Issue # 2643

Week of October 25 - 31, 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

First Snow of the Season

(PANHANDLE OF NEBRASKA) – Monday, Oct. 26, 2026 brought the first snow of the season to the panhandle of Nebraska. Up to 8.5 inches of snow was reported in Cheyenne, Wyo., with local amounts reaching around 3 to 4 inches in areas like Crawford, Chadron State Park, and northwest of Crawford, with lighter slushy or grassy accumulations around Scottsbluff and Gering.



Crawford, Nebraska photo by Doris Raum



Mitchell, Nebraska photo by Marlene S. Crosier

Harrison, Nebraska photo by Kandis Barthel Hughes



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Community

New Hours at Broadwater Country Store

“It’s that time of year again. The fall and winter hours will begin this Friday, Oct. 30. We will change to 8-5 p.m. seven days a week so yes including Sundays, we will open at 8 a.m.”



Also a reminder starting Monday Nov. 2nd they will serve breakfast burritos seven days a week. Fruit, Donuts and a Coffee bar are also available daily, and keep a watch out for hot soups coming soon.

Southwest Nebraska Energy Tour



(LINCOLN, Neb.) — From oil to biofuels, Nebraska is an energy state. Governor Jim Pillen of Nebraska recently announced, “I’m honored to be on an Energy Tour across southwest Nebraska today to see firsthand how Nebraska-grown ethanol is providing massive value for Nebraska’s farmers and ranchers, while supporting American energy independence and dominance.”



Voter Guides Still Available

(GERING, Neb.) – If you still need some voting guidance, there is still time to download your county’s Voter Guide at the website https://ballotready.org/us/nebraska.

Over 2,500 positions are up for election across the state of Nebraska, according to state records. The next statewide election in Nebraska is the Nebraska General Election on Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2026.

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Crossroads Music

Community

Crossroads Music

Crossroads Music Wins $5,000



(SCOTTSBLUFF, Neb.) — A longtime Scottsbluff music store is getting a $5,000 boost to help keep its business growing in an increasingly competitive online marketplace.

Crossroads Music, owned by Richard and Jeni Castro, received the money through the statewide "No-Bid" Giveaway, organized by Nebraskans for Accountability and Honesty.

Nebraskans for Accountability and Honesty (NAH) is a nonpartisan advocacy coalition in Nebraska that promotes government transparency, open public processes, and institutional accountability.

The Protest: NAH launched a $50,000 public grant campaign to protest a $2.5 million emergency no-bid state contract awarded by the Department of Economic Development to a lobbyist (Julie Bushell).

The Alternative: Instead of awarding a large contract without competition, NAH invited open applications from small businesses and groups across Nebraska and distributed ten $5,000 grants to selected local businesses while publicly naming the recipients to highlight transparent grant distribution.

The governor's office was under investigation with the $2.5 million no-bid case.

On Oct. 30, the Attorney General's Office said the Governor's Office was not implicated in criminal wrongdoing, following a Lincoln Police investigation. Foley had earlier turned records over to the AG and State Patrol.

The ten recipients of the $5,000 grants from NAH were as follows;

- Texttag (Omaha): Developing a dog-based home-safety device to assist older adults and individuals living alone.

- Hass Home Improvements (Fremont): Securing accessibility materials for home modification projects.

- Women 4 Her (Fremont): Supporting maternal, perinatal, and mental health programs.

- Rock Island Summer Baseball (Lincoln): Funding youth baseball programs to keep registration and player fees low.

- Papi Churros LLC (Lincoln): Investing in branding and physical wraps for their local food truck.

- Habe Honey Co. (Hickman): Purchasing protective equipment for their family beekeeping operation.

- McBride Trucking (Davenport): Assisting with independent freight operations and rising fuel costs.

- Kenesaw Market (Kenesaw): Enhancing operations to ensure reliable local grocery access in a small community.

- Crossroads Music (Scottsbluff): Constructing two inside music lesson rooms to cut costs from commercial mall rent.

- Alder Plant Nursery (Giltner): Purchasing new inventory and greenhouse film to expand operations.

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MISSING PERSONS

AND PROPERTY

Missing Person Pine Ridge SD
He Sapa Waste Win "Dixie" Two Bulls



MISSING

Scottsbluff, Nebraska

Rhylee Wilberger



Last Seen: 10/26/26
Age: 17
Height: 5'04"
Weight: 105lbs
Hair: Red or Auburn
Eyes: Blue

Rhylee was last seen wearing a gray sweater, blue jeans, gray shoes, and a black backpack.

(SCOTTSBLUFF, Neb.) - Rhylee Wilberger has been reported MISSING as of Oct. 26, 2026. Rhylee is a 17 year old white female. At the time of her disappearance, she was 5'04" tall and weighed 105 lbs. She has Red or Auburn hair and Blue eyes.



(SCOTTSBLUFF, Neb.) – Roma is looking for a friendly and reliable Host or Hostess to join their team!

Stop by to pick up an application at Western Nebraska Regional Airport.

Local Teens Reported Missing

(SIDNEY, Neb.) - ELIJAH is a 15 year old White male. At the time of his disappearance, he was 6'02" tall and weighed 140 lbs. He has Brown hair and Brown eyes.

(MITCHELL, Neb.) - MAKAYLA is a 16 year old White female. At the time of her disappearance, she was 5'04" tall and weighed 130 lbs. She has Black hair and Brown eyes.

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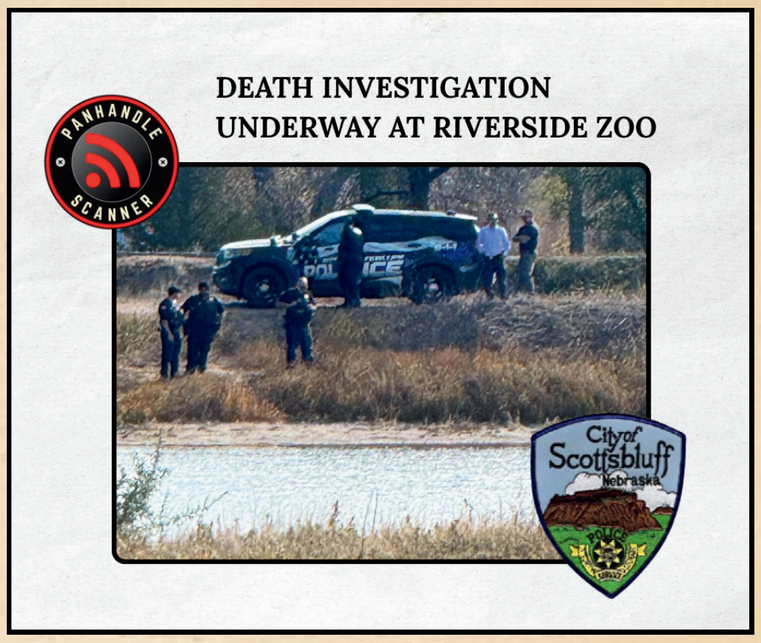
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Death Investigation Underway Near Scottsbluff Zoo Ponds

(SCOTTSBLUFF, Neb.) — Scottsbluff police are investigating a death reported Thursday afternoon near the ponds west of Riverside Discovery Center, formerly known as as Riverside Zoo & Discovery Center.

Scanner followers initially asked us about the large police presence west of the zoo. Emergency responders initially staged nearby while officers secured the scene. Scanner traffic later indicated a reported gunshot wound, and additional law enforcement resources were requested to assist.

Police have not released the identity of the deceased. Efforts are underway to identify the individual, and next of kin will be notified once identification is confirmed. The investigation remains ongoing.



SCOTTSBLUFF POLICE DEPARTMENT PRESS RELEASE:

On Oct. 29, 2026, at approximately 12:11 p.m., the Scottsbluff Police Department was called to the west pond at Riverside Zoo regarding an unattended death believed to be self-inflicted.

The investigation remains ongoing, and efforts are underway to identify the deceased. Next of kin will be notified once identification has been confirmed.

Additional information will be released as appropriate.

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE
24/7 CALL, TEXT, CHAT

Youth Gone Wild; More Catch and Release

(SCOTTSBLUFF, Neb.) – Saturday night, Oct. 31, in Scottsbluff was filled with multiple crimes and investigations into illegal activity, primarily by youth on the cruise route. We reported on several assaults, traffic stops, minors in possession of alcohol, and a slew of citations.

