

Britton Teen Faces Firearm Charges

BRITTON (AP) — A Britton-Hecla student faces firearm charges after an accidental shooting at a school parking lot, the Marshall County Sheriff's Office said Thursday.

Dusty Groom, 18, of rural Lake City, was showing other students what he thought was an unloaded a .22 caliber handgun when it went off and hit another teenager in the head about 4 p.m. Wednesday, the sheriff's office said. The injured teenager is recovering at a Fargo hospital.

Marshall County Sheriff Dale Elsen told KSFY television that the boys were hanging out in an area where most kids loiter after school. Authorities have not released the name of the injured 17-year-old because he's a minor.

Elsen said the teen was talking and alert Thursday afternoon and should be able to go home once he's able to have something to eat.

Groom faces charges of reckless discharge of a firearm, possession of a firearm on school property and false reporting to police. He's expected to make a court appearance on May 20.

Attorney information for Groom was not immediately available. The incident remains under investigation.

New Trial Set For SD Manslaughter Suspect

SIoux FALLS (AP) — A new trial has been scheduled for a Sioux Falls woman convicted of manslaughter in a drunken crash that killed another person.

Thirty-year-old Tammy Kvasnicka was sentenced earlier to serve 60 years in prison for the July 2010 crash in which authorities say she drove the wrong way on Interstate 229 in Sioux Falls while drunk and hit an oncoming car.

The state Supreme Court overturned her conviction in March, saying it was improper for a police officer who testified during her trial to compare the force of the crash to more than 900 handguns being fire at once.

Defense attorneys say a lesser charge of vehicular homicide is more appropriate than manslaughter in the case.

Kvasnicka's new trial is scheduled for Aug. 20-30.

Neb. Law Officers Discuss Pipeline Security

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Nebraska law officers are already discussing security arrangements for construction of an oil pipeline, even though the pipeline hasn't been given a final federal blessing.

The *Lincoln Journal* reports that the Nebraska State Patrol invited county sheriffs and prosecutors along the pipeline's path through Nebraska to a meeting in Grand Island last week.

Nance County Sheriff Dave Moore says the law officers are anticipating Nebraska protests that would echo those occurring during construction of the pipeline leg between Cushing, Okla., and refineries on the Gulf Coast in Texas.

Pipeline opponent Jane Kleeb says there likely would be acts of civil disobedience in Nebraska but no violence.

State Senator Resigning To Take Sanford Post

PIERRE (AP) — Sen. Mark Johnston is resigning from the South Dakota Legislature.

The Sioux Falls Republican from District 12 says he is accepting a vice president position with Sanford Health. His resignation is effective at the end of the month. He has served in the Senate the past three sessions.

Gov. Dennis Daugaard says Johnston has been "a thoughtful legislator and a leader on education issues," and that he will be missed.

Daugaard will appoint Johnston's successor. He's asking members of the public to nominate candidates, and says he expects to fill the vacancy by midsummer.

Neb. Lawmakers OK Juvenile Sentencing Bill

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Lawmakers have passed a new sentencing range of 40 years to life for murders that were committed by a juvenile.

The bill won final approval on Thursday, 38-1.

The measure was introduced by Sen. Brad Ashford of Omaha in the wake of a U.S. Supreme Court ruling that declared mandatory life-without-parole sentences for juveniles unconstitutional.

The proposal represented a compromise between lawmakers who supported 30-year minimum sentence, and others who pushed for at least 60 years.

School

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YSD would be where we need to be right now," Fitzgerald said.

YSD school board president Chris Specht said he believes the decision to create a committee to study public school funding is a small step in the right direction.

"As the vast majority of public school districts in the state continue to face declining enrollment, declining budget funds and greater expectations, in terms of opportunities offered to students and student achievement, state government needs to step up its funding of public education," he said. "When public schools spend 86 percent of their general fund budgets on personnel expenses, it is only logical that cutting the budget means cutting staff, leading towards the elimination of opportunities for students and increasing class sizes."

Specht added that some people say "if the money is not coming your way, local boards need to cut staff to meet budget." However, he said he does not want YSD to have to do that.

"I contend that is the easy way out, which will also negatively affect students and will have a detrimental impact on our state's future," he said. "As a state, we need to fund education first."

YSD board member Jay

Williams said he hopes school districts can get more state funding in the future — but he is skeptical of that happening.

"Gov. (William) Janklow vowed to fix the funding problem, and he used a formula based on the cost of educating a kid," he said. "We were doing fine, but he didn't follow up on the formula. I don't have a lot of faith in our state government to take care of education."

Williams added that the concept of not wanting to fund anything, including education, is not something the state government should follow.

"I welcome any extra money we can get, but we're in a tough situation here now," he said. "Five years down the road might not help us much with the current students we have here now. I think the Legislature needs to address what they've done, but I don't have much hope for it."

Williams said that YSD has made significant cuts in recent years, but still faces a budget shortfall of around \$1.6 million.

"We're spending up our reserves with the idea that, when it's all gone, there may somehow be more money," he said. "However, I'm all for the government trying to get funding on the right track and seeing that some people recognize that there is a problem. Anything they can do to recognize the problem they've created, I'm all for."

