Issue # 2641

Week of October 11 - 17, 2026

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THE SUNDAY SCANNER

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News and Views from across the State of Nebraska with a focus on the Panhandle

Dangerous Public Opinion; Guilty Before Charged

All suspects are guilty on social media before anything is proven in a court of law.



(SCOTTSBLUFF, Neb.) – The Scottsbluff Police Department has put out an updated press release on the accident Friday night involving the pedestrian fatality.

In every case of this nature, we remind everyone that those who could be charged or have been charged are innocent until proven guilty.

We have been made aware of a Facebook group whose title calls for the young man's imprisonment. The group description itself calls for the justice system to work better.

We can all agree that the justice system, in general, could be greatly improved. However, their title has caused a high emotional response, rather than a worthwhile debate on the need for more safety at that specific location.

We understand that the young man is remorseful and wants to apologize to the family.

It sounds like he very well understands the impact of the incident and is ready to face the consequences in a court of law, if he is charged.

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Community

Pastor Appreciation Day and Month

While the month of October is Pastor Appreciation Month, we also recognized and celebrated National Pastor Appreciation Day on Oct. 11, to remind everyone how important it is to support our local Christian leaders.

Also known as National Clergy Appreciation Month, it is designed to honor the tireless work, spiritual guidance, and 24/7 demands placed on ministers, priests, and pastors.



The entire month of October is recognized as National Clergy Appreciation Month, so you still have time to show your appreciation.

Let's show our local pastors, priests, ministers and leaders know we appreciate them.

Many pastors value personal gestures such as:

- Handwritten thank-you notes
- Gift cards for groceries or gas
- Covering a weekend of duties
- Help arrange a day off
- Home-cooked meals / baked goods

National Breast Cancer Awareness Month

National Breast Cancer Awareness Month (BCAM) takes place every year from Oct. 1 to Oct. 31 to promote early detection, education, and research funding.

- Origin: Founded in 1985 as a joint effort by the American Cancer Society and Imperial Chemical Industries Pharmaceuticals.
- Symbol: The pink ribbon, which emerged as the universal symbol in 1992.
- Core Goal: Encouraging routine screenings like mammograms (recommended annually starting at age 40 for average-risk individuals).



Important Dates in October:

- Metastatic Breast Cancer Awareness Day: Oct. 13
- Global Lobular Breast Cancer Awareness Day: Oct. 15
- National Mammography Day: Oct. 16, 2026
- Men's Breast Cancer Awareness Week: Oct. 17–23

Educational resources and support services are available via the National Breast Cancer Foundation and Susan G. Komen.

The 44th annual **Old West Weekend Marching Band Festival** in Scottsbluff took place on Saturday, Oct. 17, 2026.



Participating Bands

- Alliance Middle School & High School
- Bluffs Middle School
- Gering Middle School & High School
- Mitchell High School
- Scottsbluff High School

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MISSING PERSONS

AND PROPERTY

According to the Nebraska State Patrol, there are generally around 750 people missing at any given time across the state when accounting for short-term disappearances, active runaways, and rapidly resolved cases, with nearly 500 missing persons currently listed.

Missing (Stolen) Bicycle Recovered

(SCOTTSBLUFF, Neb.) — A Scottsbluff man faces a larceny citation in Scotts Bluff County Court following an investigation into a stolen bicycle and attached dog carrier trailer that were recovered in August.

Steven Tafoya pleaded not guilty to a larceny citation issued under a Scottsbluff municipal ordinance. A pretrial hearing is scheduled for Oct. 21, 2026, at 11:15 a.m. in Scotts Bluff County Court.

The case began Aug. 1, 2026, when Scottsbluff Police responded to an apartment complex on Fourth Avenue regarding a stolen silver Diamondback mountain bike equipped with a black-and-green dog carrier trailer. The owner reported that the bicycle, an inherited family item dating to the 1980s, and the newly purchased dog carrier had been taken overnight from beside the building's garages.

The following morning, Aug. 2, police responded to the 2600 block of Second Avenue for a report of a found bicycle. Officers verified that the bicycle matched the description of the stolen Diamondback, although the dog carrier was missing.

Police traced the bicycle's origin to a medical call involving Tafoya and an associate at a nearby residence. Officers located Tafoya at Regional West Medical Center, where he initially claimed a friend had given him the bicycle two days earlier.

When questioned further, Tafoya admitted taking the bicycle, stating that he was experiencing homelessness and needed transportation for his belongings. He apologized to officers for taking the bicycle and lying about how he acquired it. Police later located the missing dog carrier at a local track.

Both items were returned to the police station's storage area for the owner to retrieve. Tafoya was issued a larceny citation and released. Public defender William E. Madelung represents Tafoya.

Nebraska Missing Persons Day

Nebraska Missing Persons Day is observed annually on Oct. 17 to honor missing individuals, support grieving families, and draw attention to cold cases across the state.

- Date: Oct. 17 each year (recognized as the 3rd annual observance in 2026).
- Origin: Officially established by the Nebraska Legislature through Legislative Bill 1102 (LB 1102) in 2024.
- Historical Significance: The date marks the disappearance of Regina "Gina" Bos, who vanished from downtown Lincoln, Nebraska, on Oct. 17, 2000.
- Advocacy: Ongoing Support is Championed by the GINA for Missing Persons Foundation, founded by Bos's sister Jannel Rap, to connect families and reduce the isolation of missing persons cases.
- Resources: Active cases and information can be found via the Nebraska State Patrol Missing Persons Database or 411GINA.org.

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THE INTEGRITY OF THE PROCESS

by Raul Fernandez

(SCOTTSBLUFF, Neb.) – When tragedy strikes on local streets, the emotional weight felt by a community is immediate and profound.

In the aftermath of fatal traffic incidents, especially those occurring near schools, crosswalks, or neighborhood events—grief quickly turns to a demand for action. Calls for immediate arrests, maximum criminal charges, and expedited resolutions naturally fill public forums and social media feeds.

Yet, as understandable as these passionate responses are, true justice is not delivered through speed or public pressure. It is delivered through thorough, meticulous adherence to the rule of law and due process.

Precision Over Speed in Complex Investigations

Modern accident reconstruction is a scientific discipline, not an intuitive one. Determining exact vehicle speed, braking response, sightlines, current environmental conditions, mechanical performance, and driver focus requires careful forensic analysis.

Subpoenaing phone records, extracting data from vehicle recorders (the automobile equivalent of a flight "black box"), and interviewing witnesses demand time.

If law enforcement agencies hurry these technical investigations to meet public demand for quick answers, the integrity of the evidence is compromised.

A rushed report can lead to improper charges, procedural errors, or missed evidence—flaws that defense attorneys can easily exploit in court, potentially causing a case to be dismissed entirely.