Gukeisen Pleads No Contest to Unlawful Possession of Firearm

By Raul Fernandez, Courthouse Reporter
Panhandle Scanner / Hale Multimedia

(GERING, Neb.) — A local 20-year-old entered a plea agreement Wednesday in Scotts Bluff County District Court.

According to court records, Rochne J. Gukeisen was originally charged with unlawful possession of a firearm by a juvenile offender and possession of a machine gun or short rifle/shotgun, both Class IV felonies stemming from a May 21 incident.



Under a plea agreement filed Oct. 21, prosecutors dismissed the machine gun charge in exchange for Gukeisen entering a no-contest plea to the unlawful possession of a firearm charge. The offense carries a potential penalty of up to two years in prison, 12 months of post-release supervision or a $10,000 fine.

Sentencing is scheduled for Dec. 17 at 2 p.m. Bond was continued at $15,000, with a 10% deposit required.

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Stolen Trailer



(SIDNEY, Neb.) - Surveillance video shows the Table of Grace car hauler trailer being stolen on Sunday, Oct. 25, at approximately 6:59 p.m. Contact Sidney Police Department at 308-254-5515.



PRESS RELEASE Scottsbluff P.D.
(SCOTTSBLUFF, Neb.) – On 10/31/2026, at 2248 hours, officers were dispatched to a residence in the 1300 block of 7th Ave. The reporting party found a nail in a chocolate bar (a Snickers Ghoulish Green) their child received while trick or treating. Officers inspected the piece of chocolate candy with an inch long nail lodged in it. The child was not severely injured during this incident, and officers believe the child received the candy at a residence near the Westmoor School area. The possible suspect residence was described as having Halloween decorations with large spiderwebs. The potential male suspect was described as an older male with gray hair, blue eyes, and dinosaur pajamas.

COURT DATE EIGHT YEARS LATER

By Raul Fernandez, Courthouse Reporter
Panhandle Scanner / Hale Multimedia

(GERING, Neb.) — A Casper, Wyoming, woman appeared in Scotts Bluff County District Court Wednesday following her arrest on an outstanding bench warrant stemming from a 2018 drug case.

According to police affidavits, officers initially responded to a welfare check Jan. 4, 2018, at a residence on 6th Avenue in Scottsbluff. A resident reported that Dearby M. Woodruff, 37, also known as Dearby Anderson, had been using narcotics inside a bathroom.

During a search of the bathroom, officers seized 1.7 grams of black tar heroin, liquid heroin in a syringe, glass pipes containing methamphetamine residue, Suboxone strips, digital scales and drug paraphernalia.

Police noted that Woodruff admitted to using heroin that morning and methamphetamine two days earlier.



Under a plea agreement reached in June 2018, two Class IV felony counts of possession of a controlled substance were amended to Class I misdemeanors for attempted possession, along with an infraction for drug paraphernalia.

Court records show Woodruff failed to appear for sentencing in October 2018, prompting District Judge Dobrovolny to issue a bench warrant for her arrest.

The warrant was returned Oct. 20, 2026. During a court appearance Oct. 21, Judge Dobrovolny rescheduled sentencing for Nov. 19 at 3:30 p.m. and ordered an updated presentence investigation.

Bond was set at $1,000, with a 10% deposit required. As a condition of release, Woodruff was ordered to report to probation immediately and re-enroll in a Colorado treatment program.

ADDICTION TREATMENT RESOURCES AVAILABLE
Panhandle Public Health District

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A Pill for a Puff

Note: All Charges Dropped Like a Rock



By Raul Fernandez, Courthouse Reporter
Panhandle Scanner / Hale Multimedia

(TERRYTOWN, Neb.) — A Scottsbluff man is headed to trial on a felony drug distribution charge following a pretrial conference Oct. 21 in Scotts Bluff County District Court.

According to an affidavit filed by Scottsbluff police, officers were dispatched June 17 to an apartment in Terrytown regarding a resident who was locked out.

During a search of the residence, officers found THC paraphernalia and a folded receipt inside a backpack containing a blue pill identified as alprazolam, commonly known as Xanax.

The accused refused to take a plea deal.

All Charges Dropped

An individual at the scene told officers that Jonathan Sapp, 31, had given her the pill the previous day in exchange for smoking products. She also alleged that Sapp had been selling his prescription medication.

Officers found a prescription bottle belonging to Sapp that had been filled two days earlier with 60 alprazolam pills. Only 32 pills remained in the bottle.

Sapp was arrested and charged with distribution of a controlled substance, a Class IIIA felony. He previously pleaded not guilty.

During Wednesday's proceedings, Judge Miller conducted the pretrial conference and scheduled the case for trial during the November 2026 jury term. Sapp remains free after posting a $4,050 cash bond.

UPDATE: Panhandle Scanner has been advised that the prosecutor has dismissed this case. The reporting party had stolen pills from an unattended prescription bottle unbeknownst to Sapp.



Busy Day in Kimball

Drugs / Weapon / Theft charges all pending



By Kimball County Sheriff's Office

(KIMBALL, Neb.) — The Kimball County Sheriff's Office reported three arrests on Oct. 26, 2026, involving allegations of methamphetamine, firearm possession and other offenses.

- Dakota Schmit, 34, was arrested on a charge of possession of methamphetamine.

- Paul Sweet, 43, faces charges of possession of a controlled substance (methamphetamine), possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of a firearm by a prohibited person, forgery, theft by unlawful taking, tampering with evidence, and a bond violation.

- Amanda Bartow, 41, faces charges of possession of a controlled substance (methamphetamine), possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of a firearm by a prohibited person, forgery, and theft by unlawful taking.

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Over Half Million Dollar Communications Grant

By City of Alliance

(ALLIANCE, Neb.) — Alliance Police Chief David Leavitt announced that the Alliance Police Department has officially accepted a $600,000 federal technology grant that will fund the majority of a major upgrade to public safety communications infrastructure serving Alliance and Box Butte County.

The funding will support the development of a new radio repeater site designed to improve access to Nebraska's statewide public safety radio network and strengthen communications for first responders throughout the area.

"This is a critically important investment in the reliability and resiliency of our public safety communications system," Chief Leavitt said. "Reliable radio communication is not optional in emergency services.

Our police officers, sheriff's deputies, firefighters, paramedics, dispatchers and other first responders must be able to communicate seamlessly, especially during major incidents or emergencies."

The project will benefit not only the Alliance Police Department, but also the Box Butte County Sheriff's Office, Alliance Fire Department and other public safety agencies operating throughout the area.

Currently, local responders rely heavily on AT&T FirstNet connectivity to access portions of the statewide radio system. While FirstNet has provided an important communications capability, the addition of dedicated repeater infrastructure will significantly strengthen the system by providing a more direct and reliable connection to the statewide network.

Once the new repeater is operational, FirstNet will remain an important part of the overall communications system, but will primarily serve as a backup and supplemental option during infrastructure failures or in fringe coverage areas.

"The goal is redundancy," Leavitt said. "We do not want our emergency communications dependent on a single pathway. Dedicated radio infrastructure gives our first responders a stronger primary system while allowing FirstNet to provide an additional layer of resiliency when needed."

The $600,000 federal award will cover the majority of the project cost. The City and its public safety partners are awaiting a decision on an additional grant application and will also explore the appropriate use of 911 funds to help cover the remaining project balance.



The project represents a significant step toward modernizing public safety communications throughout Box Butte County and addressing long-standing coverage and infrastructure needs.

"When an officer is calling for assistance, a firefighter is coordinating operations at a major incident, or dispatchers are managing multiple emergency responses, dependable communications can directly affect safety and the outcome of an incident," Leavitt said. "This project gives our responders the dedicated infrastructure they need and provides greater confidence that the system will be there when they need it most."

Additional information regarding the project timeline, construction and implementation will be released as the project moves forward.

Our questions for the City or Chief Leavitt would be whether the additional grant has been approved, whether a site has been selected, and when construction is expected to begin.

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Bond Takes a Sharp Turn



By Raul Fernandez, Courthouse Reporter
Panhandle Scanner / Hale Multimedia

(GERING, Neb.) — Paulina Gutierrez, 29, of Scottsbluff, faces felony charges, including first-degree assault, after an Aug. 25 knife incident left a man with severe hand injuries.

