

THOMAS COUNTY Herald

Your Source Of News In The Sandhills

THOMAS COUNTY, THEDFORD, NEBRASKA 69166

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Next Week

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- MNAC Wrestling Results

Tree Planting Season Nearing

Spring is fast approaching and so is tree planting season! The Upper Loup NRD provides many tree services from planning, planting, weed barrier installation or weed control, drip irrigation, and small acreage packages. Trees are important for the environment, they provide benefits such as producing shelter for livestock, supplying wildlife habitat, preventing soil erosion, increasing crop yields, and helping to reduce heating and cooling costs.

Tree planting may qualify for either state or federal cost-share, available at a rate of 65% of the total cost. Cost-share is available when NRD crews machine plant seedlings or when a cooperater hand plants seedlings to federal specifications. A 100 tree minimum purchase is required to apply for state cost-share. Cost share is no longer available on the purchase of red cedars in an effort to prevent invasion.

Central Sandhills Mech Techs Named Champions



COURTESY PHOTO

The Mech Techs were named Champions at the First Lego League Competition in Sidney. Team members pictured above are, back row l-r: Youth Coaches Tyler and Chase Rath. Middle row, l-r: 4-H Leader, Judy Rath, Jacob Walker, Tate Kvanvig, Ethan Hardin, Chase Gracey, 4-H Educator, Sue Pearman. Front row, l-r: Daniel Wright, Cayden Hampton, Ben Werner, Brandon Hardin and Alex Werner.

The Central Sandhills Mech Techs competed on Saturday, January 20, in Sidney at the First Lego League Competition. The challenge this year was "Hydro-Dynamics." Competition includes three interviews and presentations in the morning and three rounds of robot game competition in the afternoon. They are judged on their knowledge of Core Values: Gracious Professionalism, Inclusion, Integration, Cooperation and Discovery, Robot Design and Project Presentation. This year their project that they invented was DRIP: Drinking Water Reclamation and Imple-

mentation Plan. They created a prototype that would capture rainwater then remove contaminants and/or salt that was cost effective and portable. They also entertained the idea of deriving water from natural gas by utilizing wasted natural gas from flaring generated in petroleum development areas. Their main focus was to help areas such as the Dominican Republic and Sub-Saharan Africa, where clean, fresh water is not abundant. Great discussion was held because as Sandhillers, they know the importance of our water.

They were named First

Place Champions overall plus won the award for Innovative Project. The members are Brandon and Ethan Hardin, Chase Gracey, Alex and Ben Werner, Cayden Hampton, Daniel Walker, Tate Kvanvig, Jacob Walker and Jacob Wingeback. Their leaders are Youth Coaches and Mentors, Tyler and Chase Rath, and Extension Educator, Sue Pearman. We congratulate them on their awesome accomplishment as they head to State Championship to be held February 17 in Ashland, Nebraska at the Strategic Air Command and Aerospace Museum.

Basketball Teams Join The Fight Against Cancer



Communities in and around Thedford have been hard hit with individuals and families who are fighting the fight against cancer. At one point, everyone was looking around and asking, "what's in our water?" "Stronger together" has definitely been our community's motto.

The Ansley-Litchfield and Sandhills-Thedford basketball teams will battle against each other on the court, Friday, February 2. More importantly, they will come together from one tight-knit community to another to show support to our community members who have been greatly affected by cancer. For some, they are still battling cancer as you read this story.

Black Out Cancer brings teams together in January to donate towards cancer research. They have been gracious enough to support our families in February.

Shirt proceeds and any extra donations from the night will go back to our families to help with medical expenses and costs to drive to and from Omaha, Lincoln, and North Platte, for treatments and doctor visits.

Because of the extreme chemotherapy process, our patrons are not always able to work during this difficult time.

We cannot recognize them and their family members enough for their continued fight against cancer and these hard times. We want to also recognize those among us who have battled and are now cancer free!

Thank you to Ansley-Litchfield for helping be apart of this night with us to show our support towards our fight for families who are battling this terrible disease.

If you would like to donate to "Our Fight for Families Fundraiser," you may do so by sending a check to Thedford High School, P.O. Box 248, Thedford, NE 69166 - Attention: Bec Ray. Make checks payable to STK Basketball. In the notation, please put: Fighting for Families Donation. Thank you to all who want to help and can help.

Stories of the families we are fighting with and for...

Linda E. Schaeffer was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2017 and has since gone through months of chemotherapy until they were able to shrink and remove the tumor. The tumor was surgically removed in October. Radiation is a possible option to ensure cancer cells are gone. Linda is still at Bryan Hospital in Lincoln.

Bailey Porter is a 2015 graduate of Sandhills

High School. Bailey and his brother, Devon, who is a senior at Sandhills High School this year, have been greatly affected by cancer since Bailey was a junior in high school. Bailey was a junior in high school and Devon was in junior high when their mother lost her life in a car accident. The entire football team went to Gordon for her funeral. Not long after the accident, their dad was diagnosed with cancer. He later died after a long battle, and again, Adam Marten took Devon's entire class to Ainsworth for his funeral. The brothers also lost one sister to breast cancer and another is still battling it. Bailey became Devon's guardian and with the help of his saint of a fiancée, Desarae, they have carried on. Bailey underwent surgery this past year to hopefully reduce the chances of getting colon cancer. A benign tumor around his stomach ruptured before Christmas and Bailey nearly died. He is undergoing chemotherapy now to try and shrink the tumor in order to remove it as it is taking his blood supply needed for his other organs. Bailey is 23-years-old. We thank Bailey for his continued support at our athletic contests even while going through his treatments.