To secure a conviction that withstands judicial scrutiny, investigators must be given the time necessary to build an airtight case based on verifiable facts rather than initial impressions.

Discerning Simple Error from Criminal Intent

A foundational tenet of the American legal system is the distinction between civil liability and criminal guilt. Not every catastrophic outcome is the result of criminal recklessness.

Under statutory law, prosecutors must establish specific mental states—such as gross negligence or conscious disregard for human life—to sustain severe charges like motor vehicle homicide or reckless driving.

It is true that simple human error, brief distraction, and unexpected environmental factors may very well constitute civil negligence.

However, those factors do not automatically meet the high threshold required for felony prosecution.

Preserving this boundary is vital. Automatically treating every fatal collision as an intentional or criminal act bypasses the presumption of innocence and replaces statutory law with emotional momentum.

Prosecutors carry an ethical obligation to evaluate evidence objectively, filing only those charges that can be proven beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

Protecting Institutional Integrity and Judicial Fairness

The justice system was intentionally designed to operate with deliberation, separating legal proceedings from public passion.

When community petitions or public outrage dictate prosecutorial decisions, the equality and fairness of the system are eroded.

Protecting due process for every individual, regardless of the high-profile nature of a case, ensures that the legal rights of all citizens remain intact.

A system that yields to outside pressure today can easily be turned against any member of the community tomorrow.

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Domestic Assault in Morrill

(MORRILL, Neb.) — A 35-year-old man faces a misdemeanor charge following an alleged domestic disturbance Monday morning in Morrill.

Adrian Alberto Encinas-Vizcarra was arrested Oct. 12 on suspicion of third-degree domestic assault, a Class I misdemeanor, according to court documents filed in Scotts Bluff County Court.

According to an affidavit of probable cause, an officer with the Morrill Police Department responded to a residence on East Webster Street at approximately 7:50 a.m. following a report of a woman punched in the face. Upon arrival, the responding officer contacted Encinas-Vizcarra in a nearby parking lot.

Due to a language barrier, the officer communicated with Encinas-Vizcarra using a translation app on a mobile device. Encinas-Vizcarra denied getting into a physical altercation or verbal argument that morning, claiming the woman had previously threatened to call law enforcement to have his visa revoked, according to the affidavit.



The officer then interviewed the victim inside the residence. She alleged that during an argument, Encinas-Vizcarra struck her in the face with his right hand. The officer reported observing visible swelling and redness on the right side of her lower lip.

Encinas-Vizcarra was taken into custody and transported to the Scotts Bluff County Detention Center in Gering.

During an appearance before County Court Judge Mark L. Kovarik, Encinas-Vizcarra entered a plea of not guilty. Court records indicate an interpreter was appointed for Spanish-language proceedings. Bond was set at $10,000 with a 10% cash deposit allowed.

Judge Kovarik ordered a pretrial conference, which is scheduled for Nov. 30, 2026, at 9 a.m. at the Scotts Bluff County Courthouse in Gering.



THE INTEGRITY OF THE PROCESS

By Raul Fernandez
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Final Fact-Finding Drives Genuine Prevention

Long term public safety and road infrastructure improvements must depend on accurate data, not hasty conclusions.

Prematurely attributing an incident solely to driver recklessness before an investigation is finalized can obscure other contributing factors, such as inadequate street lighting, obscured signage, or faulty road geometry.

Allowing law enforcement and prosecutors to complete their work ensures that community leaders receive an accurate assessment of what happened. Only then can public officials implement effective physical safety measures alongside appropriate legal remedies.

Justice is a long, deliberate process by design. By placing trust in established investigative standards and respecting the role of independent prosecutors, the community ensures that accountability is fair, lawful, and enduring.

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FELONY CHARGES FOR CHILD LEFT IN CAR

(SIDNEY, Neb.) — A 27-year-old Sidney woman faces multiple charges, including felony child abuse and officer assault, following a late-night incident in August involving an unattended infant at a local hotel and a subsequent struggle with law enforcement.

La'Naya J. Campos appeared in Cheyenne County District Court on Tuesday before Judge Derek C. Weimer for her arraignment, where she entered not guilty pleas to:

- Count 1: Intentional Child Abuse (No Injury) — Class IIIA Felony
- Count 2: Assault on an Officer / Healthcare Professional (3rd Degree) — Class IIIA Felony
- Count 3: Resisting Arrest (1st Offense) — Class I Misdemeanor

The charges stem from an August 29 dispatch to the Sapp Bros. truck stop on Upland Parkway regarding reported suspicious activity.

According to an arrest affidavit, responding officers made contact with a witness holding a 4-month-old infant outside the truck stop.
The witness told police she had been riding with Campos earlier in the night after drinking together. According to the statement, Campos drove to the nearby Quality Inn on East Jennifer Lane to meet an acquaintance, leaving the infant inside the vehicle.

The witness reported hearing the baby crying in the backseat while Campos was inside the hotel, prompting her to retrieve the child from the vehicle and hold her outside until law enforcement arrived.

Law enforcement located Campos inside a Quality Inn room alongside another individual. Officers observed that Campos was heavily intoxicated, vomiting on the floor, and unable to maintain her balance or walk without assistance.

When questioned about her child's location, Campos repeatedly insisted the infant was "with me," despite the child being outside with the witness. Officers also noted fresh scrapes consistent with a fall.

After being escorted outside to the parking area, Campos declined to perform standardized field sobriety tests, telling law enforcement, "You already know I am going to fail." The encounter escalated as Campos grew increasingly agitated and stepped out toward the street.

When an officer attempted to guide her back toward the patrol unit, Campos allegedly swung her hand at him and then turned to swing at a responding deputy.

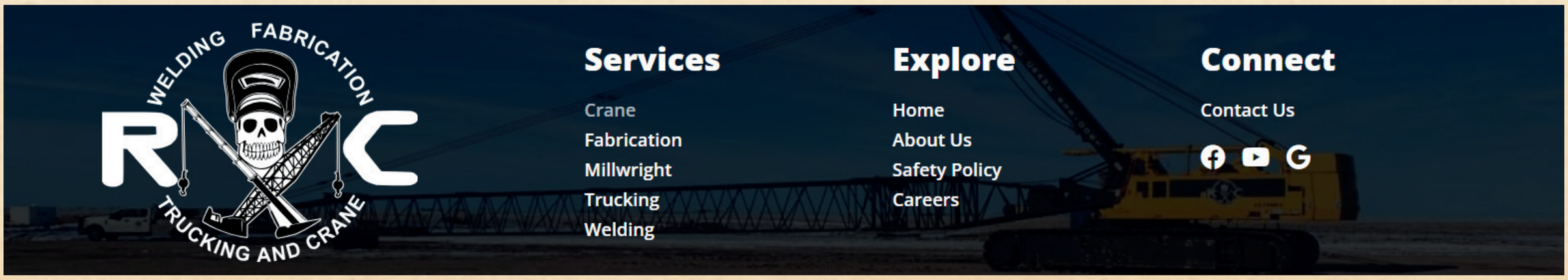
Deputies took Campos to the ground, where she allegedly continued to resist by kicking and trying to pin her arms beneath her body.

