

THOMAS COUNTY Herald

Your Source Of News In The Sandhills

THOMAS COUNTY, THEDFORD, NEBRASKA 69166

(USPS 596-550)

THURSDAY, JANUARY 4, 2018

NO. 25

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2017 Year In Review

Nebraska Farm Bureau: What Farmers and Ranchers Need to Know About the New Tax Bill

The new Tax Reform package offers a number of important changes for those in agriculture and Nebraska Farm Bureau has been very involved in making sure farmers and ranchers benefit from Congress's first major tax reform package in more than 30 years. It is truly a "win" for Nebraska farm and ranch families, Steve Nelson, president of Nebraska Farm Bureau said, when President Trump signed the bill Dec. 22.

Nebraska Farm Bureau staff, Jay Rempe, senior economist and Jordan Dux, director of national affairs, conducted an analysis of the Tax Reform package and provides 10 important things farmers and ranchers need to know about the new tax package. It's important to keep in mind that Nebraska Farm Bureau has made every effort to ensure the accuracy of the information provided. As with anything, farmers and ranchers should consult a tax professional in order to fully examine how these new changes affect their individual operations.

Lower Rates for Pass-Through Businesses, Individuals, and Corporations - The new law continues seven tax brackets for individuals and all pass-through business income (sole proprietorships, partnerships, and S-corporations) but expands them and lowers tax rates which are indexed for inflation. The law also doubles the standard deduction. Unfortunately, the new pass-through rates and brackets do expire on December 31, 2025. Pass-throughs will be able to deduct 20 percent of their business income, which includes payments from cooperatives, commodity wages, and farmland rental income.

The following limitations will apply:
 The deduction is limited for partnerships and S-corporations to 50 percent of W-2 wages paid to employees OR the sum of 25 percent of W-2 wages paid plus 2.5 percent of depreciable business property.
 The W-2 limitation does not apply to taxpayers when taxable income does not exceed \$315,000/\$157,000 joint/individual and

Thomas County residents saw progress in businesses and a new fire hall in 2017. Several successful events were conducted. One of the most controversial stories of the year was the proposed wind farm in Cherry County, and the NPPD power line that would go up Highway 83 to Thedford and then east. Two groups, Save the Sandhills and Preserve the Sandhills, spent much of the year informing and educating Nebraskans about

this unique area we call home.

Here are some highlights of 2017.

January

Government: Cherry County commissioners met December 19 to discuss and act on the conditional use permit application submitted by BSH Kilgore, L.L.C. The permit was denied on a 2-0 vote. Stan Pettit, long-time Thomas County commissioner, was honored by Thomas County officials at a retirement

party.
Business: Completion was nearing on the new Masterhand Milling Distribution Center east of Thedford.

Organizations: An "Old Fashioned" Christmas proved to be a great success again this year.

Schools: Sandhills-Thedford hosted "Black Out Cancer" night in Dunning with T-shirt sales going to support the 20th annual Cattleman's Ball; Goose Creek School students performed the musical, "Home for the Holidays."

Sports: Colby Collier (16-1) won his 100th career wrestling match on January 21.

New Arrivals: Cooper Mattox Libeau to Timothy and Shena (Nutter) Libeau on October 6, 2016.

Deaths: Alva (Al) Kenneth Bailey, died December 25, at Indian Hills Nursing Home in Ogalala; Alice Mae Goehring, 90, of Thedford, died December 30; Nancy Gaye Mostler, 69, died January 11 in Wichita, Kansas; Kathleen A. Bowdish, 56, of Lincoln died January 14.

February

Government: Thedford Public Schools Board of Education members were pictured and were Jay Jones, Steve Ahlstrom, Dixie Hoffman, Johnny Mike Lee, Bridget Licking, and Matt Blackford. Retiring board member, Ronda Haumann, was honored for 20 years of service; Connie Cox and Miles Maseberg were the two new board members on the Upper Loup NRD board.

Organizations: The Thedford Area Community Foundation gave out four grants in 2016. Grants went towards a new cart shed at the Thedford Golf Course, a roof for the Halsey Rural Fire Department's fire hall, the Little Girls lost statue, and creation of a historical marker and a scoreboard table for Thedford Public Schools.

Schools: Jim York was named NSAA District 4 Representative; Thedford Public School Board of Education met for a special meeting and announced they had agreed

to enter into a separation agreement with Superintendent Eggert. Mr. Eggert would finish out the current year; Sidney Lange won Best of Show at the MNAC Art Show; Matthew Dailey was crowned the Blaine County spelling bee champion.

