



Tidbits

Recycling Center open Aug. 20

The Hebron Recycling Center will open Aug. 20 until 12 p.m. The center opens at 9 a.m. and is located on Fifth and Holdrege Streets.

Items are accepted during recycling center hours.

Only No. 1 and No. 2 plastics, tin, aluminum, newspapers and cardboard will be accepted. The recycling center asks that lids be removed.

Lids, caps or motor oil bottles will not be accepted.

Planning commission to look at wind tower

The Thayer County Zoning and Planning Commission will hear from Aksamit Energy Development for a 199-foot tall Wind Data Measurement to be constructed at the southeast corner of Roads T and 6800.

The public hearing is scheduled for Aug. 25 at 8:15 p.m. in the Thayer County Courthouse basement club room.

Fishing volunteers to host Carp-A-Thon

The Alexandria Fishing Volunteers Club will host the Alexandria Carp-A-Thon Aug. 27 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Alexandria State Recreation Area.

The family fishing event includes a night of camping and morning of fishing.

The volunteers will be teaching on how to snag carp, baits, cleaning fish, cooking, handling and they will furnish recipes.

In addition, they will assist with casting, tying knots and fish identification.

A state park permit, fishing license and camping fee are required for this activity. Participants should bring their own poles, bait and archery supplies.

Prizes will be awarded for the largest carp and the most carp.

The volunteers promote Lake Alexandria with its safe and accessible shorelines.

More volunteers and fishing instructors are needed to join the club. Everyone is welcome to help and ideas are encouraged.

Email ngpc.rock.creek.station@nebraska.gov.

Gilead receives funding for sewer

The United States Department of Agriculture has announced \$15,700 will go to the Village of Gilead for the purchase of land to complete sewer improvements.

The funding will be leveraged with \$18,915 in other funding for the same purpose.

"In order to meet Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality regulations, the village's existing lagoon, which would no longer hold water, needed to be sealed and expanded to make it a complete retention system," USDA specialist, Janice Stopak said.

The project was funded through the USDA Rural Development Water & Waste Disposal Grant program.

Obituaries

Randolph, Beverly, 64, Fairbury

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Chamber cookoff dishes up old favorites

Cooker David Svoboda manned the chili recipe his father passed to him, give or take a few spices, while fellow cooker Keith Motley ran around placing several signs to advertise the modified "Juicy Lucy."

Motley said he borrowed the name from a popular hamburger from the 1940s made up of two hamburger patties and cheese.

They still sell them in Minneapolis for \$10 a pop, Motley said.

Meanwhile, Randy Weideman showcased the famous Tastee sandwich out of Lincoln.

"We've got the dill pickle, mustard and the whole works," Weideman said, pointing to the actual recipe.

Svoboda's "Dave's Chili" is a recipe perfected after years of experimenting.

"I've stuck with this version for about 10 years," he said.

Svoboda has worked on the recipe since he was about five years old and always serves it on Christmas.

The cookers, including Tyler Watson, who was helped out by his two smaller cooks, Lilyanna and Pierce, lined up for the first Hebron Chamber of Commerce Beef Cookoff Friday evening at the Stastny Community Center.

Two other cooks, Lucy Wegener and Blythe Norder, made the centerpieces in the Stastny kitchen, colorful plates with vegetables and cookies.

And two judges, pulled randomly



The chamber cookers, David Svoboda, Tyler Watson, Lucy Wegener, Blythe Norder, Randy Weideman, Bonnie Motley and Keith Motley, fed approximately 90 people at the Hebron Chamber of Commerce Beef Cookoff with main and side dishes. More photos, page 6.

from the 2.5 Men band on site, who are also known as Tim Halfhide and Clint Tate, went back in the kitchen to taste the cookoff's spoils.

They chose the winners — Lov-abull Cowboy Beans by Wegener and Norder for first place and \$100 in chamber bucks; Rancher Beans

by Watson for second place and \$60 in chamber bucks; and the Famous Tastee Sandwich for third place and \$40 in chamber bucks.

The People's Choice Award went to Motley for his "Juicy Lucy." For his efforts, he took two tickets to the Dueling Pianos home. The prize was

worth \$50.

The band entertained nearly 90 people with an eclectic choice in music.

Area businesses sponsored gift certificates and door prizes, and the cookoff in general.

