

MIDWEST

UNL Chancellor Girds For Cuts

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — University of Nebraska-Lincoln Chancellor Harvey Perlman is hinting that looming state budget woes could spell painful cuts for the university, a prospect he compared to a form of Chinese torture known as "death from a thousand cuts."

Perlman's remarks Thursday were part of his annual "State of the University" address, given at the Lied Center for Performing Arts in Lincoln.

Perlman says the torture known as "lingchi" is not "a recipe for success."

Perlman says he expects the university to be asked to cut its budget next year for the eighth time in 11 years.

Legislative committees are meeting this year to help identify state programs that could be reduced by the full Legislature next year to deal with what could be a \$680 million budget deficit.

Parade Legislation 'Knee-Jerk'

MITCHELL (AP) — A state lawmaker from Mitchell says he thinks potential legislation aimed at improving safety in parades that have horses is a knee-jerk reaction.

Democratic state Sen. Frank Kloucek of Scotland says he plans to introduce a bill to require an outrider with every team of two or more horses in public parades. An outrider is a single horse and rider that helps keep a team under control.

Republican Rep. Lance Carson of Mitchell says horses occasionally get scared and react accordingly. He says adding another animal to the mix could make the situation worse.

The debate has intensified because three people were injured when two horses pulling a wagon were spooked and ran into Labor Day parade spectators in Wagner. But Kloucek says he was thinking about legislation before the Wagner incident.

Alcohol-Prevention Receives \$1.4M

PIERRE (AP) — Twenty-six community coalitions in South Dakota have been awarded a combined \$1.4 million for alcohol-prevention services.

Gov. Mike Rounds on Thursday announced the funding, saying he's pleased that so many communities sought money to fight underage and binge drinking.

The state Department of Human Services is distributing the money that it received through a federal grant. The community coalitions will get grants ranging from \$34,000 to \$50,000.

S.D. Gets Share Of Pub. Settlement

PIERRE (AP) — The Dakotas and Nebraska will get part of a multistate settlement with Publishers Clearing House over allegations its mailings deceived consumers.

The settlement with 32 states stems from allegations that Publishers Clearing House violated a 2001 agreement in which Publishers agreed to change its sweepstakes promotion practices.

Under the deal announced Thursday, the Port Washington, N.Y., company will need to further restrict certain kinds of through-the-mail promotions. The company also agreed to screen more of its customers to make sure they are not disoriented, are not making excessive purchases and are not under a misimpression that buying helps win a drawing.

Premier Bankcard Reduces Work Force

SIOUX FALLS (AP) — A credit card company is further reducing its work force in South Dakota.

Premier Bankcard President and CEO Miles Beacom says about 50 employees statewide recently were offered different positions within the company in areas of more demand such as collections, and half opted to take a severance package instead.

The *Argus Leader* says the move is the latest in a series of work force reductions at Premier Bankcard, which has centers in Sioux Falls, Dakota Dunes, Huron, Spearfish and Watertown.

Several hundred jobs have been cut this year, mostly through attrition. Beacom says that after the latest reduction, the company employs about 2,200 people, down from about 2,600 at the end of last year.

Company officials blame financial regulation changes that went into effect earlier this year, making it hard to issue credit cards.

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Study: Neb. Well-Positioned For Economic Growth

BY MARGERY BECK
Associated Press Writer

LINCOLN, Neb. — Nebraska has a diverse economy that is positioned well to grow, but the state needs to work on turning its growing research and development into new products, according to a report released Thursday by GOP Gov. Dave Heineman.

Five industries have emerged as Nebraska's strengths, with growth outpacing national rates:

financial services; transportation, warehousing and distribution logistics services; precision metals manufacturing; bioscience; and renewable energy.

However, the state economy also has several areas of weakness, according to the \$220,000 report, which was commissioned by the state's Economic Development and Labor departments.

It said Nebraska's lack of progress in developing value-added industries leads to lower

demand for skills and lower wages. Value-added industries are those that add value to a raw product by taking it to a new stage of production — for example, taking what is traditionally a waste product like wheat stalks and turning them into building materials.

The report also said Nebraska has had trouble translating its growing research and development base into new products and new companies, and that the state should create stronger links between industry and university

researchers in areas such as applied research and development, technology commercialization and talent generation.

The report was compiled by nonprofit independent research and development organization Battelle Technology Partnership Practice.

"There's clearly a good environment for business in Nebraska," said Simon Tripp, a senior director with Battelle.

"Moving forward, the key will be

for Nebraska to continue to support programs and initiatives that help industry sustain a competitive edge in the global economy, provide the necessary skilled work force, and support innovation, entrepreneurship and new technology deployment."

State and local economic development professionals, university and college officials and rural and urban business leaders helped with the study, Heineman said.

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