After being handcuffed, Campos reportedly wrapped her legs around a deputy's feet in an attempt to trip him, prompting law enforcement to apply a WRAP restraint system.

While securing the restraint, Campos allegedly bit a deputy on the right arm, breaking the skin and leaving a visible mark.

During Tuesday's court appearance, Judge Weimer declared Campos indigent and appointed attorney Stacy C. Bach to represent her alongside prosecutor Amber Horn for the State.

A status hearing is scheduled for Nov. 4, 2026, at 9 a.m. in Cheyenne County District Courtroom 1, Sidney, Nebraska.



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Sexual Assault Charge Dropped

(GERING, Neb.) — A Gering man was sentenced in Scotts Bluff County District Court after entering no-contest pleas to domestic assault and strangulation charges stemming from a February incident.

Adric D. Blanco entered no-contest pleas to third-degree domestic assault (a Class IIIA felony) and assault by strangulation or suffocation (a Class IIIA felony).

Under the terms of the plea agreement reached between defense counsel Michael Meister and the State, charges of first-degree false imprisonment and first-degree sexual assault were dropped and dismissed.

The charges stem from a late-night incident on Feb. 20, 2026, at a residence on North Street in Gering.

According to an affidavit of probable cause filed by Gering Police, officers responded to a report of a domestic assault and made contact with a female victim who had visible injuries, including a bloody nose, swollen lip, and a black eye.

The victim told officers that Blanco arrived home intoxicated around 11:00 p.m. and an argument ensued. When she attempted to get away from him, Blanco followed her, pinned her down, struck her across the face, and punched the back of her head. The affidavit notes Blanco strangled the woman to the point where she nearly lost consciousness.

The victim reported being held against her will inside the apartment for approximately an hour before fleeing the residence wearing only slippers in 1-degree-Fahrenheit weather when Blanco stepped away to use the restroom.

Officers located Blanco driving nearby shortly after arriving on scene.

During a police interview, Blanco denied hitting the woman, though he made statements regarding physical interactions between them and claimed she did not try to leave until he went to the restroom. Officers noted that the victim fleeing barefoot into sub-zero conditions supported her report of a hasty escape.

On Oct. 15, 2026, Blanco was sentenced to three years in prison for third-degree domestic assault, and three years for the assault by strangulation, consecutively.

Three-Vehicle Accident on Northport Overpass

MEDIA RELEASE
Morrill County Sheriff's Department



(NORTHPORT, Neb.) — On Tuesday, Oct. 13, 2026, at approximately 7:11 p.m., the Morrill County Sheriff's Office responded to a three-vehicle accident reported atop the Northport Overpass.

Deputies arrived on scene and an investigation determined that a white Ford F-150 was following traffic too closely, failed to stop, and struck a sedan. The sedan was then pushed into an SUV.

A juvenile passenger in the sedan reported minor injuries and medical services were dispatched to the scene. The juvenile did not require transportation to a hospital.

Further investigation resulted in the arrest of the driver of the white Ford F-150, Jack L. Swires of Bridgeport for Driving Under the Influence of Alcohol, and various other charges.

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Officer Safely Dodges Collision

(SCOTTSBLUFF, Neb.) — A Scottsbluff man faces sentencing in Scotts Bluff County Court after entering a no-contest plea to an amended drunken driving charge following an August traffic stop.

Cameron C. Garcia entered a no-contest plea before County Judge Mark L. Kovarik to DUI (.08 blood or breath alcohol concentration, first offense), a Class W misdemeanor, as part of a plea agreement. The charge was reduced from the original count of DUI with a concentration of .15 or greater. On the motion of prosecutor David Eubanks, the court dismissed a secondary infraction charge of failure to yield the right of way after stopping.

The case stems from an Aug. 7 incident at approximately 10:18 p.m. near Avenue B and West Railway Street in Scottsbluff. According to an arrest affidavit, a patrolling officer observed a green BMW without license plates or in-transit tags fail to yield properly at a stop sign and pull directly in front of the patrol vehicle, forcing the officer to brake hard to avoid a collision.

After initiating a traffic stop, officers contacted Garcia, the vehicle's sole occupant. Law enforcement noted a strong odor of alcohol, bloodshot and watery eyes, and slurred speech. Garcia admitted to drinking alcohol and showed multiple indicators of impairment during field sobriety tests. A subsequent chemical breath test returned a result of 0.198, more than twice the standard legal limit of 0.08.

Judge Kovarik accepted the no-contest plea, found Garcia guilty and ordered that any application for probation require a completed alcohol and substance abuse evaluation before sentencing.

Sentencing is scheduled for Nov. 24, 2026, at 9:30 a.m. in Scotts Bluff County Courtroom 1.

DUI... On-The-Tracks

(GERING, Neb.) — A Scottsbluff man faces a misdemeanor charge of driving under the influence (second offense) with a high blood alcohol content after his vehicle became stuck on railroad tracks near Gering in August, according to court documents.

Eric J. Jacobucci pleaded not guilty to DUI, a Class I misdemeanor, in Scotts Bluff County Court.

The charge stems from an Aug. 8 dispatch at approximately 10:10 p.m. regarding a potentially suicidal and intoxicated driver stuck on railroad tracks via Snapchat.

Law enforcement located Jacobucci and his vehicle immobilized on the tracks near Highway 92 and County Road 25 after he apparently missed the crossing while attempting to drive over it.

According to an arrest affidavit filed by the Scotts Bluff County Sheriff's Office, deputies noted a strong odor of alcohol, slurred speech and bloodshot eyes. Standardized field sobriety tests indicated signs of impairment, and a preliminary breath test showed a breath alcohol concentration of 0.259, more than three times the legal limit.

Deputies transported Jacobucci to Regional West Medical Center for an evidentiary blood draw. He initially argued that he would consent only if ordered to do so by a judge.

Law enforcement subsequently obtained a search warrant signed by Judge Mickey, and the blood sample was collected.

Court records indicate Jacobucci posted 10% of a $7,000 bond on Aug. 10. He is represented by defense attorney Jessica M. Landers.

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Chainsaw Charges Cut Down to Assault, Disturbing the Peace

(GERING, Neb.) — A Gering man faces upcoming sentencing in Scotts Bluff County Court after entering no-contest pleas to amended assault and peace disturbance charges stemming from an August domestic dispute involving a chainsaw.