Toad's rock and rolled Belvidere for years

By Nancy McGill
Hebron Journal-Register
hebronjrnews@windstream.net

Winter's sloppy roads never scared Mark "Toad" Sittler. He called the road rally in the dead of winter for 25 years, and people came.

"Everyone does it in the summer. I'm the only nut that did it in the winter," Sittler said.

He is flattered by the almost 31 years of patronage at Toad's in Belvidere and said on the final night, the place was packed wall-to-wall.

"It was a nice way to go," he said. "We ended it and went out with a bang," he said.

After 28 years and serving several generations, Toad decided it was time. He gave the town of Belvidere two year's notice, and a group of local investors eventually pounced to keep the place open.

"It was nice to see the local people keep it. You see a lot of small town businesses go," Sittler said.

He calls it the bar in Belvidere.

"There was a only one Toad's Bar and Lounge," he said.

Sittler, a native of Hebron, opened Toad's in 1995. He also ran the Lucky Husker from 1985 to 1994.

People way back will remember the Lucky Husker, he said.

Sittler is a dedicated fan of live rock and roll and he brought local bands, has-beens like Black Oak Arkansas and Head East, tribute bands to AC/DC, KISS and a few others to Toad's.

"They were a lot of fun up until about 2013 and fell off the page," he said as the live bands lost support.

Times have changed over the years.

As Sittler entered the bar business, he served a beer for 90 cents, a pack of smokes was \$1 and a hamburger went for \$1.25.

When he left in May, beer was \$2.75 a glass, smokes had reached over \$6 with tax and the price of a



Photo courtesy Linda Hudson

Mark "Toad" Sittler and his wife, Malissa, who joined him for 21 of the nearly 31 years of Toad's in Belvidere. The couple lives just outside of Denton.

hamburger climbed to \$3.85.

But the key to Toad's popularity wasn't in the music or the food, or the annual pool tournaments Sittler held.

It was the staff, he said.

"That was the key to success. It's not just me," he said. "We had great people serving steaks. I miss them the most right now."

Sittler will most likely always be known as Toad, the nickname he

picked up at the age of five. Many thought it was because of his voice, but Sittler corrected that.

He was called the name as a kid. "Fifty-one years later, I still have the same nickname," he said.

Board touches on budget

The Thayer Central Board of Education has seen its general fund budget increase three percent from higher prices, cost of living adjustment and other factors.

"The budget itself will come out in the coming weeks," Superintendent Drew Harris said.

In other news, Harris said construction is right on time for opening day

See BOARD, page 6



Pep Rally Challenge

The new Thayer Central Cheerleading team made its debut at a pep rally Monday evening. In addition to introducing the fall sports athletes, the senior boys were challenged to learn cheers and jumps. They were judged by the senior girls. The cheerleaders kept spectators engaged.

Letter To The Editor

Letter to the Editor:

We count on the mail. I got the mail today. A couple of bills. A greeting card. Some catalogs. A newspaper. One package that my wife grabbed right away. (Wonder what that was?) Lately, it occurs to me how completely I take for granted that I will get the mail tomorrow.

I've had my share of gripes about the mail. As president of the National Newspaper Association, I have fielded our community newspaper members' postal concerns all year. The mail is slower than it used to be. The U.S. Postal Service slowed it down by a day, at least, because of financial problems. Newspaper subscribers are unhappy because too often their papers are arriving late. Some local businesses have had problems with cash flow because of late mail.

Still, I get the mail every day but Sunday. Bet you do, too.

If you follow the news, you know the U.S. Postal Service is in trouble. Because so many people and businesses use the internet, there isn't as much mail to deliver. But we still expect the mail to come. At my newspaper, we look for it on Saturdays, too, because weekend mail is extremely important in small towns. (Congress considered ending Saturday mail, but thankfully it has dropped that idea for now.)

Beneath the surface, however, we see seismic, economy-rattling changes ahead unless Congress can pass legislation to lower the Postal Service's cost of doing business. It carries more than \$50 billion of debt on its balance sheet. Fortunately, there are bills by Reps. Jason Chaffetz, R-UT, and Elijah Cummings, D-MD, and several other House members, and by Sens. Tom Carper, D-DE, Claire McCaskill, D-MO, Mark Warner, D-VA, Roy Blunt, R-MO, Jerry Moran, R-KS, and Susan Collins, R-ME, that would do the job. Passing these bills is easier said than done. You may have noticed Congress is having a hard time these days getting anything passed.

