Valentine MIDLAND NEWS

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Signature Quarters helps barrel racer Amberley Snyder her achieve dreams

She's already a role model for barrel racers young and old around the world, but Utah cowgirl Amberley Snyder continues to set new goals for herself. A Chickasha, OK, company, Signature Quarters, has big plans to help her achieve them.

A professional barrel racer, Snyder was parayzed in 2010 at the age of 18 when her truck slid off the highway, ejecting her from the vehicle and slamming her into a fence post that broke her back. Four months later, thanks to unwavering determination and a competitive spirit, she was back on her horse. Since then, she has faced countless challenges and adversity, but has continued to achieve her goals, including earning her Women's Professional Rodeo Association card in 2017.

Outside the arena, Snyder shares her inspiring story through powerful public speaking engagements at events and in schools. In 2019, Netflix released a movie about Snyder titled *Walk. Ride. Rodeo.* Snyder appears in the film as a stunt double with her horse, Power.

Through a new contract agreement with Signature Quarters, Snyder will be traveling to rodeos across the country in a horse trailer created just for her. Signature Quarters specializes in custom horse trailer conversions, and their team will design a one-of-a-kind living quarters tailored especially for Snyder, complete with special accessibility features like a wheelchair lift and a custom shower. Beyond that, Snyder will have the opportunity to handpick all unique finishes and fixtures from floor and furniture to ceiling and sinks.

We are so excited for the opportunity to work with Amberley on her new living quarters," said Abby Clark, owner of Signature Quarters. "In partnering with her, we hope to create a custom space that will help her keep achieving her goals. We are proud to build her a home away from home!"

The horse trailer itself will be built by Hart Trailer, another of Snyder's sponsors also based in Chickasha. The trailer will be a Tradition model four horse with a 16.5' shortwall living quarters, and it will feature Hart's unique Smart Tack design for the tack storage area.

"Working with Amberley has been a blessing and a wonderful experience," said Tracy Hart, owner of Hart Trailer. "Her 'can do' attitude and tenacity has been amazing to witness. I'm very thankful that she chose Hart Trailer. Allowing us to be a part of her story, so that we can build her the very best horse trailer."



Photo by Laura Vroman

Valentine's Main Street will be blooming beautiful!

In a different time, the third grade class of Valentine Elementary School would have been busy beautifying Valentine's Main Street. However, due to COVID-19, the school dismissed early, and instead several individuals filled in, and planted flowers in the boxes on the corners of Main Street. Pictured are Stephanie Cumbow and Ruth Hobbs.

The flowers are donated by the Valentine Chamber of Commerce.

Being near...

by Pam Bryan

When they were in grade school, our children made up a routine of daily seat assignments in our cars. It began when they were much smaller and would argue over who got to sit in front. The pattern was carried out adamantly for years until we no longer chauffeured the three. The prized position for them was the front passenger seat. It was so special, so important, that it was nothing for one to declare, "Hey, did you forget? This is my day!" What that statement said, book bags, lunch sacks, guitar and coats all were dutifully scraped together in one big heap and tossed into the back so that fairness would rule. I've never been exactly sure why this was the seat of choice; but just between us, we hoped it was because they liked being near "Mommo" and "Daddo".

I have a favorite place where I like to sit too. It's a space in our bedroom. I go there to be with my Father. With bible, journal and pen I settle in quietly so that I can be "next to Him".

There I listen for His voice.

I soak in His truth and pour out my longings and needs.

He silently affirms His love. His pleasure is in having me there beside Him.

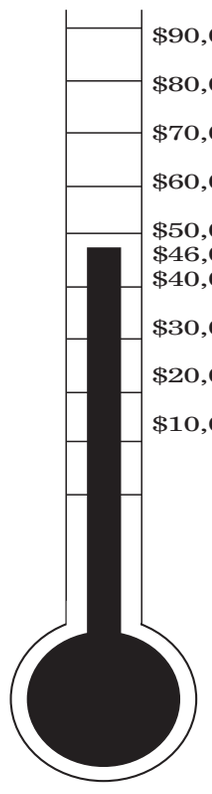
Recently I read from the Psalms. I was struck with the realization that all living things want to be near the Father. Our nearness to Him is His idea. There we are satisfied. Not only is the psalmist yearning, crying out for that "lovely dwelling place" of the living God, but

"Even the sparrow has found a home, the swallow a nest for herself, where she may have her young ~ a place near your altar, O Lord Almighty, my King and my God".

Psalm 84:3



The Cherry County Veterans Memorial Committee needs to raise $90,000 to commemorate our Korean and Vietnam veterans. The thermometer will be updated weekly!



For those wishing to donate please check with your accountant, although we have been told this is a qualified tax deduction.

Make checks out to American Legion Post 90 CCVMC, P.O Box 33, Valentine Nebraska 69201 or contact Bob Stetter at 402-376-2331. Find out more by going to: https://www.leobrinda90memorial.com.

Hospice care is now available in Cherry County through Asera Care

"My mantra is comfort and joy, without comfort there can't be any joy," said Jean Vackiner, RN, case manager for AseraCare Hospice.

Hospice is a type of care for people who are terminally ill. It focuses on pain relief and symptom management. Instead of trying to cure disease, hospice care provides comfort and support for emotional or spiritual end-of-life issues. Hospice focuses on giving patients and their loved ones meaningful time together.

"What I do, is part of a team who takes care of a person's body, spirit, heart, mind, and soul. I develop a care plan that helps meet their needs, monitor their medications to determine what works best in their stage of life, and coordinate the team members to make sure all of the patients needs are met."

Most patients and families who receive hospice care say they wish they had started sooner. Research shows that hospice can increase the quality of life, as well as how long a patient lives. One should consider hospice services when medical treatment can no longer cure their disease or the symptom burden outweighs the benefits of treatment. AseraCare nurses receive the most up-to-date training to ensure patients are comfortable, pain-free, and cared for with compassion. When you call, day or night, you speak to a registered nurse ready to assist. They are committed to providing skillful and timely instructions to those they care for as well as their loved ones and professional caregivers.

AseraCare Spiritual Care, Social Work, and Bereavement professionals can help each family understand, prepare for, and support one another through the illness and death of a loved one.

Vackiner said they're not just home based, they share a partnership within contracted facilities such as nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and may provide care in hospitals. Our team is committed to keep our patient's at the place they call home as they approach the end of life. This means we are also committed to supporting different types of living centers as they provide ongoing care and support. With specialized services and training opportunities (Virtual Dementia training, We Honor Veterans, ongoing bereavement support), we seek to elevate the expertise of everyone involved in caring for people and their loved ones.



Photo by Laura Vroman

Jean Vackiner is the Case Manager for AseraCare Hospice which now has services in Cherry County.

With hospice, the patient is guided to make decisions about their healthcare needs, in collaboration with the nurse and their primary healthcare provider. Healthcare arrangements can be made wherever they call home, along with delivery of durable medical equipment to make their life more comfortable. This includes but is not limited to, a hospital bed, air mattress, bedside commode, oxygen concentrator with tanks, and wound dressing supplies.

"We want to become their 911. If they're not feeling good, or if there is a change of condition, we want to be called to make the right choice for them to be comfortable."

With the restrictions in place due to COVID-19, Vackiner is an added layer of comfort between the patients and their loved ones. "I provide a little extra companionship too and I'm able to spend more one on one time than a typical care giver can, which brings more comfort to the families." We help our patients and their families have peace of mind by providing unparalleled care. Our mission is to ease pain by supporting, listening, and nourishing.

"I like to tell my patients that our lives are like a leaf falling out of a tree. A few spin round and round, usually it's up and down, falling gently," as she waves her hand back and forth like a pendulum. "They're doing great one day, and not so good the next. There's very few straight lines in this world; we have to appreciate and expect the high times. It helps people to understand that it's all connected. In line with the leaf falling there's a time when the whole tree will crash and there's nothing we can do about it so treasure every moment."

AseraCare Hospice is committed to developing relationships in our communities with our veteran population. They're continuously working toward serving the unique culture and specialized needs of veterans with end-of-life hospice services through a variety of activities. "We offer a pinning ceremony honoring their experience in the military. It's a special time - it's a special moment. We provide them a flag in their room which is often used to drape the patient when they leave their earthly home."

AseraCare Hospice educate and advocate for better living. A life well lived is one full of moments that matter, and their mission is to facilitate those moments. They're champions for the compassionate delivery of quality care and enable the 'good day'.

For those who are interested in hospice care for themselves or a family member call AseraCare Hospice at 402-316-4884.

Vackiner has been in this position since December and said, "I feel like I haven't worked a day yet. It's a labor of love. I need to be needed and it's my calling."



Photo by Ginny Nelsen

Sandhills State Bank donates to CCVMC

Sandhills State Bank donated $1,000 to the Cherry County Veterans Memorial Committee for the Korean and Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Monty Keiffer hands a check to Bob Stetter of the CCVMC.

Pictured are from L to R: Becky Poland, Jennie Salters, Lynde Frew, Alena Arendt, Monty Neiffer, Don Nelsen, Bob Stetter, Dick Jeffers, Kyle Arganbright, and Zane Limbach.

Interesting...

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District 43 News

by Tom Brewer

Meetings should be video recorded and publicly accessible

In 1975, the *Open Meetings Act* was created by the Nebraska Legislature with LB 325. The intent of the Legislature was clear: "It is hereby declared to be the policy of this state that the formation of public policy is public business and may not be conducted in secret. Every meeting of a public body shall be open to the public in order that citizens may exercise their democratic privilege of attending and speaking at meetings of public bodies, except as otherwise provided by the Constitution of Nebraska…"

Much has changed in the last 45 years since this law was passed. The Open Meetings Act has been amended a dozen times. These changes come through the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee. I currently serve as chairman of the Committee, so it is my job to be concerned with how the Open Meetings Act is working.

In 1975, the internet, video teleconferencing, and things like YouTube were all nothing but science fiction that you saw on The Jetsons. Now they are an everyday reality. I think government should take advantage of these advances in technology. A wise man once said the law should be stable, but it should never stand still. Last year, part of our committee priority bill, LB 212, included a bill that I introduced to give some local bodies more opportunities to use teleconferencing.

Under the law today, public bodies (like a county board) must keep minutes of the meeting. The law says that, "...each public body shall keep minutes of all meetings showing the time, place, members present and absent, and the substance of all matters discussed."

The "substance" the law requires is sometimes a judgement call. Things discussed in the meeting may or may not be fully chronicled in the minutes. A number of my constituents often complain that the substance of all the matters discussed is often left out of the minutes of a county board meeting they regularly attend.

Were all these meetings video recorded and then archived on a publicly accessible website, there would be no question what was discussed. This video record, combined with the minutes, would more fully memorialize the meeting than just the minutes alone. It could stand for itself.

It might ruffle some feathers with a few of my colleagues, but it is not just local units of government subject to the Open Meetings Act. We should consider how it should apply to the Legislature. Both committee hearings and debate on the floor should also be memorialized in a publicly-available video archive. The written transcript would still remain the official record.

Had the Chairman of the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee had the technological wonders we have today, I am confident requiring a publicly accessible video archive of meetings subject to the Open Meetings Act would have been part of the original bill back in 1975. I would argue that our state adopted the principles to create this video archive transparency for government proceedings. The technology we needed to achieve this intent has finally caught up.

Please contact my office with any comments, questions, or concerns. Email me at tbrewer@leg.ne.gov, mail a letter to Sen. Tom Brewer, Room #1101, P.O. Box 94604, Lincoln, NE 68509, or call us at 402-471-2628.

Healing our communities

Note from Washington D.C.

by Deb Fischer

Like so many Nebraskans, I am horrified by the tragedy in Minneapolis, the killing of George Floyd — and I am angry. I am also saddened that so many of our citizens still lead lives of terror and trepidation based on the color of their skin, despite decades of hard fought change. That fear must end. It starts with each of us softening our own hearts, opening our minds, and listening to different voices.

We have the constitutional right to peacefully assemble and express our thoughts and opinions. That's the very crux of our freedom as Americans, and that is what many demonstrators are seeking to do. Sadly, too many of these protests have been hijacked by others seeking to disrupt and destroy. Many peaceful demonstrations turned into senseless acts of violence and vandalism. We do not have the right to riot, to inflict injury on others or to destroy the property and livelihood of our neighbors.

Violence and looting do not honor the memory of George Floyd or advance the great cause of racial equality in this nation.

As Atlanta Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms said, "This is not a protest. This is not in the spirit of Martin Luther King, Jr. This is chaos."