Gutierrez pled not guilty to first-degree assault, use of a deadly weapon to commit a felony, and possession of a controlled substance. During a bond review hearing Tuesday, Oct. 27, Judge Miller modified Gutierrez's $74,000 bond to personal recognizance, with travel restrictions and mandatory check-ins with her defense attorney.

A probable cause affidavit filed by Scottsbluff police states that officers responded Aug. 25 to an incident near 17th Avenue. Investigating officers found a glass pipe that tested positive for methamphetamine inside Gutierrez's purse, along with a knife, digital scales and drug paraphernalia.

Police noted that Gutierrez admitted to swinging a knife during an altercation and attempting to wipe the blade in nearby grass.

The male victim suffered severe hand injuries, including two severed tendons and a partial finger amputation that required surgery, according to law enforcement records.

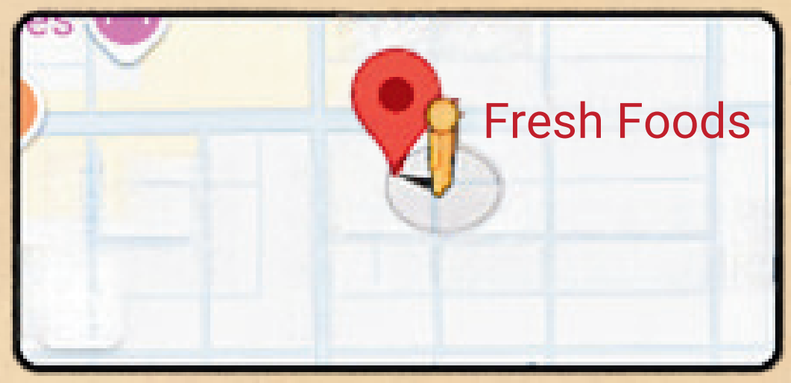
Prosecutor Eubanks and defense attorney Madelung appeared at the bond review hearing. A pretrial conference is scheduled for Dec. 9 at 1 p.m. in Scotts Bluff County District Court, with a jury trial scheduled to begin Jan. 4, 2027.

Don't Be Alarmed, It's Just the Bomb Squad



(SIDNEY, Neb.) - Loud bangs on the north side of town heard Thursday Oct. 29, were from the Sidney Police Department conducting a scheduled training exercise with the Scottsbluff Bomb Squad, prompting multiple calls to the comm center.

Back for Round Two



By Raul Fernandez, Courthouse Reporter
Panhandle Scanner / Hale Multimedia

(GERING, Neb.) — According to an affidavit filed by Officer Brown, officers were dispatched at approximately 2:53 p.m. Oct. 19 to Fresh Foods, located at 1270 10th St., after store personnel reported that Raven D. Polk, 39, had approached the rear entrance and engaged in a verbal altercation with an employee.

Police noted that Polk had received a citation for possessing an open alcohol container at the same address about 90 minutes earlier. According to the report, Polk expressed anger over the initial citation during her second interaction with officers.

After a preliminary breath test indicated a blood alcohol concentration of 0.155, Polk was taken into custody on a disorderly conduct charge.

In Scotts Bluff County Court, Judge Kris Mickey sentenced Polk to two days in jail, with credit for three days served, following her guilty plea. She was also assessed court costs.

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Red Ribbon Week

The National Family Partnership coordinated the first official, nationwide Red Ribbon Week in 1988, proclaimed by the U.S. Congress with President Ronald Reagan and First Lady Nancy Reagan serving as honorary chairpersons.

Locally, Red Ribbon Week is a time to encourage kids and teens to make healthy, positive choices and to remind them that the decisions they make today can help shape their future.

And let's be honest—there are plenty of things in life where having a plan and making good choices can keep you out of trouble.



When things do go wrong on the road, Ron's Towing & Recovery Scottsbluff Nebraska is there to help get you where you need to go.

This week, let's encourage our kids to make smart choices, look out for their friends, and remember that asking for help is always an option.

Meth Case Gets a Makeover

(GERING, Neb.) — Jesse E. Deines, 48, of Kearney, pled no contest Wednesday, Oct. 28 to an amended felony methamphetamine possession charge stemming from an April traffic stop in Scottsbluff.

Appearing by video from the Scotts Bluff County Detention Center before Judge Andrea Miller, Deines entered the plea under a negotiated agreement with the state. Prosecutor Eubanks and defense attorney Meister outlined the agreement, which reduced a Class IB felony charge of possessing more than 140 grams of methamphetamine to a Class IC felony for possessing between 28 and 139 grams. An additional charge of failing to affix a drug tax stamp was dismissed.

According to a probable cause affidavit filed by Officer Weber, authorities stopped a vehicle outside a local retail store April 9 after observing suspicious activity.



Officers reported smelling burnt fentanyl and subsequently searched the vehicle, recovering large quantities of suspected methamphetamine, prescription pills, drug packaging materials, a pocketknife and $737 in cash.

Following the no-contest plea, Judge Miller ordered a presentence investigation and revoked Deines' bond. Sentencing is scheduled for Dec. 18 at 8:30 a.m. in Scotts Bluff County District Court.

Under Nebraska sentencing guidelines, the original Class IB felony charge carried a potential penalty of 20 years to life in prison, while the reduced Class IC felony carries a penalty of 5 to 50 years.



The Origin: After Agent "Kiki" Camarena was killed in Mexico in February 1985, angry communities, local parent groups, and high school "Camarena Clubs" in Calexico, California (his hometown) began wearing red ribbons to honor his sacrifice and reject illegal drugs.



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Misdemeanor Sentence for Baby Found in Ditch

By Raul Fernandez, Courthouse Reporter
Panhandle Scanner / Hale Multimedia

(HASTINGS, Neb.) — A Hastings man charged after a 15-month-old child was found in a ditch in Oct. 2025 has been sentenced to jail after pleading no contest to amended charges.

Austin Hendrick, 31, was originally charged with intentional child abuse resulting in no injury, a Class IIIA felony, and obstructing government operations, a Class I misdemeanor.

On July 16, Hendrick pleaded no contest to amended charges in Adams County District Court as part of a plea agreement. The child abuse charge was reduced to negligent child abuse resulting in no injury, a Class I misdemeanor. The charge of obstruction will remain unchanged.

On Monday, Oct. 26, Judge Morgan Farquhar sentenced Hendrick to a total of one year in jail, with the sentences on the two counts to be served consecutively. Hendrick received credit for 280 days already served.

The affidavit detailing the circumstances of the case has been sealed by the court.

UPDATE for clarification – The Adams County Sheriff's Office knows the identity of the child found on Oct. 4, 2025 but it is an active investigation. Please help me pray for the child, the child's loved ones, and those who are handling this situation. Thank you to the concerned citizen who paid attention and called for help.

Added: The child is reported to be in fair condition and in the custody of DHHS.

VIA PRESS RELEASE

(ADAMS COUNTY, Neb.) — The Adams County Sheriff's Department is investigating a critical incident that occurred on Oct. 4, 2025 after a passerby located a 15-month-old child in a ditch near the 2000 blk of South Marian Rd, in rural Adams County.

At approximately 8:01 am, deputies were dispatched to the scene after a concerned citizen reported finding what appeared to be an infant sitting in a ditch.

Upon arrival, officers summoned Hastings Fire and Rescue. Paramedics responded and immediately assessed the child. The child was transported to Mary Lanning Hospital for further medical evaluation and care.







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LOOK WHO'S HIRING



(SHERIDAN COUNTY, Neb.) — Seeking a career field where you can help your community? The Sheridan County Sheriff's Office is currently hiring for the position of Deputy Sheriff. This position offers a wide variety of benefits including full medical, retirement, and competitive wages with ample opportunities for overtime pay.

Applicants must be 21 years of age, with a high school diploma or GED. Applicants must have a clean criminal record with no felony convictions or major misdemeanor convictions. Applicants must be willing to work holidays, weekends, all shifts, and overtime as needed.

If you are interested in making a difference in your community, come join our team! Please pick up an application at the Sheriff's Office located at 303 E 2nd St. in Rushville. If you have any questions please feel free to call us at 308-327-2161.

The Sheridan County Sheriff's Office is a public employer and an equal opportunity employer. Qualified applicants who are veterans may qualify for a veteran's preference pursuant to Nebraska law.