This is what the bills have to fix.

A 2006 law imposed a requirement to put advance funding into a federal retire-

ment health plan for postal workers. Other agencies don't do advance funding. They are on a pay-as-you-go system. That requirement began to cripple USPS within a year or two after its passage. What the 2006 law didn't do was relieve USPS of also contributing to Medicare for the same workers, which many do not use. So there are two plans for many workers, when only one is used. USPS has to double-pay, which is another way of saying you double-pay every time you buy stamps—for a total of about \$29 billion now paid into the Federal Treasury. The Chaffetz-Cummings and Carper bills would end the double-payment. Retirees would go onto Medicare like the rest of us do, and the other plan would provide supplemental coverage. The Postal Service would be relieved of the debt it is carrying from the 2006 law because the funding will be complete.

Sounds so reasonable, right? Why hasn't it passed? Because Uncle Sam likes keeping half of that double payment. Somehow, some think tanks inside the Beltway (and I say "think" with my tongue in cheek) believe by ending the double payment, USPS would be getting a bailout. But it isn't a bailout. This is stopping your postage money from being unfairly collected and relieving a financial burden USPS did not deserve if Medicare was used as intended.

Saving this money may not mean much to you at a few pennies a pop, but to businesses, it is big money that could be used to create jobs instead of lining the federal treasury. Did you know that the mail is responsible for 7.5 million jobs and \$1.2 trillion in the U.S. economy?

Mail is important. But it has to be reliable and on time. Unless this legislation gets through, mail will get slower and eventually, we won't be able to take it for granted.

If you get a chance this summer, e-mail your members of Congress a note asking them to pass these bills. Or better yet, send a letter by mail. Bet Congress takes that mail for granted every day, too.

CHIP HUTCHESON
President/National Newspaper Association and Publisher/The Times Leader, Princeton, KY

Hebron Senior Diners

Exercise daily, 9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.; Bus to Lincoln on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday; Fairbury trips are on second and fourth Mondays.

Monday, August 22: Beef fritter, potato salad, corn, fruited yogurt. *Fairbury trip.*

Tuesday, August 23: Beef in brown gravy over mashed potatoes, Harvard beets, apple crisp with topping. *Waffles; Bingo.*

Wednesday, August 24: Hot ham and Provolone on rye bread, veggie pasta salad, apricots, cookie. *Quilt.*

Thursday, August 25: Oven fried chicken, mashed potatoes and gravy, garden blend veggies, ice cream. *Tai Chi.*

Friday, August 26: Trout melt on a bun, creamed potatoes and peas, cole slaw sliced peaches. *Bingo.*

PrairieLand food order in on August 15; delivered August 27.

Meals served with bread, butter and milk. To make reservations, phone 768-6052 by 1:30 p.m., the day before you wish to dine.

Handibus goes to Lincoln on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday each week. Call 402-768-6052.

Chester Senior Diners

There are no longer activities listed on the calendar for Chester; however, an activity is scheduled each day.

Monday, August 22: Beef fritter, potato salad, corn, fruited yogurt.

Tuesday, August 23: Beef in brown gravy over mashed potatoes, Harvard beets, apple crisp with topping.

Wednesday, August 24: Hot ham and Provolone on rye bread, veggie pasta salad, apricots, cookie.

Thursday, August 25: Oven fried chicken, mashed potatoes and gravy, garden blend veggies, ice cream.

Friday, August 26: Trout melt on a bun, creamed potatoes and peas, cole slaw sliced peaches.

Meals served with bread, butter and milk. To make reservations, phone 324-5271 by 1:30 p.m., the day before you wish to dine.

Maschmann on Dean's list

Greenville Colleg in Greenville, Ill., announces that Betsy Maschmann, a freshmen from Davenport, has achieved Dean's List status for the 2016 spring semester. Betsy is the daughter of Glen and Marla Maschmann of Davenport. She is a graduate of Deshler High School and majored in Audio Engineering at Greenville.



Courtesy Photo

4-H sponsored horse show...

