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INDEPENDENT

Wednesday
December 2, 2020

VOL. 124 NO. 49

Seward, Nebraska
sewardindependent.com

2020-2021
SEWARD COUNTY

Winter Sports Preview

SEWARD	BASKETBALL
MILFORD	WRESTLING
MALCOLM	BOWLING
CENTENNIAL	

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INDEPENDENT Times

Christmas returns, bringing cheer to Seward

Children await Santa’s arrival, Lighted Evening Reverse Christmas Parade extends hours to meet demand, Magical Lights put on a show as the county shifts into the holiday season



Two visitors walk up to Santa’s door with their Christmas wishes during the Nov. 28 morning festivities at Santa’s House.



Santa and Mrs. Claus ride on the back of a fire engine down Seward Street on Nov. 28. The two rode to Santa’s House, where they wished children a merry Christmas and heard wish lists through a plexiglass panel.



Mrs. Claus gives Santa a look before the Lighted Evening Reverse Christmas Parade on Nov. 28 in the parking lot east of Seward High School.



Cars move through the Lighted Evening Reverse Christmas Parade on Nov. 28 outside of Seward High School.



Timed Christmas lights displays flicker at those driving by during the Magical Lights of Seward event.

CPS hires new superintendent

Centennial Public School interviewed five superintendent candidates Nov. 21 and made an offer to Seth Ford that evening, which was accepted.

Ford is currently the 7-12 principal and activities director at South Platte Public Schools in Big Springs. He has been serving in that capacity since 2015. Ford will officially begin his duties at Centennial on July 1, 2021.

Motorcyclist dies in accident

At approximately 5:55 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 25, the Seward County Sheriff’s Office was dispatched to a two-vehicle accident on Highway 6 west of 266th road.

The preliminary investigation shows that a 2009 Harley-Davidson motorcycle was traveling westbound on Hwy 6 when it collided with the rear of a 2005 Pontiac G6 that was disabled on the westbound shoulder. The Pontiac G6 was

unoccupied at the time of the accident.

The driver of the motorcycle and sole occupant, Luke M. Anderson, 20, of Lincoln was pronounced deceased on scene. Alcohol is not believed to be a factor and Anderson was wearing a helmet.

The crash is being investigated by the Seward County Sheriff’s Office. Milford Fire and Rescue responded.

Local health officials share hope, concern

by Brady Oltmans
editor@sewardindependent.com

Recent silver linings have come accompanied by simple math for local health officials.

Hospitalizations have leveled, meetings for vaccine distribution in the Four Corners Health District have been scheduled and more tests administered have lowered documented transition rates – all encouraging signs.

However, hospital beds used by COVID-19 inpatients are anticipated to rise again before a drop of equal amount. Simply put – it’s going to get worse.

“As we study hospital capacity, we think we’ll have new records as

we get closer to Christmas,” Memorial Health Care Systems CEO Roger Reamer said. “That’s a math thing.”

Reamer broke down those numbers during the Nov. 25 Four Corners briefing.

Health officials anticipate 4% of COVID-positive cases need some level of hospitalization. So if a county reports 200 new cases in a week, that’s eight people from that county who require hospitalized treatment.

Four Corners Executive Director Laura McDougall said the district averaged 421 new cases per week throughout November.

McDougall said the state registered an all-

time high of 987 people were hospitalized with COVID-19. Fifty residents in the Four Corners district were hospitalized in November, she said.

Of the district’s 27 COVID-related deaths, she said, nine came in November, as of the briefing. McDougall also said health officials were waiting on death certificates for a list of people who died with coronavirus. A death certificate would confirm if COVID-19 was a contributing factor.

In other numbers, Reamers pointed to emergency room identifications. He said roughly 48% of those who test positive for coronavirus through the emergency

room are discharged home. Roughly 18% stay at MHCS for treatment while 33% are transferred to another hospital.

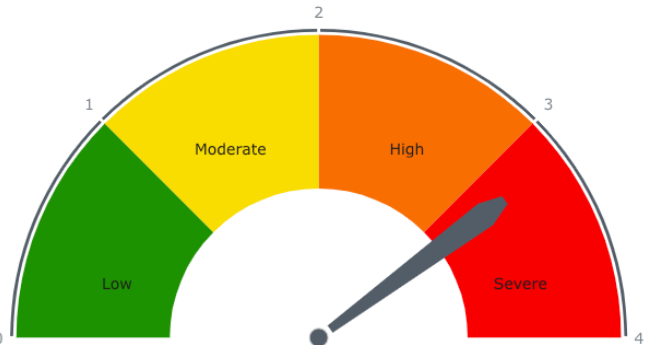
Reamer said MHCS is equipped and prepared to handle infectious disease, as it installed a new infectious disease plan in the spring. Thomas Barnett of Four Corners Health Department said personal protective equipment throughout the district is steady but that could change abruptly, so he urged reduced use when able.

