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Media Writing

February 6th, 2013

Midterm Project

1)

After a year, families can take a sigh of relief to learn that charges have been filed against an Elkton man who crashed his Cadillac and killed two friends in an apparent DUI related accident.

State patrol reconstruction places the 2009 Cadillac STS heading approximately 120 MPH, becoming airborne, snapping one utility pole, and stopping once it hit a tree and another utility pole. Sheriff Terese Amazi stated that the car was “obliterated.” Initially when the vehicle struck the ditch, Jake Moe and Luke Unverzagt were both ejected from the car and were pronounced dead at the scene. Jason gimped away with a broken ankle.

Jason Fredrickson was charged Tuesday with six felony counts of criminal vehicular homicide and is due to appear in court March 21st.

2)

A federal lawsuit has been filed against the Gaylord Police Department, the Sibley County Sheriff’s office and others, accusing them of violating a woman’s constitutional rights. Jesus Mendoza Sierra claims she was detained and not released until she was interrogated and brought to her home to show proof of her immigration documents.

Sierra was detained even though she was a passenger in the vehicle, and the driver had already been placed under arrest. The lawsuit alleges that the officers assumed Sierra was in the United States illegally and that the ACLU never pressed charges.

3)

South Dakota gun activists can chalk up another win after the house committee rejected a bill that would have denied the sale of guns to people with mental illnesses who were deemed a danger to others.

The bill would have prevented citizens from buying or possessing guns if at any time in their past they were involuntarily committed for mental health treatment and were found to be a danger to others.

The committee came to a narrow vote of 7-5 to defeat the measure. Opponents of this measure argue that this would not make society any safer.

4)

North Dakota’s Senate has approved a measure that will give more money to an agency that provides lawyers for criminal defendants who can’t afford to hire their own. The senate voted unanimously to increase funding for legal counsel from $11.7 million to $14.5 million over the next two years.

Robin Huseby states that her legal agency is up 12 % statewide and 43% in the western North Dakota counties. She also stated that the agency has about 50 lawyers under contract; most are being shipped to the western counties due to the increased workload there.

5)

Dunn County is seeing a disturbing increase in child abuse cases over the last year.

With 47 Child Abuse and Neglect cases being filed, Tom Picken labeled this a “disturbing trend.” This number of cases is roughly double what the county has ever seen before.

* DUI Death
* Citizens’ Rights
* SD Gun Laws
* Counsel Aid
* Child Abuse

I put these stories in this particular order I did because I think they are the most important ones we had to choose from. I started off with the DUI accident as it was more of an attention grabber. Recently DUI punishments have been a hot topic in the area and it’s just fuel to the fire for stricter punishments. The next three run through personal constitutional rights, in my opinion, all hinder under the same subject or, “constitutional citizen rights”… Putting these in an order was a little bit difficult but I don’t think the government should have the power to detain a U.S. citizen. As far as gun laws; I’m originally a country boy. I think certain policies and methods need to be followed when selling guns but I don’t agree with the way they are trying to do it. The counsel aid piece really closes it all, and it does so on an important topic. Lawyers are expensive, and many people can’t afford them. Not only that but as citizens of this country we are entitled to legal counsel. This is something important to this country and shouldn’t be put on the back burner. I ended with the child abuse statistics as a closer just because I thought it was important and shouldn’t be ignored.