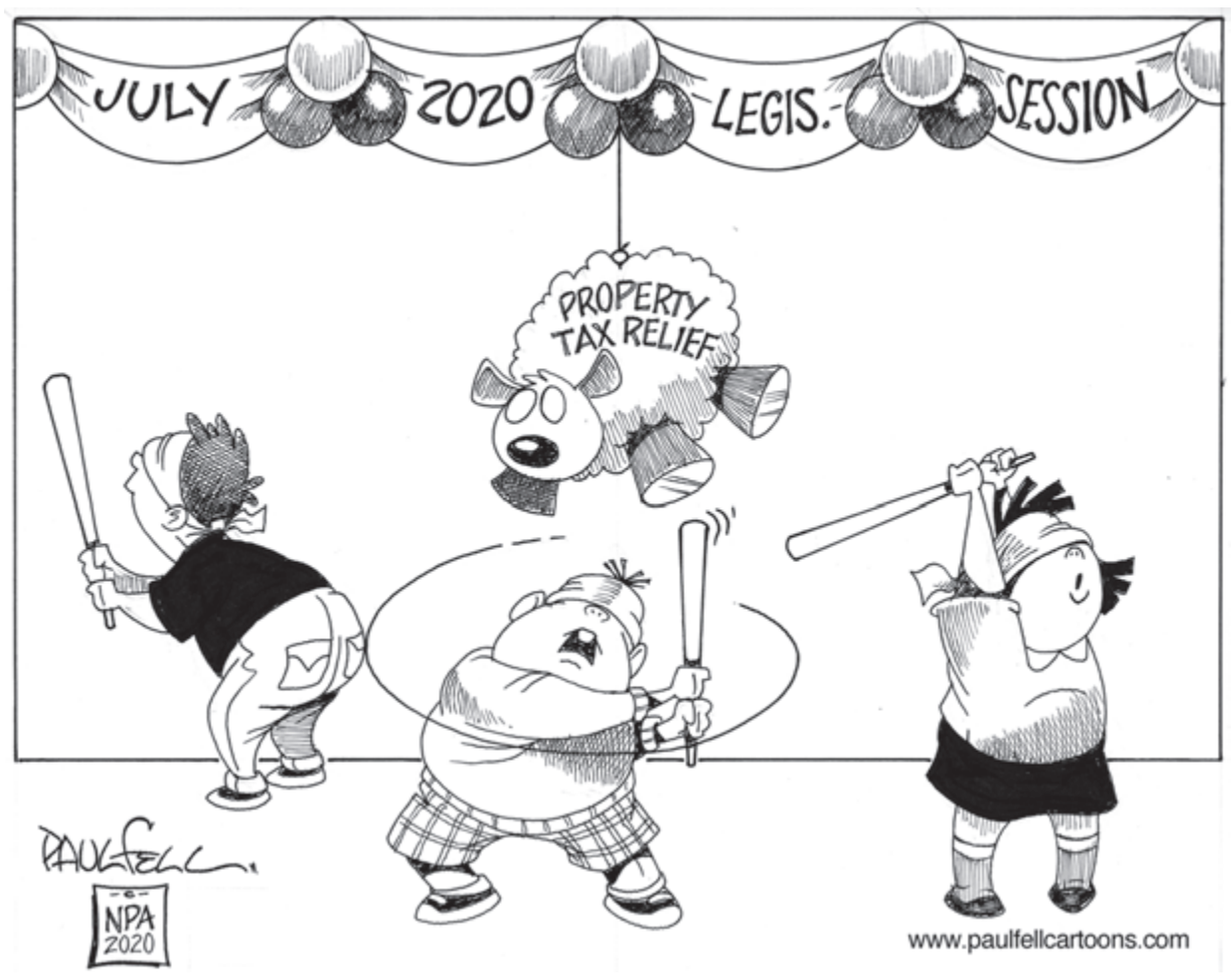
The United States is facing a health pandemic and a struggling economy. Forty million Americans are out of work. Families are under stress and are suffering. We see civil unrest and we are facing tremendous uncertainty. I have heard from so many Nebraskans telling me their fears — I share them all.

Despite these overwhelming challenges, we remain a strong state, a great nation, and a resilient people. Let us begin to heal our communities through individual acts of kindness. And let us humbly pray to God for wisdom.

Thank you for participating in the democratic process. I look forward to visiting with you again next week.

Political Satire

by Paul Fell



If things work out, lawmakers to gather July 20 to finish business

Capitol View

by J.L. Schmidt

With the Nebraska Legislature set to gather again in about a month (July 20), the most frequently asked question is will they get anything accomplished with just 17 days left?

Remember, the Legislature's only constitutional obligation is to pass a budget, in this case, budget adjustments. The bills to accomplish the Appropriations Committee's adjustment to the $9.4 billion budget are at the second stage of consideration. There's a strong chance they will pass with slight pandemic forced adjustments to the bottom line.

Appropriations Committee chairman Sen. John Stinner of Gering said the adjustments reflect the committee's main objectives of restoring the state's cash reserve, controlling state spending growth, attaining a structural balance between revenue and spending and leaving enough money for property tax relief. That was before the COVID-19 virus wreaked havoc on the state economy.

Another wild card in the pending budget debate is the first-round filibuster mounted by Sens. Justin Wayne and Ernie Chambers of Omaha to protest a perceived urban-rural split in the allocation of money. Wayne questioned $10 million for rural workforce housing when no direct appropriation for urban workforce housing has been approved during his time at the Legislature.

"This budget places rural over urban [interests] and increases the rural and urban divide," he said.

Committee Vice Chair Kate Bolz of Lincoln said there is no rural/urban divide or dichotomy in this budget. "I think the majority of what this budget does is lift up the state as a whole," she said.

Two other important issues run the risk of once again being inextricably linked. The Governor and a number of lawmakers want some manner of property tax relief, though most concede the way things are now, it won't be a dynamic proposal. The Governor and a smaller number of senators want a new business tax incentive bill to pass. The old one expires soon.

But there appears to be a larger number of mostly rural senators who want to tie the property tax and business incentives bills together. That marriage spelled doom last year as neither measure advanced, and Senator Tom Briese of Albion said this year's bills aren't out of the woods yet.

The Revenue Committee's property tax proposals are aimed at reducing the state's reliance on property taxes to fund education by increasing state aid to public schools. Key to the measure is reducing the percentage at which property is valued for school tax purposes while using up to 15 percent of state tax revenue to provide foundation aid per student to each school district. A proposed amendment to the bill would provide an estimated $520 million in property tax relief over the next three years.

The state's business tax incentive act, the Nebraska Advantage Act, is set to end this year. A new bill sponsored by Sen. Mark Kolterman of Seward would create the ImagiNE Nebraska Act. Qualifying businesses would receive a varying combination of incentives—wage credits, income tax credits, sales and use tax refunds and exemptions, personal property tax exemptions or real property tax refunds—based on their level of capital investment and the number of employees they hire at a minimum qualifying wage.

Renee Fry, executive director of OpenSky Policy Institute, says the proposal would reduce state revenue by approximately $1 billion over the next decade when Nebraska still has hundreds of millions of dollars in outstanding obligations under its current tax incentive programs.

She says the proposal's cost is concerning when the Legislature also is considering the major property tax relief proposal and funding for a large expansion project at the University of Nebraska Medical Center. If passed, those three measures alone could consume 6.8 to 9.4 percent of state revenue between 2023 and 2028.

Lawmakers have 17 days to wrap up as many loose ends as possible, and there are a lot of loose ends. Get ready for the show; it could be the best one in years!

Ricketts concern virus will flare

News to know

by Grant Schulte
Associated Press

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) - Nebraska could see another flare-up of coronavirus cases because of the demonstrations over the death of George Floyd, but state officials concluded that allowing protesters to peacefully vent was more important than concerns about the pandemic, Gov. Pete Ricketts said.

His comments came as new, lighter virus restrictions went into effect throughout most of the state. The restrictions approved by Ricketts allow bars, zoos, swimming pools and other public venues to reopen, with crowd limits based on a venue's occupancy.

Protests in Omaha and Lincoln have each drawn more than 1,000 people, often clustered into large groups as they confront law enforcement officers. Some protesters and officers haven't worn masks, ignoring the recommendation of public health officials.

"We're certainly concerned about that potential for additional spread of the coronavirus," Ricketts said at a news conference. "If you're out at the protests, it would be a good idea to wear a mask."

Ricketts said he discussed concerns about the virus with other public officials, but decided that the protesters' free-speech rights "outweigh the concerns about the pandemic."

He said the protesters are justifiably angry about the death of Floyd, a black man who died after Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin pressed a knee against his neck for more than eight minutes. Chauvin, who is white, has since been fired and charged with third-degree murder and second-degree manslaughter.

Officials in Omaha and Lincoln have imposed overnight curfews, from 8:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m., after a violent weekend that included widespread vandalism and numerous arrests in both cities. Ricketts has dispatched the Nebraska National Guard as well to help local and state law enforcement.

Tensions increased Monday, June 1, 2020, when the top prosecutor in Omaha, Douglas County Attorney Don Kleine, announced that he wouldn't file charges against a white bar owner who fatally shot a black man during the weekend protests.

Kleine said Jake Gardner, who owns two bars near where the shooting happened, fired the fatal shot during a scuffle with protesters outside of one of his bars. Kleine said Gardner feared for his life before the shooting, which killed 22-year-old James Scurlock.

On June 1, Ricketts and Omaha Mayor Jean Stothert implored protesters to stay peaceful and respect the curfew.

The new virus restrictions went into effect June 1, in 89 of Nebraska's 93 counties, despite the looming public health threat. State officials confirmed another 196 new cases on Sunday, bringing the statewide total to 14,101. Of that number, 170 people have died from the virus. More than 103,800 people have been tested so far.

Hospitals statewide continued to have adequate capacity, with 45 percent of hospital beds, 49 percent of intensive care unit beds and 77 percent of ventilators still available for use.

The new rules will also allow non-contact sports such as baseball, softball and volleyball to resume practices, games can begin on June 18. Rodeos can also resume, but contact sports such as football, basketball and wrestling will remain prohibited.

Ricketts imposed the rules to try to prevent the coronavirus from spreading and overwhelming the state's hospitals.

Some restrictions were also eased in hard-hit Hall, Hamilton, Merrick and Dakota counties, but to a lesser extent.

For some infected people, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, the virus can cause severe illness or death. But for most people, it causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough, that clear up in two to three weeks.

Economic opportunity for every American

Washington Round-up

by Adrian Smith

Across our nation, 2020 has been a year of upheaval. Since March, our lives have been drastically different as we have stayed home, worked remotely, and avoided gathering in large groups to help protect the health and safety of our most vulnerable populations. We have taken extraordinary steps in our personal, professional, and social lives in order to slow the spread of COVID-19.

Just as states have begun implementing plans to reopen public places and we begin resuming our daily lives as we knew them a few months ago, cities across our nation have been moved by the May 25 killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis.

I condemn racism and the violence inflicted on George Floyd in the strongest possible terms. I also condemn the looting, vandalism, and violence occurring across our country, particularly by those who are rioting solely because a moment of national reflection has provided them an excuse. We must strive together every day to ensure the freedoms of life, liberty and opportunity are available to their fullest extent to each of us.

This is a difficult time in our nation, and we must listen and reflect on how to move forward together. I am committed to helping the most vulnerable, and ensuring personal freedom and economic opportunity are truly available to every American.

Creating economic opportunity has long been a goal of mine. In 2018, I introduced the JOBS Act, the first major overhaul of our TANF (cash welfare) programs since the 1990s. Ways and Means Ranking Member Kevin Brady reintroduced the bill last year with my support, and I continue to support its goal – connecting individuals with the support they need to reenter the workforce, stay connected with employment, and have increased opportunity to receive advancement and promotion.

The last welfare reform improved the ability of mothers to return to the workforce, but its incentives left behind too many young people, particularly young men as states diverted resources to meet federal requirements which prioritized getting people off of welfare rolls without tracking whether they were successful after they attempted to reenter the workforce. We must do better.

As our country recovers, we must stay focused on solutions. One small step is ensuring the most vulnerable Americans have the opportunities they so desperately need.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The *Valentine Midland News* welcomes Letters to the Editor. We ask that letters be a maximum of 600 words in length.

Letters will be edited for clarity, brevity and good taste and will be subject to acceptance or rejection at the editorial staff's discretion.

Letters that may be libelous as well as unsigned letters will not be published.

Letters sent via e-mail must be accompanied by a signed hard copy. Letters must be signed with the author's true name, address and phone number for purposes of authentication.

An individual may only submit two letters per 30 days. Letters containing offensive, libelous material or misleading information will either not be run, or be edited.

Precedence will be given to letters from subscribers, and readers in the local area, with regard to current issues.

The *Valentine Midland News*, its owners, publisher, editor and staff members assume no responsibility, legal or otherwise, for opinions other than their own.

Check out the news @ www.valentinenews.com

Remdesivir first drug known to treat COVID-19

A major, scientific study on the results of the drug, remdesivir, used to treat patients hospitalized with coronavirus, was published in a recent issue of the New England Journal of Medicine, a leading scientific medical journal. The preliminary results about the study were released in late April, by an independent data and safety monitoring board overseeing the trial, while the study was still ongoing because of the implications for patients in the study and for public health.

Published scientific studies serve as a foundation to advance medical discoveries and provide a treatment guide for physicians.

University of Nebraska Medical Center/Nebraska Medicine infectious disease physician, Andre Kalil, MD., is one of the authors of the study. He led the study at UNMC where the first study participant in the United States was enrolled– a study that began February 21, and subsequently enrolled 1,063 participants in 10 countries.

The randomized, double-blind study, published May 22, found patients who were given remdesivir had a significant faster recovery time than those who received placebo and a trend to improved survival. The median time to recovery was 11 days for patients treated with remdesivir compared with 15 days for those who received placebo.

"This is not a cure, but it can make people get better sooner and survive," Dr. Kalil said. "We still have work to do."

Researchers also reported a survival benefit, with a 14-day mortality rate of 7.1 percent for the group receiving remdesivir versus 11.9 percent for the placebo group; however, the difference in mortality was not statistically significant.

The study analyzed hospitalized adults with COVID-19 with moderate to severe disease. Investigators found that remdesivir was most beneficial for hospitalized patients with severe disease who required supplemental oxygen.

The study compared 538 patients who received a 10-day course of intravenous, antiviral remdesivir drug developed by Gilead Sciences, Inc., to 521 patients who received standard, supportive care and placebo.

Dr. Kalil said because the medication shortens the disease duration, it's shortening time spent in the hospital.