(continued on 2)



Four Corners

(continued from 1)
McDougall, when asked about re-infection, said there was one case in the district to which it could apply. From Four Corners data, one person showed COVID symptoms after being exposed to two different events more than three months apart. The health district cannot confirm that as a re-infection since that would require more intensive information and testing administered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Reamer said there's hope for an outpatient infusion for qualifying



high-risk people. That would be an hour-long infusion with another hour of monitoring. That's an encouraging sign, he said, to help hospitals limit emergency room visits. Local health officials and hospitals are scheduled to meet in early December about storage and distribution of a coronavirus vaccine throughout the district. MHCS is signed up to receive vaccines. Reamer said he's anticipating they'll be close to a Phase 1-B of the vaccine available in the district by Christmas. "That starts the plan for getting the community vaccinated," he said.

County remains in the risk dial's red

Seward County remained in the "severe" (red) range in the Nov. 27 updated Four Corners Health Department risk dial. The district's risk level dropped slightly from 3.25 to 3.19. Over the Thanksgiving holiday, Seward County accounted for 23 new cases of coronavirus. That raises the county's total to 1,260. Seward County residents accounted for 120 new cases from Nov. 21-27. Total cumulative COVID-19 cases in the district were 3,258 as of Nov. 27.

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Our Remembrance Service has been cancelled this year due to the pandemic. If you've lost a loved one this year, we invite you to stop by the funeral home to pick up a Christmas ornament in memory of your loved one Dec. 1st through Dec. 15th, between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

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Health directors call for action

by Brady Oltmans
editor@sewardindependent.com

Coinciding with Public Health Thank You Day on Nov. 23, Nebraska's local health department directors hosted a virtual press conference regarding the coronavirus.

Among those on the call was Four Corners Health Department Executive Director Laura McDougall. During the hour-long conference came pleas for urgent action from community members and state government officials to slow the spread of coronavirus. Gov. Pete Ricketts, who's repeatedly rejected any statewide face-covering mandate, once again denied cries from doctors, public health officials and infectious disease experts. Instead of implementing any sort of mask mandate, Ricketts instead instructed the state capitol be reflected in blue light to show thanks for public health workers.

Dr. James Lawler, an infectious disease expert at University of Nebraska Medical Center, said a statewide mask mandate would increase compliance similar to seat belts. The health directors and experts said they've continually tried making education on face coverings available and community transmission of the virus has hastened. Some cited instances throughout the country where mask mandates statistically slowed the community spread of coronavirus compared to those com-

munities that did not implement such ordinances. Since that conference, multiple Nebraska communities have implemented mask mandates, including David City and York, both in the Four Corners Health District. The Seward City Council heard a citizen request for a mask mandate in October. No one, aside from the community member who requested it, spoke in favor of such action, and two members of the council voiced their concerns with issuing such an ordinance.

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A healthy community takes us all!
Shop safely this holiday season.

We asked you

Last week's poll question: If you could take one vacation right now where would you go?

- Warm beach: 15.
- Ancient city: 1.
- Mountain town: 4.
- Quiet campground: 1.

Now we want to know

This week's poll question: Are you altering your Christmas shopping approach at all this year?

- Yes.
- No.

Vote online at www.sewardindependent.com and share the question on Facebook, then check next week's edition of The Seward County Independent for results.

American Life in Poetry

by Ted Kooser
U.S. Poet Laureate, 2004-2006

The following poem by Susanna Brougham appeared in the Spring 2020 issue of Beloit Poetry Journal, one of our country's successful older literary journals. This is as fine a poem about "the staff of life" as I've ever seen. Is that a pun in the last line? I'll leave that to you. Brougham lives in Massachusetts.

Translation

Months later, my father and I
discovered his mother's last word—
deep in the downstairs freezer,
one loaf of dark rye.

Its thaw slowed the hours.

I could not bear
the thought of eating it.
Then the ice subsided. The bread
was firm, fragrant, forgiving.

My father got the knife,
the butter. The slices
held. Together we ate
that Finnish silence.

We do not accept unsolicited manuscripts. American Life in Poetry is made possible by The Poetry Foundation (www.poetryfoundation.org), publisher of Poetry magazine. It is also supported by the Department of English at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln. Poem copyright ©2020 by Susanna Brougham, "Translation," from Beloit Poetry Journal, (Vol. 70, No. 1, 2020). Poem reprinted by permission of Susanna Brougham and the publisher. Introduction copyright ©2020 by The Poetry Foundation. The introduction's author, Ted Kooser, served as United States Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress from 2004-2006.

