

Lickings Part of Photo Event In Kansas City

Bridget Licking of With Love Co. Photography, Thedford, and Megan Licking of Flash Photography, Stapleton, were two of 200 winners attending Project Obscura 2021 in Kansas City, Missouri. The event was held June 1 and 2. The event was hosted by H+H Color Lab and Sal Cincotta was a spokesperson, as well as an instructor.

Day one included live shooting with models and instructors. Locations were Union Station and the WWI Memorial that had six "stations" spread out.

Each station had a photographer and models who shared knowledge and tips. After a short introduction, instructors turned photographers loose.

Models were brought in and available to pose, putting what photographers learned into action and they were able to shoot photos for portfolios.

Day two was a conference with instructors from the day before speaking throughout the day.

Topics included creative concepts and sessions for kids, luxury products for wedding clients, luxury boudoir experience, and in-person sales.

Megan Licking has been a photographer professionally for a year and took photos six years as a hobby



COURTESY PHOTO

Megan Licking, left, and Bridget Licking are pictured with speaker and instructor Sal Cincotta at Project Obscura held in Kansas City in June.

"I loved the conference and not anything two Sandhill girls would have expected," Megan said after the conference. "I learned so much, not only through the instructors, but through other photographers who were more than willing to help."

Megan said they were able to meet people from Las Vegas, Michigan, Texas, Wisconsin, and Iowa.

"This was the kind of hands-on experience that I really needed to help me in my business," Megan said.

Bridget Licking opened her studio in September, 2018 in Thedford.

"I learned so much at project Obscura," Bridget said. "We had great instruction on posing, composition and perspective. I loved they had live models and photographers instructing each group at six different locations in and around Union Station. It was an amazing experience that I am thankful to have been able to experience. The new knowledge I came away with will serve me well in advancing my pho-

tography business and people in the area.

New Irrigation Acres Added For 2022

The Upper Loup NRD Board of Directors approved allowing new irrigated acres within the District for 2022.

Approximately 2,500 new acres will be allowed for development throughout the District next year. Each of the five sub-districts has been allotted 500 acres.

Interested landowners must apply for any new irrigated acres on a District application form. The application period is from June 1, 2021 through September 30, 2021. Along with the application form, the landowner needs to submit an aerial photo depicting the new acres as well as a one-time non-refundable administrative fee of \$100.00 per application of 25 acres or less or \$500.00 for appli-

cations over 25 acres.

A minimum score of 15 points on the Upper Loup NRD Irrigated Acre Ranking Sheet is required for an application to be considered for approval. Each application will be ranked according to the following criteria: density of irrigated acres within the vicinity, NRCS soil classification, stream depletion factor, ground water quality, slope, removal of trees and any other criteria deemed relevant by the District.

Acres approved for expansion must be certified with the Upper Loup NRD as well as have a flowmeter installed. For more information or an application, you can visit our website at www.upperloupnrd.org or call the office at 308-645-2250.

Observation Flights Find Fires Fast

Civil Air Patrol Assists Local Fire Departments in Early Detection of Wildfires

Fire season has arrived for the year in Nebraska and local fire chiefs have begun requesting observation flights to detect possible wildfires as soon after lightning strikes as possible.

The Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), the Nebraska Forest Service (NFS) and the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) have a long history of working together in various capacities to prevent and extinguish wildfires.

Last Friday, at the request of local volunteer fire department chiefs, a detection flight discovered three fires in addition to three working fires. The flight crew was able to report the fires to crews on the ground.

"These flights are one of the tools we have to put out fires before they get out of hand," said NEMA Assistant Director Bryan Tuma. "The CAP aircraft and pilots are prepared to respond rapidly when local fire departments need aerial fire detection flights during fire weather and drought conditions. These flights are essential in our efforts to reduce the destruction that can be caused by wildfires."

NEMA, NFS and CAP have a memorandum of understanding to accomplish fire detection missions statewide. The volunteer CAP pilots and observers fly predetermined routes, after lightning storms, to detect possible fire starts, Tuma said. CAP can fly as low as 1,000 feet above ground level, which is beneficial in detecting a fire. The pilot and observers can get GPS readings, orbit a fire and then make contact with volunteer fire departments and state or federal resources on pre-established air-to-ground frequencies to report on active fires.

Fire chiefs in Valentine, Chadron and Crawford requested flights Monday and Seth Peterson, a fire management specialist with NFS served as the observer for the flight as

well as those over the weekend.

"We didn't spot any fires on Monday or Saturday," Peterson said, "but last Friday was a different matter. We located three areas of smoke and provided access routes we could see from the air. We got ground crews to them quickly. Local firefighters were able to knock them down and prevent them from escalating."

Peterson said before the flight, the crew has access to a lightning map that details lightning strikes during thunderstorms. This gives them a look at the activity of the storm and helps them to know where there is potential for a fire start.

"We are looking for smoke in the area of ground strikes," Peterson said. "We stay in radio contact with ground crews so they can respond immediately to any smoking areas we detect. While we were in the area Monday Crawford's Volunteer Fire Department had trucks spread out throughout the district to rapidly respond. The aircrew stays in the area until released by the incident commander."

