

THOMAS COUNTY Herald

Your Source Of News In The Sandhills

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Valentine woman gets second chance at degree

It's never too late to go back to school.

Just ask Carolyn Moore-Petersen. At age 57, the Valentine woman is following up on the education she started almost 40 years ago.

"I'm doing it for me, but I'm also doing it for my kids and grand-kids," said Moore-Petersen. "I want them to understand that if they ever feel the need to make a change in their lives, they can."

Moore-Petersen's first experience with college was in the '70s, when she was in high school. By the final semester of her senior year, she had breezed through Advanced Placement exams in math and English - the only offerings the high school had for high achievers.

Because dual credit didn't exist, her only other option for higher learning was to ride a bus every day to and from La Salle University.

"In those days, it was way out of the norm for a young woman to do that sort of thing," said Moore-Petersen. "But, I had a thirst for learning. I took calculus, Spanish, English and a sociology class at the college, and the high school gave me credit for it."

She and her sister were the first in their family to go to college. Their mother was a housewife and their father was a laborer at a chemical plant. His job was what influenced Moore-Petersen's decision to enroll at Cornell University, in Ithaca, N.Y., following her high school graduation.

"I told everyone I wanted to be a chemical engineer, but that's really just the path I got put on," said Moore-Petersen. "I had always been good at math and science, and the plant offered a National Science Foundation scholarship that I was eligible to apply for because my dad worked there. I got the scholarship, and since it was intended for engineering, that's what I went into."

Once in the program, however, Moore-Petersen realized engineering didn't interest her at all.

Partway through, she got married and started a family, providing her with an all too welcome excuse to leave her branch of study, and college in general, behind. She didn't think again about continuing her education until two years ago.

By then, Moore-Petersen's children were grown and she was living in Valentine, where she had moved in 2001. She was working full-time as the office manager for the KVSH radio station and part-time as an administrative assistant for the Mid-Plains Community College Valentine Campus.

"One day, I was joking around with [Jennie Nollette, MPCC Valentine Campus coordinator,] about how I should go back to school," said Moore-Petersen. "Jennie took it seriously and was very supportive of the idea. Next thing I knew, I was enrolled in six summer classes."

Moore-Petersen started with online courses, but has since taken every type offered by Mid-Plains, including: on-site, distance learning, hybrid, night and Sunday College classes.

"The online option was challenging at first, because I had never taken anything outside of a traditional classroom setting," said Moore-Petersen. "The instructors got me through it. They listened to my questions and supported me every step of the way."

A part of her actually found the challenges intriguing. Although nearly four decades had passed, she had not lost the desire to push herself.

"My background is business, but as time went on, I became interested in information technology (IT)," said Moore-Petersen. "Everybody needs it, so that's the direction I'm headed."

Moore-Petersen earned an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Business from MPCC in December. She did it in record time, a year and a half, while maintaining both of her jobs and consistently earning high marks in her classes.

She made the President's List once, was on the Dean's List twice and earlier this month was inducted into the Phi Theta Kappa academic honor society, the qualification for which is based upon grade point average.

"In addition to the help from the instructors and staff at MPCC, I got a lot of support from my family and employers," said Moore-Petersen. "I'm sure I couldn't have done it, particularly at the pace or with the grades I did, without everyone standing behind me."

Moore-Petersen is currently taking one more class through MPCC that will allow her to pick up an IT certificate when she walks at the college's commencement ceremony May 12.

She is also taking online classes through the University of Nebraska at Kearney with the goal of obtaining a bachelor's degree in business with an emphasis in accounting and marketing.

"I will probably continue taking classes after I get my bachelor's degree," said Moore-Petersen. "It just amazes me all the information that's out there. I want to learn as much as possible."

She also plans to remain an advocate for postsecondary education in Valentine - a job that will be easier thanks to MPCC's new campus.

"I'm super excited about that," said Moore-Petersen. "I just think it's going to be explosive. We will have so much more space, which means more opportunities. The possibilities for students are unbelievable - with the dual credit availability and the time and cost savings of having a community college right here in town. I think it's the best thing that's happened to this area."

She's hopeful other non-traditional students will take advantage of MPCC's offerings and not miss out on the chance to better themselves like she almost did.

"It's not just about learning, but about doing well in life," said Moore-Petersen. "Life is so much more fulfilling when you push yourself to be the best you possible. If I can do it, anyone can."



COURTESY PHOTO
Carolyn Moore-Petersen studies for an upcoming test.

