



Taken from the news columns of area newspapers.

Concerns expressed about school changes

COZAD—A large number of parents and community members recently crowded into the large meeting room at the Lexington Public Library anxious to hear details regarding a proposed school reconfiguration plan of switching from neighborhood-based elementary schools to grade-level campuses. The proposal was met with frustration of the reasons why school board members want to change the current system, some sighting a way to bypass federal intervention for failing schools rather than what is best for the students. Many concerns were brought up including transportation, safety and class sizes. Members of the Lexington Board of Education are to vote on the issue as early as April 8, despite the numerous questions and concerns by the public.—reported in the Tri-City Trib.

Esch sentenced for shooting police vehicle

BROKEN BOW—Custer County District Judge Karin Noakes firmly addressed Trent Esch recently before passing sentence on him. “It is obvious to everyone involved in this case that you have an extreme problem with alcohol...” Esch, 36, of Broken Bow had been found guilty of shooting up a Custer County Sheriff’s Department vehicle by a jury Feb. 13. Judge Noakes handed down a sentence of 5-7 years on Count 1-use of a firearm to commit a felony, and 20-36 months on Count 2-criminal mischief. On top of the prison sentence, Esch was also ordered to make restitution of \$7,500.—reported in the Custer County Chief.

Ogallala seeks to build new public library

OGALLALA—For the last 60 years, the brick building that once was the American Legion Hall, and before that served a variety of purposes, has been home to Ogallala’s first permanent library. The building was purchased by Robert and Clarice Goodall in 1953 who donated it to the city for the library, and has served the community since. Now, the library’s 36,000-item collection and its nearly 8,000 patrons have outgrown the building. A committee has come together that is interested in pursuing a new library with preliminary plans of an 25,000-square-foot building to serve the community for years to come.—reported in the Keith County News.

Statewide magazine features Curtis

CURTIS—The March/April issue of Nebraska Life Magazine features the southwestern city of Curtis, whose residents are working together, with a combination of compassion and enthusiasm, to ensure that this Easter City is always in bloom. In “Standing Together in Curtis,” field assistant editor Alan Bartels explores Curtis, teemed with locals, ready to lend a helping hand wherever they can. “Everyone in Curtis is so friendly...as far as I’m concerned, there’s no better place to live...everything we need is right here,” according to a few locals who were interviewed. The full article with photography of Curtis is available in the featured issue magazine.—reported in the Frontier County Enterprise.

Postcards for Nathan helps boy to ‘see’ world

ARNOLD—Arnold fourth-grade students and their teacher, Berni Crow, made postcards for a 10-year-old boy named Nathan who suffers from a disease that will eventually make him blind. Mrs. Crow learned about the little boy from a Denver newspaper article where his mother had posted a message on Facebook asking for postcards from around the world. She wants her son to see as much of the world as possible before he loses his sight completely. Mrs. Crow’s students sent photos of their school activities and local landmarks. Nathan ended up getting

hundreds of postcards to help him see the world.—reported in the Arnold Sentinel.

144 bales of hay burned along Highway 21

CALLAWAY—A hay bale fire seven miles south of Oconto brought out fire volunteers from Oconto with an assist from Eddyville around 10 a.m. on March 21. A reported 144 round bales caught fire along Highway 21 on property owned by Herb and Joel Ringenberg. There was not much that could be done once hay burns but pull it apart and keep it under control, said Cliff Badgley, fire chief. What caused the fire is unknown but was determined to have started in the ditch alongside the highway. Units stayed on scene until the fire burned itself out by mid-afternoon. Concerns remain high that last year's fire season could repeat itself as the area remains dry.—reported in the Callaway Courier.