1st Amendment, U.S. Constitution

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What I'm thankful for this year and beyond

by Stephanie Croston
scroston@sewardindependent.com

So, how was your Thanksgiving? Not the same as usual, right? Yeah, me too.

I've been thinking about Thanksgiving and things I'm thankful for (besides the traditional family, friends, health, my job, my church, etc.). Since I didn't get to share them before the holiday, I thought I'd take the time to do so now. You may disagree with some – that's OK.

Believe it or not, I'm thankful for the coronavirus. I'm not thankful for having to wear a mask or stay six feet from everyone I meet. But I am thankful that the virus made us all stop and evaluate what's truly important in our lives. I think we've all tried to improve connections with our families and friends since we don't know if it'll be the last time we get to see them.

I'm thankful for the scientists and researchers who have spent countless hours working to develop a vaccine for the virus. Without their tireless efforts, we'd still be wallowing in the question of when/if a vaccine would be ready.



Stephanie Croston
sports editor

While we still don't know the long-term effects of the new vaccines, at least we know they exist and we can consider that the light at the end of the tunnel.

I'm thankful for health departments that are probably really, really tired of talking about the virus, how cases are going up, that we need to wash our hands, wear masks, stay socially distant. No one likes the decisions they've had to make, but they make them anyway, knowing they're for the good of the people living in their coverage area.

I'm thankful for our readers and advertisers who have stuck with us through these unprecedented times. Without you, this newspaper and my job wouldn't exist. I know we've written a lot about the virus. I don't know how much you've read, but you're probably as tired of reading/hearing about it as I am.

In looking to the holiday shopping season, I'm thankful for local shops. I know it's easy to go online or stop at a big box store to find what you want to get for someone for Christmas. But take time to look in your local stores. Wander through their inventory – you might find something even more perfect.

Plus, by spending your money in your home town or county, you're keeping those dollars local, supporting your neighbor

and saving the environment. Because you don't have to drive as far, you save gas and limit those nasty carbon emissions we hear about on TV. And you don't have to deal with the really long lines in the bigger stores. Just saying.

As the sports editor, I'm thankful we got through the high school fall season with few cancellations because of the virus. All five sports had their postseasons and crowned their champions.

With high school basketball and wrestling scheduled to start this week, I'm hoping we'll be as successful. Since both events are indoors, we'll have to be more careful. Many schools are limiting fans to family only, but there are online options to watch your favorite team. Maybe that's not your favorite way to watch, but at least you can watch, right?

So as we start the winter season, let's be patient and understanding with each other. We're all frustrated by the virus. We want it to just go away. But have some fun with your mask anyway. Decorate it for Christmas or Hanukkah or Kwanzaa or whatever holiday you celebrate. Draw a smile on it so you don't have to smile for real. Bedazzle it – that would be awesome.

Happy Christmas season, everyone.

Express gratitude this holiday season

by Gov. Pete Ricketts

It's fitting to set aside time each year to express gratitude to God and to one another for the many blessings we enjoy.

In seasons of peace and plenty, as well as in times of war and loss, Americans have faithfully carried on Thanksgiving traditions. During challenging times, it's even more important to remember the abundant blessings we enjoy as Americans.

In 2001, President George W. Bush issued a Thanksgiving proclamation a couple months after the tragic Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. The sentiments he expressed ring true this year in light of the coronavirus pandemic.

"During these extraordinary times, we find particular assurance from our Thanksgiving tradition, which reminds us that we, as a people and individually, always have reason to hope and trust in God, despite great adversity. ... In thankfulness and humility, we acknowledge, especially now, our dependence on One greater than ourselves.

"On this day of Thanksgiving, let our thanksgiving be revealed in the compassionate support we render to our fellow citizens who are grieving unimaginable loss; and let us reach out with care to those in need of food, shelter, and words of hope. May Almighty God, who is our refuge and our strength in this time of trouble, watch over our homeland, protect us, and grant us patience, resolve, and wisdom in all that is to come."

As we finish 2020, let's draw strength from the example of previous American generations who have overcome war, eco-



Gov. Pete Ricketts

nomie depression, disaster, and even pandemics. Let's use our Nebraska grit to slow the spread of the virus as we get through this together.

At Thanksgiving time, we usually join with friends and family for a large meal of turkey, cranberry sauce, and pumpkin pie. This year, Nebraskans are holding smaller gatherings—or getting together virtually—to slow the spread of coronavirus. Even if you're unable to gather with family this holiday, find a way to stay connected by phone or video. It's important for us to support one another as we cope with the disruptions of the coronavirus.