"The medication shortens the duration of the time it takes to recover by about 30-40 percent, so some patients end up four to six days less in the hospital –requiring less oxygen, or less mechanical ventilation, and four to six days is an eternity when you're really sick," said Dr. Kalil who added there are 300 more patients' data to be analyzed from the study (currently data on 75 percent of patients has been analyzed).

The study, Adaptive COVID-19 Treatment Trial (ACTT), was funded by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID).

The article, "Remdesivir for the Treatment of COVID-19 – A Preliminary Report," can be found at https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMoa2007764.

Next study phase

Dr. Kalil and colleagues recently have begun the next phase of the study to evaluate the effects of remdesivir with another drug called Baricitinib. Researchers want to know if Baricitinib, used to reduce inflammation in rheumatoid arthritis patients, in combination with remdesivir, can reduce the inflammation in the lungs, in COVID-19 patients. UNMC/Nebraska Medicine was the first in the country to enroll a patient in the new study.

Dr. Kalil complimented collaborators local and worldwide, thanked patients who enroll in the trial and praised University of Nebraska leaders.

"It's a real team approach. We're fortunate to have the leadership here at the University of Nebraska and we have been leading the way with several other centers. We have to win as a team with everyone united. There's no other way. This is the only way we're going to defeat this pandemic."

"Patients and families who volunteer to participate in the clinical trial are heroes to me because it is with their participation that we could discover a new treatment for this virus. With their continued participation we're going to find more treatments."

BBB tips for travel during the pandemic

June 3, 2020 — Among the many effects of the current Coronavirus pandemic is the disruption and uncertainty of summer vacation plans. Many have had to cancel trip arrangements. Some may have decided to wait a bit and see how things play out. Others may be considering making new travel plans as states gradually open up again but are wondering what they should and should not do.

Weariness from being homebound for months has led to anticipation of summer travel and a return to something resembling a vacation. Your Better Business Bureau (BBB) has some suggestions and tips for those wanting to make travel plans or deal with the complications of changing plans already made.

Consider taking some of these steps when rescheduling or canceling those travel plans:

Make contact, communicate and keep it friendly. Reach out to the companies or agencies you made your arrangements with to check on refund or rescheduling options. Some of these organizations are overwhelmed by similar requests so try to exercise patience and avoid getting overly aggressive. That can just put the other party on the defensive and lead to barriers instead of bridges. Pandemic distress is being felt by everyone, including that employee on the other end of the line.

Get the details regarding the process and procedures involved in future changes. Expectations of a new wave of the virus have to be considered. Is there flexibility should that time come, and you need to change your plans?

Stay on top of the news if you are planning to go ahead and book travel. You can sign up for text or email updates from most tourism boards, resorts, airlines and other companies with which you make arrangements.

Booked a VRBO already, or expecting to? See their updated policy for the pandemic at help.vrbo.com .

Give cancellation policies a thorough read, including the fine print. Right now, doing this matters more than ever. Take nothing for granted that isn't specified in a stated policy.

Travel insurance may be a good idea, but also may be less helpful than you assume. Policies differ. Most will not cover a cancellation just on the basis of your fear to travel. Read it carefully.

Travel agents can be helpful in dealing with all the rapid changes taking place.

Watch out for those travel deals that are popping up everywhere. Uncertainty about the future means sudden changes may be necessary. Be sure the deal you are considering comes with guaranteed ways to make changes. As always, keep in mind that additional fees and charges can eat into any savings you thought the deal would provide.

Always use BBB.org to check up on a company's reputation with former customers for reviews and complaints.

Scams are everywhere. Legitimate appearing ads for travel deals can be completely fake. Websites can look real but be constructed by a scammer to fool you. Never click on links in ads, texts and emails that come to you unsolicited. You could be enabling malware downloads that will steal your privacy and identity.

Don't let the pent-up desire for a summer getaway blind you to precautions that should always be followed. Your BBB is mindful of the need for marketplace trust during the current crisis. Trust your BBB with your questions by contacting them at 800-649-6814 or visit BBB.org.

THINKING ABOUT HEALTH

Reports about coronavirus vaccine don't always give the full story

by Trudy Lieberman,
Community Health News Service

How soon will we have a vaccine to protect us from coronavirus? That's the question uppermost on the minds of many Americans, especially the elderly and others especially at risk for a severe bout of the disease.

Everyone wants the vaccine yesterday. Maybe that's why the media cheered in late May and hope soared when Moderna, a 10-year-old biotechnology company based in Cambridge, Massachusetts, issued a press release with hopeful news.

Positive Phase 1 data, although early, showed promising results, the company said: "These data substantiate our belief that mRNA-1273 (the vaccine name) has potential to prevent COVID-19 disease." Given how devastating the disease has been, who wouldn't appreciate news like that?

The media ran with the story. The company's stock value zoomed up even though Moderna has yet to sell any products. The public was left with the message that maybe a vaccine was right around the corner. But is it?

Readers and listeners need to be on the lookout for clues to the real story right now.

Helen Branswell, a veteran reporter I know who has covered other disease outbreaks and knows her stuff, penned a cautionary message for STAT News where she now works. She wrote, "While Moderna blitzed the media, it revealed very little information, and most of what it did disclose were words, not data. With science, numbers speak louder than words."

I reached Branswell by phone to chat about how people should judge the studies, the claims, and the wishful thinking that will surely come until a new medication has been discovered that will tame the virus.

First off, the public needs to understand that all clinical trials are not created equal. A Phase 1 trial that Moderna reported is just the first step in the process. These trials are usually small with no expectation there will be data about how effective a drug will be. Instead, Branswell pointed out, such a trial is "really about establishing a dose to make sure it's safe enough to keep going.

In a Phase 2 trial, which may enroll a few hundred people, researchers are looking for efficacy and safety signals that tell them whether it makes sense to continue and whether the result may be an effective vaccine for humans.

Phase 3 trials are the gold standard. They are usually large and double blind. That means half of the participants receive the trial vaccine and the other half a placebo. Neither the participants nor the researchers know which half is which until the end of the trial. It's generally best to look for how well a new drug performed in a Phase 3 trial with results published in a peer-reviewed journal where experts have scrutinized the data.

In this case, because of the rush to find a vaccine, Branswell said some testing may be compressed. For example, a Phase 1 trial may be combined with a Phase 2 trial in the hope of speeding up the process and getting quickly to a marketable vaccine.

Branswell told me many things are still not known about the virus. For example, she said, "It's still not clear what protective immunity should look like and what level of antibodies are needed to ward off disease?"

When science produces answers to questions like those, then ideally, results of Phase 3 trials should be published in peer-reviewed journals where experts have a chance to "kick the tires" and cast a critical eye on the data. If a new therapeutic drug passes the test, then it is considered fit for humans.

Moderna's vaccine in the making "may be effective," Branswell said. "But we don't know yet. It's too soon. People don't understand it takes time to produce a vaccine."

So what does the vaccine universe look like now? Eight vaccine candidates are in human trials, and more than 100 others are ongoing with some in animal testing. Given the urgency to find a vaccine, press releases similar to Moderna's will undoubtedly find their way into the hands of journalists. The public needs to read them skeptically.

The same goes for news stories built around a single source or an animal study or a study that doesn't mention a control group or is built on a "preprint." These are essentially rough drafts of studies that have not peer reviewed.

"Results of these studies should not be reported by the media as established information," warns Gary Schwitzer, the long-time publisher of Health News Review.

"Questions about the quality of the evidence are more important than ever before."

Do you have a question about the efforts to develop a vaccine against the coronavirus? Write to Trudy at trudy.lieberman@gmail.com.

Lakeview/Crookston

Jean Burge
402-376-2134

Visiting Ron and Becky Patton last week was their daughter and son-in-law, Cynthia and Brady Cope. The Copes were traveling from Pennsylvania to Montana, where he has taken a new job. Alex and Laura BadBear and other family members visited with them also.

Dean and Roz Danhof of Montana spent the weekend with the Logterman family and attended the wedding of Jae Lynn Logterman and Marshall Miller on Saturday.

A bridal shower for Heather Patton will be held Monday, June 29 at 7:00 at the Lakeview Community Hall. Ladies of the community area invited.

Gilbert and Virginia Witte attended the wedding and reception for Lee Shelbourn and Samantha Parkhurst on Saturday in Valentine.

The annual 4th of July Lakeview Church picnic is still being discussed at this point. With "social distancing" rules in affect, plans are still being made as to deal with that aspect. I will keep you posted. Isn't it amazing how what seemed such simple pleasures in life have changed?

Wind, wind and more wind was the theme for the weekend. With gusts over 50 mph, temps near 100, some stormy clouds - well, it wasn't the greatest weekend to be outside. Some in the area reported hail, but the storms were pretty spotty. This week looks better, and we'll pray for rain.

New Books at the Library



"Hard Cash Valley" by Brian Panowich
"The Paris Hours" by Alex George
"Only the River" by Anne Raeff
"The Woman of a Thousand Names" by Alexandra Lapierre
"Silence on Cold River" by Casey Dunn
"The Last Blue" by Isla Morley
"The Ancestor" by Danielle Trussoni
"The Runner" by Stephen Leather

Valentine Senior Center News

ACTIVITIES

Center closed until further notice to all congregate meals and services except home-delivered meals and the loan of medical equipment.

HOME DELIVERY OR CURBSIDE PICKUP of meals is available through the Senior Center. At this time, the requirements of being homebound, or recovering from surgery or an illness is waived. The suggested contribution for persons age 60 and over is $4.50. Please call the Center for more information, 402-376-1400.

A miscommunication has resulted in Memorial Day flowers being removed in error, in particular-Section G at Mt. Hope Cemetery. The Senior Center apologizes to anyone affected by this action. You are welcome to come to the center and retrieve your flowers that are in storage there.

CASH DONATIONS: Betty Copeland

NON-CASH DONATIONS: Dennis and Carol Ahrens

MEMORIAL: In memory of Herb Pabst from Bill and June Stroup, Ann Keech, Jerry and Mary Henderson, Bill and Betty Joseph, Carolyn Tehrani

In memory of Dean Colburn from Suzy Beel.

** Farmers Market coupons will be distributed through the senior center this year. Please call the senior center to add your name to the list. Income guidelines apply: single-person household annual income of no more than $23,606. Two-person household annual income of no more than $31,894.

VOLUNTEERS FOR THE WEEK: Bernard and Lovella Miles, Marie Arendt, Cherry Hafer, Dan and Jerilyn Colburn, Becky Pettigrew, Northstar Services, Perry and Lindy Ayers, Dave Prasch.

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• 416 N. Hall St.: 3 bedroom, 1 bath, upgrades include siding, windows, doors, walk-in shower, forced air furnace, sewer & water lines, appliances included, 24x42 detached garage insulated & heated. $95,000.

• Vacant commercial lot on south Main St in Valentine. Level, graveled lot 75'x150' situated between the Cherry County Tourism office and the Cherry County Historical Society Museum. This property at the junction of Highway 20 and Highway 83 affords one of the best commercial locations on Main Street Valentine. Priced at $110,000.

Have potential buyers for all classes of real estate.
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Sat. 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

HEALTHCARE WITH HEART...

CHERRY COUNTY CLINIC
Physicians Schedule

For the week of June 8-12

Monday	Family Practice	Dr. Kelli Garwood	In all day
		Cassie Schill, PA-C	In all day
Tuesday	Family Practice	Cassie Schill, PA-C	In all day
Wednesday	Family Practice	Dr. Kelli Garwood	In all day
		Cassie Schill, PA-C	In all day
Thursday	Family Practice	Cassie Schill, PA-C	In all day
Friday	Family Practice	Cassie Schill, PA-C	In all day

For the week of June 15-19

Monday	Family Practice	Cassie Schill, PA-C	In all day
Tuesday	Family Practice	Cassie Schill, PA-C	In all day
Wednesday	Family Practice	Dr. Kelli Garwood	In all day
		Cassie Schill, PA-C	In all day
Thursday	Family Practice	Dr. Kelli Garwood	In all day
Friday	Family Practice	Dr. Kelli Garwood	In all day
		Cassie Schill, PA-C	In all day

To schedule an appointment please call 376-3770. 512 N. Green St. • Valentine, NE

Area Church Services

First Baptist Church
2nd and Green St.• 376-1659
Pastor Johnathon Moore
"Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice"
Summer Worship Schedule
SUNDAY MORNING
Sunday School Classes (all ages) 9:30 a.m.
Worship Service 11:00 a.m.
WEDNESDAY
Next Generation 6:30-8:00 p.m.

Crossroads Assembly
404 E. Hwy 20.• 376-2905
Pastor Paul Maunu
SUNDAY
Bible Classes (all ages) 9:30 a.m.
Worship Service 10:30 a.m.
Nursery 10:30 a.m.
Children's Church 10:30 a.m.
WEDNESDAY
Youth Services 6:30 p.m.
(6th thru 12th grade)
THURSDAY
Prayer Service 7:00 p.m.

Berean Bible Church
702 East 7th St.• 376-3714
Pastor Scott McClellen
Worship Schedule
SUNDAY
Early Church Service 9:15 a.m.
Late Church Service 10:45 a.m.
Sunday School will be offered at both services for the kids.
WEDNESDAY EVENING
Bible Study 7:00 p.m.
FRIDAY MORNING
Men's Bible Study 6:30 a.m.

Zion Ev. Lutheran Church
Wisconsin Synod
3rd and Haley • 376-1643
Pastor Thadeus Flitter
Sunday Services 10:00 a.m.
Lutheran Radio Service
(KWYR AM1260) 8:15 a.m.
The Twister FM 99.5, 12:30 p.m.

