

VanDiest Celebrated

Story & Pictures By
Linda Teahon

A retirement celebration was held Sunday afternoon, August 6th at The Sandhills Heritage Museum in Dunning honoring Marlene VanDiest. Many friends came to congratulate and wish her well.

After 44 years of creating the highly collectable Sandhills Pottery, 87-year-old Marlene has decided to devote her time to gardening, painting, volunteering in the community and her local church family.

Dixie Hoffman read the proclamation, sent by Governor Jim Pillen, making Marlene an Admiral in The Great Navy of the State of Nebraska. A cake, with the iconic windmill design, was enjoyed by all attending.

Those attending brought their favorite pieces of Sandhills Pottery for Marlene to sign one more time.

Sadly, there will be no more Sandhills Pottery.



A large group was on hand at the Sandhills Heritage Museum in Dunning to honor Marlene VanDiest, second from the left holding plaque. She has decided to retire from pottery making after 44 years.



Marlene VanDiest signing pottery for those in attendance at her celebration in Dunning.

Thedford Daycare Center Receives ARPA Funding

More working families with young children will be able to access high-quality child care due to funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

Nebraska Children and Families Foundation's Communities for Kids initiative, through partnership with the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Children and Family Services received funding through Nebraska Legislative Bill 1014. It appropriates funds allocated to the State of Nebraska from the federal Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund pursuant to the federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, 42 U.S.C. 802.

Sandhills Area Child-

care in Thomas County was one of twelve contracts to Nebraska communities to receive funding to increase child care offerings through new programs or expansion of current providers.

The proposed center in Thedford will have a capacity of 24 and is in the process of finding contractors to remodel the facility that will be in the restaurant/bar area of the Cowpoke located on Highway 2. The newly established "Cowpoke Emporium" is housed in the front of the building.

The facility is taking applications for a director and there are job openings. Resumes may be sent to sandhillsarea childcare@gmail.com

In partnership with the

Communities for Kids (C4K) initiative, the Thedford/Thomas County Community for Kids Core Team is collecting child care data with the mission to bring awareness to the importance of high-quality early child care and education programs. Your assistance is needed to identify the needs of our community's parents, employers, and early child care and education programs. Once the survey results are analyzed, solutions will be identified to meet community issues and needs.

Be sure to follow what's going on by checking out the Sandhills Area Child-care Facebook page and take the survey.



Dixie Hoffman, left, reading the proclamation by Governor Jim Pillen, making Marlene an Admiral in The Great Navy of the State of Nebraska. Also pictured with Marlene, second from left are: Vickie Webb holding the cake made especially for Marlene and Marlene's daughter, Shari Haumann looking on with pride for her mother.

Dove hunting season opens Sept. 1 in Nebraska

With the annual dove season opener on Sept. 1, the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission has some reminders for hunters, as well as recommendations for areas to hunt.

Doves are abundant statewide and, with generous bag limits, provide excellent wing-shooting opportunities. Doves may be hunted statewide Sept. 1 - Oct. 30, 2023, with daily bag and possession limits of 15 and 45, respectively. Bag and possession limits are for mourning, white-winged and Eurasian collared-doves in aggregate. Shooting hours are 30 minutes before sunrise until sunset.

Sunflowers, millet and wheat, which generally provide good food sources and dove hunting opportunities, were planted on numerous wildlife management areas earlier this year. For a listing of these "dove fields," view the 2023 Dove Hunting Fact Sheet at OutdoorNebraska.gov on the "Other small game" webpage.

Drought conditions are affecting many areas of the state; hunters should follow proper safety practices to prevent wildfires. Preseason scouting is

recommended due to changing habitat conditions. All publicly accessible sites throughout the state - including federal, state, conservation partner and private lands enrolled in Game and Parks' Open Fields and Waters Program - are displayed in the 2023-2024 Public Access Atlas.

Private lands throughout the state also provide excellent hunting opportunities for doves. Hunters are reminded they must obtain landowner permission prior to accessing private lands in Nebraska.

Nebraska residents 16 years and older and all nonresidents are required to have a valid Nebraska small game hunting permit, habitat stamp and Harvest Information Program number. Federal and state migratory bird hunting stamps, or duck stamps, are not required to hunt doves.

Shotgun plugs restricting it to no more than three shells also are required.

Hunters who harvest a dove with a leg band should contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at reportband.gov. In addition, randomly selected hunters will be asked to save one wing from each dove during the first week of the season and mail them postage-free to the Service.

Eurasian collared-doves may be harvested between Oct. 31, 2023, and Aug. 31, 2024, with bag and possession limits of 15 and 45, respectively.

Find the Public Access Atlas and summaries of hunting regulations in the Small Game and Waterfowl Guide at OutdoorNebraska.gov. Purchase permits or register for your free HIP number at GoOutdoorsNE.com or at any Game and Parks office.

Support The Knight Athletes!

They will be in action

Thursday, August 24 with

Volleyball in Thedford, 2:30 p.m.;

Football in Dunning 7:30 p.m.; &

Cross Country In Burwell, 10:00 a.m.