

Opponents carve anti-pipeline message into field

Opponents of a proposed pipeline to carry Canadian oil south to the Gulf Coast have carved a message of resistance into a Nebraska field in the project's path. The 80-acre artwork, which was done last week and reads "Heartland#NoKXL," is the latest protest environmentalists and landowners have employed against TransCanada's proposed Keystone XL pipeline. Critics of the pipeline want President Barack Obama to reject the project because they fear it could contaminate groundwater and contribute to pollution. TransCanada has said the pipeline will have upgraded safety measures, including remote control shut-off valves and frequent inspections. It has already built the southern leg of the pipeline between Oklahoma and Texas. The section of the project that still needs approval would cross Montana, South Dakota, Nebraska and Kansas.

Neb. looks to join states in fighting wildfires

Nebraska is on the cusp of joining forces with Colorado, Wyoming and the Dakotas to help fight rural wildfires. A bill sent to Governor Dave Heineman would allow Nebraska to join the Great Plains Interstate Fire Compact, an agreement that lets member states share their firefighters and equipment in an emergency. Kansas is considering a similar proposal. The bill was introduced two years after massive wildfires swept through central and western Nebraska. Its sponsor, Senator Al Davis of Hyannis, says pooling the states' resources could lead to faster response times in the most remote and hard-to-reach areas of Nebraska. Nebraska State Forester Scott Josiah says the state still has the potential to see large wildfires in years when its grasslands and forests are dry.

Ponca Tribe to host run, powwow in Norfolk

Nebraska's latest attempt to expand Medicaid may have died this year, but the issue is certain survive through the November elections and beyond. Opponents succeeded last weeThe Ponca Tribe of Nebraska is planning its annual run and walk event along with a powwow in Norfolk. The April 26th events will begin with a 2-mile run at Skyview Lake at 9:30 a.m. A 4-mile prayer walk is scheduled at the lake from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. A lunch will follow the run and walk from 11:30 p.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Ponca Tribal Gym in Norfolk. The powwow in the gym will take place from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. The powwow will feature informational booths about tribal programs. This year's event will honor cancer survivors and those who have died of diabetes. The Ponca Tribe serves a 15-county area that covers parts of Nebraska, Iowa and South Dakota.

UNK to host robot basketball shooting contest

Robots designed, built and programmed by students are scheduled to compete in a basketball shooting contest at the University of Nebraska at Kearney. The annual "Tilt-a-Hurl" event is scheduled for 11 a.m. Tuesday at Otto Olsen Hall. Robots will shoot three-point shots on a tilted robotic basketball court. Some students in the "Tilt-a-Hurl" event will also compete in an April 25th regional competition in Wisconsin, which includes students from a seven-state area. UNK won the regional competition last year. Sherri Harms, who heads the Department of Computer Science and Information Systems, says students use advanced programming techniques to design their robots.

Neb. bicycle ride features 476-mile route in 2014

This year's Bicycle Ride Across Nebraska will follow a 476-mile route across the northern part of the state. The ride will begin on June 8th in Rushville. It will continue through June 14th. Overnight stops are planned in the towns of Cody, Springview, Atkinson, Verdigre, Laurel, Lyons and Waterloo. The ride costs \$175, but riders under the age of 25 pay only \$100 and group discounts are available. The event is limited to 600 riders. [More details online](#).

Longtime Neb. rabbi who invested with Buffett dies

A longtime Omaha rabbi who became a philanthropist after investing with Warren Buffett in the 1960s has died. Reports say Rabbi Myer Kripke died Friday at the age of 100. Rabbi Steven Abraham says his predecessor at Omaha's Beth El Synagogue remains beloved by the congregation he led from 1947 to 1975. Kripke stayed active in the community long after becoming rabbi emeritus at Beth El, and he often gave talks explaining his faith to non-Jewish audiences. Kripke was able to become a philanthropist later in life because he invested with his friend Buffett, who he'd met during the 1950s. One of the bigger gifts Kripke and his wife made was a \$7 million donation to the Jewish Theological Seminary he attended in New York City.

Motorcycle rider killed in crash on Saturday

Omaha Police have identified the motorcycle rider who was killed in a weekend crash after failing to negotiate a corner in the road. Omaha police say 27-year-old David Plassmann of Bellevue died Saturday afternoon while out riding with others. The accident happened shortly after noon along John J. Pershing Drive near the Missouri River on the northeast edge of the city. Police say Plassman failed to negotiate a corner in the road, lost control and slammed into

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a tree. Some of Plassman's fellow riders and paramedics tried to revive him, but he died at the scene. Plassman was wearing a helmet.

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