Homicide Suspect Killed in Shootout

From Nebraska State Patrol

(DAVID CITY, Neb.) — A 45-year-old Clarks man suspected of killing a rural Duncan resident was fatally shot by Nebraska State Patrol troopers Oct. 23 after allegedly firing at a Butler County sheriff and later exchanging gunfire with troopers during a pursuit.

The Nebraska State Patrol identified the suspect as Nathan Dohmen, 45, of Clarks. The victim was identified as John Cyza, 47, of rural Duncan, who was found dead at his home in northeast Polk County with multiple gunshot wounds.

According to the State Patrol, Polk County 911 received a call from an uninvolved person reporting a shooting at the residence. Dohmen had left before law enforcement arrived. The caller also warned authorities that Dohmen might be targeting another person, who was located and confirmed to be safe.

As officers searched the area, the Butler County sheriff located Dohmen's vehicle on a rural road. When the sheriff began checking the vehicle, Dohmen allegedly fired at the sheriff with a rifle. The sheriff was not struck, and Dohmen fled in the vehicle.

After leaving, Dohmen stopped at a store in Bellwood and stole a case of beer, according to investigators.

Trooper pilots in a Nebraska State Patrol helicopter and ground units later located the vehicle. A brief pursuit followed before Dohmen pulled into a farmhouse driveway northeast of David City, near 37 Road and O Road.

Authorities said Dohmen fired at troopers, who returned fire. Dohmen was struck and pronounced dead at the scene. No troopers were injured, and the resident of the farmhouse was not hurt.

NSP Superintendent Col. Bryan Waugh praised the troopers, dispatchers, pilots, investigators and command staff involved in the response during a dangerous situation.

The investigations are being handled separately. At the request of the Polk County sheriff, the State Patrol's Investigative Services Division is investigating Cyza's death. The Butler County attorney requested that the State Patrol's Special Investigations Unit investigate the trooper-involved shooting, with assistance from the Lancaster County Sheriff's Office.

The two troopers involved in the shooting were placed on paid administrative leave, in accordance with State Patrol policy. Under Nebraska law, a death during a law enforcement encounter requires a grand jury investigation. Both investigations remain ongoing, according to the State Patrol.

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FIRE & RESCUE



(LAKE MCCONAUGHY, Neb.) — Keith County EMS was dispatched to assist Nebraska Game and Parks with a rescue of two hunters that were on foot and dangerously stuck in the mud, west of Van's Lake View at Lake McConaughy late Friday night / early Saturday morning, Oct. 24.

KC-EMS responded with one ALS ambulance for standby and one command unit equipped with a thermal drone. While Game and Parks were launching their airboat, the thermal drone was used to locate the two individuals and assisted the boat into position for the successful rescue.

"We are urging all hunters to use extreme caution navigating these areas, especially west of Van's Lake View due to low water, and dangerous mud conditions.

We recommend keeping your phones with you at all times, head lamps and or other sorts of lighting that can be seen from a distance. We always encourage life jackets! If you're in a boat and get stuck, be very careful exiting the boat as you could easily be overtaken by mud and water without the ability to escape.

Call *55 or 911 if you need help. Be safe, enjoy your hunt!"

PUT A FREEZE ON WINTER FIRES:

Fireplace Safety

Prepare your fireplace and chimney safely for the winter season by following these essential steps:

1. Inspection and Cleaning
Get a professional check: Have your chimney, flue, and smoke chamber inspected and swept annually by a certified chimney specialist before lighting your first fire of the season.

Clear blockages: Check for animal nests, leaves, or debris that may have gathered over the spring and summer.

Avoid chemical shortcuts: Do not rely on chemical "chimney-cleaning logs" as a substitute for a real mechanical sweeping and physical inspection.

2. Damper and Ventilation
Verify operation: Make sure your damper opens and closes smoothly. Always confirm it is completely open before lighting a fire and keep it open until the embers have totally burned out.

Install a chimney cap: Ensure your chimney has a secure cap and screen to block rain, snow, birds, and pests from entering the flue.

3. Safe Fuel Practices
Use seasoned hardwood: Only burn dry, properly seasoned hardwood. Avoid wet or green wood, which accelerates dangerous creosote buildup (a combustible tar-like residue that causes chimney fires).

**Continued on page 14

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FIRE & RESCUE

Fireplace Safety

Continued from page 13

Never burn trash: Do not burn cardboard boxes, wrapping paper, plastic, or trash in your fireplace. Never use flammable liquids to start a fire.

Build smaller fires: Start with smaller, hotter fires that burn completely and produce less smoke.

4. Hearth Safety & Clearances

Maintain the 3-foot rule: Keep anything that can burn—including furniture, rugs, curtains, holiday decorations, and firewood stacks—at least 3 feet away from the hearth.

Use a screen: Always use a metal mesh screen or close the glass doors while a fire is burning to stop flying sparks and embers.

5. Managing Ashes and Detectors

Cool and dispose of ashes safely: Keep ash levels at the base of the fireplace to 1 inch or less. Transfer used ashes into a covered metal container and wet them down; place the container outside at least 10 feet away from your home.

Check safety alarms: Test your smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors and install fresh batteries before heavy winter use.

For more official guidance on home heating safety, review the USFA Fireplace and Wood Stove Safety Guide.

Gas Leak Prompts Evacuation



(SCOTTSBLUFF, Neb.) — According to scanner traffic, at approximately 12:15 p.m. on Oct. 26th, the Scottsbluff Fire Department was dispatched to Rincon Latino at 1002 East Overland after dispatch received a third party report of a gas leak within a commercial building.

The Scottsbluff Fire Department has confirmed that Engine One, Engine Three, and Scottsbluff Two were assigned to the call. Upon arrival crews made entry into the building, and upon making entry, noted an obvious, strong smell of natural gas. Due to the levels within the building, occupants were evacuated and Black Hills Energy was contacted.

Through the course of the investigation it was determined that the building had started to smell like natural gas Sunday evening, however was not called in until a customer reported it to the Communications Center on Monday. Due to the levels, the gas was shut off to the building and ventilated, and the store manager was advised a pressure test would need to be completed and the leak resolved prior to the gas getting turned back on.

All parties involved are very fortunate this situation did not have a different outcome due to the significant delay in reporting it. If you ever smell natural gas within your residence, your place of employment, or any building, please note that is not normal, and should never be ignored.

Scottsbluff Fire Department thanked Black Hills Energy and Regional West EMS for their response and assistance on this call.

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FIRE & RESCUE

In Recognition of National First Responders Day

People all over the country paid tribute to first responders this week in recognition of National First Responders Day on Oct. 28. Our affiliate scanner team in Southeast Wyoming is led by Nate Bayless, who left this nice graphical tribute in honor of their service and sacrifice.



“Today we honor and thank the brave police officers, firefighters, EMTs, paramedics, and all first responders who put their lives on the line to protect and serve our communities. Thank you for your courage, sacrifice, compassion, and dedication.”

SMALL GRASS FIRE



(SCOTTSBLUFF, Neb.) -- Scanner traffic indicates a small grass fire, intersection of Highway 26 & Highway 92, 'around the corner' according to the reporting party.

In an update from Scottsbluff Rural Fire Protection District, “Shortly after 3:00 p.m. on 10/30/26, Scottsbluff Rural was dispatched to a report of a small grass fire at the curve of Highway 92 and Highway 26 (this is West of Scottsbluff). A small burn area was located and wet down by fire personnel.”

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FIRE & RESCUE









Firefighters Bring Careers to Life



By Andi Hale, publisher
Panhandle Scanner / Hale Multimedia

(SCOTTSBLUFF, Neb.) — From emergency preparedness to a potential future in public safety, local students got an inside look at the fire service during educational activities involving Scottsbluff firefighters and regional high school sophomores.

According to the Scottsbluff Fire Department, members of A-Shift participated in two educational activities, presenting to Scottsbluff High School students involved in Teen Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and speaking with regional sophomores about careers in public safety.

The firefighters' presentations gave students an opportunity to learn more about the responsibilities, challenges and day-to-day work of serving their communities.

The department also participated in Career Cabs activities at Nebraska State Patrol Troop E headquarters in Scottsbluff, where students learned about the work performed by public safety professionals.

In total, firefighters spoke with around a hundred students throughout the day, according to the department.

While responding to emergencies and putting out fires are among the most visible parts of the job, the department noted that mentoring young people who may pursue careers in public service is another important part of its work.

