

Minn. Investigating 2 Security Hospital Incidents

ST. PAUL, Minn. (AP) — State officials are investigating after one patient left the Minnesota Security Hospital for 22 hours and another allegedly stabbed his mother at a nearby park.

Deputy Human Services Director Anne Barry says the two incidents appear coincidental.

In the first case, 25-year-old William Pfeffer left the St. Peter hospital without permission Tuesday. Pfeffer was wearing an electronic monitor that alerted employees he was off the grounds but it did not contain any GPS tracking device.

A search team found Pfeffer near a park Wednesday.

Minnesota Public Radio News (<http://bit.ly/Jt6d09>) reports while the search was going on, another male patient left on a pass with his 69-year-old mother. Deputies later found the 48-year-old patient stabbing his mother at the same park.

Authorities arrested the patient. His mother is in critical condition.

Buffalo County Chairman, Wife Plead Not Guilty

KEARNEY, Neb. (AP) — The Buffalo County Board of Supervisors chairman and his wife have pleaded not guilty to bankruptcy fraud charges.

Richard and Janna Pierce are accused of hiding money that they could have used to pay creditors. The *Kearney Hub* says they pleaded not guilty on Wednesday in U.S. District Court in Lincoln. They and their attorney declined to comment after the hearing.

The Pierces are accused of failing to disclose \$159,000 of Janna Pierce's income. They filed for bankruptcy in 2003.

The money was from commissions on grants that she wrote in 2004 for Buffalo and neighboring counties. She didn't submit a bill to the county until 2010, which the board — including her husband — voted to pay.

Prosecutors believe the delay was intended to hide the income.

Law Enforcement Adding Security At Festival

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Authorities say they are increasing security at a festival in Sioux Falls Wednesday after anonymous threats were made.

Minnehaha County Sheriff Mike Milstead said the Sioux Empire Fair office received two threatening phone calls about KRROFest. Milstead said both callers said people would be shot at the festival.

KSFY reports that the Sheriff's Office and the Sioux Falls Police Department announced at a news briefing Wednesday afternoon that they are providing additional security because of the threats.

Marilyn Manson is the headline act at the festival.

DOC Lawyer Responds To Prison Guard Lawsuit

SIoux FALLS (AP) — A lawyer for the South Dakota Department of Corrections denied that corrections staff knowingly contributed to the death of prison guard Ronald Johnson last year.

Lawyer James E. Moore filed a 15-page response Wednesday to a wrongful death lawsuit filed by the Johnson family.

The lawsuit alleges that Warden Doug Weber, state Corrections Secretary Denny Kaemingk and others disregarded the risk that inmates Rodney Berget and Eric Robert posed to staff in the South Dakota State Penitentiary.

But Moore denies the defendants' actions caused Johnson's death.

Berget and Robert acknowledged killing Johnson by hitting him with a pipe and wrapping his head in plastic wrap before using his uniform in an attempt to escape. The two men have been sentenced to death.

Private Flights Cost UNL Foundation \$80K

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Flight records show the University of Nebraska Foundation spent more than \$80,000 last year on 21 flights aboard its private aircraft, opting for the plane over often less expensive commercial flights.

Foundation officials say the 11-seat plane is used when necessary. But flight records requested by The Associated Press through Nebraska's open records law show examples where the tax-exempt organization could have saved money by flying commercially to major metro areas or driving less than 200 miles.

The foundation is a tax-exempt nonprofit that raises money for the university.

Spokeswoman Dorothy Endacott says the organization uses its plane when it's more convenient and cost-effective than flying commercially or driving. She says fundraisers sometimes use the aircraft to travel to rural and far-off donors, or to make pitches to major contributors.

Official Urges Pregnant Women To Quit Smoking

PIERRE (AP) — A state Health Department official says that nearly 20 percent of South Dakota's expectant mothers smoked during their pregnancies in 2010.

Colleen Winter, state director of health and medical services, used the numbers to help to urge pregnant women to quit smoking to protect their babies from a wide range of health problems. She says women who smoke can celebrate Mother's Day by quitting.

Smoking while pregnant increases the child's risk for problems such as abnormal blood pressure, cleft palates, leukemia, colic, respiratory disorders and eye problems. She says the mortality rate for infants of mothers who smoke is much higher than the mortality rate among infants of non-smoking mothers.

Fiegen To Seek Full Term On So. Dakota PUC

PIERRE (AP) — South Dakota Public Utilities Commissioner Kristie Fiegen is seeking a full term with the regulatory group.

Gov. Dennis Daugaard appointed the former state legislator to the PUC last year when Commissioner Steve Kolbeck resigned to take a job in the private sector. Fiegen will seek the Republican Party's endorsement to run to keep her seat on the commission.

Matt McGovern earlier announced he is seeking the Democratic Party endorsement. He is the grandson of former South Dakota senator and Democratic presidential candidate George McGovern.

