

The Free Press

FRIDAY 75¢

"It is impossible for me or anyone to compel the Syrian government and also the opposition to take the steps to bring about the political process."

IN NATION & WORLD, A3

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IN ENTERTAINMENT, C1

AT THE EDGE OF ETERNITY

IN THE VALLEY, B1

TAKE A JUICY BITE OUT OF FARMAMERICA

IN SPORTS, D1

GABBY GETS THE GOLD

Celebrating our 125th Year The Free Press



Amy Ann Romero is suspected in the death of her baby girl, born in 2001.

Romero murder trial to proceed

Woman charged with leaving baby to die in woods in 2001

By Dan Nienaber
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GAYLORD — Investigators haven't found a body and all they have is their suspect's own words to describe how and where a newborn child was left to die, but that is enough to move forward with a first-degree murder trial, according to a ruling by a Sibley County judge.

Although others say they knew Amy Ann Romero, 29, was pregnant more than a decade ago, she apparently kept the secret until last year that she actually gave birth to a baby girl and left her in a woods to die in 2001.

In an alleged confession to a Missouri co-worker in August of last year, Romero told a nurse's aide who she was working with that "she had done something really bad in her youth," according to a document issued recently by Sibley County District Court Judge Thomas McCarthy.

The document was a
Please see ROMERO, Page A2

Nicollet and Blue Earth counties remain

VERY DRY



Adam Knewton pulls back the husk on ears of corn south of Mankato. Most corn ears and kernels are smaller than normal.

John Gross

CROP AND LIVESTOCK WORRIES: Less yield, higher feed prices

By Tim Krohn
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Drought conditions to the north of Mankato improved in the past week, while south-central and southwestern Minnesota remain in the "abnormally dry" to "moderate drought" range.

The U.S. Drought Monitor this week showed that rains in and to the west of the Twin Cities and up through northeastern and much of southeastern Minnesota have removed drought risk.

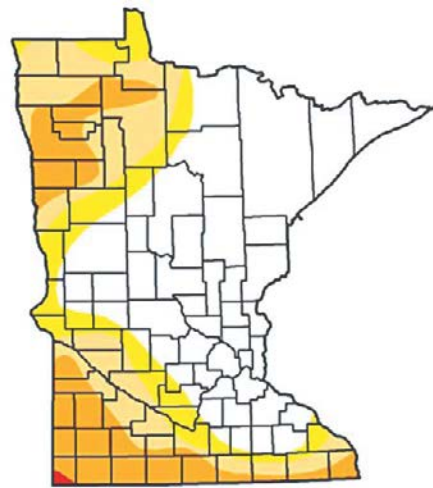
Nicollet County and most of Blue Earth County remains abnormally dry, while Brown County and areas to the west and south remain in a

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	52.11	47.89	35.02	16.25	0.18	0.00
Last Week (07/24/2012 map)	37.88	62.12	37.37	13.05	0.00	0.00
3 Months Ago (05/01/2012 map)	1.78	98.22	60.07	18.65	0.00	0.00
Start of Calendar Year (12/27/2011 map)	0.79	99.21	57.45	24.08	0.00	0.00
Start of Water Year (09/27/2011 map)	48.42	51.58	19.26	4.58	0.00	0.00
One Year Ago (07/26/2011 map)	99.23	0.77	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Intensity:

- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Drought - Moderate
- D2 Drought - Severe
- D3 Drought - Extreme
- D4 Drought - Exceptional



moderate drought. Le Sueur and Waseca counties have normal moisture levels.

While crop farmers in the region are being spared the devastating drought that's gripped most of the Midwest and Corn Belt, hot and dry weather are lessening yield potentials.

And the national drought is laying the groundwork for record-high crop prices that will affect grocery store prices and are pushing live-

stock producers toward a cliff.

Livestock 'crisis'

Hog and beef producers are reeling as the drought drives up feed prices.