The activities offered students a closer look at public safety careers while helping connect them with professionals who serve communities across the Nebraska Panhandle.

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PANHANDLE SPORTS

Bulldogs Headed to State



(GERING, Neb.) – Gering Bulldogs took down Gretna East in three sets to claim the B-5 District Championship and punch their ticket to the State Tournament.

Crawford-Sioux County D2-5 Champions



(CRAWFORD, Neb.) – The Crawford - Sioux County Ladies Volleyball team won the D2-5 District Final over Paxton 3-1.

NEBRASKA SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION

2026 STATE VOLLEYBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS

November 4–7, 2026 Lincoln, Nebraska ADMISSION · $12 ADULTS / $9 STUDENTS

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4 SESSION 1 — PINNACLE BANK ARENA · FIRST ROUND

TIME	NORTH COURT	SOUTH COURT
9:00 a.m.	Class B — #1 v. #8	Class B — #2 v. #7
11:00 a.m.	Class B — #4 v. #5	Class B — #3 v. #6
1:00 p.m.	Class C1 — #1 v. #8	Class C1 — #2 v. #7
3:00 p.m.	Class C1 — #4 v. #5	Class C1 — #3 v. #6
5:00 p.m.	Class A — #1 v. #8	Class A — #2 v. #7
7:00 p.m.	Class A — #4 v. #5	Class A — #3 v. #6

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 5 SESSION 2 — PINNACLE BANK ARENA · FIRST ROUND

TIME	NORTH COURT	SOUTH COURT
9:00 a.m.	Class D2 — #1 v. #8	Class D2 — #2 v. #7
11:00 a.m.	Class D2 — #4 v. #5	Class D2 — #3 v. #6
1:00 p.m.	Class D1 — #1 v. #8	Class D1 — #2 v. #7
3:00 p.m.	Class D1 — #4 v. #5	Class D1 — #3 v. #6
5:00 p.m.	Class C2 — #1 v. #8	Class C2 — #2 v. #7
7:00 p.m.	Class C2 — #4 v. #5	Class C2 — #3 v. #6

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 6 SESSION 3 — PINNACLE BANK ARENA · SEMIFINALS

TIME	NORTH COURT	SOUTH COURT
9:00 a.m.	Class D2 semifinal	Class D1 semifinal
11:00 a.m.	Class D2 semifinal	Class D1 semifinal
1:00 p.m.	Class C1 semifinal	Class C2 semifinal
3:00 p.m.	Class C1 semifinal	Class C2 semifinal
5:00 p.m.	Class A semifinal	Class B semifinal
7:00 p.m.	Class A semifinal	Class B semifinal

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7 SESSION 4 — FINALS

TIME	DEVANEY SPORTS CENTER · CHAMPIONSHIP	LINCOLN NORTHWEST · 3RD PLACE
9:00 a.m.	Class D1 championship	Class C2 third place
11:00 a.m.	Class D2 championship	Class D1 third place
1:00 p.m.	Class C1 championship	Class D2 third place
3:00 p.m.	Class C2 championship	Class C1 third place
5:00 p.m.	Class A championship	
7:00 p.m.	Class B championship	

All times Central. Schedule subject to change; visit nsaahome.org for the current bracket. NSAAHOME.ORG

EST. OREGON TRAIL 1978 Plumbing, Heating & Cooling



Lady Hawks D2-4 Champions

(HAY SPRINGS, Neb.) – The Hay Springs Lady Hawks hosted the D2-4 subdistrict and headed to state after defeating Dorchester, 3-1.

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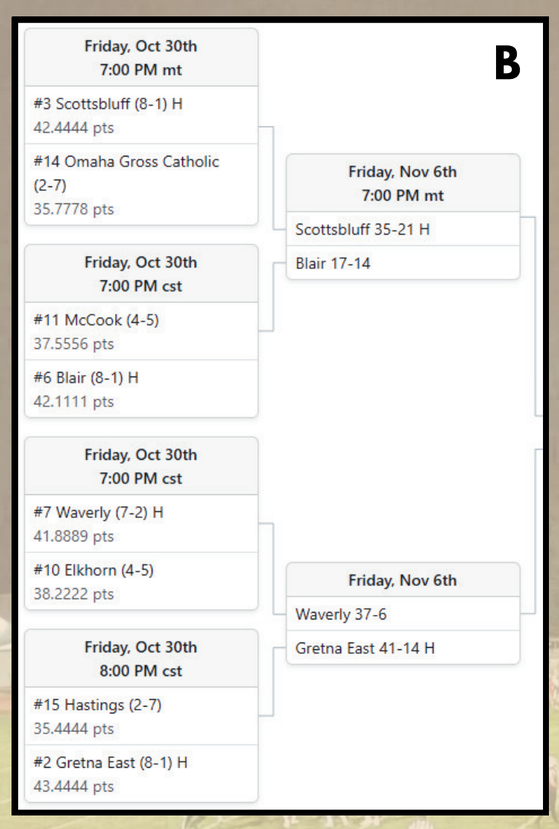
PANHANDLE SPORTS

NEBRASKA STATE FOOTBALL PLAYOFFS

Bearcats Win

(SCOTTSBLUFF, Neb.) – In a cat fight, the Bearcats fought off a determined Omaha Gross Catholic team in a two-sided rushing showdown, with Senior QB Carver Nemnich racking up 204 yards and five touchdowns, to win 35-21 at home.

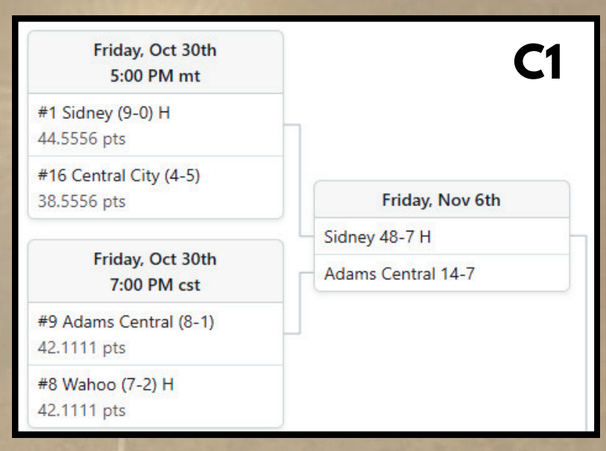
Scottsbluff will host 8-1 Blair, who had a tough time getting past McCook, 17-14 in the first round on Friday.



Red Raiders Conquer Central City

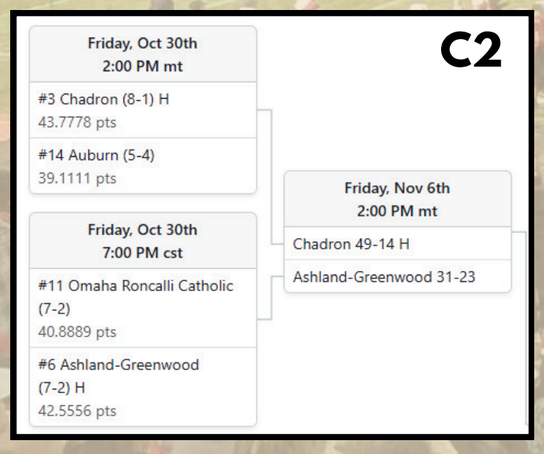
(SIDNEY, Neb.) – The undefeated Sidney Red Raiders put on another defensive clinic in their 48-7 win over Central City.

The 8-1 Patriots from Adams Central of Hastings defeated Wahoo 14-7 to advance to a matchup with 9-0 Sidney, Nov. 6.



Garden County Advances

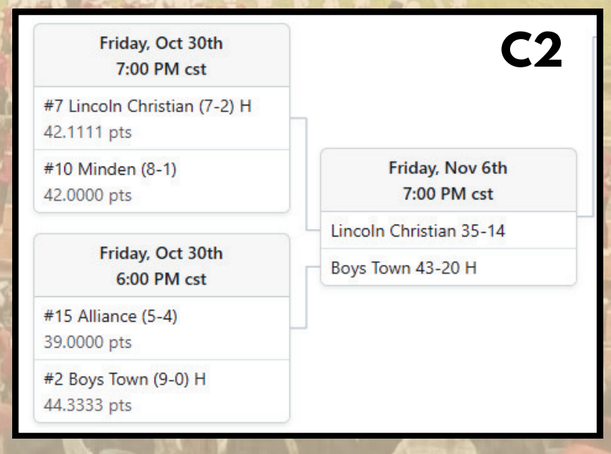
(OSHKOSH, Neb.) – Garden County also won big, 58-12 over Meridian. The Eagles will host Medicine Valley next week, who won 88-52.