Higgins/Pokorny Named THS Prom Royalty

The 2017 Sandhills-Thedford Junior-Senior Prom was held Saturday, April 1 at the Nebraska State 4-H Camp in Halsey.

Cade Pokorny, son of Brad and Paula Pokorny of Stapleton, and Rebecca Higgins, daughter of Chris and PJ Higgins of Brownlee, were crowned the 2017 Thedford High School Prom King and Queen.

This year's theme was "A Touch Of Class" and the Lodge was beautifully decorated for the evenings

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JAMIE TAYLOR PHOTO
Cade Pokorny and Rebecca Higgins were crowned the 2017 Thedford High School Prom Royalty.

Easter Worship Services Planned At Area Churches

Area churches are making plans for Easter Sunday services.

The Amazing Grace Church will not have Sunday School, but Easter worship service will start at 5:30 p.m.

The Bethel Assembly of God will have an Easter breakfast at 9:45 a.m. with their worship service starting at 10:45 a.m.

Nature Conservancy supports LB 504

A March 30th edition of this newspaper reported that The Nature Conservancy (TNC) opposes LB 504. In fact, TNC testified in support of the bill.

The Nature Conservancy strongly supports renewable energy development in Nebraska. The long-term success of our conservation mission

depends on increasing the role of renewables in our energy portfolio so that we can lessen the impacts of climate change. Nebraska has great potential to contribute to this transition through development of its wind energy resources.

On the other hand, grasslands are among

America's least conserved habitats. Wind energy development sited in the wrong places can have negative impacts on species and habitat. The Sandhills region is one of North America's greatest remaining grassland systems, home to millions of migratory birds like the (Continued on page 8)

Benefit for Seneca couple

A benefit spaghetti dinner for Rose and Tom Licking is being planned for Saturday, April 15, from 4:00 until 8:00 p.m. at the Hooker County Fairgrounds.

Tom and Rose were involved in a ranching accident with one of their bulls, and both are currently on the mend. Rose remains at Good Samaritan Rehabilitation in Kearney and is

hoping to return home very soon. Tom is up and about and tending to the ranching and making frequent trips back and forth to Kearney to be with Rose.

The benefit is being sponsored by Chuckwagon 'n Jug of Mullen, and the Mullen Lion's Club.

Everyone is invited to come out and enjoy a good meal and support Rose and Tom Licking.

Annual Easter Egg Hunt Saturday

The Easter Egg Hunt sponsored by the Thedford Service Club will be held April 15 at 2:00 p.m. CT on the Thomas County Courthouse lawn. Participants need to be there and ready to go by 1:45 p.m. Everyone should meet on the street side of the Thomas County Library. Age groups will be divided up there and sent to their area to gather Easter Eggs.

We have made arrangements as in previous years to move the Easter Egg Hunt indoors in case of inclement weather.

All donations to the Easter Egg Hunt are greatly appreciated. Monetary donations may be dropped off with Michelle McIntosh at the Country Salon or placed on the Service Club account at Ewoldt's Grocery. Candy donations can be dropped off with Michelle McIntosh at the Country Salon. If you have any questions or need additional information please contact Michelle McIntosh at 645-2585 or Kevin Hood at 645-2504.

Gov. Ricketts Names John R. Freudenberg to Third Judicial District Judgeship

Governor Pete Ricketts has announced his appointment of John R. Freudenberg to the County Court for the Third Judicial District of Nebraska.

Freudenberg, 47, is the Criminal Bureau Chief at the Nebraska Attorney General's Office. In this role, he supervises the prosecution, investigation, and criminal appeals sections as well as assists the Attorney General with his legislative agenda.

Freudenberg was previously a partner at Smith, King, and Freudenberg in Gordon. Additionally, he served as the Sheridan County Attorney from 2005-2007. Freudenberg is a 1988 graduate of Stapleton High School.

He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice with minors in Legal Studies and Mathematics from Chadron State College. He received his Juris Doctor from the University of Nebraska College of Law. Freudenberg chairs the Nebraska Commission on Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice and is a past president of the Nebraska County Attorneys Association.



COURTESY PHOTO
John Freudenberg has been appointed to the County Court for the Third Judicial District of Nebraska. Freudenberg was in law practice in Gordon before serving in the Nebraska Attorney General's office.

The Third Judicial District for the County Court consists of portions of Lancaster County.

The vacancy is due to the resignation of Judge Thomas Fox effective January 5, 2017.

Notices

- Notice Of Organization Triple G Redimix, LLC
- Board Of Equalization Proceedings
- Thomas County Commissioners Proceedings
- Thedford School Public Notice
- Contract Work Wanted

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