Saturday morning found over 30 kids participating in the Horse Show sponsored by Little Blue Country Kids 4-H Club. It was held at Dick Walsh's Arena in Hebron. There was also a Horse Judging contest held at the event in conjunction with the Thayer County Fair. Attendees at the Horse Show represented several different counties. The 4-H Club sponsors this equine event each year. Parents helped with the lunch stand and the leader is Gina Hudson of Belvidere.

Gehle family reunion held

The descendants of Adolph and Lenora (Ahrens) Gehle gathered at the home of Jim Gehle, August 13-14, for a family reunion.

Food, fun, visiting and games were enjoyed by all. Those attending came from N.Y., Mass., Mo., Kan., S.D., Colo., Wyo. and various places in Nebraska, as well as an exchange student from Sweden. A total of 90 were in attendance.

Davenport Senior Diners

Exercise Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 9:30 a.m.

Monday, August 22: Beef fritter, potato salad, corn, fruited yogurt. *Qwirkle.*

Tuesday, August 23: Beef in brown gravy over mashed potatoes, Harvard beets, apple crisp with topping. *Card game.*

Wednesday, August 24: Hot ham and Provolone on rye bread, veggie pasta salad, apricots, cookie. *Scrabble.*

Thursday, August 25: Oven fried chicken, mashed potatoes and gravy, garden blend veggies, birthday cake.

Friday, August 26: Trout melt on a bun, creamed potatoes and peas, cole slaw sliced peaches.

Meals served with bread, butter and milk. For reservations, call 364-2449 by 1:30 p.m., the day before.

Bulin graduates UNL

DebraSue Bulin of Bruning was among nearly 800 graduates who received degrees from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln during the summer all-university commencement ceremony Aug. 13 at Pinnacle Bank Arena.

Bulin earned a master of arts for teachers from the Office of Graduate Studies.

West Nile Virus Mosquito surveillance in Nebraska

Public Health Solutions along with the other local health departments in the state continues surveillance and education regarding West Nile Virus and other mosquito borne illnesses.



With the recent periodic rains, opportunities for mosquito breeding increases, so it is important to get rid of even the smallest amount of standing water.

Twenty-nine potential mosquito breeding pools are sampled on a weekly basis across the state. Of these, 12 have tested positive for the virus.

In the five county PHS area the sampling in done in Jefferson County and it has been negative so far. Fourteen people have been confirmed to have West Nile Virus. None are within the PHS District.

The public is urged to continue precautions to avoid mosquitos and to use Deet.

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(New patients need a referral)

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Courtesy Photo

Stormy weather...

Belvidere's Centennial Park suffered much wind damage in last week's Thursday night storm. Periods of strong wind and rain caused the loss of some trees located in the northern part of town.



JR Photo/Nancy McGill

Semi strikes vehicle

The Thayer County Sheriff's Office reported an injury accident at 13th and Dove Road Aug. 10 at 3:25 p.m. The eastbound semi, pulling a loaded grain wagon, failed to see a southbound vehicle on 13th St., driven by Loella Schoenholz of Bruning, who was transported to Thayer County Health Services via the Hebron Volunteer Rescue team. The impact caused Schoenholz's vehicle to spin into a ditch. The semi driver was Clifford Kennedy of Forest Hill, La. He was cited by Nebraska State Patrol for failure to yield, among other offenses.

Band judges cookoff, youth showcase entrepreneurship



Clint Tate and Tim Halfhide of 2.5 Men out of Concordia, Kan., were not only the entertainment for the evening of the cookoff, they were also randomly pulled to judge the entries.



Courtesy Photo

Fireman Minion on alert...

Minions are popular in Belvidere. The Woman's Club is responsible for their appearance. This Mr. Fireman Minion adorns the front of the fire hall, standing ready with his fire hat and hose! Anyone wanting to make a Minion? The club would welcome anyone wanting to contribute. It would be placed in a prestigious spot. Next week another Minion will be featured.

Belvidere

By Linda Hudson

Halfway through August and many events are happening. Has different meanings for those involved. For some teachers it marks the end of a teaching career and no more "getting ready for school" preparations. For others, the exact opposite as we see Karla and Tony Deepe's daughter begin her art teaching career in Deshler Schools. In comparison, Heidi Wachtel begins her 30th year in Deshler.

This week will also bring the end to the Summer Olympics in Rio. American athletes have been making the United States proud with their many abilities. How about those Nebraska girls leading the team to play for the Championship? Makes you anxious for Nebraska volleyball to begin. Poor Mike Riley has had his share of problems since coming to Nebraska. Humans sometimes do such dumb things and affects so

many plus difficult for the one that is responsible.