The requested missions are reimbursed by NEMA according to NEMA Preparedness and Operations Administrator Sean Runge.

"In the Pine Ridge of northwest Nebraska, there are areas that can't be seen from the ground," Runge said. "These flights are our best defense against large fires," Runge said. "We definitely appreciate the resources the Civil Air Patrol brings to our efforts to reduce the size and scope of wildfires in Nebraska."

In addition to the resources of CAP, the Single Engine Air Tanker (SEAT) program and the volunteer fire departments across the state work to keep fires small, Runge said. These efforts can save rural grassland, eastern red cedar and Ponderosa pine forest resources that could eventually disappear or be al-

tered due to the severity of wildland fires.

The NFS publishes the Emergency Assistance for Wildfire Control or Yellowbook in cooperation with NEMA as a description of aviation suppression resources available to the rural fire districts and fire departments in Nebraska. This quick reference for available statewide resources includes information on who to contact for resources including state, federal and private agencies as well as aerial applicators, foam retardant suppliers and deployment procedures for ordering a SEAT.

NEMA and NFS jointly contract the SEAT and manage its deployment to Nebraska during fire season in an effort to provide rapid, efficient support for active wildfire incidents. Local incident commanders can request deployment through the Great Plains Dispatch Center.

The State of Nebraska is also part of the Great Plains Interstate Wildfire Compact that includes the states of Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota and Wyoming and the Province of Saskatchewan in Canada. The compact promotes effective prevention and control of wildfires and allows resource sharing system to assist partner states and provinces in wildfire management activities.

"A prime example of this was the Hubbard Gap Fire in Banner County during August 2020, Tuma said. "Through the compact, South Dakota provided air support to our efforts to get the fire under control. It takes a team effort to fight a fire of that size and in addition to the assistance from South Dakota, local firefighters, the State Fire Marshal and NFS Wildland Incident Response Assistance Team, the SEAT and Nebraska National Guard helicopters worked together to put that fire to rest."

Sandhills Task Force To Hold Workshop

The Sandhills Task Force will be hosting a one-day workshop in Arthur on June 30, 2021 as an introduction to their newest outreach program, Sandhill Stewards. The workshop is free to the public, but a pre-registration is requested in order to allow for a complimentary meal count.

The workshop is designed to explain the Sandhills Task Force's history and positive impact on the Sandhills ecosystem, as well as outlining some of its new goals. A variety of speakers will

also present information related to understanding the environmental impact that Easter Red Cedar encroachment is having on the Sandhills, the basic principles of planned grazing and how successful producers apply the principals on their operation, and how our livestock handling can have positive or negative impacts on cattle production.

Some of the grazing and business-related discussions will tend to be geared toward anyone related to the production

beef industry; however, volunteer fire department personnel and the general public is encouraged to join the discussion on how fire can be used as a tool to control eastern red cedar encroachment in the Sandhills which is scheduled to be presented right after the noon hour.

For a list of speakers, topics, and registration anyone wanting to participate can contact Ty Walker at 308-764-7082 (voice or text) or go to the Sandhills Task Force website at www.sandhillstaskforce.org/ss.

Local Scholarship Recipients Named By NCF

The Nebraska Cattlemen Foundation (NCF) announced during the Nebraska Cattlemen Midyear Meeting in Fremont that it awarded \$69,500 in scholarships to 54 students furthering their education goals in the 2021-2022 academic year.

"The Foundation strongly believes in the importance of a sound education for tomorrow's industry leaders and is pleased to be able to provide this funding to these outstanding students to aid in their academic career," says Mark Jagels, president of the Nebraska Cattlemen Foundation. "Due to the generosity of many donors and the success of our Retail Value Steer Challenge fundraising project, the Foundation was able to offer these scholarships."

Established in 2014, the Nebraska Cattlemen Beef

State Scholarship is the premier Nebraska Cattlemen Foundation scholarship providing a \$10,000 award to an outstanding junior, senior or graduate level Nebraska resident student enrolled in a Nebraska college or university pursuing a beef industry related degree. The 2021 Nebraska Beef State Scholarship was awarded to Malina Lindstrom of Elm Creek. Malina will be a senior at UNL this fall double majoring in Animal Science and Agriculture Communications. Malina is also working on a minor in Beef Industry Scholars and is a member of the Senior Livestock Judging team.

The Nebraska Cattlemen Foundation was proud to have been able to partner with Central Life Sciences this year in supporting Nebraska's future agriculture leaders with Central

Life Sciences Scholarships. Through a rebate program on purchases of Altosid® IGR feed-through fly control, Central Life Sciences provided 4 - \$1,200 scholarships awarded to students pursuing a degree in an agriculture related field of study. The students receiving the scholarships are Matthew Dailey of Thedford, Jais Ford of Cody, Ethan Kreikemeier of West Point and Dalton Kunkee of Lexington.

In addition to the Beef State Scholarship and Central Life Sciences Scholarships, the Foundation awarded 49 additional scholarships local students receiving scholarships were:

Brett Downing - \$1,000 Retail Value Steer Challenge Scholarship
 Emily Martindale - \$1,000 Retail Value Steer Challenge Scholarship