Ryan J. Rohnke entered no-contest pleas before County Judge Mark L. Kovarik to assault causing bodily injury (a Class 1 misdemeanor) and disturbing the peace (a Class 3 misdemeanor).

The charges were reduced from original counts of third-degree domestic assault and negligent child abuse in the plea agreement.

According to an arrest affidavit, officers responded around 2 a.m. on August 28, 2026, to a residence on 12th Street in Gering after a 13-year-old juvenile reported that his stepfather was heavily intoxicated and attempting to break down an interior door.

Upon arrival, the juvenile told police that Rohnke had retrieved a chainsaw during an argument over loud music and tried to break through a locked bedroom door, though he was unable to get the chainsaw started. The teenager reported taking the chainsaw away from Rohnke and placing it outside near the back door, where officers subsequently located it.

Inside the home, police spoke with Rohnke's girlfriend, who stated that Rohnke pushed her to the ground, slapped her across the face, and bit her on the right cheek during the altercation. She further reported that Rohnke squeezed her hand while she held a speaker cord, breaking an acrylic nail and injuring her finger.

Prosecutor Allison M. Witcofski represented the State during Tuesday's hearing, while defense attorney William E. Madelung represented Rohnke.

Sentencing is scheduled for November 10, 2026, at 2 p.m. in Scotts Bluff County Courtroom 1.

Judge Kovarik accepted the no-contest pleas, and found Rohnke guilty on both amended counts. Rohnke was also advised of federal firearm restrictions under 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(9).

Meth Pipe and Syringe Charges Dropped in Park Arrest

(GERING, Neb.) — A Scottsbluff woman was sentenced to time served in Scotts Bluff County District Court on Tuesday after pleading guilty to an amended misdemeanor drug charge stemming from a summer park incident.

Buffy L. Salas entered a guilty plea to an amended charge of attempted possession of a controlled substance (methamphetamine), a Class I misdemeanor, as part of a plea agreement. In exchange for her plea, prosecutors dismissed an infraction charge for possession of drug paraphernalia.

District Judge Andrea Miller sentenced Salas to 105 days in the Scotts Bluff County Jail, granting full credit for 105 days already served prior to sentencing. The court waived a presentence investigation and discharged all court costs, allowing Salas to be released with time served.

The conviction arises from a July 1 response by Scottsbluff Police to a report of a physical disturbance at a park near 12th Avenue. Responding officers contacted Salas and a male companion laying on the ground beneath a tree.

During the contact, a reporting party informed law enforcement that the pair had been drinking. When asked if officers could search her belongings, Salas consented. Inside her purse, officers discovered a glass pipe and a hypodermic syringe, both containing white residue. Field testing confirmed the residue was positive for methamphetamine, leading to her arrest.

Prosecutor Allison Witcofski represented the State of Nebraska during Tuesday's hearing, while court-appointed defense attorney Jessica Landers represented Salas.

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FIRE & RESCUE

S. Beltline Rollover

(SCOTTSBLUFF, Neb.) -- First responders were on scene at 21st Avenue & S. Beltline Hwy for a vehicle rollover accident Monday afternoon.



Gering House Fire(s)

(GERING, Neb.) – Panhandle Scanner followers were on scene as first responders were fighting a house fire on the south end of Gering Thursday just before noon.

The Gering Volunteer Fire Department and the Scottsbluff Rural Fire District both responded.



There was another house fire this week, on Tuesday, KNEB was on scene for a fire in the Wildcat Hills area. Thankfully, the report indicated that there were no injuries or loss of life.

Teen Killed in Alliance Motorcycle Crash



(ALLIANCE, Neb.) — A 17-year-old motorcyclist was killed Sunday afternoon in a collision at U.S. Highway 385 and West Third Street in Alliance, followed minutes later by a separate crash in which a vehicle struck a local furniture store.

Emergency responders were dispatched to the first crash at approximately 1:35 p.m. Preliminary information indicates a southbound passenger vehicle attempted to turn east onto West Third Street, crossing into the path of an oncoming motorcycle.

The teenage motorcyclist sustained fatal injuries.

The Box Butte County Sheriff's Office and Nebraska State Patrol are investigating the fatal collision. The Alliance Police Department and Alliance Fire Department also assisted at the scene. Alliance Police Department provided a drone for accident reconstruction.

At 1:44 p.m., Alliance police dispatchers received a report of a vehicle that had crashed into Bruce Furniture, located at 1508 West Third Street, Alliance.

According to the Alliance Police Department, the driver had recently passed the scene of the fatal collision and became emotionally distressed by what he witnessed. The driver reportedly lost consciousness while traveling east on West Third Street, causing the vehicle to leave the roadway and strike the business.

The driver sustained non-life-threatening injuries and was transported to a hospital for evaluation and treatment. The crash also damaged the building.

The Alliance Police Department is investigating the second collision. The circumstances surrounding the driver's reported loss of consciousness remain under investigation.

In a statement, the department extended its condolences to the motorcyclist's family and loved ones, while also acknowledging the emotional toll traumatic incidents can have on witnesses, bystanders, emergency responders and the community.

No charges had been filed as of the time of the department's release.