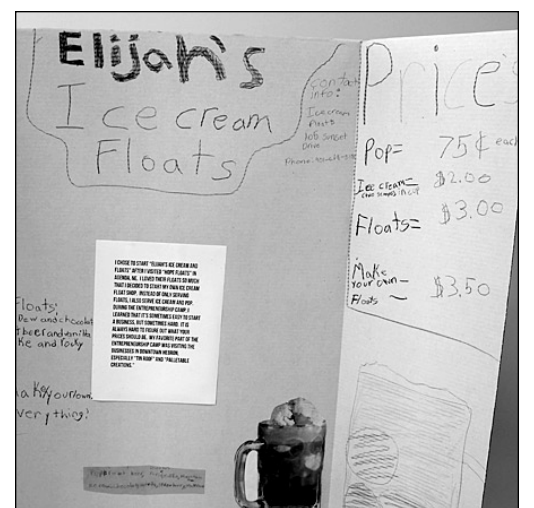
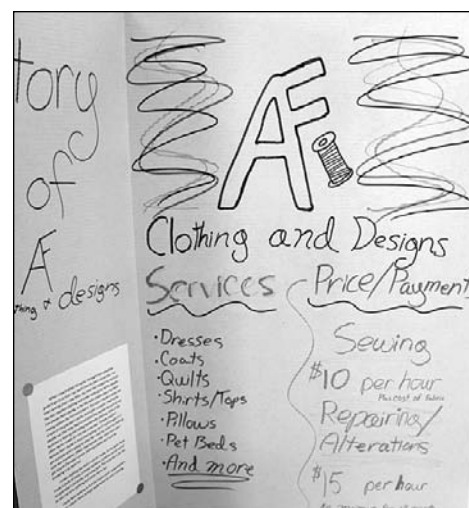
It is also time for "The Old Farmers Almanac" to resurface and make the 2017 long range forecast. Only time will tell if this publication's 80 percent accuracy for predicting weather is correct. Many northern regions will be much colder with more precipitation than normal. It is probably true that old fashioned forecasting still works. If you spot wispy thin clouds when jet airplanes fly, expect fair weather. Red sky at night, sailors delight; Red sky in the morning, sailors take warning. A rainbow in the morning gives you fair warning. West showers will probably be coming. Observe the sky and see if the proverbs really work.

Jenn and Josh Waldmeier and family spent the past weekend out west with her family. They celebrated a birthday on Saturday. Then

on Sunday they set up tent on beach and went boating with her parents. A nice ending to summer vacation for the Waldmeier family. Now three kids to school when Hebron School begins. Seems as though "Angels were flying pretty close to the Ground" (a good song of Willie Nelson) on Saturday evening as the UCC pastor, KIM Dunker and her husband Jim were coming home from Lincoln. An oncoming vehicle crossed the Center Line and caused a three car wreck! Shook up but doing o.k.

The United Church of Christ is sponsoring a Bible study on several Wednesdays at 5:00 p.m. It will be held at Assisted Living at Courtyard Terrace. Speaking of Courtyard Terrace everyone is rooting for Nancy Fangmeier who had the misfortune of breaking some bones in her foot. Everyone depends too much on Nancy to have her handicapped. Nancy is an important part of that facility. Always making life better for someone.

This past week blessings have been numerous including the little showers that have kept the grass growing and the flowers beautiful. Perhaps the farmers have one more week of irrigating?? One more blessing would be a hovering drone that keeps the grass mowed!



Young innovators from the Youth Entrepreneurship Camp of Thayer County Extension displayed their ideas for businesses at the cookoff.