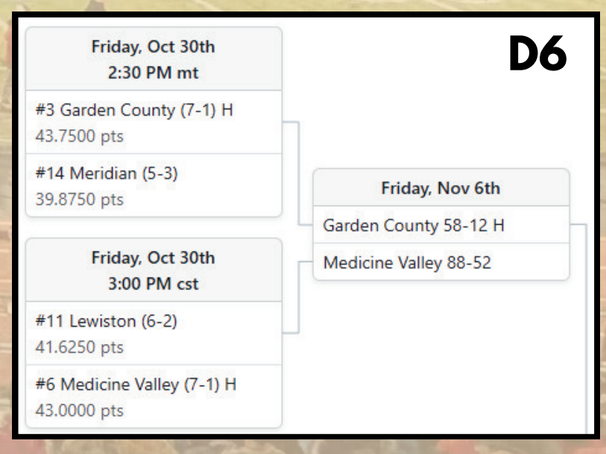


Chadron In, Alliance Out

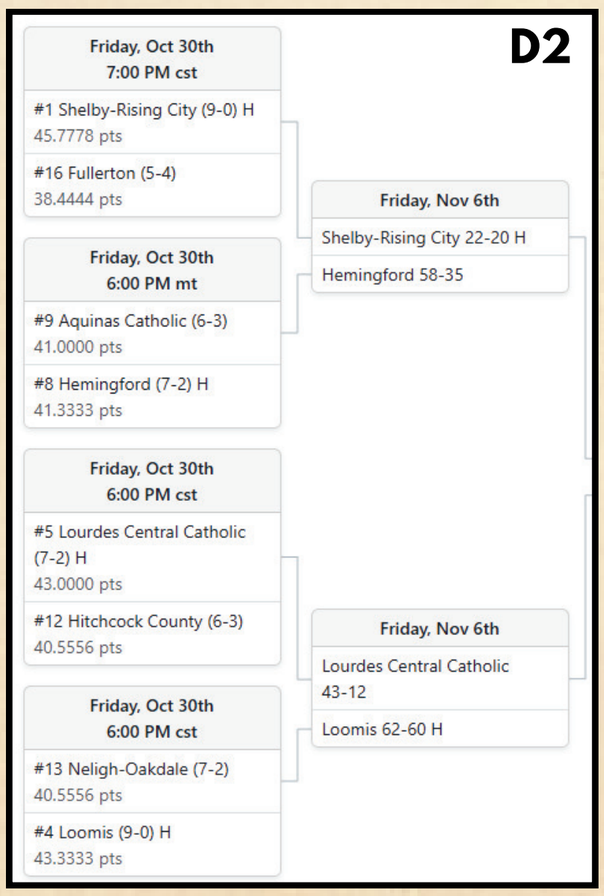
(CHADRON, Neb.) – Chadron kept their near perfect record going by defeating Auburn in the first playoff game of the afternoon, 49-14.

Boys Town beat the Alliance Bulldogs, 43-20, and Boone Central defeated Mitchell, 38-0.





Hemingford Holds off Aquinas at Home



(HEMINGFORD, Neb.) – The Bobcats capitalized on a high spirited atmosphere to hold off visiting Aquinas Catholic, 58-35.

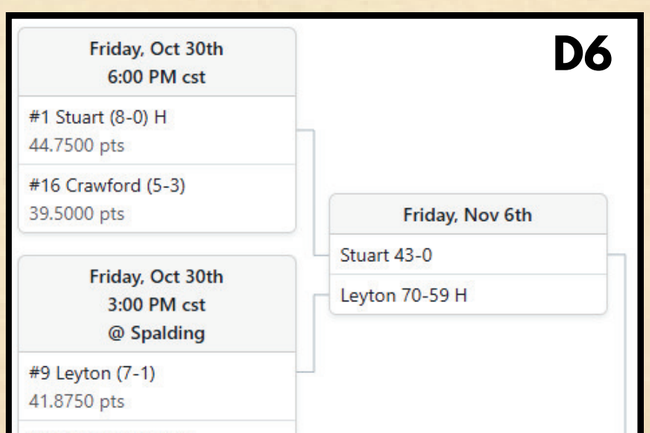
They will face #1 ranked Shelby-Rising City next Friday who managed to squeak by #16 ranked Fullerton, 22-20.



Warriors Face #1 Stuart in Round 2

Crawford and Hay Springs Out

(DALTON, Neb.) – The Leyton Warriors join Garden County as the only panhandle teams to advance in Class D6, defeating Riverside in a true shootout, 70-59. Crawford fell to Stuart 43-0, while Hay Springs lost to Red Cloud, 80-37.





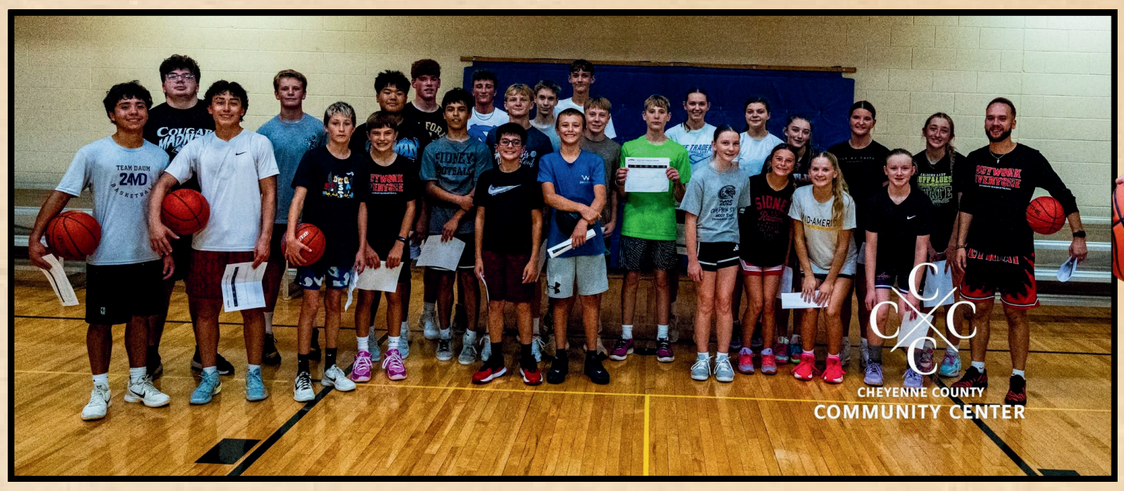
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WESTERN NEBRASKA LANDSCAPING

Sidney Hosts GymRat Basketball Camp

By Cheyenne County Community Center

(SIDNEY, Neb.) — The work doesn't stop when practice ends. That was the message for more than 50 young athletes Sunday at the GymRat Basketball skills development camp to the Cheyenne County Community Center.





Founder and head coach Trey Winkler led two sessions for third- through 12th-grade boys and girls, emphasizing fundamentals, footwork, ball handling and the importance of practicing beyond organized basketball.

The Gering High School graduate and current Western Nebraska Community College men's basketball assistant coach drew from his collegiate playing experience to introduce drills designed to challenge athletes at different skill levels.

"GymRat Basketball is a lifestyle and movement," Winkler said. "It's all about kids that love to be in the gym. About the kids that work when no one is watching."

Winkler also sent athletes home with a 14-day ball-handling tracker, encouraging them to practice independently and hold themselves accountable.

"I hope they take all these drills home and get better," Winkler said. "They've seen a bunch of new drills. Take it home and use it."

GymRat Basketball continues to expand its reach throughout the region, with additional camps planned in Cheyenne, Wyoming, and Scottsbluff in November.

Winkler said bringing the program to Sidney was about reaching young athletes who share his passion for basketball. "I want to give back to the kid I once was and help them get better at basketball," he said. "I appreciate the community of Sidney coming out here. This was a great turnout. We will definitely be back."



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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



Hal Coker Memorial Buckaroo Benefit Fund



The organization's mission is to provide financial support for people in the ranching, cowboy community who experience health and accident-related emergencies that result in the inability to work and provide for their families.