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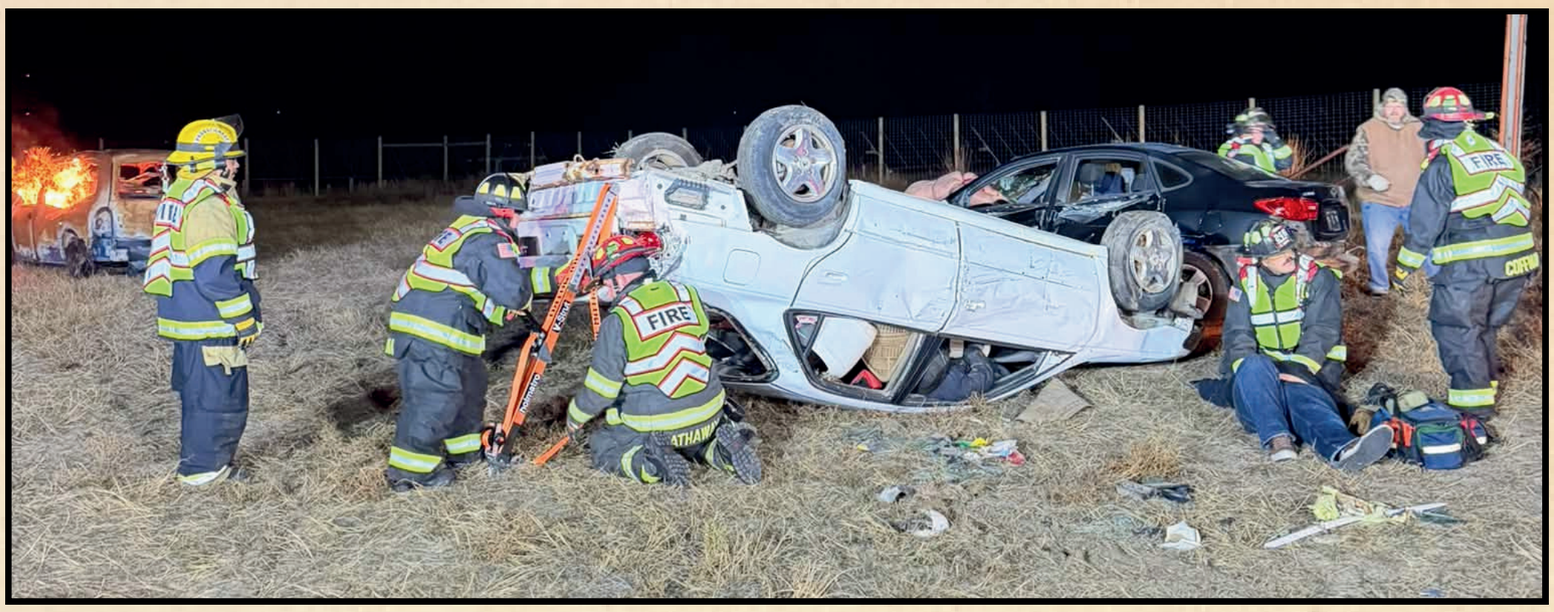
FIRE & RESCUE

Multi-Vehicle Accident Training

(SIDNEY, Neb.) – Thursday night, Sidney volunteer firefighters participated in a realistic training exercise involving a simulated multi-vehicle accident with a vehicle fire, an overturned vehicle, and trapped occupants.

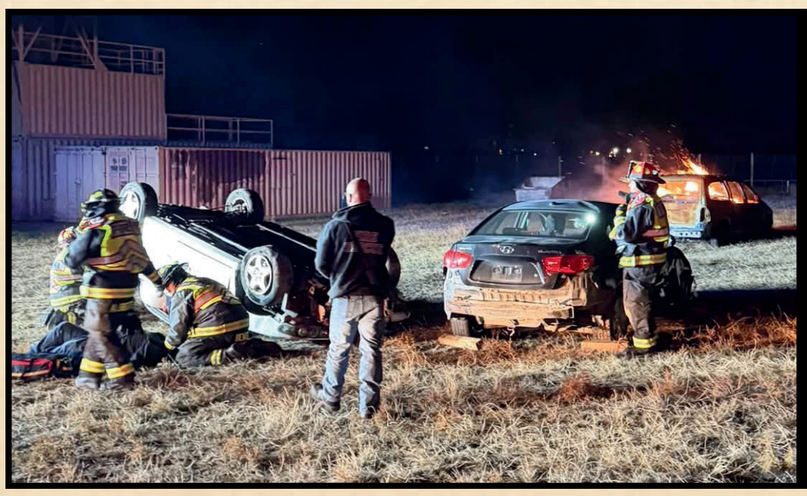
Crews worked together to manage multiple challenges simultaneously, including incident command, scene safety, fire suppression, vehicle stabilization, extrication, and patient care.

Following the initial scenario, firefighters continued with hands-on training, focusing on vehicle stabilization and extrication techniques to further develop their skills and experience.



Training like this provides valuable opportunities for our firefighters to strengthen teamwork, improve decision-making, and prepare for the complex emergencies they may encounter in real-life situations.

We are proud of the dedication our volunteer firefighters continue to show by giving up their personal time to train and better serve our community.





Grant for New Gear

(SIDNEY, Neb.) – Big news for the Sidney Volunteer Fire Department! The department is celebrating a generous $50,000 grant from the Jack Lewis Safety Fund that will help keep local firefighters protected while they're out protecting the community.

Thanks to this funding, the department was able to purchase 10 complete sets of structural firefighting gear, including new helmets, turnout coats, turnout pants and boots. That's a whole lot of added protection for the men and women who answer the call when emergencies happen!

Firefighting gear works hard, just like the people wearing it. Under National Fire Protection Association standards, structural firefighting gear has a maximum service life of 10 years, and some equipment needs to be replaced sooner depending on its condition and use.



This grant helps replace gear that has reached or is nearing the end of its service life, giving firefighters the protection they need to do their jobs as safely as possible.

New gear, better protection and one more reason to celebrate the people who serve our community.

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FIRE & RESCUE

Car vs. Bike Accident



(SCOTTSBLUFF, Neb.) – A car-versus-bicycle accident occurred on Avenue I and 27th Street in Scottsbluff Friday afternoon.

Dangerous Public Opinion; Guilty Before Charged

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Let's all have some respect and courtesy and let law enforcement sort things out. At this point no one has been charged.

Special thanks to the Scottsbluff Police Department for putting out the additional release.

The investigation into Friday's pedestrian fatality remains ongoing. Once all video evidence, accident reconstruction materials, and medical evidence have been completed and reviewed, a final charging decision will be made.

We encourage everyone to read the article by our courtroom reporter, Raul Fernandez, titled "The Integrity of the Process"

Rise in Carbon Monoxide Calls

(SCOTTSBLUFF, Neb.) — The Scottsbluff Fire Department is urging residents to check their carbon monoxide detectors and have home heating systems inspected following an increase in carbon monoxide-related calls this year.

Year to date, the department has seen an increase compared with the same period last year, according to a public safety notice issued by the department.

Carbon monoxide is often called the "silent killer" because the poisonous gas is colorless, odorless and tasteless. Exposure can cause serious illness or death if not detected promptly.

The department recommends that residents check their carbon monoxide detectors to ensure they are functioning properly. Detectors typically have a limited service life, often around seven to 10 years depending on the model, and should be replaced according to the manufacturer's instructions. Residents should also check and replace batteries as needed.

Homeowners are encouraged to have furnaces inspected and serviced by qualified technicians. Those who use fireplaces or wood-burning stoves should also have their chimneys cleaned and inspected to help prevent carbon monoxide from entering their homes.



Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning can initially resemble the flu and include headaches, nausea, vomiting, dizziness, shortness of breath and fatigue. More severe exposure can cause confusion, vision problems, muscle weakness, seizures, loss of consciousness and death.

Because carbon monoxide cannot be detected by smell or sight, working detectors are an important part of home safety.

The fire department advises residents to leave the building immediately and call 911 if a carbon monoxide alarm sounds or anyone experiences symptoms that could indicate exposure. Residents should not re-enter the building until emergency responders or the appropriate utility company determine it is safe.