Sports: The Lady Knights repeated as MNAC basketball champions and brought home a plaque from the tournament; Zach Call was working his way up in the Bullfighters Only standings; Colby Collier was the 170 pound Class Champion at the MNAC meet held at Mullen; Cade Pokorny committed to play football at Chadron State and Jacey Nutter committed to the University of Nebraska-Kearney; The Lady Knights advanced to district finals; Colby Collier ended his wrestling career fourth in the state.

New Arrivals: Ford and Molli Miller of Gandy were the parents of a baby girl, Murphy Marie, born January 27.

Deaths: Dolores (Bestol) James, 95, died at Mother Hull Home in Kearney on January 30; Vera Sautter, 91, died February 4 at Alliance; Mary Neal Johnston, 91, died February 11, at the Pioneer Memorial Nursing Home in Mullen.

March

Government: Judy Mulligan of Thedford, was named the new Stapleton postmaster; Sandhills residents concerned about the potential for wind turbines and the R-project power line gathered February 4 at the Hamilton Ranch in southeast Cherry county; Thedford Rural Fire Protection District received a \$10,000 grant for the new fire hall building from Farm Credit Services of America; Senator Brewer proposed a two-year moratorium on wind turbines in the Sandhills

Sports: The Lady Knights were the District D2-5 basketball champions; Thedford lost a heartbreaker, 41-44 against Exeter-Milligan in the state basketball tournament at Lincoln.

Deaths: Francesmary "Mary" Portz, 94, died

March 8 at her ranch home at North Platte.

April

Government: Desarae Catlett was the new Information and Education Coordinator at Upper Loup NRD.

Business: Creative Printers went online with the launching of their new website and subscribers could now read the *Thomas County Herald* online.

Schools: Kristin Gannon was pictured with her book, "George and the Stolen Sunny Spot," at a special presentation at Sandhills Elementary School at Halsey.

Organizations: The American Legion Auxiliary Steidley-Kayton Unit #230 announced Helen Leaf had been a member of the Auxiliary for 71 years and Linda Galusha for 70 years.

Accidents: An early morning derailment rocked Thedford as an eastbound Burlington Northern Santa Fe coal train went off the rails at 4:48 a.m. on the south end of Maple Street.

New Arrivals: Sam Pearson and Jennifer McMullen were the parents of a son, Levi Matthew Pearson, born April 2.

Deaths: Billye McGooden Johnson died March 20 in Broken Bow; Lana Marie Clouse died at her home at North Platte on April 5; Troy Jon Neiman, 48, died April 15.

May

Business: The Stapleton Enterprise and *Thomas County Herald* won numerous awards in Class A at the Nebraska Press Convention in Lincoln, including a first place in the Specialty Pages division for the "Calling All Babies" and second place for "Salute To Our Veterans." First place went to the *Thomas County Herald* for the best single retail advertising idea, black and white with "Christmas in July." The Sandhills Heritage Museum would open its doors Memorial Day weekend.

Sports: Rebecca Higgins signed a letter of intent to play basketball at Concordia University; Sheven Rodocker placed third in

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Tuberculosis Discovered In Wheeler County

Disease detected as part of investigation into South Dakota infected herd

According to Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) State Veterinarian Dr. Dennis Hughes, NDA and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) veterinarians have discovered a bovine tuberculosis (TB) positive cow in a beef cattle herd in Wheeler County. The Nebraska herd was identified through an epidemiological investigation from an infected herd in South Dakota.

"Nebraska was contacted by the South Dakota Animal Industry Board earlier this year as they began to trace the movement of cattle into and out of their infected herd," said Hughes. "We have been diligently

working with our counterparts in South Dakota and the USDA to locate and test the cattle that were moved into Nebraska, and through that testing procedure we discovered the TB positive cow in Wheeler County."

NDA and USDA are currently working together with the producer, who has been cooperating with both agencies. The herd is under quarantine.

"Our staff will be conducting a thorough investigation tracing the movement of cattle into and out of the Wheeler County herd," said Hughes. "We will also be working to locate any cattle that may have been pastured next to and had fence line contact with

the infected herd. TB is primarily transmitted through nose to nose contact, so it is imperative that we work with those neighboring producers to test their cattle as well."

TB is a slow, progressive disease and is difficult to diagnose in the early stages; however, as the disease progresses, animals can exhibit emaciation, lethargy, weakness, anorexia, low-grade fever, and a pneumonia with a chronic, moist cough. If a producer sees any of these symptoms in their herd, they should contact their local veterinarian. Further information, including FAQ sheets on TB can be found on the NDA website at www.nda.nebraska.gov.