Zion Ev. Lutheran
Grade School
224 N. Govt. St. 376-2745
Hannah Carter, Preschool teacher/ Director
Emma Doble, Teacher K-3
Ethan Doble, Teacher 4-8/Principal

St. Mary's Catholic Church-Nenzel
Sunday 10:30 a.m. MDT

Our Savior Lutheran Church
Missouri Synod
130 East 3rd St. • 376-2932
SUNDAY
Worship/Communion 9:00 a.m.
Sunday School/Adult Bible Study 10:30 a.m.
WEDNESDAY
After School Bible School 3:45 p.m.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
339 West 4th St. • 376-2671
Jeremy Johnson-Branch President
660-988-7189
SUNDAY SERVICES
Sacrament 10:00 a.m.
2nd hour block 11:10 a.m.

Seventh Day Adventist
8th and Haley • 376-2364
Pastor Fred Grant
402-389-0836
SATURDAY
Sabbath School 9:45 - 10:45 a.m.
Worship Service 11:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m

Victory Bible Church
Merriman
Pastor Dave Morrison
Sunday Service 6:00 p.m.
Thursday Bible Study 7:00 p.m.

Grace Ev. Lutheran Church
Missouri Synod
100 E. 2nd Ave. • Merriman, NE
Pastor Travis Sherman
Sunday Services 4:00 p.m. MST

St. Nicholas Catholic Church
400 West 5th • 376-1672
Fr. Abraham Kaduthodiyil
Saturday 6:00 p.m.
Sunday 9:00 a.m.

Lakeview Christian Reformed Church
North from Crookston; right at Lakeview School; then right after the cemetery.
Pastor Mark Langenbach
Sunday Services 10:00 a.m.

Sandhills Church of Hope
314 W. Nebraska St., Cody
402-823-4136
Pastor Kurt Busenitz
Sunday Worship Services
8:30 a.m. MT (Cody)
11:30 a.m. MT (Cutcomb)
Kids Club After School Program Wednesday(Cody)
Seasonal Bible Studies also available

Grace Lutheran Church
(Affiliated with the Church of the Lutheran Confession)
810 West 3rd
Paul D. Nolting, Pastor
Pastor's Residence 376-3248
Summer Schedule
Easter to Labor Day
Church Services 9:30 a.m.
Live stream at valentinelutheran.com
Winter Schedule
Labor Day to March
Bible Class 9:30 a.m.
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Church Services 10:30 a.m.
Radio Program - KVSH
Sunday 8:05 a.m.

Grace Ev. Lutheran School & Preschool

Wood Lake Union Church
Rev. Don Letellier • 967-3390
Sunday School 10:00 a.m.
Worship Service 11:00 a.m.
WEDNESDAY
Prayer Service 8:00 p.m.

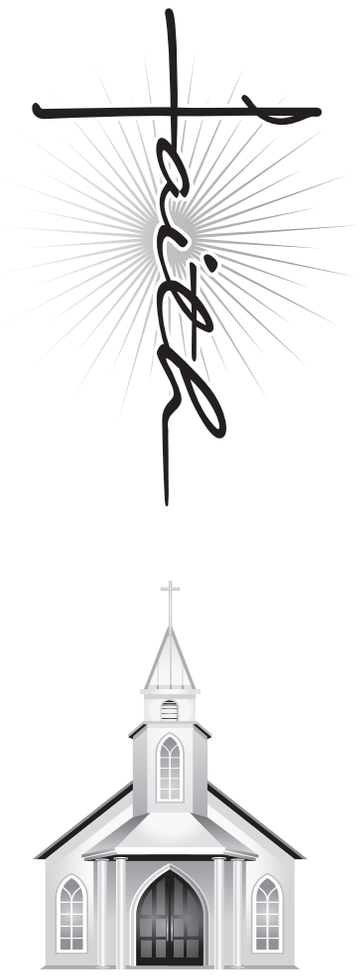
St. John's Episcopal
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372 N. Main St.
376-1723
Pastor Steve Meysing
Pastor Jon Mapa
Worship Schedule
Morning Prayer 10:30 a.m.
The Holy Eucharist 10:30 a.m.
Pantry Hours
Thursdays 10:00 a.m.- Noon
Except Holidays

Eli Wesleyan Church
Paul McNare • 308-689-3500
Sunday Services 10:30 a.m.

Hunts Chapel United Methodist Church
Pastor Judith Miller-Qualley
Cody at 10:30 a.m. MT

Valentine Presbyterian Church
Pastor Guy Helms
325 N. Victoria St. Office: 376-1305
AA - Monday, Thursday, Saturday 7:00 p.m.
Al-Anon - Mondays 6:00 p.m.
Sundays: Worship 10:30 a.m.
LOGOS Middle & High School

United Methodist Churches
804 E. 5th St., Valentine
402-376-3473
Pastor A.G. Turner
620-762-1313
Sunday Worship Opportunities
Combined at 9:30 a.m. CT
Coffee-Friendship Hall 10:30 a.m.
Sunday School Opportunities
Adults: 8:30-9:30 a.m.
Children: Pre-5th 10:15-10:45 a.m.
Office Hours
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday
8:00 a.m - Noon
Closed
Tuesday, Friday, and weekends



Obituaries

Jean M. Bagwell, 73

Jean Marie (Williams) Bagwell was born March 15, 1947 in Valentine to Julia (Borszich) and Lloyd Williams. She received her early education in Crookston Elementary School and then attended high school in Valentine. She graduated with the class of 1965.

Jean married Ronald Bagwell in Lincoln on October 25, 1969. This union was blessed with two children; Bob and Pam. Ron and Jean raised their family in Valentine and then moved to Grand Island in 1990.

She was a member of First Faith Methodist Church in Grand Island. Jean enjoyed sewing, cooking, painting and crocheting. Her fried chicken couldn't be beat and was a family favorite.

Jean passed away May 31, 2020 at St. Francis Hospital in Grand Island. She was preceded in death by her mother Julia Holbrook, father Lloyd Williams, step-father Gordon Holbrook, sister Carol Schwanz, and brother, Harold Williams.

She is survived by husband Ronald of Grand Island, son, Robert Bagwell of Lincoln, daughter, Pam (Scott) Battershaw of Valentine, grandchildren, Carson Bagwell, Jeff (Becky) Wrage, AJ Wrage, James Battershaw, Jarrett Battershaw and great granddaughter, Brenlee Wrage. Also surviving are sisters Bev (Johnny) Zahl and Connie (John) Schaefer all of North Platte.

Graveside service was held on Saturday, June 6 at 11:00 a.m. at the Crookston Cemetery in Crookston. Sandoz Chapel of the Pines is in charge of service arrangements.

Alice E. O'Donnell, 74

Alice Elaine (Osterman) O'Donnell passed away peacefully at her home in North Platte on May 29, 2020. She was 74 years old.

Elaine was born on June 12, 1945 to Walter Nile Osterman and Doris Lucille (DeLong) Osterman in Valentine. Her parents lovingly nicknamed her "Sis" and called her that as long as they were alive. She joined a brother who was five years older than her, Nile Walter whose nickname was "Sonny".

On June 12, 1962 Elaine was united in marriage to John Patrick O'Donnell at the Calvary Episcopal Church in Hyannis. To this union two children were born: Patricia Ann (Patti) and Patrick Harry (Pat). Their early marriage was spent on a ranch south of Whitman where Elaine was a ranch wife and mother while dabbling a little in the sales world of Avon cosmetics. When they moved from the ranch to Valentine, Elaine learned there was a nursing program at Sinte Gleska University. It had been her lifelong dream to be a nurse. She fulfilled this dream by receiving her R.N. degree and went on to work at the Cherry County Hospital and Pine View Good Samaritan Nursing home in Valentine. An opportunity to advance her career was presented to her by the State of Nebraska Nursing Department so she and John moved to North Platte. For the remainder of her career she was proud to be a State Surveyor for the Nursing homes, Assisted Living Centers as well as a tester for nursing students after they had finished their training in the panhandle of Nebraska. She held this position with great pride for 25 years until her retirement.

After John passed away Elaine was lucky enough to find a second loving and caring companion in Jerry Wright who she spent the last 29 years of her life with.

Elaine is survived by her two children: Patricia Duffy (Dan), Winner, SD and Patrick O'Donnell (Marilyn), Oskaloosa, KS; six grandchildren: Samantha Cable (Aaron), Rapid City SD, Danee' Bricker (Ryan), Evergreen, CO,Brittany Chaplin, Lawrence KS, LaRissa Bertram (Brady) Watford City ND,Casey O'Donnell (Emily), Denver CO and Skyler Best (Tanner), Winner, SD; Five great grandchildren: Dieter Bricker, Slade, Franki Grace and Porter Bertram and Saylor Best and her loving companion and partner Jerry Wright, as well as many other relatives too numerous to mention.

She was preceded in death by her father, Walter Nile Osterman, her mother, Doris Lucille (DeLong) Osterman, her husband John P. O'Donnell, her grandson, John Patrick O'Donnell, her brother, Nile Walter Osterman, and her grandparents, Fredrick Charles (Charlie) Osterman, Elsie (Blank) Osterman, James Royal (Roy) DeLong and Clara Edith (Jackson) DeLong.

Melvin C. Thornton, 84



Mel was born in Sioux City, IA to parents Phil and Ruth Thornton. The family moved to Storm Lake, IA, where Mel grew up living a block from the lake and enjoyed sailing with his twin brother and friends in a boat they bought and renovated.

Mel graduated from Storm Lake High in 1953 and received a Navy Scholarship to the University of Nebraska, where he majored in mathematics and met his future wife, Rosemary. After graduation in 1957 Mel spent two years in the Navy, serving as an LTJG on the Calvert, a troop transport ship. He and Rosemary were married in 1958.

After the Navy the couple moved to Champaign, IL, where Mel studied mathematics at the U of Illinois, earning a PhD in math. Meanwhile, three boys were born before the family moved to Madison, WI, where Mel taught at the University of Wisconsin and their daughter was born. Mel's last stop was the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

He flourished at UNL. His passion for mathematics inspired his students' learning. He reached beyond traditional university students with his leadership of the Nebraska Math Scholars and Western Math Scholars, teacher enhancement programs for secondary mathematics teachers. For these programs and others, in 1995 Mel was inducted into the Academy of Distinguished Teachers. In the previous year, 1993-94 UNL selected him for the Outstanding Teaching and Instructional Activity Award. His teaching also brought him recognition from the Carnegie Foundation in 1994 as Nebraska Professor of the Year.

In 2000 Mel retired. He and his wife then spent 20 years living in two places: their Lincoln home and a log cabin on the prairie near Valentine, where Mel honed his building skills to finish the inside of the cabin. He and Rosemary spent their retirement traveling, visiting their children in the four time zones and canoeing or kayaking on the nearby Niobrara National Scenic River.

Along with his wife and children, Mel was a member of the First United Methodist Church. The two also were working members of Friends of the Niobrara and Nebraska Wildlife Federation. Throughout his life Mel was a helper, a builder and a fixer, always willing to pay attention to others' needs or problems. As a husband and father he was the best.

Survivors include wife, Rosemary Thornton, Lincoln; son, Jeff Thornton and wife, Karen and grandchildren, Nolan, Declan and Charlotte, Croton-on-Hudson, NY, Joel Thornton and wife, Melissa and grandchildren, Cammy, Cara and Cade, Dallas, Jay Thornton and wife, Crystal and grandchildren Rosemary and Madeline, Seattle; daughter, Jennifer Thornton-Kolbe and husband, Charles and grandchildren, Emma, Evan and Elias, Denver. Other survivors are twin brother, Manly Thornton and wife, Peg of Elkhart, IN; sister, Mary Ruth Turner, Iowa City; brother-in-law, Gary Weeks and wife, Jane of Guthrie OK, sister-in-law, E.J. Weeks, Omaha and many nieces and nephews.

A private graveside service will be held for Mel.

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As If

"For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he."
Proverbs 23:7



Sometimes it is hard to see the good in others, especially when they don't treat us the way we think we deserve. It is all too easy to see others as selfish and mean-spirited. But we usually do better by believing the best rather than the worst about others. Acting "as if" you like someone and they like you is more likely to bring about friendly relations than acting as if they are your enemy. Believing that we can do a difficult task and acting on that belief is more likely to achieve those results than giving in to doubt and fear. This aspect of positive thinking also often holds true when we are talking about global or even cosmic events. Believing that we can change the world creates the impetus for positive social action. And simply believing that the world is a good and safe place changes our perspective on it. A great philosopher once said "The world of the happy man is a happy world." When it comes to questions of faith, sometimes we have trouble believing that God is working in our lives, or even believing that God exists. But sometimes we have to act "as if" God exists in order for us to see that He does exist. Getting down on one's knees and praying is sometimes the only way to open our hearts and minds to the existence of a benevolent God. Act as if you are happy, and successful, and that there is a benevolent, loving and all-powerful God who can help you. Because all of this can be true.
–Christopher Simon

These weekly church messages are provided to you by the following concerned and responsible citizens and businesses.

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Treasure Hunt = Family Fun!!!
Hey parents - looking for a chance to get out of the house for a fun family adventure? Then drive on down to The First Baptist Church for our "Concrete&Cranes Virtual VBS Treasure Hunt"!
Search for clues all around Valentine for fun and prizes!
The Hunt starts at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, June 14th at the First Baptist Church parking lot on the corner of 2nd and Green Street.
Join the fun, join the adventure!



