

Professor Eyes SD No Fault Divorce Law

SIOUX FALLS (AP) — A law professor is collaborating with the brother of a woman who was slain by her abusive husband to bring a no fault divorce law to South Dakota. Roger Baron of the University of South Dakota hopes to draft a bill called “Tania’s Law” that will allow a person to seek divorce without proving grounds such as adultery or extreme cruelty. He says the lack of no fault divorce discourages victims of domestic violence from seeking a divorce because they’re forced to make their case in court. The *Argus Leader* reports South Dakota is one of two states without some form of no fault divorce. Baron says studies have shown such laws reduce domestic violence cases by a third. The law would honor Tania Aesoph of Highmore, who was beaten and strangled by her husband in 1999.

Finalists Selected For UNL Presidency

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — The University of Nebraska’s presidential search committee has named four finalists to replace former President J.B. Milliken. The finalists announced on Monday are Hank Bounds, Mississippi’s commissioner for higher education; Michael Martin, chancellor of the Colorado State University System; Sally Rockey, deputy director for extramural research at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland; and George Ross; president of Central Michigan University. Nebraska Gov. Dave Heineman, who announced publicly that he would apply for the job, was not among the finalists. The list will be submitted to the University of Nebraska Board of Regents, which will make the final selection. Milliken left in May to become chancellor for the City University of New York.

SD Hunter Death Being Investigated

ROSCOE (AP) — Authorities in Edmunds County are investigating the death of a hunter. County Coroner Jesse Knittel tells KELO-TV that the man in his 60s was hunting Friday when he went missing. Officers with the Edmunds County Sheriff’s Office and the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish & Parks found the man in a slough south of Roscoe on Sunday. Knittel expects to release an official cause of death on Tuesday. Authorities didn’t immediately release the man’s name but did say he lived in the area.

Man Pleads Guilty To Child Sex Assaults

COZAD, Neb. (AP) — A December sentencing has been scheduled for a 38-year-old Cozad man who made a plea deal on charges that he sexually assaulted children while baby-sitting them. Lexington radio station KRVN reports that Lael Arpan on Friday pleaded guilty to two counts of sexually assaulting a child. A third count was dropped in exchange for Arpan’s pleas. Each felony count carries a prison sentence ranging from 20 years to life. His sentencing is set for Dec. 22. Arpan was arrested on August following an investigation by the Cozad Police Department into allegations made by two families. A court affidavit says Arpan lived with one of the families and provided baby-sitting to both of them.

Contributions For Time Capsule Sought

SIOUX FALLS (AP) — Sioux Falls officials are encouraging residents and businesses to contribute to a time capsule celebrating South Dakota’s 125th anniversary. The time capsule will be buried at Falls Park near the visitors’ center and won’t be opened until November 2064. Interested individuals can take their items to City Hall. Suggested items include current technology, packaging from products including prices, news pieces showing current events, photos, letters and popular toys and tools. An eight-member committee will evaluate the items and not all will be included in the capsule. The deadline for submission is Friday.

Report

Midwest Economy Slowing

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — The economy likely will slow to a crawl in nine Midwestern and Plains states in the months ahead, according to a monthly economic survey released Monday. The region’s overall economic index fell to 51.8 in October, just above a neutral score of 50. That’s down from 54.3 in September and 57.2 in August. “Sharp declines in grain and crude petroleum prices drove the overall index down for the month. Even with the pull-back, economic growth is expected to be positive, but somewhat slower in the next several months,” said Creighton University economist Ernie Goss, who oversees the report. The survey results from supply managers are compiled into a collection of indexes ranging from zero to 100. Organizers say any score above 50 suggests growth in that index, while a score

below that suggests decline. The survey covers Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma and South Dakota. The employment index fell into negative territory at 43.1 in October from September’s 53.5 as businesses linked to agriculture and energy encountered difficult conditions, but Goss said he thinks the decline is likely to be temporary. “There is currently a record number of workers employed in the region. Even so, employers in the region continue to expand output primarily by increasing hours worked of current workers and adding temporary workers,” Goss said. The prices-paid index, which tracks the cost of raw materials, rose to 60.6 in October from September’s 60.1. Business leaders remain optimistic about the economy. The confidence index

increased to 61.2 in October from September’s 59.6. The inventory index declined slightly to 51.4 in October from September’s 52. The export orders index declined to 48.8 from September’s 53.2. And the October import index increased slightly to 52.9 from 52.8 in September. “The significant increase in the value of the dollar this year has made U.S. goods less competitively priced abroad and increased the attractiveness of foreign goods sold in the U.S.,” Goss said. Other components of the overall October index were: — Delivery lead time decreased to 56.2 from September’s 59. — New orders rose to 55 in October from 52.9. — Production or sales increased to 55 from last month’s 54.3.