Feds: ND May Use Missouri River For Now

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — The Corps of Engineers has agreed to issue temporary, no-cost permits to oil drillers and others for water usage from North Dakota's Lake Sakakawea. But North Dakota officials say the agency intends to charge users in the future and the state will fight it.

North Dakota Sens. Kent Conrad and John Hoeven say corps officials told them the agency will process water agreements at no charge until it determines a cost structure. The agency says the process could take 1 1/2 years.

Memorial Service Honors Slain S.D. Law Officers

BY CHET BROKAW
Associated Press

PIERRE — Three law officers killed last year were among the fallen members of South Dakota law enforcement honored Wednesday in a ceremony that drew officers from across the state.

A bagpipe player performed "Amazing Grace" and trumpeters sounded taps as those gathered paid tribute to the 66 officers who died in the line of duty in the state the past 125 years.

The event started at a memorial near the state Capitol that lists the names of fallen law officers. Special mention was made of a state corrections officer and two Rapid City police officers who were all killed last year.

Corrections officer Ronald "R.J." Johnson, 63, died in April 2011 at the hands of two inmates who tried unsuccessfully to escape the South Dakota State Penitentiary in Sioux Falls. Rapid City police officers James Ryan McCandless, 28, and Nick Armstrong, 27, died after being shot last August in a confrontation with a man who also died.

Gov. Dennis Daugaard, who spoke later at a Pierre church for the conclusion of the memorial event, said Americans should thank law officers who are willing to risk their lives to keep people safe. He said when he visited South Dakota troops in Afghanistan a couple of weeks ago, he had to wear a helmet and body armor everywhere he went.

"When I got back to South Dakota I was reminded how lucky I was to live in a place like South Dakota, like America, where we can go about our business safely because law enforcement is there to maintain a civilized society and keep us safe and give us freedom because of that safety," Daugaard said.

A service similar to the one in which the governor spoke was held Wednesday in Bismarck to honor the 61 North Dakota law officers who have died in the line of duty in that state's history. The North Dakota service paid tribute to Bismarck Police Sgt. Steve Kenner, who was shot last July while responding to a domestic disturbance, and Burleigh County Sheriff's Deputy Bryan Sleeper, who suffered a heart attack at the scene of an arrest last September.

The annual services in both states were held a week early because relatives and friends are going to Washington, D.C., next week for a national memorial service.

In South Dakota, more than 100 officers and others gathered on a sunny day as a wreath was placed at the memorial near the Capitol. An honor guard of seven officers carrying rifles then fired three rounds apiece.

Daugaard noted that last year's ceremony featured a special tribute to Johnson, the prison guard, who was killed just weeks before that ceremony. Much of the governor's speech Wednesday focused on the two Rapid City officers.

McCandless and Armstrong died in in-

juries after being shot while performing what authorities have described as a routine stop in Rapid City, a community on the eastern edge of the Black Hills. Officer Tim Doyle, 39, also was shot but returned to work a few weeks later.

According to a report, the officers stopped a group of people who appeared to be intoxicated, and Daniel Tiger pulled a gun and began shooting. Tiger was shot by the officers and died later.

Daugaard said Tiger may have hurt other people if the officers had not stopped him.

"I believe other people would have been hurt or possibly may have died from bullets in that gun if the officers had not responded," he said.

Rapid City Police Chief Steve Allender said such ceremonies are difficult but help people heal.

"It's a sad time. We miss our guys every day," Allender said. "I just wonder how long it's going to linger in our hallways. I don't think all of our employees have recovered."

During the service in the church, officers and family members placed blue carnations on a table to honor the fallen officers as South Dakota Attorney General Marty Jackley read the names of all officers who have died in more than a century.

McKenzie Armstrong, a brother of Officer Nick Armstrong, said the ceremony was a reminder of the support the officers' families are receiving from people across South Dakota.

S.D. Delegations Welcomes New Postal Service Proposal

BY DIRK LAMMERS
Associated Press

SIoux FALLS — South Dakota's congressional delegation welcomed the U.S. Postal Service's announcement Wednesday that it will seek to keep thousands of rural post offices open with shorter hours.

Sen. John Thune, R-S.D., said the agency has to be reformed to ensure its long-term viability, but whether the new proposal is aggressive enough to remedy the Postal Service's financial woes remains to be seen. He said the agency cannot continue to lose money every year and put the American taxpayer on the hook.

"What we're encouraged by is that it looks like they're trying to achieve those goals and those reforms without penalizing or hitting too hard rural areas of the country, which as we all know depend very heavily on access to the Postal Service," Thune said during a conference call.

Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe announced Wednesday that the mail agency was backing off its plan to close up to 3,700 low-revenue post offices sometime after May 15. Citing community opposition, the agency said it now will whittle down full-time staff but maintain a part-time post office presence in rural areas with access to retail

lobbies and post office boxes.

Sen. Tim Johnson, D-S.D., said the announcement is good news for South Dakota.

"This proposal will at least keep rural post offices open and providing service," Johnson said in a statement. "The Senate has passed bipartisan legislation that provides structural reforms that should help the Postal Service with its struggling financial situation. Now the House should pass it."