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Niobrara National Scenic River and Niobrara Council introduces Citizen Science Projects

Valentine, NE – The Niobrara National Scenic River, along with the Niobrara Council, is offering opportunities for the public to participate in scientific research on Friday afternoons beginning June 12 at 1:00 p.m. These will continue through July 31. They will take place at the Niobrara National Scenic River Visitor Center in Valentine. Due to social distancing best practices, each session is limited to nine participants. Please call to reserve your spot. Multiple sessions will be provided upon need. We encourage all ages, families, and single people to participate. It's for everyone!

You do not need to be a scientist to participate. These activities introduce the participant to a topic and show how it connects to the Niobrara River and instruction for an ongoing scientific research project. These activities can be done in your own communities or places you travel. Many of them are connected to NASA whose projects need millions of pieces of data to make them relevant. Citizen Science is the collection and analysis of data relating to the natural world by members of the general public, typically as part of a collaborative project with professional scientists.

June Schedule:

June 12, GLOBE: Trees -Measure tree height (without climbing the tree) to aid scientists in tracking the carbon budget and the ecosystem's ability to produce trees.

June 19, Globe at Night – It was a dark and moonless night….. when people from around the world go outside to evaluate the darkness of the sky in their area in this ongoing project.

June 26, Creek Critters – Explore the tiny living things in the creek that indicate the water quality.

Niobrara National Scenic River is one of America's National Scenic Rivers and a unit of the National Parks Service in Valentine, Nebraska. Keep up with the latest information by following us on Facebook (Niobrara National Scenic River) and Instagram (@ NiobraraRiverNPS). For more information, please call 402-376-1901 or visit www.nps.gov/niob. Visitor Center hours of operation are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. daily. Admission is free of charge.

Miss Rodeo Nebraska Association calls off pageant

The Miss Rodeo Nebraska Association will not have a pageant this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The decision was not made lightly – it came after months of consideration and monitoring of safety recommendations by state and local health officials.

The MRNA tried to come up with alternatives, even pushing the pageant back from June to August, while still keeping the welfare of contestants and attendees as its top priority. Ultimately, it was determined that cancelling the pageant was in the best interest of everyone.

The reigns of Miss Rodeo Nebraska 2020 Joeli Walrath and Miss Teen Rodeo Nebraska 2019 Brylee Thompson will be extended into next year.

"The safety of those involved with the pageant and the public was the committee's foremost concern, thus making the decision for us to cancel the pageant," said Cindy Petersen, chair of the pageant committee. "We are grateful to our current titleholders who are willing to carry their titles into the next year and are looking forward to a successful pageant in 2021."

Miss Rodeo America, Inc. made the same announcement last week – putting off its pageant until December of 2021. Current MRA, Jordan Tierney, will continue her reign until that time.

Creativity, teamwork key to providing 4-H youth a fair experience in 2020

Lincoln, Neb., June 8, 2020 – All across Nebraska, county fair boards and ag societies are working to determine what their fairs will look like in 2020.

Some counties have elected to cancel their fairs in an effort to slow the spread of COVID-19. Others are choosing to proceed - though perhaps in a modified, socially distanced way. Others still continue to weigh the pros and cons.

Nebraska 4-H is committed to making sure every single youth involved in 4-H across the state has the opportunity to show their livestock and exhibit their projects this summer, whether or not their county is having a fair, and no matter what that fair looks like, said Chuck Hibberd, dean and director of Nebraska Extension.

"We want to provide a 4-H experience at the county fair that is robust, that is safe, that is enjoyable and that gives our 4-H youth the opportunity to exhibit their hard work," he said.

Just as fairs boards and ag societies are figuring out what fairs will look like in the era of COVID-19, Nebraska 4-H is still figuring out how to adapt both livestock shows and static exhibits to adhere to recommendations from the governor's office, the University of Nebraska and district health departments. But through teamwork, creativity and hard work, they're getting closer.

In Platte County, which has one of the earliest fairs, Platte County Agricultural Society, the Platte County 4-H Council, the Platte County Board of Supervisors East Central Health District have been working together to imagine a fair in the era of COVID-19, said Jill Goedeken, Platte County 4-H youth development extension educator.

Representatives from the agricultural society, the 4-H Council and the county board of supervisors began discussing what the county fair and the 4-H component of it might look like in April, before they even knew whether they would be able to have an in-person event at all. When in late May, the governor's office gave counties the green light to hold fairs this summer, the groups immediately met with the East Central Health District. Together, the groups decided to focus this year's fair on 4-H and FFA exhibits and events, and to limit the number of spectators at those events. The groups worked together to develop guidelines for face coverings, social distancing and capacity of buildings on the fairgrounds. When all of the partner groups were satisfied with the guidelines, Goedeken scheduled a call with the county's 4-H families so they were aware of what this year's fair would bring.

For the next three weeks, Goedeken and her colleagues will work out the nitty-gritty details of 4-H livestock shows and static exhibits.

"I would say at this point, all ideas are on the table," she said. "We are considering all the ways to celebrate and showcase the work of our youth."

Initially, Nebraska 4-H had considered moving some events online, but after talking with 4-H families, Nebraska 4-H administrators decided to focus on in-person 4-H experiences as much as possible, Hibberd said.

Part of the 4-H experience is seeing friends from other communities and 4-H clubs at the fair, interacting with the judges and spending time in the livestock barns and exhibit halls, he said.

Those are also the experiences that Goedeken says make 4-H such a valuable program for youth development.

Goedeken believes 4-H helps youth build skills in four critical areas. It allows them to master a skill and to feel the sense of pride that comes along with mastery. It also fosters a sense of belonging, gives youth a chance to demonstrate generosity, and builds independence.

Goedeken said that Platte County Extension and partner organizations are keeping those four areas in mind when designing the 2020 Platte County Fair 4-H experience.

She is grateful, she said, for the strong partnerships among all entities involved in the Platte County Fair. And she also knows that a lot could be riding on the decisions they make, as counties with later fairs are likely looking to early birds like Platte County to see what works and what doesn't.

She believes, though, that those involved with the fair are prioritizing the right things.

"We're all doing it for the right reasons," Goedeken said. "We're doing it for the benefit of youth in our county."

High School Finals Rodeo to be held in Burwell

May 18, 2020 (Hastings, Neb.) Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Adams County Ag Society has made the decision that the 2020 Nebraska High School Finals Rodeo will not be held in Hastings. The rodeo was to be held June 18-20.

After receiving guidance from the local health department and the governor's office, it was determined that protecting the health of the participants and the community will be best met by not hosting the event. Directed health measures, including limitations of gathering size of events, social distancing, requiring the wearing of masks, and testing all volunteers and committee members for COVID-19, was not feasible.

It was an emotional decision, but it was decided that, in order to be socially responsible, there was no reasonable way to keep competitors, fans, volunteers and sponsors healthy. Directed health measures have made it nearly impossible.

We will miss seeing the bright smiles and eager faces of our Nebraska high school rodeo athletes and we'll be ready for them in 2021!

The 2020 Nebraska High School Finals Rodeo is set to take place in Burwell June 17-20.

For more information on the Nebraska High School Rodeo Association as they move forward with alternate plans for the 2020 State Finals, visit their website at www.hsrodeo-nebraska.com.

Virtual livestock judging camp will be held June 16-18

CURTIS, Neb. - (June 5, 2020) Youth interested in livestock evaluation can participate in a national, virtual Nebraska livestock judging camp on June 16-18.

Daily Zoom sessions from 10:00 a.m. to noon C.T. will be open to any age of youth, from anywhere in the U.S., said Doug Smith, animal science professor and livestock judging coach at the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture in Curtis.

"Since our traditional on-campus livestock judging and animal science field days in Curtis and Lincoln were canceled due to the novel coronavirus pandemic, we came up with another way to stay connected with Nebraska youth," explained Smith.

"We will start with beef cattle on the first morning, followed by sheep and goats on Wednesday, and conclude with swine on Thursday," he said.

Topics will include EPD's for cattle, note-taking, priority traits for market and breeding animals, terminology and phrases to use in reasons, and evaluation of practice classes.

Youth can gain not only from evaluation and placings but by written reasons e-mailed each afternoon for individual review and feedback.

Blaine French, livestock judging coach and youth educator at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, is co-coordinator of the virtual camp.

"We're just really excited to be able to offer this opportunity to the youth of Nebraska and elsewhere," said French, who splits his work in UNL animal science at the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources with Nebraska Extension.

"This will be a unique way for students to have some interaction with Nebraska coaches as well as practice before their 4-H and State FFA contests this summer," French added.

NCTA interim dean, Kelly Bruns, a former livestock judging coach and animal science professor for 18 years, helped Smith and French with virtual camp logistics and filming livestock.

Much of that video was compiled with the assistance of Judging Pro, a Missouri company specializing in livestock evaluation resources.

"Reasons may be the most interesting part of our work with the students," French said. "They will e-mail the reasons by 5:00 p.m. and I'll spend Tuesday and Wednesday evenings reviewing and critiquing those. Dr. Smith will review the swine reasons and we'll have responses back before we resume the next morning."

See agenda and registration details at NCTA/ UNL Virtual Judging Camp Registration.

A single payment per household enables several family members to participate. Once registered, participants will receive a Zoom link.

For further details, contact Smith at 308-367-5286 or doug.smith@unl.edu, or French at Blaine.french@unl.edu.

Join the Great Park Pursuit for a Nebraska outdoor adventure

LINCOLN, Neb. – Enjoy an outdoor adventure with family or friends. Join the Great Park Pursuit for a chance to visit Nebraska's many park areas, engage in healthy recreation – and possibly win prizes.

As a safety measure, the start of the traditional Great Park Pursuit was delayed until it aligned with Directed Health Measures. With travel restrictions lifting, the program now has opened to receive submissions, and the deadline has been extended to October 31, 2020.

The Great Park Pursuit is a free program encouraging participants to visit up to 20 official sites across the state, consisting of community, regional, state and federal parks. Participants register a team of up to 10 people online and then follow clues from the website or Great Park Pursuit mobile app to find a program post located somewhere within a park area. Once they find the post, the team can use the mobile app to mark their visit, or make a pencil impression of the post to prove they were there.

A number of prizes are up for grabs, including Nebraska state park entry permits for 2021, an iPad, and the grand prize, an outdoor recreation package valued at $1,500. Prizes and entry into drawings are based on the number of post impressions that teams collect, or the number of park visits they mark on the mobile app.

The goal of the Great Park Pursuit, a partnership between the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission and the Nebraska Recreation and Park Association, is to promote active lifestyles while increasing awareness of the state's nature-rich outdoor recreation opportunities. Sponsors of the Great Park Pursuit include The Nebraska Chiropractic Physicians Association, the Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District and the Nebraska Association of Resource Districts.

The participating parks are: Arnold Recreation Area, Arnold; Brickyard Park, Hastings; Central Park Fountain, Alliance; City of Indianola Park – Pawnee Woman's Grave, Indianola; Conestoga State Recreation Area, Denton; Cottonwood Lake State Recreation Area, Merriman; Davis Creek Recreation Area, North Loup; Eugene T. Mahoney State Park, Ashland; Graves Park, Wakefield; Heron Haven, Omaha; Hickman Main Park, Hickman; Indian Cave State Park, Shubert; Johnson Lake State Recreation Area, Elwood; Ponca State Park, Ponca; Sherman Reservoir State Recreation Area, Loup City; Smith Falls State Park, Valentine; Swanson Reservoir State Recreation Area, Trenton; Ta-Ha-Zouka Park, Elkhorn; Toadstool Geologic Park, Crawford; Windmill State Recreation Area, Gibbon.

For more information and to register, visit negpp.org. The Great Park Pursuit app is available at the Apple iStore and on Google Play for Android.

Meat processors may apply for Hunters Helping the Hungry

LINCOLN, Neb. – Meat processors have until July 1, to apply for participation in the 2020 Hunters Helping the Hungry program, according to the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission.

The program pays participating processors to accept deer donated by hunters. The ground venison produced is picked up by charitable organizations and donated to Nebraskans in need.

The application form and program guidelines are available at OutdoorNebraska.gov/hhh under Participating Processors. Processors can apply to participate in any or all of the Nebraska 2020-2021 deer hunting seasons.

Contact Teresa Lombard at 402-471-5430 or teresa.lombard@nebraska.gov for more information.

Application period for big game draw permits began June 8

LINCOLN, Neb. – Hunters may begin applying for 2020 big game draw permits as of June 8. Residents and nonresidents may apply for one deer permit, residents may apply for one elk permit, and residents and eligible landowners may apply for one antelope permit.

The application period began at 1:00 p.m. CT on June 8. Paper applications must be received by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission by 5:00 p.m. CT – or by 11:59 p.m. for online applications on June 26.

Only a nonrefundable application fee is due at the time of application. Drawing results will be available by July 3. Successful applicants will have until July 17 to complete the purchase of their awarded permits. Awarded but unpaid permits will result in applicants losing preference or bonus points and forfeiting the permit. Any forfeited draw permits, as well as unsold draw permits and buy-unit permits, will be sold over the counter on a first-come basis beginning August 3.

Applicants who supply valid email addresses will be notified when the draw is complete. Applicants not providing valid email addresses will be responsible for monitoring their status online at OutdoorNebraska.org.

Applications will be accepted:

- Online at OutdoorNebraska.org.
- Via U.S. Postal Service mail: Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, 2200 N. 33rd St., Lincoln NE 68503.
- By calling 402-471-0641.
- Dropped off at any Game and Parks permitting office. A drop box or an Iron Ranger will be provided near the building.