Melanie Daly, Thedford's school librarian was diagnosed with stage three breast cancer last June. Melanie went through chemo and then had surgery, but is still going through radiation to be sure the cancer is 100% gone. Melanie has been traveling to North Platte every day for treatments since right after Christmas and continues every day - Monday through Friday, for six weeks. Melanie's story is strong in that she would like to emphasize to all to know your body and the signs it gives/tells you. In September 2016, Melanie had a healthy mammogram, but in late October found a lump in her armpit. She sought help right away and they sent her for an ultrasound. They told her it was probably fatty tissue and to come back in six months. When she went back in May for a second ultrasound, they did biopsies and discovered that it had been cancer all along. If Melanie had sat back and ignored the signs and symptoms, she would be telling a different story today. We thank Mel for her strong personality and pursuit to find out what was wrong when she knew something wasn't right. You would never know she is going through radiation as she always has a smile on her face and is uplifting when we see her in

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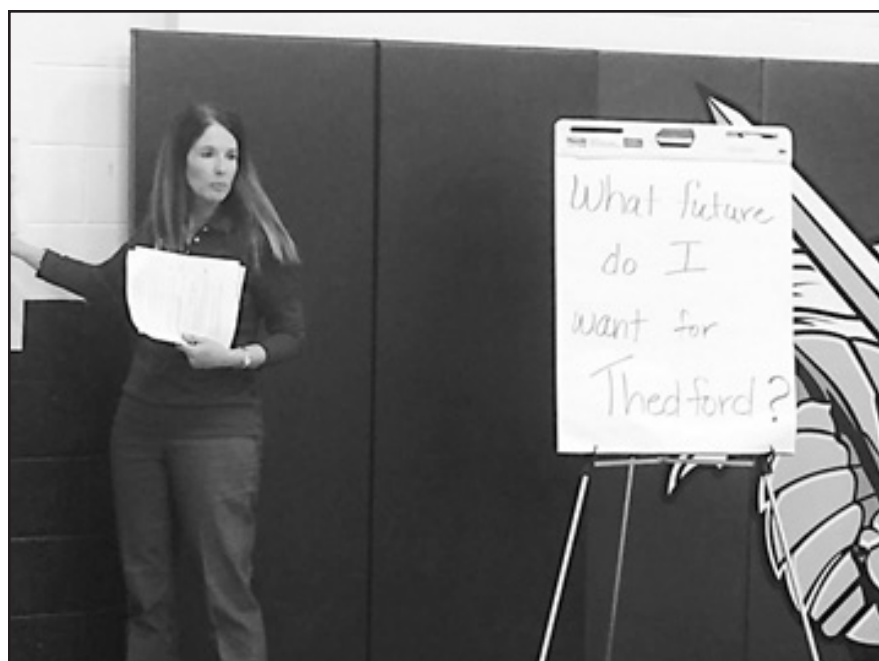
Thedford Community Center progress update

The Thedford Area Community Foundation is the recipient of a \$7,500 grant to be used into looking at the feasibility of different options and designs for a community center in Thedford. Jana Jensen, Western Nebraska representative for the Nebraska Community Foundation, made the announcement to the group at a January 17 board meeting. The grant is from the Eldridge Foundation of Antioch and the Thedford Area Community Foundation is very appreciative of this grant. More information will be announced as the year progresses.

Plans for a community center began March 22, 2016, when Jensen conducted a town visioning session. The community was well represented and there were many great ideas suggested. Jensen came back a week later to speak to high school students and obtain their ideas on what they wanted in a community center. A lot of input was received.

In January and February of 2017, the Thedford Area Community Foundation polled the community about what they would like to see in the center.

TACF board members have spent last year investigating all sorts of possibilities. They spoke to architects, traveled to other communities and viewed



JAMIE TAYLOR PHOTO

In March 2016, Jana Jensen, Nebraska Community Foundation western representative, worked with local community members to determine what they would like to see developed in Thedford.

their community centers, looked at possible places to build a center, and pursued the possibility of adding on to the fair building or enclosing the pavilion at the Thomas County Fairgrounds. The board has taken on this huge project that would benefit the community and surrounding area and they want to "get it right."

The goal of board members is to try to meet expectations and wishes of all community members, create something that will be functional for a variety of activities, and a building that would attract huge functions, as well as being a source of pride for

the Thedford community.

After examining all possibilities and putting a pencil to the project, building a new community center would cost over two million dollars. The board is composed of conservative members, and they just could not make that commitment.

The TACF board will continue to examine other possibilities that would cost far less.

"We are grateful for the Eldridge Foundation's grant that we'll utilize for that purpose," board members said.