Under the emerging strategy, no post office would be closed. But more than 13,000 rural mail facilities could see reduced operations of between two and six hours.

The Postal Service intends to seek regulatory approval and get community input, a process that could take several months. The new strategy would then be implemented over two years and completed in September 2014, saving an estimated half billion dollars annually.

U.S. Rep. Kristi Noem, R-S.D., applauded the agency for finding alternatives to keep rural post offices open.

"There is no question the Postal Service must make adjustments to deal with the realities of an increasingly digital world, but I appreciate its efforts to ensure savings can be achieved in a way that doesn't jeopardize service to rural America," Noem said in a statement.

Iowa Legislature Adjourns Three Weeks Into Overtime

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — The Iowa Legislature on Wednesday adjourned a session in which lawmakers took on some big issues but emerged with little legislation.

It took an additional three weeks past the scheduled adjournment before lawmakers agreed on the state's \$6.2 billion budget and adjourned.

The state will end the year with a \$300 million ending balance. That reflects an improving economy, which has boosted tax revenue, and a Republican desire to spend less than the state receives in tax revenue.

The state also will have more than \$600 million in reserve.

Gov. Terry Branstad called for bold education reform but got an unfunded policy bill that will be revisited next year to provide money.

Another priority, a measure to reduce property taxes, remained unresolved as it has for many years. The House passed a bill but a Senate measure failed to get the 26 votes necessary to pass, and the issue died in the final hours of the session.

Lawmakers enhanced penalties for motorists who fail to stop for a school bus, formed a new board to oversee local open meetings and records laws, and gave the Field of Dreams a tax break to expand. They also passed a law allowing parents of stillborn babies to get a birth certificate, and made it illegal to lie to gain employment at livestock confinement facilities for the purpose of taking photos to expose details of operations.

Lawmakers also approved a measure to help fund projects that prevent future flooding.

On the last day, they finalized action on a health and human services budget that included no new Republican language restricting government-funded abortions. The issue kept lawmakers at the Statehouse even after everything else had been resolved.

OBITUARIES

Wesley Anderson

WAUSA, Neb. — Funeral services for Wesley Anderson, age 87 of Wausa, Nebraska, will be 2:00 p.m. Monday, May 14, 2012, at the Evangelical Covenant Church in Wausa. Pastor Matt Norlen will officiate, with burial in the Woodlawn Cemetery at Wausa. Military Honors will be conducted by American Legion Post 5824 of Wausa.

Visitation will be Sunday, from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m., at the church in Wausa, with a 7:30 p.m. Prayer Service.

Brockhaus Funeral Home of Wausa is in charge of arrangements. To sign the guestbook, or leave online condolences, please visit www.brockhausfuneral-home.com

Wesley died Monday, May 7, 2012, at Golden Living Center in Wausa.

Wesley H. Anderson, son of Reynold and Melvenia (Newman) Anderson, was born September 5, 1924, at Oakland, Nebraska.

Wesley attended Wakefield Public Schools, graduating from high school in 1941. Following graduation, he served his country in the United States Army during World War II, from February 1943 to October 1945, in Europe. On October 31, 1946, Wesley was married to Leola Grimm at Wakefield. The couple was blessed with four children, Kenneth, Steven, Sally, and Kay. Wesley was a member of the Wausa Evangelical Covenant Church.

Wesley is survived by his son, Kenneth Anderson of Marysville, California; daughters, Sally Tjeerdsma of Yankton, South Dakota, and Lynette Kay (Dennis) Kronberg of Wausa, Nebraska; daughter-in-law, Judy (Bill) Rokiski; 10 grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren; sisters, Arlene (Ron) Bloomquist and Dorothy Kellar.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Reynold and Melvenia Anderson; second mother, Anna Anderson; wife, Leola Anderson; son, Steven Anderson;

grandchildren, Beth Kronberg and Nathan Tjeerdsma; and a sister, Elaine Anderson.

Yankton Press & Dakotan
May 10, 2012

Lavonne (Sykora) Gorsett

Lavonne (Sykora) Gorsett, 75, of Yankton died Tuesday, May 8, 2012, at the Mayo Clinic, St. Mary's Campus, Rochester, Minn.

Mass of Christian Burial is at 10:30 a.m. at Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Yankton, with the Rev. Mark Lichter officiating. Burial will be in St. Wenceslaus Cemetery, Tabor.

Visitations begin at 5 p.m. Friday at Opsahl-Kostel Funeral Home and Crematory, Yankton, with a 7 p.m. rosary followed by a 7:30 p.m. Scripture service. Visitations will resume one hour prior to the service at the church.

Earl Sholey

ROSEVILLE, Minn. — Earl R. Sholey, 87, of Roseville, Minn., died May 5, 2012, at Mercy Hospital, Coon Rapids, Minn.

A memorial service is being planned at Roseville Memorial Chapel is handling arrangements.

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