

Man Charged With Manslaughter In Crash

LOUP CITY, Neb. (AP) — A Nebraska man charged with drunken boating in a crash that killed two North Carolina teens has been charged with two counts of manslaughter.

KHGI-TV in Kearney (<http://bit.ly/pEpHyR>) says Brian Packer, of Wood River, was arraigned on the additional charges on Thursday in Sherman County Court.

He was charged with boating under the influence in July. Authorities say he was operating a pontoon boat that hit two step-brothers on a tube on July 3 at Sherman Reservoir. Twelve-year-old Joshua Rowley and 19 Matthew McAlexander died. They were from Kernersville, N.C., and were visiting family in Nebraska.

Packer's defense attorney, Ron Temple, says he's disappointed with the additional charges and that the investigation shows Packer was not responsible for the deaths.

A hearing is set for Oct. 13.

Pedophilia Conviction Improperly Overturned

SIOUX FALLS (AP) — The South Dakota Supreme Court says a lower court improperly overturned the conviction and sentence of a man charged with molesting a 4-year-old girl in 2001.

Dale Guthmiller was convicted of criminal pedophilia in the case. He was released last year when a Pierre judge ruled that Guthmiller didn't get a fair trial because of comments made by the trial judge.

The high court reversed that decision in a written opinion released Thursday.

Guthmiller's attorney in March argued that a trial judge's comment that police in Rapid City don't arrest innocent people eliminated Guthmiller's presumption of innocence.

The justices said that although the trial judge's inappropriate comments reflected negatively on Guthmiller, they did not amount to a structural error or mean the judge was biased.

Arnie Laubach, Guthmiller's attorney, said he felt that the judge's comments and the trial counsel's failure to address them rose to the level of granting him a new trial.

Nebraska Tops In Income Growth

BY GRANT SCHULTE
Associated Press

LINCOLN, Neb. — Nebraska's median household income grew more than any other state's last year, according to new U.S. Census data released Thursday.

The Census report shows that Nebraska's median income increased last year by more than \$300 per family, to \$48,408, which is 0.7 percent jump over 2009's figure. Only Washington, D.C., had a bigger jump, at 0.8 percent.

Nebraska was one of only five states, not counting the nation's capital, where the median income grew. The others were South Dakota, North Dakota, West Virginia and Virginia.

Overall, real income in the United States declined 2.2 percent, from \$51,190 in 2009 to \$50,046 last year.

Nebraska also stood out compared to neigh-

boring Iowa and Kansas, which saw small net losses, said David Drozd, research coordinator at the Center for Public Affairs Research at the University of Nebraska Omaha. Drozd said the data also didn't account for cost-of-living differences, which would have widened the gap further.

"The income that we have here does stretch further due to a relatively low cost of goods and services," Drozd said. "When you couple the income declines in places like California, along with their high cost of living, it's kind of a double-whammy."

Among U.S. states, Nebraska jumped from 31st in median income in 2009 to 26th in 2010.

The increase was driven by rural Nebraska, which more than offset declines in the Omaha area. Drozd said Nebraska's income gains came largely from the 3rd Congressional district, which encompasses the rural western two-

thirds of the state. The 1st Congressional district, which includes Lincoln, increased by 1.7 percent. The 2nd district that surrounds Omaha saw a net decline of 1.3 percent.

Drozd attributed the difference to rising commodity prices, which have boosted farm profits, and to the state's 4.2 percent unemployment rate, which is the less than half overall national average of 9.1 percent in August and which trails only North Dakota's among the states.

Three industry sectors in Nebraska continued to show job growth last month, according to a preliminary state labor report. Professional and business services added 635 jobs, financial activities added 83 jobs and manufacturing added eight jobs.

The Census estimate was limited to household populations and did not count college dormitories or other institutions.

S.D. State Fair's Fortunes Continue To Improve

HURON (AP) — Consistent jumps in attendance and spending at the South Dakota State Fair in recent years have brought it closer to reaching its organizers' goal for the annual event to pay for itself and improved its long-term outlook, which was on shaky ground just a few years ago.

The 126th fair earlier this month in Huron saw both atten-

dance and revenue increases. Nearly 200,000 people attended over the five days, up 8 percent from the previous year and nearly 27 percent from 2007.

"We were up anywhere from 5 to 12 percent (over the year) in our major revenue generators," Fair Manager Jerome Hertel told the *Argus Leader* for a story published Thursday. That includes gate receipts, camping revenue,

sales, vendor rent and the carnival, he said.

Tax revenue from the fair also has surpassed last year's level of \$121,000, with the revenue still being collected, state officials said. The event that once had been sharply scrutinized by legislators now is widely praised.

Now, "the biggest question is what would you do without a state fair?" said Sen. Shantel

Krebs, R-Renner, chairwoman of the Senate Agricultural and Natural Resources Committee. "It's an investment that may cost a little money, but it pays off dividends when you see the young leaders in the state gaining from it."

State funding for the fair has dropped from \$900,000 in 2002 to \$267,000 this year, one in which lawmakers grappled with a large budget shortfall.

Ill. Launches Asian Carp Anti-Hunger Program

BY SOPHIA TAREEN
Associated Press

CHICAGO — Asian carp may be a plankton-gobbling nuisance threatening the Great Lakes, but Illinois officials on Thursday expressed hope in changing that perception one bite at a time.

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources held a public tasting event starring a Louisiana chef turned advocate to start a campaign that may lead to feeding the invasive species to the growing number of people facing hunger.

"Fish translates to one thing: food," said Chef Philippe Parola. "It's one of the greatest natural resources we have."

He sauteed fillets and deep fried fish cakes for a menu that included sweet potatoes, green beans and banana pudding. The fillets — fried in butter with salt, pepper and sprinkle of Creole spices — had a very mild taste, like tilapia. But several big bones were scattered among the flaky flesh.

The fish cakes, served with a cheese and cream sauce, were savory and moist, and compared favorably with a restaurant-quality appetizer.

Dozens attended the community dinner in Chicago to learn more about the fish that's better known for its ability to grow to 100 pounds, sail out of the water when startled and a voracious appetite that could devastate the Great Lakes.

"There was so much negativity about this fish," said Sharon Hendrix, 67. "It's good. It's so light and delicate, not what I was expecting."

That sentiment was shared by Hendrix's 73-year-old friend, Alice White.

"It's very good, flavorful," she said.

Even young taste testers — many unaware they were eating Asian carp — gave it two thumbs up.

Bakia Johnson, 15, compared it to salmon, which she says she loves.

"I think it was excellent, well-seasoned," she said.

The idea to exploit Asian carp's nutritional value — nutritionists say it's a good protein source, low in mercury and high in Omega 3 fatty acids — has major obstacles in Illinois. While it's eaten in China and high-end restaurants, among other places, there's no infrastructure yet for netting the fish in mass quantities, cleaning and distributing it to the masses. Officials also recognize they face an even more intangible challenge: the fish has a bad public image.

Parola said people just need to be exposed to it.

"This fish is not any uglier than any other fish," he noted.

Getting carp to soup kitchens and food pantries is months off, said Tracy Smith, a director for Feeding Illinois, which supplies food banks and is helping on the project. Illinois officials don't know the most feasible way to dole out the carp: minced, boneless fillets or some type of pre-cooked product.

Also, at least when it comes to soup kitchens and food pantries, Illinois officials appear to have their work cut out for them. Recent visitors to Our Lady of Grace Food Pantry in Chicago were skeptical. The pantry puts canned goods, meat and bread in the plastic food bags it gives out. If carp were to make its way there, workers would include it with the meat, leaving people to figure out how to cook the fish on their own.

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