Accomplished Wyoming horse trainer Annette Coker lost her husband early in life.

She writes, "Hal was everything to me. We were building a dream together, and in his honor, I will pick up the pieces and continue what we started. His spirit is boundless, and I know we will all continue to feel his presence in our lives."

This fund is dedicated to the memory of Hal Coker.

Visit mantzcreekhorses.com to learn more about 'Netty' Coker and Kevin Meyer and their outstanding horse training program, or visit the Hal Coker Memorial Fund website directly. You can find them both by visiting horsemanscorner.com and do a simple search.

Again, if you know a cowboy that's been injured or is experiencing health-related emergencies, you owe it to your friend to check out this website. www.hcmbbf.org

HorsemansCorner.com
MantzCreekHorses.com
HCMBBF.org

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WEATHER



Brandi Lea May of Chadron submitted this photo of the season's first snow.



Pamela Jones Caskie submitted this photo of the season's second full moon.

The Week Ahead

- Sunday: Overcast with developing rain. The month opens under cloudy skies with light daytime winds. An incoming system brings a 70% chance of rain showers this week.
- Monday: Chilly, rainy, and windy. A passing cold front triggers steady light rain mixed with gusty northwest winds up to 22 mph. Daytime temperatures drop before clearing out overnight.
- Tuesday: Clearing and cool. Skies turn partly sunny as the storm track pushes east. The air remains crisp with lingering northwest breezes.
- Wednesday: Abundant sunshine. A quiet high-pressure system sets in, bringing bright, sunny skies and calm conditions.
- Thursday: Mostly sunny. Conditions remain pleasant and dry for late autumn, making for great outdoor or agricultural harvest conditions.
- Friday: Increasing clouds. High pressure begins to exit, allowing a blanket of mostly cloudy skies to filter in by afternoon, though conditions remain dry.
- Saturday: Seasonal and calm. The week wraps up with a mix of sun and clouds, light winds, and seasonal temperatures.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
56° 46°	48° 37°	56° 29°	56° 30°	59° 30°	59° 36°	57° 27°

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BUILDING A STRONGER MIND

Panhandle Public Health District

Healthy Choices at Every Age



Red Ribbon Week is a reminder that protecting our minds and bodies starts with the choices we make — and that prevention matters at every stage of life.

Observed each October, Red Ribbon Week raises awareness about substance use prevention and encourages people to live healthy, drug-free lives. While the message is often directed toward children and teenagers, making healthy choices is just as important for adults.

Building a healthy mind is a lifelong process. It means learning to manage stress, developing healthy coping skills, surrounding ourselves with positive influences and recognizing when we need help.

For preteens, teens and adults alike, the way we care for our mental and physical health can influence how we handle stress, relationships and difficult situations.

Avoiding alcohol, tobacco, vaping products and the misuse of medications or other drugs is an important part of prevention. So is finding healthy ways to cope with life's challenges.

Stress, anxiety and loneliness can affect anyone. When life becomes overwhelming, it may be tempting to look for a quick escape. But relying on substances to manage difficult feelings can create additional problems instead of addressing the source of the stress.

Healthier alternatives include physical activity, spending time with supportive friends and family, getting enough sleep, enjoying hobbies and reaching out for help when needed. These habits won't eliminate every challenge, but they can help us build resilience and respond to difficulties in healthier ways.

Positivity Makes a Difference

Preteens and teenagers are still developing the confidence and decision-making skills needed to navigate peer pressure. Friends, social media and the desire to fit in can influence their choices. Parents, teachers, coaches and other trusted adults can help by listening, offering guidance and modeling healthy behaviors.

Adults face pressures of their own, including work demands, financial concerns, family responsibilities and unexpected life changes. They also need supportive relationships and healthy ways to manage stress.

No matter our age, the people around us matter. Open communication and positive role models can help create an environment where healthy choices are encouraged and asking for help is seen as a strength.

Talk About It Before There Is a Problem

Conversations about drugs and alcohol don't have to wait until someone makes a risky decision.

Parents and caregivers can ask young people what they hear from friends, answer questions honestly and discuss ways to respond to peer pressure. Adults can check in with friends who seem overwhelmed, talk openly about stress and recognize when alcohol or other substances may be becoming a way to cope.

These conversations are most helpful when approached with curiosity rather than judgment. Listening and creating space for honest answers can make it easier for someone to ask for support.

If you are concerned about your own substance use or that of someone you care about, reaching out to a health care professional or support service is a positive step.

Every Choice Can Make a Difference

Making a difference doesn't require a grand gesture. For a preteen, it might mean walking away from pressure to try something harmful. For a teenager, it could mean supporting a friend. For an adult, it might mean setting a healthy example or helping a loved one find support.

This Red Ribbon Week, remember that prevention is about more than saying no to harmful substances. It's also about saying yes to your well-being, your relationships and your future. A healthy mind is worth protecting at every age.

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BUSINESS NEWS

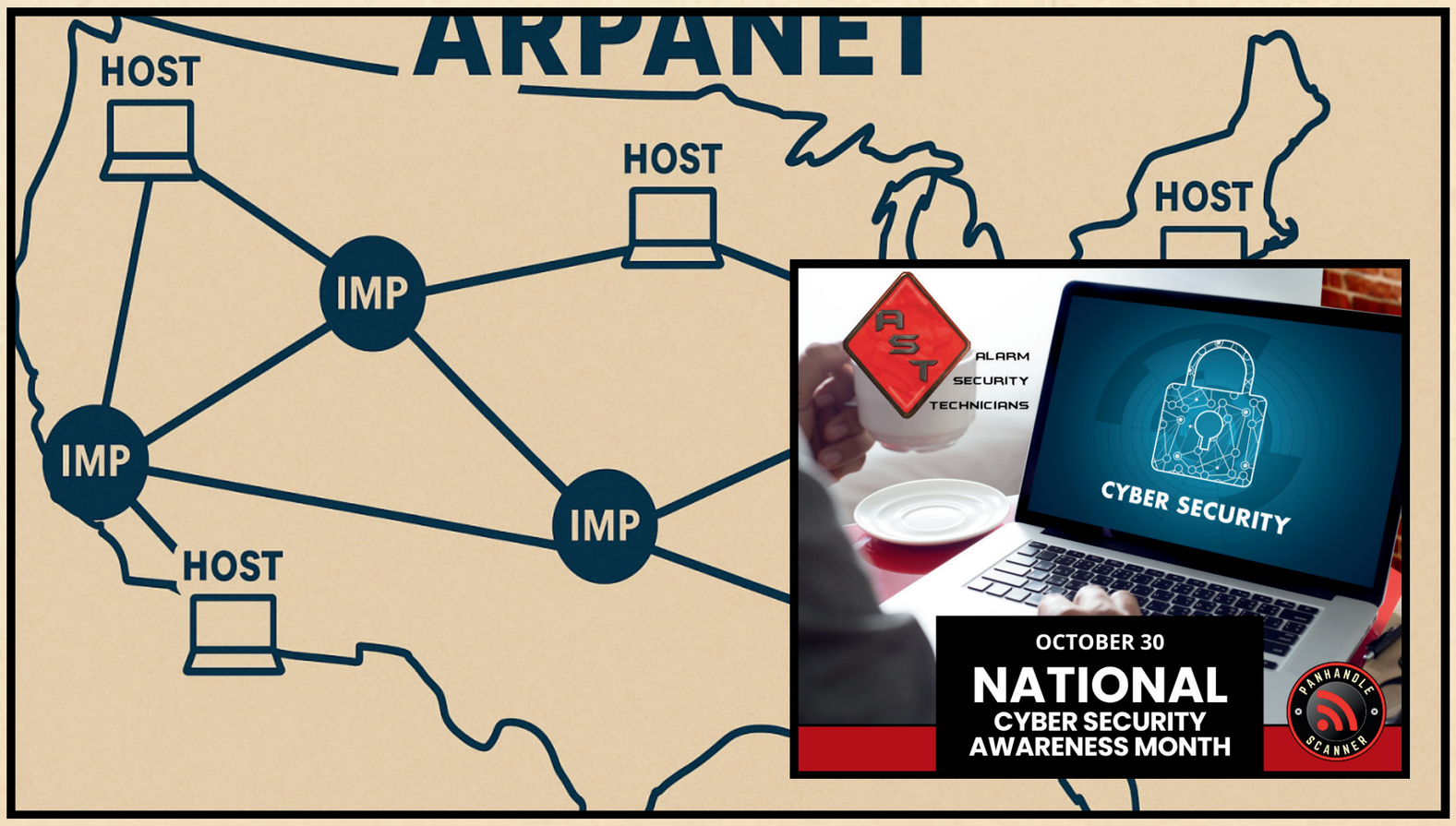
How the Internet Began

Celebrating National Internet Day

ARPANET (Advanced Research Projects Agency Network) was the first operational wide-area packet-switched computer network and the direct technical forerunner of the modern Internet.

