



Taken from the news columns of area newspapers.

10-year-old's birthday wish benefits others

COZAD—'Tis the season of giving and it was Cozad youngster Jacob Engel that recently enlightened people of the Cozad area with his birthday wishes. Engel asked his mother to have the birthday invitations for his party emphasize for people to bring food to be donated to the Cozad Emergency Action Food Pantry, instead of gifts for himself. When the birthday donations were complete, an estimated 100-plus pounds had been gathered from the birthday party. Engel is currently a fourth grade student at Cozad Elementary School.—reported in the Tri-City Trib.

Skid-steer fire burns toward local vineyard

BROKEN BOW—Local couple Ed and Maxine Wehling watched helplessly the previous week as a pasture fire made its way toward their prized grape vines. Luckily the couple's vineyard was spared. The Merna Fire Department crew was called to the scene of a skid-steer on fire in a pasture, but before they arrived at the scene it was apparent the fire had gotten much bigger. Back up was called to help battle the blaze which spread five miles. With assistance from area departments the fire was extinguished, however, 250-300 acres were already burned. Flames had inched toward the Wehlings' vineyard, which produces grapes for area wineries, but it was saved from the blaze.—reported in the Custer County Chief.

Vacant motel brings health, safety concerns

OGALLALA—In an effort to rid Ogallala of yet another of its vacated motels that have fallen into a state of disrepair, Keith County Area Development (KCAD) officials are trying to raise

\$25,000, the purchase price of the Lakeway Lodge, so that the buildings on the property can ultimately be demolished and the land used for new projects. The Lakeway Lodge, as of now, is overrun with health and safety hazards, overgrowth and trespassers have been using the building for shelter and lighting fires inside. President of KCAD, Drew Krab, views the property as a prime location for successful business ventures and envisions projects to benefit the community.—reported in the Keith County News.

Eustis-Farnam school ranks No. 1 in science

CURTIS—The Nebraska Department of Education released its annual State of the Schools report recently, and for the first time ranked every school in the state in a variety of academic areas. Those rankings showed Eustis-Farnam High School at number one in the state in science. Ranking was based on the results of the Nebraska State Accountability Tests given each year to students in various grades statewide. This was the first year the test was administered in science and writing. Eustis-Farnam students had an average score of 136.91 on the science portion, compared with a statewide average of 98.81.—reported in the Frontier County Enterprise.

Flowers help to stock food pantry shelves

ARNOLD—The DownHome Emporium of Arnold was among participating flower shops across the nation who gathered canned goods for distribution to their local food pantries recently. Donors who brought in two cans of food received one dozen long-stem roses for only \$10. Flowers that were not sold in Arnold were taken to the residents at Riverview to enjoy. Florists in participating communities chose a local food distribution charity to help feed those within their own communities. Over 32 tons of food was gathered across the central United States during the event.—reported in the Arnold Sentinel.

Old-Fashioned Christmas at Callaway

CALLAWAY—The annual Callaway Chamber Old-Fashioned Christmas was to take place this evening, Dec. 5, with familiar events and a few changes implemented. Participating businesses would be open until 9 p.m. for open houses and shopping. Santa will be at the library and there will be a craft show along with a soup supper. Cartoons will be shown for children and fire truck

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rides will be offered. Added this year is something new in the Mini-Park with a fire pit to roast marshmallows or make s'mores. Drawings for prizes will take place and several other activities. The Seven Valleys Museum will also be open for public tours,—reported in the Callaway Courier.