While Game and Parks offices still are closed to the public, customer service is being provided via telephone. See a list of office phone numbers at OutdoorNebraska.gov/locations.

Draw units are established to provide equal opportunity to obtain permits in those units. They are determined by the overall demand on a unit's permits. Residents get preference over nonresidents when these permits are drawn.

Details regarding drawings and permits may be found in the 2020 Big Game Guide, which is available at OutdoorNebraska.org or wherever permits are sold. Drawing statistics from previous years may be found at OutdoorNebraska.gov/drawresults.

To download an application form, regulations and hunting unit descriptions, visit OutdoorNebraska.gov/huntingseasons.

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Public Notices

Meeting Notices

Valentine City Council

Notice is hereby given that the regular meeting of the Council of the City of Valentine, Nebraska will be held on the second Thursday of every month at 7:00 p.m. in the Meeting Room of the Valentine Public Library, 324 North Main Street, Valentine, Nebraska. The meeting will be open to the attendance of the public. An agenda for the meeting, kept continuously current, is available for public inspection in the City Clerk's office at 323 North Main Street, Valentine, Nebraska.

Deanna Schmit, City Clerk
17863-3, 10, 17, 24 ZNEZ

Nenzel Village Board

Notice is hereby given that the regular meeting of the Nenzel Village Board of Trustees will be held on Thursday, June 18, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. MT at the Nenzel Community Building. The meeting will be open to the public. An agenda is kept continuously current and is available for public inspection at the office of the Village Clerk.

Terri Nollette
Village Clerk
17878-10 ZNEZ

Cherry County Board of Commissioners

The Cherry County Board of Commissioners will meet the second and last Tuesday of each month at 10:00 a.m. in the Cherry County Courthouse, in the Sheriff's Conference Room. A current agenda will be on file in the office of the County Clerk.

Additional Meeting information is available at: https://co.cherry.ne.us/

17864-3, 10, 17, 24 ZNEZ

Cherry County Board of Corrections

The Cherry County Board of Corrections will meet the last Tuesday of each month at 2:30 p.m. in the Cherry County Courthouse, in the Sheriff's Conference Room. A current agenda will be on file in the office of the County Clerk.

Additional Meeting information is available at: https://co.cherry.ne.us/

17865-3, 10, 17, 24 ZNEZ

Cherry County Extension Board

The Cherry County Extension Board will meet in Valentine on Monday, June 15, 2020 at 7:30 p.m. CT at the Extension Office. The meeting agenda is on file at the Extension Office.

17870-3, 10 ZNEZ

Rebates Available for Diesel School Bus Replacements

Applications due August 7, 2020

The Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy's Nebraska Diesel Emission Mitigation Program has announced the opening of the 2020 School Bus Rebate Program, which will use funds from Nebraska's portion of Volkswagen State Trust to provide rebates to replace diesel school buses. Schools across the state are being notified that applications are now being accepted and must be received by August 7, 2020, to be considered for selection. NDEE anticipates awarding up to 44 school bus rebates during this third year of the program.

Public school districts and private schools in Nebraska are eligible for this funding. Rebates will be available to replace diesel buses (with engine model year 2009 or older) with new or late-model used buses fueled by diesel, propane or compressed natural gas (CNG) or all-electric buses. The new bus must replace a bus that is currently operational and in use. The replaced bus and engine must be disabled (scrapped) to ensure that the project reduces diesel emissions. Each applicant may submit one application for one bus replacement rebate. Previous recipients of a Nebraska or EPA Clean Diesel School Bus Rebate (2013 or later) are eligible to apply, but preference will be given to schools that are not previous rebate recipients.

NDEE anticipates providing public school districts with funding covering 50% of the base cost of a replacement diesel bus (up to a maximum rebate of $42,000), 60% of the base cost of a new propane or CNG bus that meets stricter emissions standards (up to a maximum rebate of $57,000), or 40% of the cost of an all-electric bus (up to a maximum rebate of $80,000). Private schools will be eligible for a maximum reimbursement of 25% of the base cost of a new diesel, propane or CNG bus as prescribed in the State Trust agreement.

If the number of applications exceeds the number of available awards, rebate recipients will be selected by lottery. Applicants that are not previous rebate recipients will have two entries in the lottery, while previous recipients will have one entry. Rebate selectees may not purchase the new bus until they have signed a project agreement with NDEE.

Source of this funding

A series of court settlements in 2016-2017 regarding emissions test violations required Volkswagen to establish a $2.925 billion Environmental Mitigation Trust Fund to assist states and tribes to offset the excess nitrogen oxide (NOx) pollution emitted by the offending diesel vehicles. Nebraska was allocated approximately $12.25 million in the Trust.

For more information about Nebraska's involvement in the VW State Trust, go to NDEE's Nebraska Diesel Emission Mitigation Program web page at http://deq.ne.gov/NDEQProg.nsf/OnWeb/AirVW. Schools seeking more information about eligibility and application requirements can find more information at http://deq.ne.gov/publica.nsf/pages/19-007.

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Job Description Details:
Develop prospects and make sales of all Companies' products through development of local business. The ability to develop contacts, network within the local area and community, and gain experience in planning and making sales is essential. General sales experience and a college degree with general business courses is helpful. Must be able to obtain the Nebraska Property and Casualty Insurance License and Nebraska Life and Health in a timely manner. Must take in-house training at various agent schools and continued industry education. May perform general administrative or record keeping duties related to sales in our Broken Bow office location. Eligible to work in the United States for any employer.
Compensation is salary plus commission, retirement plan, and benefits. Please call our office at 308-872-5105 or email us at bcuster@shelterinsurance.com.

Notice to bidders

The Middle Niobrara Natural Resources District (MNNRD) and City of Valentine are co-sponsoring the USDA-NRCS, Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Mill Pond Bank Stabilization project located in Cherry County, Valentine, NE at the Mill Pond.

Contractors bidding the project are required to attend a Pre-Construction meeting:

1. Location: MNNRD office at 303 East Highway 20, Valentine, NE 69201

2. Time and Date: June 24th, 2020, 1:00 p.m.

Sealed proposals for the construction of "EWP Mill Pond Bank Stabilization Project" will be received by the MNNRD General Manager at 303 E. Highway 20, Valentine, NE 69201 until 1:00 p.m. on the 8th day of July 2020.

If interested, stop by the MNNRD Office, and pick up an Invitation to Bid and a copy of the Contract Documents located at 303 E. Highway 20, Valentine, NE 69201. For more information give Chandler Schmidt, MNNRD, a call at 402-376-3241 or Dave Coe, Engineer at 308-430-5386.

17877-10, 17, 24, 1 ZNEZ

News Briefs

CSC announces President's List

Chadron State College has announced the names of 306 students who qualified for the institution's Spring 2020 President's List. Students on the list have a 4.0 grade point average on a 4.0 scale. To qualify, students must be enrolled in 12 credit hours of coursework, be seeking their first bachelor's degree, and have no incomplete grades during the semester.

Area students include: Grace Robison of Valentine and Treyvin Schlueter of Wood Lake.

CSC announces Dean's List

Chadron State College has announced the names of 265 students who qualified for the institution's Spring 2020 Dean's List. These students met requirements for the Dean's List by earning at least a 3.5 grade point average. To qualify, students must be enrolled in 12 credit hours of coursework, be seeking their first bachelor's degree, and have no incomplete grades during the semester. Area students include: Brennann Jackson, Mercy Maunu, Steven Shields, Trinity Shipley all of Valentine and Collin Sanders of Merriman.

Nebraska Cattlemen Foundation announces scholarship recipients

The Nebraska Cattlemen Foundation (NCF) is pleased to announce it has awarded $61,200 in scholarships to students furthering their education goals in the 2020-2021 academic year.

Area student includes: Jais Ford, Cody - $1,200 Clarence & Lois Jean Hartmann Scholarship.

Buena Vista University Dean's List

Casey Lamle, of Cody was named to Buena Vista University's Spring 2020 Dean's List. Lamle was among more than 500 students who were named to the list.

The Dean's List recognizes full-time students achieving a 3.5 grade point average for the semester.

Lamle graduates Buena Vista University

Casey Lamle of Cody graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry and Biology from Buena Vista University in the spring of 2020.

BVU's 129th Commencement Celebration originally scheduled for May 23, 2020 has been rescheduled due to COVID-19 restrictions. Graduates will be honored at BVU's Virtual Commencement Ceremony on June 20, as well as in-person on October 11, the Sunday of the 2020 Homecoming Celebration.



Cherry County Sheriff Rusty Osburn gathered up these hail stones off his front yard Sunday, June 7, 2020.

"I've not heard of anybody losing any windows. The majority of it was ping-pong sized hail, but there wasn't a lot of it. There was more than we wanted!"

The short lived storm came with winds between 40 to 50 mph in Cody, NE.

"It's just a summer storm - it's that time of the year," Osburn said.

The winds gusted up to 59 mph in Valentine, with temperatures that reached a high of 99 degrees at 5:00 p.m., but no rain fall.



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Notice of sale

By virtue of an Order of Sale issued by the District Court of Cherry County, Nebraska, in an action wherein Heartland Investors is the Plaintiff and Douglas Hendrix and Amy Hendrix, John and Mary Doe and any other persons or entities claiming any right to the real estate described herein, are the Defendants in the entitled cause, foreclosing liens for real estate taxes, I will at 1:00 o'clock p.m. on the 8th day of July, 2020 at the front door of the Cherry County Justice Center in Valentine, NE sell at public auction to the highest bidder for cash, the following described property to wit: Lot 3, Block 3, Keeler's Place, an Addition to the City of Merriman, Cherry County, NE also referred to as 102 S. Smith Street, Merriman, NE to satisfy the liens and encumbrances thereon, costs of suit and accruing costs, all as set forth in the foreclosure decree. The sale will remain open one hour.

Given under my hand this 2nd day of June, 2020.

Rusty Osburn
Cherry County Sheriff
17876-10, 17, 24, 1 ZNEZ

Senior Farmers Market coupons

The Valentine Senior Center will once again distribute Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program coupons to eligible participants. Eligible participants of the program will receive coupons with a value of $48 to use for fresh, unprocessed fruits and vegetables at farmers markets across Nebraska. To be eligible to receive the coupons, persons must be age 60 or older with income guidelines as follows: a single-person household's income must be no more than $23,606 annually, and a two-person household's income must be no more than $31,894. Please call the senior center to sign up for the coupons, or for any questions about the program. 402-376-1400

Three ways to help your gardens thrive with minimal care

by Melinda Myers

So, you filled your shopping cart and gardens with lots of new shrubs, flowers, and vegetables. Now what? Keep your plants looking their best with minimal effort so you can enjoy them and your summer even more.

Watering is one task where I find even experienced gardeners struggle. Proper watering is key. Too much or not enough water can result in yellow, wilting and even death of plants.

Check container plantings daily. Stick your finger into the soil and water whenever the top few inches of soil is starting to dry. Water thoroughly so the excess runs out of the pot and away from the planter.

New plantings need special attention the first few weeks. Water thoroughly and often enough to keep the roots and surrounding soil slightly moist. Gradually reduce frequency and only water thoroughly when the top few inches are crumbly, but slightly moist.

Continue giving perennials, trees, and shrubs regular care the first two years. It takes this long for them to establish a robust root system. Water thoroughly, but only as needed.

Water early in the day to reduce water lost to evaporation. Avoid watering at night. Wet foliage at night is more susceptible to disease.

Use soaker hoses, drip irrigation or watering wands to apply water to the soil. Less water is wasted plus you'll help decrease the risk of disease by avoiding wet foliage.

Mulch gardens to conserve moisture, suppress weeds and improve the soil as it decomposes.

Spread a two- to three-inch layer of organic mulch such as shredded leaves, evergreen needles, wood chips or shredded bark on the soil surface surrounding your plants. The courser the mulch used, the thicker the layer.

Do not bury the base of your plants or pile mulch against the trunks of trees. This can lead to a decline of your plants. I like to use wood-based mulches for permanent plantings and pathways.

Consider using shredded leaves, evergreen needles or even a thin layer of chemical-free grass clippings for annual plantings. These mulches break down more quickly than wood and do not cause nutrient deficiencies if worked into the soil.

Fertilization provides the nutrients plants need to grow and thrive, but too much of a good thing can be detrimental. Over fertilization can result in lots of green leafy growth, but no flowers or fruit. Lush succulent growth from over fertilization is more susceptible to insect and disease problems.

Select a fertilizer labeled for the plants you are growing and your gardening goals. Organic and slow release fertilizers provide a slow, steady supply of nutrients over a longer period of time. You'll need to make fewer applications throughout the growing season.

Do not apply more than the recommended rate. Not only are you wasting fertilizer and money, but an overdose of fertilizer can damage and even kill plants.

Consider taking a soil test in the future. The results tell you how much and what type of fertilizer to apply. Contact your local Extension office for tips on how to take a soil test and where to send the sample for testing.

Visit your gardens regularly. Pick a few flowers to enjoy in a vase indoors and harvest vegetables when they are mature. Regular harvests of ripe vegetables and herbs keeps them producing.

Notice

A total of 175 cases will be heard by the Board in June, 2020. The following case(s) sentenced in Cherry County will be seen by the Board of Parole.

June 26, 2020 – 8:30 a.m.
Omaha Community Center, Omaha, Nebraska
Poland, Dylan-84878
Sexual Assault 1st Degree

Rosalyn Cotton, Chair
Nebraska Board of Parole
17875-10 ZNEZ

West Nile Virus dead bird collection

West Nile Virus season has arrived. The North Central District Health Department is once again providing surveillance throughout the nine-county district that includes: Antelope, Boyd, Brown, Cherry, Holt, Keya Paha, Knox, Pierce and Rock counties.