You can follow Andrew Atwal on Twitter at twitter.com/andrewatwal

Nebraska

Bill Targets Synthetic Drugs

BY GRANT SCHULTE
Associated Press

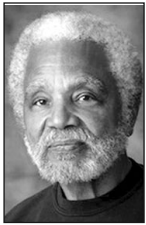
LINCOLN, Neb. — Nebraska lawmakers began debate Thursday on a bill that would restrict chemicals used in synthetic drugs that mimic the effects of methamphetamine, marijuana, LSD and other substances.

The bill targets second- and third-generation versions of K2, a brand name for an herb sprayed with chemicals that mimics the highs of marijuana. It also targets an LSD knockoff known as "smiles," and "foxy," which creates hallucinations and a sense of euphoria.

Nebraska outlawed some synthetic drugs, including K2 and bath salts, in 2011 and 2012. But drug manufacturers have changed their chemical formulas to skirt drug laws, said Sen. Beau McCoy of Omaha, who introduced the bill.

Newer generations of the drugs are legal and can be bought online or in hemp shops. Symptoms for some drugs include hallucinations, high blood pressure, rapid heart rates and seizures.

"The reality is that drug labs in certain parts



Chambers

of the world continue to create these drugs, because they're virtually undetectable," McCoy said.

Lawmakers approved a technical change to the bill on Thursday but did not advance the measure itself.

Sen. Ernie Chambers of Omaha raised concerns that the bill was too broad, saying it could unintentionally outlaw chemicals that have other, legal purposes. Chambers noted that strychnine — a common rat poison — isn't banned. Neither is aspirin, he said, but the pain medicine can cause stomach bleeding for a small number of patients.

"Suppose somebody could sniff ethanol and get a high," Chambers said. "Is sniffing ethanol going to cause ethanol to be banned?"

Forensic scientists with the Douglas County Sheriff's Office in Omaha have said law enforcement struggle to ban new forms of the synthetic drugs.



JOHN SLEEZER/KANSAS CITY STAR/MCT
The Kansas City Royals' Mike Moustakas (8) slides across the snow covered infield tarp after Thursday's baseball game against the Tampa Bay Rays was canceled Thursday at Kauffman Stadium in Kansas City, Mo.

May Snow Blankets Midwest

Up To 16 Inches OF Snow Fall
In Some Points In Minnesota

BY STEVE KARNOWSKI
Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — Schoolchildren in Minnesota and Wisconsin got a rare May snow day Thursday as a storm dropped up to 16 inches of sticky snow across a beleaguered region that was just starting to enjoy spring.

Bobbi Howe's daughters, 10-year-old Emma and 7-year-old Averie, stayed home in the southeastern Minnesota city of Owatonna, where 15.5 inches of snow made it hard for the family to open their front door. Owatonna was one of dozens of Minnesota and Wisconsin school districts that canceled classes for the day.

"I'm hoping they stay outside for most of the day and I'll just provide hot chocolate when they come in," Bobbi Howe said.

For Emma, the promise of a late spring snow day felt a little less like paradise.

"It's not cool," Emma said, adding that she was tired of winter and would rather be at school. "I don't like the snow right now."

Nancy Keller of Owatonna said her three kids were getting fed up with the endless winter, too. She said several of their tennis, soccer matches and field trips already have been postponed.

"They're getting tired of having things canceled," Keller said.

Such was the sentiment in other states that also got slammed by the two-day storm which dropped

a wintry mix of snow and rain Wednesday from Oklahoma, Kansas, Colorado and Wyoming into Nebraska, South Dakota and Iowa. It delivered the first May snowfall in Sioux Falls, S.D., in 37 years, knocked out power to tens of thousands of homes and businesses in several states, forced the closure of major roads and was a factor in at least one fatal crash early Thursday in Wisconsin between two semis on Interstate 94 near Menomonie.

Ashland, in far northwestern Wisconsin, got over 16 inches before the storm moved on to Lake Superior. Hayward, Wis., got 15 inches and other Wisconsin communities including Baldwin, Barron, Ellsworth and Spring Valley got 14 inches.

National Weather Service meteorologist Craig Cogil said the 11 inches recorded at Forest City and nearby Britt, Iowa, by Thursday morning was the state's largest snowfall in a 24-hour period in May, the state's highest snowfall total from any storm in May, and the state's most snow recorded ever in May.

State transportation officials recommended no unnecessary travel across a large swath of southeastern Minnesota and northwestern Wisconsin. Meanwhile, the Minneapolis weekend forecast includes rain, with highs in the 40s and 50s.

But that mild respite was little consolation for fourth-grader Allie Keller, Nancy Keller's 10-year-old daughter, who had her own reasons for being unhappy with Thursday's unexpected snow day in Owatonna: "I had good hair today, so I kind of wanted to go to school."

Associated Press writers Gretchen Ehle in Milwaukee and Barbara Rodriguez in Des Moines, Iowa, contributed to this report.

Report: Fed
Case Load Up In
S. Dakota In '12

SIoux FALL (AP) — A new report released by the U.S. Attorney's Office in South Dakota says crime in Indian Country accounted for more than half of the case load for federal prosecutors in 2012.

The U.S. Attorney's Office released its 2012 annual report Thursday.

Of the 769 cases filed last calendar year, 46 percent were for violent crime on the state's nine Indian reservations and 7 percent were for non-violent cases on the reservations. Immigration cases accounted for 13 percent of filed cases, while drug cases accounted for 11 percent.

In Fiscal Year 2012, the U.S. Attorney's Office filed 552 cases involving 711 defendants. Compared to 2008, this is a 23 percent increase in the number of new cases filed and a 27 percent increase in the number of defendants.

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