

Neal Lumber changes hands



Neal Lumber Company, Inc., formerly Larsen Hardware and Citizen's State Bank as pictured in the *Pictorial History of the Sandhills*.

MARCIA HORA

A lumber company that has been in the same location for well over 100 years is changing hands.

Tim Neal is announcing the sale of Neal Lumber Co., Inc. to Dave Masek of Purdum, effective February 10, 2023. Neal Lumber's last day of operation will be Thursday, February 9, and the business will be closed Friday, February 10.

Tim and his father, Ken-

neth Neal purchased the lumber company from Sandy Larsen in 1975.

"I've decided that it's time for me to step down and enjoy retirement," Tim said. "I know that Dave will continue to serve our customers and I will be available to help Dave, or you, if the need arises."

Tim said his family thanks everyone in the area for their support and loyalty over the years.

"We are very thankful

and grateful to have had you as our customer," Tim said.

The history of the lumber yard in Thedford dates back to 1887 when lots on which the store is located were platted and surveyed and recorded in the Thomas County records. Charles Barnes was the original owner.

In 1889, William W. and Delia Cowles became the owners, receiving a warranty deed from the General Land Office during



After Sandy Larsen took over the Doyle and McMillan Lumber Yard in Thedford, he tore out the old storage sheds and built new storage for lumber and supplies as this picture shows in the *Pictorial History of the Sandhills*. The Larsens operated the business for 40 years and in 1975 sold it to Tim and Kenneth Neal, who formed Neal Lumber Company, Inc.

the administration of President Benjamin Harrison. Mr. Cowles had a printing press and published a newspaper.

During the next few years, owners of the property were M.D. Lyons, followed by Burton and Cyrus Wroughton and later by J.F. Spiker. In the early 1900's, Jim McMillan and John Doyle acquired the property and opened a general store and lumber yard; the store with groceries and general merchandise was in the main building.

Jim McMillan built a

small addition to the west of the main building and operated a bank. This was in addition to running the lumber yard, which he and John Doyle maintained for many years. They sold everything the homesteaders needed including food, clothing, fence posts, wire, windmills, tanks, horse-drawn mowers, lumber and building supplies. The Doyle and McMillan partnership continued for over 50 years.

In 1935, Sanford and Kathryn Larsen purchased the business and

operated it for 40 years. In 1975, Tim and Kenneth Neal bought it and formed the Neal Lumber Company, Inc.

The original store building is still standing and is being used although it has been remodeled and added to several times.

The very first lumber yard in the Sandhills area was started by Homer Gage at Dunning before the railroad came through the country. He had supplies shipped into Kearney and hauled them over the hills to Dunning by horse and wagon.

Upper Loup NRD offers trees, shrubs to individuals

Is winter weather making you consider adding or renovating shelterbelts on your property?

There are numerous benefits of windbreaks. They provide protection for livestock, crops, wildlife, and your home. The Upper Loup Natural Resources District continues to sell and plant trees and shrubs to any individuals within the District. The NRD also has drip

line irrigation available which is beneficial for growth and the longevity of young plants especially in drought conditions.

Resources Technician, Justin Sprague, will assist you with deciding which tree species will work best for your needs, drafting planting plans, and assist in filling out cost-share forms.

Anyone wishing to plant this spring should contact

our office as soon as possible to ensure cost-share availability. The Upper Loup NRD cost-shares on hand plant orders of at least 100 trees or shrubs, machine planted orders of at least 200 trees/shrubs, and drip line irrigation. Cost-share funds are distributed on first come first serve basis. Contact our office at 308-645-2250 to start your tree plans.

Windbreak Classes For Livestock And Acreage Savings

Are the trees in your windbreaks dying out? Do you need to replant parts of your windbreak, or add sections to it to help improve protection for your livestock or acreage? Now is the time to improve and renovate these important natural resources to save on livestock maintenance and acreage utility costs before conditions become worse! Join Nebraska Extension across West Central Nebraska this spring and attend the "Windbreaks for Livestock and Acreage Savings" class.

Randy Saner, Nebraska Extension Livestock Educator, and David Lott, Nebraska Extension Horticulture Educator, will be teaching this class across the region to help ranchers, farmers, and acreage owners understand the importance of windbreaks as an important tool to help conserve input costs related to livestock operations and utility bills. An emphasis on correct windbreak design, tree and shrub replacement plans, control for eastern red cedar beyond the windbreak, feed and



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input savings on livestock operations, utility expense saving, and wildlife habitat enhancement.

Please register through the link at https://go.unl.edu/windbreaks_for_livestock to help ensure all participants receive copies of educational handouts. The nominal registration fee will be payable on the evening of each program. Below are

the dates, locations, and times for each of the classes.

February 9, Wilson Public Library, Cozad, 6:30 p.m. Central Time

February 16, Upper Loup NRD, Thedford, 6:30 p.m. Central Time

March 22, Lincoln County Extension, North Platte, 6:30 p.m. Central Time

April 8, Chase County

Extension, Imperial, 6:30 p.m. Mountain Time*

April 11, Mid Plains Community College, Ogallala, 6:30 p.m. Mountain*

If anyone has any questions about the "Windbreaks for Livestock and Acreage Savings" class, please contact Randy Saner or David Lott at the Nebraska Extension Office in North Platte by calling (308) 532-2683.

Top Spellers



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Champion of Champions final round, l-r: third place, Mattee Zutavern; second place, Holt Jensen; and first place - Grand Champion, Paisley Zutavern.

The Sandhills Public School spelling bee was held Wednesday, February 1, 2023 at Sandhills Elementary School in Halsey.

The spelling bee was for students in grades second through eighth.

Paisley Zutavern a seventh grader was crowned the grand champion speller. Holt Jensen, a

fifth grader was the runner-up and Mattee Zutavern, also a seventh grader, was the third place speller.

The pictures of all the class winners can be found inside this issue on Page 8.

Congratulations to all the spellers on their accomplishments in competing in this event.

Thedford Area Community Foundation awards grants

The Thedford Area Community Foundation Fund Advisory Committee met Wednesday, January 25, to review grant requests for the period through July 1, 2023.

The committee reviewed and discussed six separate grant requests. After significant sharing of opinions and thoughts, the committee elected to award grants to the following organizations and projects:

- Thomas County Fair Board and Kaycee Hoffman for the construction of three grain bin shades with cement floors near the old concession stand at the fairgrounds.

- Halsey Rural Fire District for purchase and installation of a remote controlled monitor for a fire truck.

- Thedford Golf Association for installation of new sprinkler systems on the Thedford Golf Course fairways to complete the long term project.

The TACFF wishes to thank all our donors for their contributions that make these grants possible and to encourage qualifying organizations to continue to apply for funds. The larger we grow our endowment, the more we have on an annual basis to grant to projects in our area.