Mosquito trapping has started in Cherry, Holt & Knox county. If any West Nile Virus- positive mosquito pools are trapped, NCDHD will report them to the public.

The health department will NOT be collecting corvid birds for West Nile Virus testing this year. Citizens who find a dead bird should use a glove or a plastic sack to discard of the bird. NCDHD will continue tracking call ins of dead birds if citizens wish to report them.

NCDHD also encourages you to remember the 4 Ds when you head outside this summer:

-Wear DEET or an EPA approved bug spray

-DRESS in light-colored, loose, long sleeved clothing to keep mosquitos away

-DUMP standing water in your yard

-And avoid DUSK & DAWN when mosquitos are most active

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We will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. All persons are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised are available on an equal opportunity basis.

Office Manager

NorthStar Services, an entity serving people with developmental disabilities, is seeking a part time Office Manager. 30 hours per week. The Office Manager must possess a complete working knowledge of bookkeeping and office procedures. This person shall maintain records and files pertinent to Area-specific requirements and perform all clerical and bookkeeping duties. This person works closely with the central office clerical/ fiscal support staff and is directly responsible to the Area Director. Base salary is $12.75/hour with an increase to $13.50 after the first year. Health/Dental/Vision/ Life Insurance. Random drug testing. Must be 19 years of age and have a valid driver's license. Pick up an application at 324 South Hall St (Airport Road) Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Open until filled.

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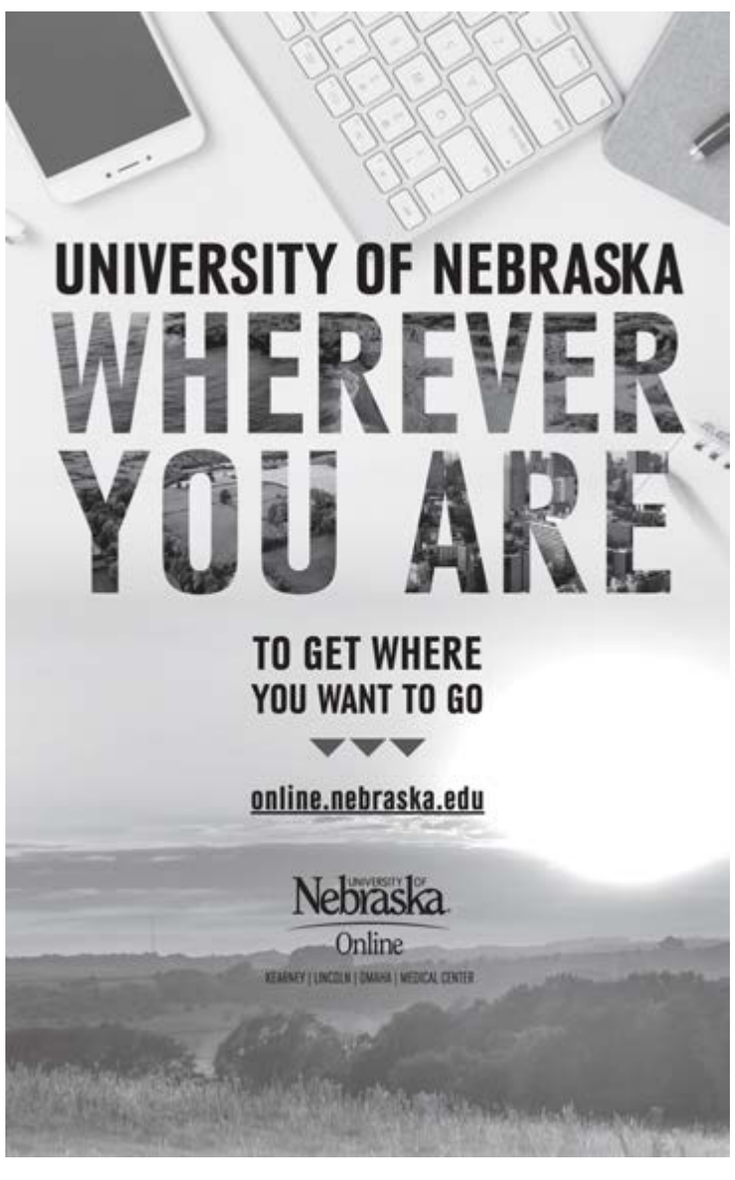
Highway Maintenance Worker

The Nebraska Department of Transportation is currently accepting applications for a Highway Maintenance Worker in Valentine. Valid drivers license is required.

For full job description and to apply, visit www.statejobs.nebraska.gov

The Nebraska Department of Transportation is an Equal Opportunity/Veterans Preference Employer

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



AG EQUIPMENT

FOR SALE: Heavy bottomless stock tanks. Buckley Steel. 402-387-0347 or evenings 402-387-2785.(1TF)

SALES and SERVICE

5 STAR Door Company: Offering residential and commercial sales and service. Call Adam Moosman for pricing, 402-389-0375. (2TF)

CHERRY COUNTY Construction will be ready to take on new construction projects once we get through this COVID-19 pandemic. All phases of construction – residential, commercial or at your ranch. We travel 80 miles from Valentine. Free estimates, call 1-402-200-8610. (21-24P)

FOR SALE

REGISTERED ANGUS bulls for sale: Yearlings and age-advantaged fall bulls available at TK Angus. Contact Tim, 308-360-1601 or Rick Marlatt, 308-360-0001 in Valentine, NE. (24-26A)

EMPTY LOT on 227 N. Government St., Valentine, 50'x137', $10,000. Call 402-376-4421 or 402-322-1124. (24TF)

Thank You

I would just like to thank the Badger Boosters for honoring me with the wonderful award this year! This gives me an opportunity to say how proud I am of our school system here-administrators - teachers -support staff and our young people. When I have any opportunity I like to point our nation to these young people-they are the future of our America!

Again my heartfelt thank you!
Jeanne Blackford

FOR RENT

STORAGE UNITS. Contact Great Plains Mini Storage, call 402-376-3421 or 376-4714. (1TF)

SOUTH PARK storage for all your storage needs. Call Dan 402-389-1632. (42TF)

ONE AND two bedroom apartment, all utilities paid except electricity and garbage. No pets, no smoking. Call 402-322-1475 or 402-376-2001. (26TF)

ONE BEDROOM, and two bedroom apartments. 1 year lease, no smoking or pets. Application required. 402-322-0576. (7TF)

ONE-1 bedroom apartment, fully furnished, all utilities included, television, internet and snow removal. Call 402-376-6334. (45TF)

STORAGE UNITS: 10'x20' and 10'x40'. Contact TJC Storage 402-389-2087. Short and long term contracts, Tjcstorage.com (3-52P)

AS OF May 1, Jordan Apartments, 114 N. Main St., Valentine, NE, name changed to Main Street Apartments under new ownership. One and two bedroom apartments available. Call 402-322-1124 for appointment. (18TF)

READY SOON: Nicely redecorated 1 bedroom apartment, stove, fridge, most utilities included, hardwood floors. 402-376-6032. (19TF)

ONE BEDROOM unit for someone 62 years of age or older. Rent is based on income. Call 402-376-2316 for more information. (21-24A)

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THE VILLAGE of Merriman is looking for a public works/utilities person. For any questions contact CaCee McConaughey, village clerk at 402-322-1576. (24-15A)

HOMES FOR SALE

514 N. Macomb St., Valentine. Completely remodeled inside and out. New HVAC, 3 bedroom, 2 bath, new siding, windows, doors, flooring (laminate wood), added insulation, all new plumbing, all new appliances (SS refrigerator, range, microwave, dishwasher). Ground level, it's basically a complete new home. Priced at $160,000, includes all closing. Selling by builder. Call 402-376-4421 or 402-322-1124. (24TF)

Thank You

We would like to thank everyone who sent cards, flowers, brought food, gave memorials or reached out in any way when our Dad passed away. We appreciate each one of you.

The family of Herb Pabst

Niobrara Council approves Treasurer's Report

The Niobrara Council met for their regular meeting, May 21, 2020. The meeting was held via conference call through CenturyLink Business. The meeting was called to order at 1:34 p.m.

Present: Jason Appelt, Tom Higgins, Dallas Dodson, Rich Mercure, Mike Murphy, Tanya Storer, Jim Stout, Steve Thede, Mike Tuerk, Scott Wessel.

Excused Absence: Brad Arrowsmith, Lana Arrowsmith, Steve Hicks, Dustin Hoefs, Mary Mercure, Buddy Small.

Open board positions

Kieborz stated she was informed by the Governor's Office that board appointments would not be taking place at this time. The Governor's Office would contact the Council when they conduct that business.

Treasurer's Report

The Revenue and Budget committee reviewed the May 2020 claims prior to the meeting. Dodson motioned to approve the May 2020 claims in the amount of $9,103.57. Higgins second.

Roll Call Vote: 9 Ayes – Higgins, Dodson, R. Mercure, Murphy, Storer, Stout, Tuerk, Wessel, Appelt.

Motion carried: 9 ayes to 0 nays and 5 not present.

Agency Reports

NPS - Thede stated that their seasonal staff will be on board. He mentioned that law enforcement on the river this summer will be similar to last summer. Interpretive rangers will also be out on the water.

USFWS - Hicks was not present but submitted a report via email ahead of time.

NGPC - Wessel stated that openings for NGPC campgrounds have changed. They are opening up many camping areas including some at Smith Falls State Park. He also discussed the opportunity for landowner elk permits.

1:55 p.m. Niobrara Council member Tom Higgins left the conference call.

NRD - Murphy reported about tree planting. He also talked about static water levels being up.

2:00 p.m. Niobrara Council member Tanya Storer left the conference call.

Quorum was lost at the Niobrara Council meeting at this point, the remainder of the meeting was discussion only, there was no action taken by the Niobrara Council beyond this point in the conference call.

Resource Management

Kieborz reported that the vault toilets along the river, located at Berry Bridge, Brewer Bridge, Stan's Landing and Meadville Park, will be unlocked for the season. There will be a sign on the doors stating that the facilities will only be cleaned one time per week. The contracted pumper will be pumping and cleaning the facilities on Mondays and between the National Park Service and the Niobrara Council, the facilities will be checked prior to the weekend throughout the summer.

Legislative Issues

Discussion/action regarding LB855 – a bill introduced by Senator Mike Moser, to eliminate legislative confirmation for certain members of the Niobrara Council. There was no action taken on this item.

The Niobrara Council meeting was adjourned at 2:25 p.m.

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Master Gardener tips

Here is the weekly crop of Master Gardener tips from Nebraska Extension in the Panhandle. These tips are relevant to local lawn and garden issues in the High Plains and follow research-based recommendations. This week's tips come from Vicki Schmitt, Nebraska Extension Master Gardener Volunteer, and each focuses on the roles that trees can play in home landscapes.

Using a rain barrel to water plants: Surprise! The old-fashioned rain barrel is making a comeback. Catching water from your roof allows you to store it for later use. Even ½ inch of rain on a small home can yield 150 gallons of water. That water can be used for ornamental plants and flower pots, but not recommended for edible plants. You can keep precious rainwater from running down the gutter. Install a rain barrel!

Trees and shrubs save on energy costs: Want to save money on air conditioning? Plant the right trees. Trees and shrubs can reduce heating and cooling bills by providing summer shade and protection from winter winds. A deciduous tree, one that sheds its leaves in the winter, will provide shade for your home in the summer but still let winter sunlight through the branches. Careful planning can save money and energy.

Mulching potted plants: You probably have mulch in your yard or garden but what about your potted plants? Outdoor pots benefit from a layer of mulch in much the same way as your garden, reducing moisture loss and evening out the soil temperature. Clean compost, straw, hay, and shredded bark are all good choices. Apply no more than 1 inch and keep it away from the plant stem.

How mulching helps your garden: Have you considered using mulch in your garden? Compared to bare ground, mulch moderates soil temperature, retains moisture and keeps the weeds down. Inexpensive, organic choices include leaves, straw, newspaper, and compost. Spread mulch on warm soil no deeper than 3-4 inches. Grass clippings can be used if they are pesticide-free. Just keep them under 2 inches at any given time. Now is a good time to consider your mulch options.

Harvesting and preserving herbs: If you have herbs in your garden, now could be the time to harvest and preserve them. To dry herbs cut them just before the flowers open, morning is best. Tie the sprigs together at the cut ends and hang them upside down in an airy, well ventilated, dark area away from direct sunlight. Strip the leaves when they are crispy and store in airtight jars. Enjoy your dried herbs all year.

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Department promotes resources and opportunities to help rural residents

WASHINGTON, June 1, 2020 – U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development Deputy Under Secretary Bette Brand kicked off National Homeownership Month by highlighting USDA's ongoing role in supporting rural homeownership. President Trump issued a proclamation on May 29 recognizing June as National Homeownership Month.

"Rural communities are rising to the challenge put forth by the coronavirus pandemic," Brand said. "Under the leadership of President Trump and Agriculture Secretary Perdue, USDA is committed to being a strong partner in building prosperity in rural communities and for the people who call them home – especially those impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic."

To assist homeowners facing current hardships, USDA is offering payment moratoriums and modified application processes. USDA Rural Development is also working with new borrowers and their lenders to make special accommodations based on local needs and restrictions. For the most up-to-date information on Rural Development's response to COVID-19, visit rd.usda.gov/coronavirus. Updates are also distributed via Twitter @usdaRD.

In Nebraska, USDA invested $102,067,478 to help 904 families and individuals buy a home. The state also provided $319,684 for home repairs for 47 very low-income rural residents.