With colder weather approaching, officials encourage residents to take a few minutes to check their alarms and arrange any necessary maintenance.
Taking these precautions can help protect families from a potentially life-threatening hazard.

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PANHANDLE SPORTS

Western Conference Champions



(GERING, Neb.) – The Gering Bulldogs Girls Varsity Volleyball team holds an outstanding record for the season, solidifying their spot as one of the premier teams in Nebraska Class B.

The Bulldogs began the year on an absolutely dominant tear before facing highly competitive tournament matchups.

Gering opened the season undefeated, winning their first 18 straight matches and only dropping five sets along the way. This stretch included prominent sweeps over rivals like Sidney and cross-town rival, Scottsbluff.

Following their 18-game streak, Gering went through a brief 3-4 skid against top-tier state competition, including a tight 2-0 loss to the Gretna Dragons and a 2-0 non-league loss to the Kearney Bearcats.

They bounced back quickly, winning five of their last six home games and currently sitting at 24-5 overall.

The senior-heavy roster is led by several key leaders in Class B;

- JC Cochran: Crucial offensive weapon with nearly 1,500 career kills.
- Audrey Anderson: Surpassed 2,500 career varsity assists.
- Adriana Canales: Leads Class B defensively with an average of over 6 digs per set.
- Ivy Brookner: Ranks in the top 5 of Class B by averaging 1 block per set.

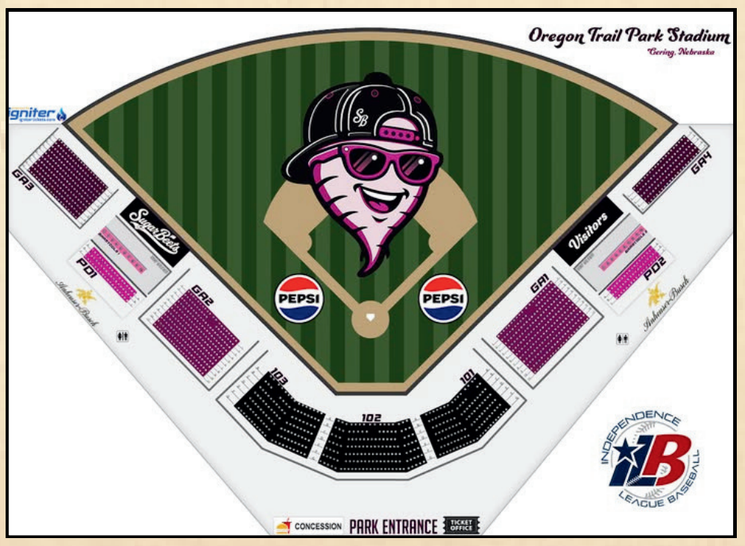
The Gering Bulldogs won the Western Conference Volleyball Tournament title on their home court sweeping through the field to capture the championship.

Planting Season



(GERING, Neb.) – Big news for Gering and the entire Panhandle. A new collegiate summer baseball team out of Florida is coming to Oregon Trail Park in 2027.

The new team management announced recently, “It’s awesome to see collegiate summer baseball returning to Oregon Trail Park and bringing more affordable family fun to our area. Can’t wait to see the stands packed and the community get behind this team. Welcome to Gering, Sugar Beets!”



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PANHANDLE SPORTS

FOOTBALL SCOREBOARD

3 Area Teams Undefeated

- Scottsbluff Bearcats
- Sidney Red Raiders
- Leyton Warriors

2 Teams with only One Loss

- Chadron Cardinals
- Garden County Eagles

3 Teams with only Two Losses

- Mitchell Tigers
- Hemingford Bobcats
- Crawford Rams

🏈 Panhandle Football Results (October 15–16, 2026)

Winning Team	Score	Losing Team	Score	Game Date
Chadron	**28**	Bridgeport	8	Fri, Oct 16
Crawford	**41**	Morrill	13	Thu, Oct 15
Dundy County Stratton	**52**	Bayard	6	Thu, Oct 15
Hay Springs	**46**	Cody-Kilgore	26	Thu, Oct 15
Hemingford	**42**	Hitchcock County	30	Fri, Oct 16
Leyton	**48**	Creek Valley	0	Fri, Oct 16
Mitchell	**61**	Valentine	34	Fri, Oct 16
Potter-Dix	**63**	South Platte	54	Fri, Oct 16
Scottsbluff	**21**	McCook	7	Fri, Oct 16
Sidney	**20**	Alliance	8	Fri, Oct 16
Aurora	**50**	Gering	6	Fri, Oct 16
Centura	**54**	Kimball	16	Fri, Oct 16



Why is Arthur's Pizza SO Popular?

- Scottsbluff's oldest locally owned pizzeria.
- Taco pizza, cheese pizza and cinnamon dessert pizza are frequently favorites mentioned by customers.
- Reviews repeatedly praise the owner and staff.
- Customers often mention supporting a local business.
- Appreciation for its traditional pizza-parlor atmosphere.

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SCHOOL NEWS

Health and Childcare Grants for Bayard Public Schools

(BAYARD, Neb.) – Bayard Public Schools and Bayard Tiger Cub Childcare Center are celebrating new funding through the Nebraska Department of Education's Rural Health Transformation Program to support student nutrition, healthy habits and hands-on agricultural education.

Bayard Public Schools was awarded $104,695.07 to modernize its school kitchen infrastructure. The improvements are intended to strengthen the district's nutrition program, streamline kitchen operations and help staff provide healthy meals to students.

"Modernizing our school kitchen will help us strengthen our ability to serve students and support their nutritional needs," Superintendent Zachary Nesbitt said.

The funding also supports efforts to introduce younger children to gardening and fresh, healthy foods through a partnership involving Tiger Cub Childcare Center, Bayard Public Schools and Aulick Industries.

The project will provide hands-on learning opportunities for students of different ages, from toddlers planting their first seeds to high school students constructing container greenhouses.

The goal is to encourage agricultural education, build healthy eating habits and strengthen community connections.

Together, the initiatives focus on improving access to nutritious foods while helping students learn where food comes from and why healthy choices matter.

The grants represent an investment in student wellness at multiple stages of childhood, combining improvements to school meal preparation with opportunities to explore gardening and agriculture.

Through these efforts, Bayard schools and community partners are working to cultivate healthier habits and support students from their earliest years through high school.



Westmoor School Recognized by NDOT

(SCOTTSBLUFF, Neb.) -- Westmoor students participated in the Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) Name A Snowplow Competition with Ms. Souza's class submitting a winning snowplow name. 165 schools across the state participated, creating nearly 2,460 submissions, with 16 winners being recognized.