Established in the late 1960s by DARPA (then known as ARPA), an agency of the U.S. Department of Defense.

- First Nodes: Went live in October 1969, connecting four initial university and research laboratories: UCLA, Stanford Research Institute (SRI), the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB), and the University of Utah.
- First Message: On Oct. 29, 1969, a programmer at UCLA attempted to type the word "login" to a computer at Stanford, though the system crashed after transmitting just the letters "Lo".
- Core Technology: Built on decentralized packet-switching concepts and Interface Message Processors (IMPs) designed by Bolt Beranek and Newman (BBN). It originally used the Network Control Program (NCP) before officially transitioning to TCP/IP on January 1, 1983.
- Decommissioning: Split into ARPANET and MILNET (for military use) in 1983. ARPANET was officially decommissioned in 1990 after being superseded by networks like NSFNET.



Nominations Galore

Each Quarter, Panhandle Scanner asks followers who their favorite local small businesses are.



A crazy number of nominations have come in recently, especially for those two front-runners that were leading the pack last quarter. Remember? When all of a sudden, during the final week of official voting, fourth place nominee Broadwater Country Store stole the show, surpassing both JAY's Duct Cleanings LLC and Trujillo Services to win the title!

The following is a complete list of all quarterly winners so far.

- Sweet V's Restaurant, Scottsbluff
- Scotty's Drive-In, Scottsbluff
- Platte Valley Glass, Scottsbluff
- Prime Cut Restaurant, Scottsbluff
- The Crispy Biscuit, Scottsbluff
- Golden Hour Barbecue, Alliance
- Frankies Bar and Grill, Bridgeport
- The Happy Dackle, Mitchell
- My Angels Mexican Food, Alliance
- The Twisted Turtle, Rushville
- Kiowa Honey Company, Mitchell
- Cryptic Tattoos, Scottsbluff
- Cornerstone Coffee, Mitchell
- Farm to Family Cooperative, Hay Springs
- Broadwater Country Store, Broadwater
- 4th Quarter Winner for 2026 - ??

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328,370 Unique Viewers

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21,167 Unique Readers

Podcasts & Streaming
2,863 Unique Listeners

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1/6 PAGE	$150.00
1/3 PAGE	$250.00

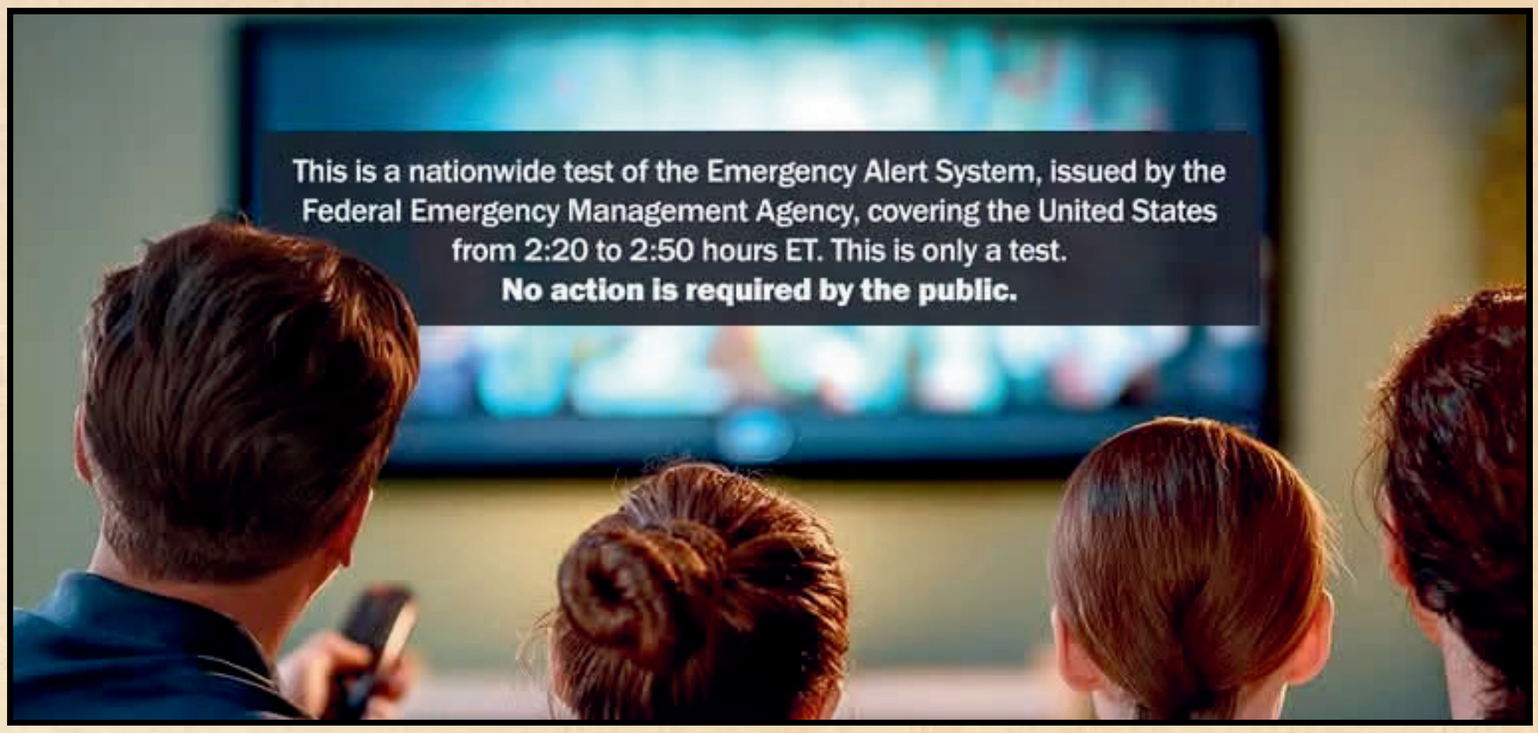
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Emergency Alert System Test

(NATIONWIDE) – On Tuesday, Nov. 17, 2026, around 2:20 p.m. ET, FEMA and the Federal Communications Commission will conduct a nationwide test of the Emergency Alert System (EAS). The test will air on radio and TV only and will not be sent to mobile phones. No action is needed from the public.



The backup date is Dec. 3, 2026.

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

In Other Scanner Traffic...

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

Traffic Complaint - Oct 26
(JACINCTO, Neb.) -- MM 35, I-80 Eastbound, White Truck Hauling trailer, Driving erratic; almost hit traffic cones, swerving all over the roadway.

Traffic Complaint - Oct 28
(DIX, Neb.) – MM 32, I-80 EB, Dark Grey Freightliner White Box Trailer, 5733015 Maine, Followed by RP, RP advised Maine Trailer had hit him, still both in the area.

Traffic Complaint - Oct 28
(MITCHELL, Neb.) – MM 16, HWY 26 East, Black Pickup Wyoming Plate (Unknown Balance) “No Plate Number”, Almost ran RP off of the roadway (Reporting Party)

Traffic Complaint - Oct 28
(BRULE, Neb.) – Scanner traffic indicated, MM 117, I-80 West, White Trailer, RP (Reporting Party) - advised sparks are coming from the trailer

Unknown Injestion - Oct 31
(SCOTTSBLUFF, Neb.) - Scanner traffic indicated a 16 year old puking due to injesting an unknown substance on 16th ave; LEO on scene advised male possibly took a THC gummy.

Possible Assault - Oct 31
(MITCHELL, Neb.) -- Scanner traffic indicated an unknown age male on CR D that has injuries to his face, possible assault victim, scene is not secure. Also, victim has been pushed downstairs. Scene is still not secure.

Scanner Traffic reports are ever-evolving and seldom tell the final story.
We report what comes across traffic verbatim whenever possible.