Oak

By Phyllis Schmitt

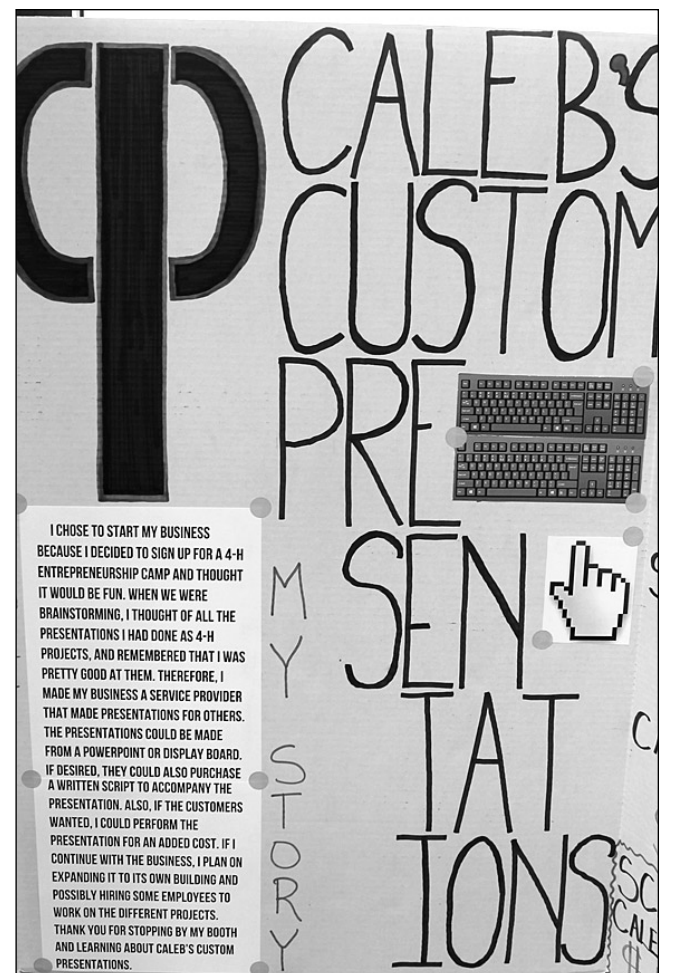
Donna Gillan quilted last Monday. Last Tuesday, she went to Hastings. On Wednesday, she attended Bible study at the Community Center where Pastor Stephen Berry showed his slides of his trip to Paris, France. In the afternoon, she attended Women's Fellowship at the church.

Last Tuesday morning, Keith and Lynda Brich were coffee guests of Phyllis Schmitt. At noon, she ate dinner at the Davenport Senior Center, and in the afternoon, she played cards at the Nelson Senior Center. Gerry Eckles also played cards.

Thursday morning, Donna Gillan had coffee at the Senior Center. She also went to Superior, and in the afternoon, she had coffee at D&D's Lyon's Den. Saturday, she was in Superior, and on Sunday, the ladies ate lunch at Caps Cafe.

On Saturday, Jackie Cox attended a community bridal shower for her granddaughter, Sierra Franzen, at the Bethany Lutheran Church in Ruskin.

Saturday evening supper guests of Dick and Carol Eckles were Phil and Gerry Eckles, Julia Merrill and girls from Warrensburg, Missouri. Dan and Stephanie Eckles and daughter of Lincoln and Sarah Vanhorn and children, also of Lincoln. This was in celebration of Julia's birthday and Phil and Gerry's anniversary.



Board...

Sept. 6. Rain caused a slight delay for outside work.

The board also approved changes to the student handbook regarding social media. Harris said the school stays informed on new social media

apps and adjusts the handbook policies accordingly.

"We expect students to use them appropriately, especially when they are at school or representing the school," Harris said.

ABOUT LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Hebron Journal-Register welcomes and encourages letters from our readers. Guidelines Include:
 • Letters must be signed by the author and include a phone number for contact if there is a problem or to verify the author. If more than one name appears, all signatures and telephone numbers must be included.
 • Hand delivered letters with spoken instructions from the letter writer will also be accepted provided the deliverer is the letter writer.
 • Letters must be pertinent to our readers, come from our readership area, and deal with something of interest to our readers.
 • Letters are not a substitute for advertising and those that appear to be advertising will not be published.
 • We reserve the right to choose which letters to publish and to edit for legal or length reasons.

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Bats test positive for rabies

The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services reminds Nebraskans that bats are very active this time of year, which means the possibility of exposure to rabies increases.

"Several bats have tested positive for rabies over the last few months and we expect to see many more," said Dr. Tom Safranek, State Epidemiologist for DHHS. "We want to remind Nebraskans to be careful around bats and other wild animals like skunks, foxes, coyotes and raccoons or domestic stray animals like cats and dogs which are less likely to be vaccinated. These animals could potentially have rabies and transmit it to people."