Westmoor first-grade students will have the opportunity to participate in a presentation honoring the winning class and unveiling the name of the snowplow on Oct. 20 at 1:00 p.m. The Nebraska Department of Transportation will have a snowplow on hand. The snowplow will be parked in the bus lane on the north side of the gym.

The event includes a short presentation about snowplows and snowplow drivers, followed by a Q&A. The class is then recognized and receives a prize. After the presentation, NDOT teammates are available to give tours of a real snowplow, take photos, reveal the new name, and let students meet the snowplow driver.

The snowplow names will soon be added to the 511.Nebraska.gov snowplow tracker so students can watch for their named snowplow out on the highways.

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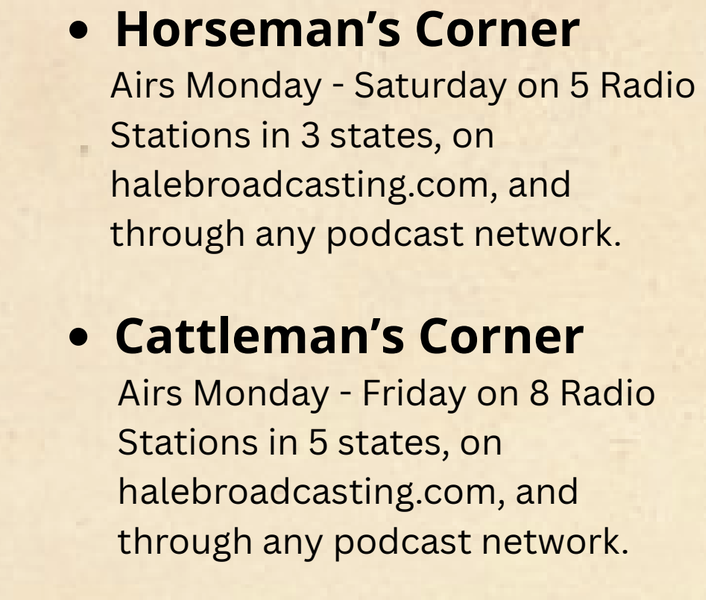
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AGRICULTURE

Our Daily Broadcast Lineup

- **Elevate Your Day**
  Airs Monday - Friday on Rumble, on halebroadcasting.com, and through any podcast network.
- **Scanner News**
  Airs Monday - Friday on KCMI-FM, on halebroadcasting.com, and through any podcast network.
- **Harvest USA Report**
  Airs Monday - Friday on 14 Radio Stations in 8 states, on halebroadcasting.com, and through any podcast network.
- **Horseman's Corner**
  Airs Monday - Saturday on 5 Radio Stations in 3 states, on halebroadcasting.com, and through any podcast network.
- **Cattleman's Corner**
  Airs Monday - Friday on 8 Radio Stations in 5 states, on halebroadcasting.com, and through any podcast network.

www.halebroadcasting.com



National Farmers Day

Today we're giving a big thank-you to the farmers who work long days, watch the weather and put food on our tables. It's hard work that deserves a whole lot of appreciation!

And one of the best ways to appreciate that work? Eat local!



Megan's Market makes it easy with locally grown, fresh farm-to-table produce—bringing the goodness of local farms straight to your table.

So thank a farmer, shop local and enjoy something fresh!

AgSearch.us

AgSearch.us is a human-curated, U.S.-exclusive agricultural directory and search engine developed by programmer Brian Hale of Hale Multimedia in partnership with Hale Broadcasting. It is designed to help agricultural businesses establish and improve their online presence by exposing over 10,000 top ag businesses to their vast radio and online audience.

Rather than being a massive, general-purpose search engine like Google, it functions primarily as a specialized B2B directory and marketing platform where businesses pay for tiered listings (ranging from $70 to $1,500 per year) to be featured alongside agricultural radio networks and podcasts.

While its parent network boasts over 2 million podcast and radio listeners and more than 1,200 clients, the platform serves a highly specific, targeted audience within the American agricultural sector rather than the broader public.

www.agsearch.us

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WEATHER

Freeze Hits the Panhandle

(SCOTTSBLUFF, Neb.) – A powerful blast of cold autumn air moved through the region, prompting the National Weather Service to issue Freeze Warnings. The deepest freeze occurred on Thursday night into Friday morning (Oct. 15–16). Regional low temperatures plummeted into the mid-20s (25°F to 29°F). The deepest sub-freezing temperatures hit higher elevations closer to the Wyoming border, officially marking the arrival of the region's first widespread frost and freeze of the season.

Daily Weather Overview

Date	Conditions	High Temp	Low Temp	Wind Speed
Sunday, Oct 18	Sunny	67°F	41°F	9 mph S
Monday, Oct 19	Sunny	72°F	47°F	10 mph S
Tuesday, Oct 20	Sunny	76°F	49°F	8 mph SE
Wednesday, Oct 21	Sunny	81°F	53°F	7 mph S
Thursday, Oct 22	Partly sunny	82°F	55°F	6 mph S
Friday, Oct 23	Mostly cloudy	80°F	56°F	11 mph SE
Saturday, Oct 24	Cloudy	79°F	55°F	12 mph S



Photo by weather chasers Dan Fitts and Jerry Doremus



The weather forecast for the week of October 18–24, 2026 in the Nebraska Panhandle (centered around Scottsbluff) features mostly pleasant, sunny, and stable fall conditions. While the early half of the week stays warm with highs stretching into the low 70s, a late-week system will introduce a notable cooling trend with minor precipitation risks.

