards Link: Research: Use the newspaper to locate information.

Write On! Spring Poem

Write a poem about spring in your community.

National Bird of India

It makes sense that a colorful country like India would have a colorful national bird—the peacock!

In India, peacocks are protected by the government. No one can hunt them.

Find the two identical peacocks.