"Having affordable housing helps rural communities thrive," said Nebraska USDA Rural Development State Director Karl Elmshaeuser. "Rural Development has housing programs available that can assist rural residents in becoming a homeowner."

For more program information in Nebraska, visit: www.rd.usda.gov/ne

USDA Rural Development provides loans and grants to help expand economic opportunities and create jobs in rural areas. This assistance supports infrastructure improvements; business development; housing; community facilities such as schools, public safety and health care; and high-speed internet access in rural areas. For more information, visit www.rd.usda.gov.

Valentine Police Department
Week in review
May 24-30, 2020

On 05/24/20 at 7:43 p.m., Officers were called to the 700 block of East Highway 20 in regard to a shoplifter. Upon arrival, officers found that the suspects had fled the area but not before assaulting an employee. Suspect identification is being sought.

On 05/24/20 at 11:17 p.m., Officers were called to the 200 block of East 2nd Street in regard to a disturbance. Following an investigation, a 25 year old Valentine woman was cited for possession of drug paraphernalia.

On 05/25/20 at 11:25 p.m., Officers responded to the 300 block of North Wood Street in response to a disturbance. A 35 year old Valentine woman was arrested for disturbing the peace.

Officers responded to 126 calls for service this week.

Dana Miller, Chief
Valentine Police Department
402-376-3055
dmiller@cityofvalentine.com

Story of the lost chairs

SOAPWEED SOLILOQUY

Steve Moreland

Back in my younger years, there were no cell phones, and not everyone even had a landline telephone. Local calls were handled by a telephone operator, who would connect the caller to whoever they wanted to call. The caller would ring the phone with a hand crank, and the local operator would say: "Number, please?" The caller would say the number, and the operator would plug a cord into the line of the recipient.

Often times, before the call was ever delivered, the operator could inform the caller that the intended recipient was "over at such-and-such's place," or "they went to Martin today," or other pertinent information gleaned from simply transferring recent calls. This was useful knowledge which was appreciated by all concerned. Long distance calls were very cumbersome, time-consuming, and expensive, and were only done as a very last resort.

Not everyone had vehicles, so rides were shared whenever possible. We ran our whole ranch with one car and one pickup, along with five small tractors, and several saddle horses. Whenever anyone knew of someone else being in a distant town, requests were made such as: "Would you please pick this up for me?"

By the time I was in my early 20s, I had acquired my own pickup and was working with my dad on our ranch.

On one particular day, I had gone to Gordon to run some errands. My folks knew which stores I would be inhabiting, and at one of these stops I was requested to call home. I called our house, and Mom answered. She said, "Lois Fairhead had ordered six new dining room chairs; they have arrived at the furniture store, and she wondered if you could pick them up. You can leave them at Grandma Grace's house in Merriman, and they will get them from there."

That was fine with me, and I willingly complied. There were three cardboard boxes, with two chairs in each box. They were cumbersome but not heavy, and they fit easily into the back of my 1973 Chevrolet half-ton pickup.

All went well on most of the 30 mile drive from Gordon to Merriman, until I went by the Belsky place six miles west of town. An extra gust of wind caught one of the boxes, and through the rear-view mirror I could see it blowing out of the back of the pickup. I immediately slowed down and turned around, and went back to retrieve the chairs. The box was somewhat battered by the fall, but the chairs seemed unharmed. I reloaded them, drove a bit more cautiously, and arrived to unload my cargo on the front porch of Grandma Grace's house. The phone system had modernized by then, and I was able to use my grandmother's phone to dial "Aunt Lois" that her chairs had gotten as far as Merriman.

Lois sent her son John into town to haul the chairs six miles further north to their ranch. John complied, and loaded the three boxes containing two chairs each. When he arrived home, lo and behold, there were only two boxes on the back of his pickup. He immediately turned around and retraced his route. Another lo and behold—alas, there were no chairs to be found. All that was left was an empty box. Someone else had found them first, and they were forever gone. More matching chairs had to be ordered from the furniture store.

Moral of the story: Yes, in retrospect I should have volunteered to take the chairs all the way to Fairheads' ranch. At least 45 years have gone by since this incident, and it now baffles me why I didn't do just that. In my defense, I was following the instructions that were given.

VALENTINE POLICE REPORT

05-24-20 TO 05-30-20

CALLS		
Accident Non-Injury	1	Delayed hit and run report filed. Everyone who was involved was located. Nice job!
Assist Other Law	10	Officers assisted the Todd County Sheriff's Office, Hooker County Sheriff's Office, Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, Thayer County Sheriff's Office and Nebraska CPS this week.
Assist Other Agency	3	
Business Check	48	
Civil Matter/Standby	2	
Code Violation	4	Code violations were addressed for parking left side to curb, tall grass and junk this week.
Complaint	3	
Criminal Mischief	1	Someone damaged a car this week just to be ornery. This is unacceptable.
Disturbance	4	Report of the same person two nights running causing a disturbance results in an arrest.
Domestic Disturbance	1	Officers responded to a disturbance. Disturber left but drug paraphernalia found. OOPS.
Follow Up Investigation	13	Two week old shoplifting report called in. We're up for the challenge!
Missing Person	1	Missing person called in. They were found in an odd location but A-OK.
Run Away	1	Runaway report was filed. Thankfully the subject was found safe and sound.
Special Assignment	3	Caller wanted to know what the consequences for breaking the law was. It was explained and now you have our attention.
Suspicious Person/Vehicle	8	
Theft Shoplifting	3	Report of shoplifter. Lifters fled prior to arrival but not before assaulting someone. NOT OK!
Training	1	
Traffic Stop	12	Traffic stops were made for speeding, stop sign violations, traffic signal violation and no lights
Welfare Check	2	Welfare checks requested for two different folks. One wasn't found at all and the others were just fine.
Total Calls	126	

Gov. Ricketts announces appointments to boards and commissions

LINCOLN – Governor Pete Ricketts announced recent appointments he has made to fill Nebraska's boards and commissions.

The following appointees are unpaid and are not subject to Legislative confirmation:

Board of Engineers and Architects
Bruce Dvorak, P.E., Lincoln
Advisory Committee on Aging
Danny L. DeLong, Beatrice
Charlotte Dorwart, Sidney
Luana Duennerman, Lincoln
Rodale Emken, Holdrege
Frank A. Herzog, Omaha
Ira Nathan, Omaha
Barbara Wegner, Cozad
State Comprehensive Capital Facilities Planning Committee
David K. Fanslau, Papillion
Conveyance Advisory Committee
Bret A. Abels, Papillion
Nebraska Dairy Industry Development Board
Michael K. Amen, Norfolk
Nebraska Board of Geologists
Charles G. Joyce, P.G., Omaha
Nebraska Coalition for Juvenile Justice
Colleen S. Barnes, Norfolk
Long-Term Restrictive Housing Work Group
Melissa Ripley, Lincoln

The following appointees are unpaid and subject to Legislative confirmation:

State Racing Commission
Shelby Bakenhus, Saint Edward
Nebraska Game and Parks Commission
Donna Kush, Omaha

Thank you to the many Nebraskans that generously give their time and talent to make a difference in our state. These appointments will provide crucial insight and expertise to their respective boards, committees, and commissions. To learn about openings and apply to serve on a board or commission, go to https://governor.nebraska.gov/board-comm-req.

DHHS COVID-19 Update

LINCOLN – During the past seven days, the total number of COVID-19-related deaths in the state increased by 16 to 186, according to the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) data dashboard, as of Friday, June 5, 2020.

The state case total, as of 5:45 p.m. CT, Friday, June 5, 2020, is 15,193, marking an increase of 1,539 from last Friday. Local health departments are reporting deaths and cases in their jurisdictions. In the event of a discrepancy between DHHS dashboard data and deaths or cases reported by local public health officials, data reported by the local health department should be considered the most up to date.

Additions to DHHS Data Dashboard

The DHHS COVID-19 data dashboard has undergone several improvements since appearing on the DHHS public website on March 27, and that work is continuing. Additional "tabs" of information were added. The tabs included deaths, recoveries and demographic information like age and gender for positive cases and hospitalized cases. The improvement joins past additions to the data dashboard that describe hospital capacity, and other improvements.

At Governor Pete Ricketts' daily coronavirus briefing May 29, Gov. Ricketts was joined by DHHS CEO Dannette R. Smith, who said DHHS is working to compile data from four sources that would track race and ethnicity as they relate to COVID-19. These improved data breakdowns are expected on the dashboard at the end of the month.

The CARES Act

While measures continue in Nebraska to manage the spread of COVID-19, passage of the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act on March 27, will support child care and out-of-school learning initiatives in Nebraska. Specifically, $20 million has been allocated to the state.

Stephanie L. Beasley, director of the DHHS Division of Children and Family Services spoke June 1, at Gov. Pete Ricketts' regular COVID-19 briefing to break out how the money will be used.

The high points follow:

1. Child Care Relief Fund - The Child Care Relief Fund was established to offer grants of $1,000 to meet the needs of child care providers. The relief fund application was released to providers on April 8, 2020.

2. Child Care Provider Stabilization Grant Funds - DHHS will award Child Care Stabilization grants to help make up lost income for providers caring for fewer children in accordance with COVID-19 Directed Health Measures (DHMs). Providers will need to meet requirements, submit an application and be in good standing with DHHS.

3. Incentive-to-Reopen Child Care Programs Grant - DHHS will also award Incentive to Reopen Child Care Program Grants. Priority for these grants will be given to providers who are in good standing with DHHS and meet certain criteria. Some family child care homes are eligible for a one-time grant of $2,000 and some child care centers eligible for a one-time grant of $3,000. Providers aren't eligible for both the stabilization grant and this grant.

4. Nebraska Child Care Referral Network Website - A Child Care Referral Network website was created to help families find safe, high quality, licensed child care. The searchable database connects working parents with providers that have open child care spots. DHHS is planning to improve data-collection and the technology platform to sustain the network and build it into the existing Nebraska child care resource and referral system.

5. After School and Summer Learning for School Age Children - DHHS will use CARES Act funding for future collaboration between DHHS and the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation's Beyond School Bells initiative, which supports expanded learning opportunities. Discussions about potential initiatives are underway.

General Information

Here's where to find tools and resources for individuals and families, schools, communities, businesses, healthcare facilities, and first responders on the DHHS website - http://dhhs.ne.gov/coronavirus and CDC's website – https://www.cdc.gov/covid19 .

DHHS opened a statewide COVID-19 information line to help answer general questions and share the latest information and resources with Nebraskans to help keep them informed. The number is 402-552-6645 or toll-free at 833-998-2275; hours of operation are 8:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m. CT, seven days a week.

DHHS will continue to update Nebraskans through the DHHS website and on Facebook and Twitter as we have new information.

NSP completes spring *Click It or Ticket* Campaign

JUNE 2, 2020 (LINCOLN, NEB.) — The summer driving season is underway and Nebraska State Troopers are working hard to keep Nebraska roads safe. Troopers took 39 impaired drivers off the road during the annual *Click It or Ticket* campaign surrounding Memorial Day.

"Traffic volume has been increasing across the state and will continue to do so as directed health measures change," said Colonel John Bolduc, Superintendent of the Nebraska State Patrol. "Summer travel may be different because of COVID-19, but troopers remain focused and ready to enforce traffic safety laws and assist motorists in need of help."

In addition to the arrests for driving under the influence, troopers issued 858 citations for speeding. Of those speeding citations, 61 drivers were traveling at more than 100 miles per hour. Troopers also issued 23 citations for no seat belt, five improper child safety restraint, 26 open alcohol container, 11 minor in possession, 55 driving under suspension, and 29 no proof of insurance.

The *Click It or Ticket* campaign was made possible thanks in part to a grant for $25,000 from the Nebraska Department of Transportation – Highway Safety Office. The enforcement effort ran from May 15 through May 31.

Landowners have until June 19 to enroll in Open Fields and Waters

LINCOLN, Neb. – Private landowners have until June 19, to enroll their land in the Open Fields and Waters Program, in which they can earn additional income for allowing walk-in hunting, trapping and/or fishing access on their properties.

Landowners with property offering hunting or fishing potential may be offered annual, per-acre payments from 50 cents to $15, depending on habitat type and location. Additional financial incentives may be possible to enhance the habitat on enrolled acres. Participating landowners are afforded protection through the Nebraska Recreation Liability Act, and properties are regularly patrolled by conservation officers. Once enrolled, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission biologists post boundary signs and properties will appear in the Nebraska Public Access Atlas, which is available at OutdoorNebraska.org/PublicAccessAtlas.

In 2009, Game and Parks initiated the Open Fields and Waters in an effort to increase public access opportunities on private lands. Nebraska is more than 97 percent privately owned, and obtaining access to private lands continues to be one of the major challenges facing hunters, anglers, and outdoor users.

Due to a growing demand for more places to hunt, trap and fish, the program has grown substantially in recent years. Since 2016, enrollment has increased by over 112,000 acres, a 48 percent increase. Currently, there are 750-plus participating landowners in Nebraska who provide public access opportunities on over 346,000 land acres, 42 ponds/lakes, and 44 stream miles. Game and Parks and its partners hope to expand the program in coming years. This will be aided by a recent $3 million grant award through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Program.

For more details and a list of frequently asked questions, visit OutdoorNebraska.org/OFW. Private landowners interested in enrolling should contact their nearest Game and Parks district office and ask to speak to a private lands biologist: Lincoln 402-471-5561, Norfolk 402-370-3374, Alliance 308-763-2940, or North Platte 308-535-8025.

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