Rabies is caused by a virus that affects the nervous system and is transmitted by the bite of an infected animal or if saliva from a rabid animal gets directly into an open wound or a person's eyes, nose, or mouth. Rabies is generally fatal without preventive treatment.

Help prevent the spread of rabies by following these recommendations:

- Be a responsible animal owner. Keep rabies vaccinations up-to-date for all dogs, cats, ferrets, and other animals you own.
- Seek immediate veterinary assistance for your pet if it's bitten by a wild animal or exposed to a bat.
- Call your local animal control agency about removing stray animals in your neighborhood.
- Do not touch, feed, or unintentionally attract wild animals with open garbage cans or litter.
- Never adopt wild animals or bring them into your home. Do not try to nurse sick, wild animals to health. Call animal control or an animal rescue agency for assistance.
- Teach children never to handle unfamiliar animals, wild or domestic, even if they appear friendly. "Love your own, leave other animals alone" is a good principle for children to reduce the risk of contact with rabid animals.
- Maintain homes and other buildings so bats can't get inside.
- If a bat is in your house, don't let it outside until you talk to animal control or public health officials. If you can do it without putting yourself at risk for physical contact or being bitten, try to cover the bat with a large can or bucket, and close the door to the room.

If you think you've been bitten by a bat:

- Seek immediate medical

attention if you've been in direct contact with or bitten by a bat.

- If you wake up and find a bat in your room, you should try to safely capture the bat and have it tested. The same precautions should be used if you see a bat in a room with an unattended child.

- If you or a family member has been in close proximity to a bat, consult your doctor or local health department for assistance to determine if you might have been exposed to rabies and need preventive treatment.

- People often know when they've been bitten by a bat but its small teeth can make a bite mark difficult to find. It's better to be safe than sorry. Try to safely capture the bat or call animal control, have the bat tested and seek medical advice.

Animal Rabies Cases in Nebraska:

2016: 10 animals have tested positive for rabies so far (7 bats, 2 skunks, and 1 bovine)

2015: 28 cases (16 bats, 8 skunks, 2 cattle, 1 dog, and 1 cat)

2014: 21 cases (10 bats, 7 skunks, and 4 cattle)

2013: 33 cases (14 skunks, 7 cattle, 6 bats, 3 cats, 1 dog, 1 horse, and 1 llama)

2012: 59 cases

2011: 35 cases

2010: 53 cases

2009: 90 cases

No human cases of rabies have occurred among Nebraskans since the 1920s.

For more stats on the number of rabies cases in Nebraska, go to - http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/srd_rabies.aspx.

Find more information on bat-proofing your home -

<http://www.cdc.gov/rabies/bats/management/index.html>.

General information about rabies can be found here - <http://www.cdc.gov/rabies/index.html>.



Bruning-Davenport Unified School

ACTIVITIES

Thursday, August 18: Football practice at Bruning, 3:30 p.m.

Friday, August 19: FB scrimmage.

Tuesday, August 23: DIBELS testing.

Wednesday, August 24: DIBELS testing.

BRUNING

MENU

Thursday, August 18: Taco salad, churro.

Friday, August 19: Chinese chicken, rice, cookie.

Monday, August 22: Turkey bacon sandwich, fries.

Tuesday, August 23: Spaghetti with meat sauce, French bread.

Wednesday, August 24: Chicken patty sandwich, cheese sticks.

Fruit and vegetable bar and salad bar served every day. Milk served with all meals. Menu subject to change.

DAVENPORT

MENU

Thursday, August 18: Corn dogs, ravioli, corn, pineapple.


Friday, August 19: Hamburgers on bun, French fries, strawberries and bananas, green beans.

Monday, August 22: Chicken strips, French fries, peas, Mandarin oranges.

Tuesday, August 23: Hot dogs, chips and cheese, baked beans, pears.

Wednesday, August 24: Mac and cheese, smokies, cooked carrots, peach cup.

Fruit and vegetable bar served every day. Milk served with all meals. Menu subject to change.



Deshler Public Schools

ACTIVITIES

Thursday, August 18: Preschool - Welcome to school night.

Monday, August 22: First day of preschool.

Wednesday, August 24: FCA, 6 p.m.

Thursday, August 25: School pictures (grades K-11).