Nebraska

Election Features High-Profile Races

BY GRANT SCHULTE
Associated Press

LINCOLN, Neb. — Races for Nebraska governor, U.S. Senate, a competitive House race and a minimum wage ballot measure are drawing voters to the polls. Some highlights:

FROM CROWDED PRIMARIES

The Republican candidates for governor and U.S. Senate emerged from unusually crowded primary races that divided the party. Pete Ricketts, a wealthy Omaha investor and former TD Ameritrade executive, narrowly defeated Attorney General Jon Bruning in a six-man race. Ben Sasse, the president at Midland University in Fremont, won his U.S. Senate nomination by a larger margin but still faced four opponents. Both contests were more competitive than usual because of term limits for Republican Gov. Dave Heineman, who leaves office in January, and the announcement that GOP U.S. Sen. Mike Johanns would not seek a second term. Ricketts and Sasse both enjoy a party advantage in Nebraska, where Republicans make up 49 percent of registered voters and Democrats account for 31 percent, according to the secretary of state’s office. Democrat Chuck Hassebrook, a former University of Nebraska regent, is running for governor. Dave Domina, an Omaha attorney, is seeking

the U.S. Senate seat. Domina easily defeated Larry Marvin in his primary race, and Hassebrook was unchallenged.

INCUMBENTS LEAVING

Nebraska voters won’t see many incumbent candidates for statewide officeholders on this year’s ballot. In addition to Heineman and Johanns, State Auditor Mike Foley and Attorney General Jon Bruning are also leaving their jobs after running unsuccessfully for governor. All are Republicans, and the GOP holds every statewide office as well as Nebraska’s three congressional seats. Democrats are looking to break the hold, despite an uphill battle in state-level races. Foley is now on the ballot as a lieutenant governor candidate under Ricketts. Lt. Gov. Lavon Heidemann, who was Ricketts’ previous running mate, resigned and withdrew from the race after a judge granted his sister’s request for a domestic abuse protection order. Two candidates are seeking Foley’s seat: state Sen. Amanda McGill, a Democrat from Lincoln, and Republican state Sen. Charlie Janssen, of Fremont. Bruning, a former state lawmaker and U.S. Senate candidate, has said he may enter a private law practice. Republican Doug Peterson of Lincoln and Democrat Janet Stewart of Fremont are running for the seat. Secretary of State John Gale and State Treasurer Don

Stenberg, both Republicans, are heavy favorites to win reelection.

THE MINIMUM WAGE AND TURNOUT

Despite a Republican advantage, Democrats are hopeful that a minimum wage ballot measure will boost turnout among their supporters. Backers of the measure, Initiative 425, have strong financial support from unions with a sizable membership in Omaha. Turning those voters out in large numbers could swing the tight Omaha-area race between eight-term incumbent U.S. Rep. Lee Terry, a Republican, and state Sen. Brad Ashford, a Democrat. Hassebrook has also campaigned on his support for the measure, citing it as part of a broader argument that he would advocate for working Nebraskans and the middle class. The measure would increase the state’s minimum wage from \$7.25 an hour — the same as the federal rate — to \$8 an hour by 2015 and \$9 an hour by 2016.

A COMPETITIVE HOUSE RACE

The race between Ashford and Terry has become competitive enough to draw national attention. The National Republican Congressional Committee has launched a series of attack ads against Ashford, including one that tried to tie him to a prison inmate who killed four people in Omaha after his release. Democrats demanded that the ad be pulled but Republicans refused.

That ad has been compared to the 1988 commercial that Republicans aired against Democratic presidential nominee and former Massachusetts Gov. Michael Dukakis, tying him to Willie Horton, a man who committed crimes while on a weekend furlough. Terry is struggling to hold his seat after he stated last year that he would keep his federal salary during the partial government shutdown because he had a “nice house” and a child in college.