🍂 Weekly Highlights

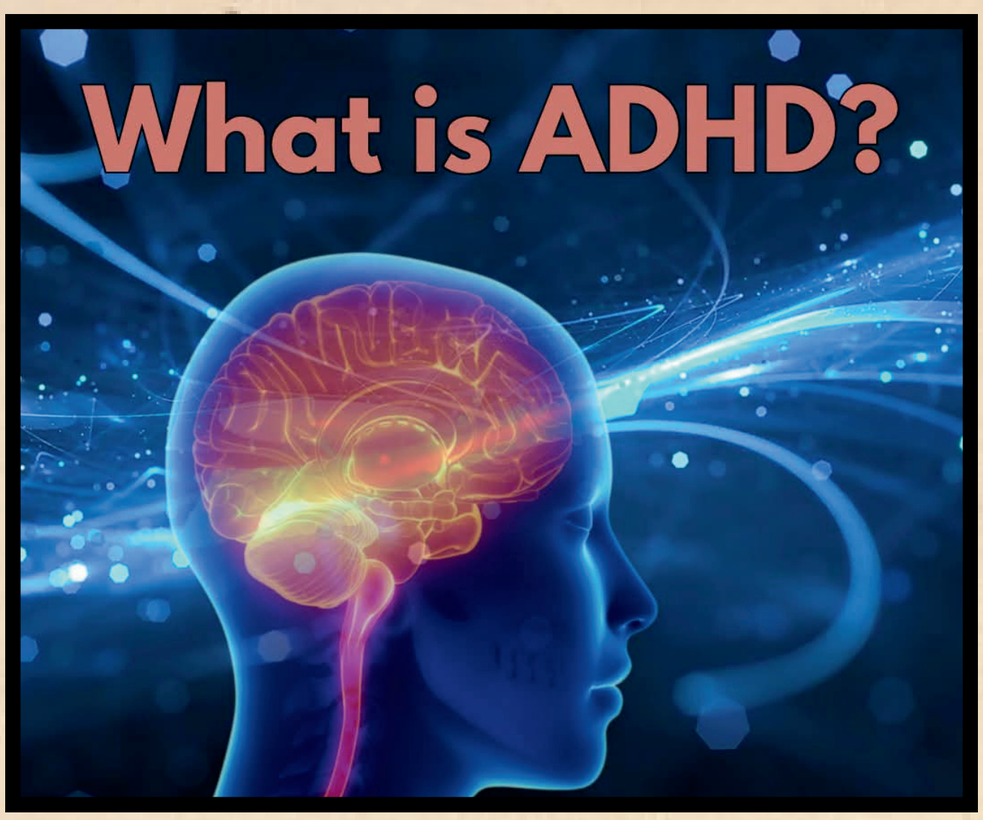
- **Chilly Nights:** Frost is highly likely on Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday nights as overnight lows plunge into the mid-30s. Friday night will bring the coldest snap, dropping well below freezing to 23°F.
- **Late-Week Cool Down:** An incoming front on Thursday night breaks up the early-week warmth, dropping Friday's high down to a chilly 48°F before recovering slightly by the weekend.

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BUILDING A STRONGER MIND

Panhandle Public Health District



National ADHD Awareness Month

Most people think ADHD is just about sitting still or staying focused. In reality, an ADHD brain simply handles motivation, focus, and information differently.

ADHD stands for Attention Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder, a common neurodevelopmental condition that affects how the brain manages attention, executive function, and impulse control.

Behavioral and Cognitive Strategies

- Behavioral Therapy: Teaching targeted organizational habits, routine structures, and boundary reward systems remains one of the most heavily backed, non-pharmaceutical foundations for managing ADHD executive dysfunction.
- Neurofeedback: This biofeedback training aims to help individuals consciously alter their brainwave patterns. Parent-reported surveys often note positive improvements, though blinded clinical studies display highly mixed results regarding how effectively these changes carry over into real-life settings like school or the workplace.

Sleep Hygiene & Regulation

Sleep disturbances affect up to 73% of individuals with ADHD, which can heavily compound daytime focus issues.

- **Melatonin:** Clinical reviews show that melatonin significantly improves sleep delay and extends overall sleep duration by an average of 20 to 33 minutes for individuals with ADHD, though it does not directly alter daytime behavioral symptoms.
- **L-Theanine:** Found naturally in green tea, this compound is sometimes utilized to promote a state of relaxed alertness and calm focus without causing sedation.

Targeted Nutritional Supplements

Always speak to a physician before starting supplements, as they can interact with other medications.

- Omega-3 & Omega-6 Fatty Acids
- Mineral Deficiencies (Zinc, Iron, Magnesium)
- Herbal Adaptogens

PUBLIC HEALTH IS FOR YOU

CredibleMind

Get started on our wellbeing journey today with resources you can trust!

Panhandle Public Health District

https://pphd.crediblemind.com/

In partnership with DHHS

This resource is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of an award totaling $4,133,447.00 with 100% funded by HRSA/HHS

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BUSINESS NEWS

LOOK WHO'S HIRING



(SIDNEY, Neb.) – Ron's Towing in Sidney is hiring qualified applicants. Must live in Sidney, Nebraska and meet a few other requirements. We are willing to help with relocation for the right person!

- Experience in the heavy wrecker industry is preferred
- MUST HAVE CLASS A CDL
- Clean MVR record
- Good customer service skills
- Cleanliness is key. We keep our equipment top-notch and expect the same from you!

Pay Depending on Experience

Call 308-254-4670 ☎️ if interested!

GREENHOUSE PROJECT

(BAYARD, Neb.) – Aulick Industries teamed up with Bayard High School for a multi-year partnership designed to give students hands-on experience in skilled trades and agricultural engineering.

The Container Greenhouse Project
The primary collaboration between the company and the high school was a specialized two-year container greenhouse project.

- The Build: Students at Bayard High School transformed a standard shipping container into a fully functional, insulated greenhouse.
- The Features: The class handled the advanced construction elements, including the installation of specialized climate equipment, storage units, and vertical growing racks inside the container.
- The Long-Term Goal: Following its completion, the container greenhouse remains within the Bayard Public Schools system. High schoolers use the facility as an educational space to teach younger elementary students how to grow and cultivate plants.

Covering the Panhandle of Nebraska

Covering the rest of Nebraska from Ogallala to Omaha

Covering Southeast Wyoming from Goshen to Laramie County

Providing Coverage from North Texas to Southern Oklahoma

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Kimball Police Department

CHIEF'S ADVISORY GROUP



Kimball Jr./Sr. High School Incident

(KIMBALL, Neb.) – On Friday evening, Oct. 16, 2026, the Kimball Police Department was made aware of an incident involving threats with a weapon and a physical dispute between Kimball Jr./Sr. High School students. Steps were immediately taken to ensure students were safe and no one else was in danger.

Kimball Public Schools is cooperating fully with the Kimball Police Department as the investigation into this incident continues.

Anyone with information about this incident is asked to contact the Kimball Police Department at 308-235-1807.

Scanner Traffic is provided by Hale Multimedia LLC, Streaming by Broadcastify

In Other Scanner Traffic...

Listen to Scanner Traffic - www.panhandlescanner.com/listen

Driving Complaint - Oct 16
(SIDNEY, Neb.) -- Scanner traffic indicates a white semi with green and gold trim tailgating and driving recklessly on I-80 EB near mm 65.

Wrong Way Driver - Oct 15
(SCOTTSBLUFF, Neb.) -- Scanner traffic indicated a Red semi hauling 2 tractors on Hwy 26 near mm 25 heading west in the eastbound lane.

Scottsbluff DOA Reported - Oct 15
(SCOTTSBLUFF, Neb.) – According to scanner traffic, a DOA was reported in Scottsbluff on Thursday. Prayers for our first responders and special prayers for the folks who made the discovery.

Scanner traffic originally indicated the body could have been there for days, however the reporting party called us to say that he did not tell the dispatcher that.

Scanner Traffic is ever evolving and not meant to be the final story, and seldom is. We report what comes across traffic verbatim whenever possible.