"It's not good. People are wondering if they'll even have enough feed," said Jim Compart of Compart's Boar Store near Nicollet.

Please see DRY, Page A5



Today

Practice: 10:30-11:30 a.m. (walk-thru)
Practice: 2:45-5 p.m. (full pads)
Morning autographs: defensive ends.

Saturday

Family Football Day
Practice: 10:30-11:30 a.m. (walk-thru)
Practice: 7-9 p.m. (full pads) inside stadium
Morning autographs: alumni.
Fireworks to follow evening practice.

Page D1

After making 118 tackles last season, Vikings safety Jamarca Sanford is working hard in Mankato to improve on "football IQ stuff."

Retail sales rising

Revenue in stores rose 4.6 percent in July

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Shoppers showed some spending muscle in July, once summer clearance sales and the hottest July in 50 years got them in the mood.

Solid sales reports from retailers Thursday took some of the sting out of weak June manufacturing data. And improving trends in unemployment benefit applications provide hope for slightly better job growth in coming months a day before the government reports on July employment.

U.S. retailers reported better-than-expected July revenue in stores open at least a year, an encouraging sign at the beginning of the back-to-school season, the second-biggest shopping season behind the holidays.

A preliminary compilation by the International Council of Shopping Centers of 20 retailers found revenue in stores open at least a year rose 4.6 percent in July, higher than the 3 percent to 3.5 percent the ICSC expected. Economists watch the num-

Please see ECONOMY, Page A2

Quist and Parry still well behind Walz in fundraising

Bachmann effort failed to energize Quist financial supporters

By Mark Fischenich
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MANKATO — Congresswoman Michelle Bachmann, who has raised more money from individual donors this election cycle than the rest of Minnesota's congressional delegation combined, didn't bring the same fundraising magic to Allen Quist.

Bachmann's July 20 fundraiser for Quist was less

lucrative than the Quist campaign previously reported, according to a campaign finance report filed this week.

The man Quist hopes to knock off on Nov. 6 — Democratic Congressman Tim Walz — had a relatively quiet fundraising month in July, raising about a third of the \$81,000 per month he's averaged in contributions in the past 19 months. But the \$27,878 Walz raised from

July 1 to July 25 nearly matched the \$32,000 Quist has generated from supporters in his entire campaign.

Quist, however, has contributed \$205,000 of his own money and made a personal loan of \$25,000 — bringing his total receipts to \$262,000.

Walz had just less than \$808,000 in his campaign treasury as of July 25 compared to \$117,878 for Quist. State Sen. Mike Parry, R-

Waseca, who is running against Quist in the Aug. 14 primary election for the right to take on Walz, has \$27,797 on hand.

Parry raised \$90 more than his primary opponent in contributions from supporters but finished with \$9,100 less in receipts because of Quist's latest self-financing.

Bachmann bucks

A retired farmer from

rural St. Peter, Quist contributed more from his own pocket in July — \$10,000 — than the Bachmann event generated. Quist told various Minnesota media the event raised \$9,000.

But the campaign's filing with the Federal Elections Commission showed that nine contributions of \$250 were made to the Quist campaign July 20, the day the event was held at the home of a Rochester physician. That was the size of

Please see SUPPORT, Page A2

UPCOMING

TOMORROW IN THE FREE PRESS

Write brain

Children can be taught how to draw realistically.

PAGEFINDER

- Business B4
- Comics B5
- Corrections A2
- Crossword C6
- Entertainment C1-C3
- Marketplace C3-C6
- Nation-World A3
- Obituaries B2
- Sports D1-D6
- TV B6

WEATHER, PAGE B6

Hot, hot

Partly sunny, very warm. High 88. Low 70.



Looking for news from you

Would you like to submit a photo or an update of a family member or loved one in the military? The Free Press is publishing a weekly collection of military-related items and we invite you to share your own by emailing editor@mankatofreepress.com.

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