BIG-NAME VISITORS

Nebraska leans Republican, but the GOP candidates for governor and U.S. Senate both sought to energize voters by inviting nationally known conservatives to the state. Ricketts visited Norfolk with former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee, a television personality and former presidential contender. In Lincoln, he campaigned with New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, a potential presidential candidate in 2016. Ricketts has also turned to well-known family members for fundraising. In August he held a fundraiser with his parents and siblings at Wrigley Field, home of the family-owned Chicago Cubs baseball team. His father, Joe Ricketts, is the founder of TD Ameritrade and a wealthy conservative activist. Sasse drew former GOP presidential nominee Mitt Romney to an event in Hastings last week. During the primary, former vice presidential contender Sarah Palin and U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas campaigned on his behalf.

SD: Senate Race, Minimum Wage Top Ballot

BY REGINA GARCIA CANO
Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS — The four-way race to fill the open seat of retiring U.S. Sen. Tim Johnson, South Dakota’s last congressional Democrat, has dominated this election cycle. But Tuesday’s ballots will also ask voters to choose a U.S. House member, governor, legislative members and other state leaders, as well as decide on three measures.

HAVE A (SENATE) SEAT

Despite a late influx of national party money, former Republican Gov. Mike Rounds still held a lead in recent polls. He’s being challenged by Democrat Rick Weiland and independents Larry Pressler and Gordon Howie. Weiland and Pressler, who spent 18 years in Congress, tightened the race in the month before the election. Republicans are looking to pick up the South Dakota seat in their quest for a net gain of six to take control of the chamber. NOEM’S HOUSE Republican U.S. Rep. Kristi Noem is seen as the prohibitive favorite for another term, while Democratic challenger Corinna Robinson has struggled to build name recognition.

tion. Noem, who was first elected in 2010, has campaigned on issues of agriculture and human trafficking. Robinson, a retired Army veteran, has promised to work on increasing teacher salaries and promoting equal pay for equal work.

DOUBLE DAUGAARD?

Republican Gov. Dennis Daugaard is the favorite to win a second four-year term. He has run on a platform of fiscal responsibility and economic growth, but has drawn strong criticism from school boards and educators for cutting school aid in 2011 when the sluggish economy limited state tax collections. Democratic challenger state Rep. Susan Wismer is the state’s first woman to be nominated for governor by a major party. During her campaign, she’s been critical of Daugaard’s handling of the state budget. She supports expanding Medicaid and increasing the minimum wage. Independent candidate Mike Myers, a former law school professor, is also in the race. The lieutenant governor candidates are: Matt Michels with Daugaard, Susy Blake with Wismer and Lora Hubbel with Myers.

YOUR OPINION PLEASE

There are three measures

on the ballot statewide: — The so-called patient choice measure (Initiated Measure 17) has split the medical community. If approved, doctors who agree to the conditions set forth by insurers, including payments for services provided to patients, could join an insurer’s preferred providers list. The state’s medical association and specialty hospitals are in favor of it, saying it will give residents the freedom to choose their doctor. Health insurers and large hospital networks argue it will neither provide more choice nor reduce costs. — A minimum wage measure (Initiated Measure 18) would raise it from the federal standard of \$7.25 to \$8.50 an hour. The measure also would increase the \$2.13 hourly tip wage to half the minimum wage and tie future increases to the cost of living. Supporters say it would help boost South Dakota’s lagging personal income, while opponents say it could force businesses to increase prices, lay off workers or reduce benefits. — Deadwood casinos would see the number of games they can offer double under Constitutional Amendment Q, adding roulette, keno and craps. The additional games also could be offered at the state’s tribal casinos. Supporters say casinos in the his-

toric gambling town are hurting because of increased competition. Opponents say the measure would increase social ills caused by gambling addictions, such as crime.

OTHER STATEWIDE RACES

Four people are vying to become secretary of state, a seat being vacated by Republican Jason Gant. They are: Republican Shantel Krebs, Democrat Angelia Schultz, Libertarian Emmett Reistroffer, and Lori Stacey with the Constitution Party. Commissioner of School and Public Lands is an open seat, with Republican Ryan Brunner, the current deputy commissioner, facing Libertarian John English. Current officeholders are up against challengers for the following seats: — Attorney general: Libertarian Chad Haber vs. incumbent Republican Marty Jackley. — Auditor: Libertarian Kurt Evans vs. incumbent Republican Steve Barnett. — Treasurer: Democrat Denny Pierson and Libertarian Ken Santema vs. incumbent Republican Rich Sattgast. — Public Utilities Commissioner: Democrat David Allen and Constitutional Party candi-

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date Wayne Schmidt vs. incumbent Republican Gary Hanson.

LEGISLATIVE EASE

All 35 senators and 70 representatives are running, but there’s no chance Republicans will give up control of either chamber because of the large number of uncontested races.

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