MENU

Thursday, August 18: BBQ pork on bun, sweet potato fries, coleslaw, grapes, milk.

Friday, August 19: Turkey, mashed potatoes, green beans, dinner roll, apple or peach crisp, milk.

Monday, August 22: Cheeseburger, potato smiles, pickles and onions, star apple or apple, milk.

Tuesday, August 23: Spaghetti, lettuce salad, garlic bread, tropical fruit, milk.

Wednesday, August 24: Pigs in a blanket, baby carrots, corn, pears, snickerdoodle cookie, milk.

Help for hearing loss is often unaffordable

Nearly two-thirds of adults over age 70 have hearing loss that doctors consider "clinically meaningful." In plain English that means as people age, they are likely to become hard of hearing. Many of those people, however, don't get the help they need, often because they simply cannot afford it.

"The prevalence of hearing loss almost doubles with each age decade of life," says Dr. Frank Lin, an otolaryngologist at Johns Hopkins University, but for older people, he adds, "there are multiple barriers that prevent individuals from getting their hearing loss addressed."

Lin spoke about the subject to a group of journalists in a recent phone conference sponsored by a Washington, D.C., advocacy group the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare. He is a co-author of a June report issued by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine that recommends better access and support for treating hearing loss.

Lin told the group that although hearing loss is a normal part of the aging process, "hearing care is inaccessible" to many seniors. He said studies over the last five years have shown that such loss "can increase the risk of cognitive decline."

Using data from a longitudinal study (one that tracks data from the same people repeatedly over many years or decades) that began in

1958, Lin and his colleagues at Johns Hopkins found that those with hearing loss had a higher probability of developing dementia. The more severe the loss, the more likely the dementia.


That isn't the only problem. Hearing loss is also associated with a greater risk for falls and other accidents because a person can't hear traffic or a smoke alarm in their home.

Furthermore, those with hearing loss often feel isolated and shun normal social contacts because they can't hear others speak. That's a blow to productive aging, the goal promoted by the late Dr. Robert Butler, a well-known gerontologist who fought against ageism.

So why, then, is hearing care so inaccessible? Cost may be the major barrier. Nearly all expenses for hearing care must be paid out-of-pocket, and for many seniors on fixed incomes, that's sometimes hard to do. Lin told me the average cost of two hearing aids is \$4,700 and rarely covered by insurance.

Medicare doesn't cover hearing exams, hearing aids, or exams for fitting hearing aids. It does, however, cover diagnostic hearing and balance exams but only if your doctor orders those tests to see if you need medical treatment.

In that case, if a person has traditional Medicare and a Medicare supplement policy, often called a Medigap, he or she has to pay 20 percent of the approved amount for



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the exam. Some Medicare Advantage plans may include hearing tests as part of the extra benefits they offer.

The National Committee and other advocacy groups are campaigning to add a hearing benefit to Medicare's benefit package. Their campaign is bucking the trend in Washington to cut Medicare benefits by raising the age of eligibility, making richer seniors pay more, and requiring those with traditional Medigaps to have more skin in the game.

Politicians have already begun redesigning Medigap policies to make seniors pay more out of pocket for their care. Beginning in 2020, for example, insurers will not be allowed to sell Medigap policies that cover the deductibles for Medicare Part B that pays for physicians' services, lab tests and hospital out patient care. The theory behind this shift is that seniors will pay more and the government less thus helping to save Medicare money.

I asked Dan Adcock, the National Committee's policy director, about the chances of adding benefits to treat hearing loss, or for that matter vision and dental care, when the focus has been on cutting benefits of

all kinds.


He said one major source of funds to pay for hearing aids could come from lowering the price of what Medicare pays for drugs. The 2003 legislation that gave seniors a drug benefit also prohibited the government from negotiating prices for the drugs it buys. Drug makers strongly oppose such negotiations.

Adcock said he remains hopeful. If better hearing means a decrease in dementia, falls and accidents, fewer people would need treatment for those conditions. The savings could potentially "pay" for the hearing aids, he said.

For now, though, seniors and their families are on their own. The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine offer an Action Guide for Individuals and Families that suggests actions people can take to prevent hearing loss and strategies for families to cope with it when it occurs. It's available at www.nas.edu/hearing.

What experiences have you or a family member had with hearing loss and obtaining treatment? Write to Trudy at trudy.lieberman@gmail.com.




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