Although Thanksgiving in 2020 may look different for you, there are still plenty of reasons to give thanks. Here are a few that come to mind for me. As Americans, we're blessed to live in a time of relative peace. Even with the disruptions of the coronavirus, we enjoy prosperity that would have been unimaginable to the Pilgrims who landed at Plymouth Rock.

Our Constitution allows for us to exercise many freedoms: religious freedom, freedom of the press, and the freedom of speech. Many military servicemen and women put their lives on the line every day to protect our Republic and these freedoms. We are grateful for their service and sacrifice.

Our free country and free enterprise system have given us great prosperity. In the midst of this pandemic, we're blessed with technology to connect with loved ones living far away. We're blessed to have excellent health care. We're blessed to live in a scientifically advanced country with the capability of rapidly developing vaccines.

Despite the pandemic, Nebraska is expected to experience a bountiful harvest this year. Nebraska's corn growers are forecasted to bring in a record of 1.82 billion bushels. Soybean production is up 5% from last

year to about 300 million bushels. The sorghum crop of 12.4 million bushels is also projected to exceed last year's numbers. Dry edible bean production is forecasted to be up 85% from 2019, and sugar beet production is expected to be 38% higher than last year.

This year, we are especially grateful for our healthcare workers. Nurses, doctors, hospital staff, and public health leaders are on the front lines working long hours to help Nebraskans stay healthy during the pandemic. As we enter this holiday season, our hospitals are counting on Nebraskans to be smart in their social interactions to help slow the spread of coronavirus.

We all need to do our part to help them by wearing a mask, washing our hands often, and watching our distance. Nebraskans are hard-working folks, and we don't like to be on the sidelines. It's critically important, however, for everyone to stay home when sick to slow the spread of the coronavirus.

Our local health departments tell us the virus is spreading at informal gatherings, usually in people's homes. As you think about celebrating the holidays, please keep gatherings small and avoid the "Three Cs," even in private settings. Avoid crowded places where you can't practice social distancing. Avoid close contacts where you're within six feet of someone for 15 minutes or more. And avoid confined spaces with poor ventilation.

Using these tools is the best way to support our healthcare workers and protect our hospitals.

If you have questions about Nebraska's coronavirus response, please email pete.ricketts@nebraska.gov or call (402) 471-2244. I am grateful to the Nebraskans who were working this Thanksgiving weekend to help folks stay healthy in hospitals and nursing homes.

— STAFF DIRECTORY —
Kevin L. Zadina, publisher • kevinzadina@sewardindependent.com
Brady Oltmans, managing editor • editor@sewardindependent.com
Stephanie Croston, assistant editor/sports editor • scroston@sewardindependent.com
Hope Moural, reporter • hope@sewardindependent.com
Tammy Leff, business mgr/bookkeeping • tammyleff@sewardindependent.com
circulation • subscriptions@sewardindependent.com
Monique Peetz, office assistant • monique@sewardindependent.com
legal notices • office@sewardindependent.com
Nichole Javorsky, advertising • nichole@sewardindependent.com
Dave Fiala, graphic artist • dave@sewardindependent.com
Hailey Behlen, graphic artist • hailey@sewardindependent.com

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Obituaries

Bobby E. “Bob” Tompkins

Nov. 12, 1936 – Nov. 29, 2020

Bobby E. “Bob” Tompkins was born Nov. 12, 1936, to William Henry Tompkins and Martha Irene Tompkins (Bentley) in Randlett, Oklahoma. He spent most of his childhood and early adult years in Oklahoma City.

After working his way through college and graduating from Oklahoma City University with a business/marketing degree, he moved to Amarillo, Texas. His career would take him back to Oklahoma, to Kansas, to Nebraska, back to Oklahoma, to New Mexico and back to Oklahoma. While he had a tremendous work ethic, his definition of success was not rooted in what he did to earn a living. His measures of success, and his passion, revolved around God and his family (and, maybe Oklahoma Sooners football).

Bob married Sue Tompkins (Parks) on June 1, 1961. They were married for almost 60 years and in their home one could always find some reference to the verse they claimed and lived by (Isaiah 40:31). Together they had four children. No matter what new town life took them to, they immediately sought a new church home where they could work and serve the Lord. Bob worked faithfully in each church and often served as a deacon and/or as an adult Sunday school teacher. Bob said recently “I gave all four of my kids a drug problem, I drug them to church.” And he did. As a result, each of his children has a strong faith rooted in Jesus Christ. Bob was a fully engaged father, rarely missing any event in his children’s lives. As children (and as adults) he was always their “go-to” for advice. He prayed for them daily, celebrated their successes and stood by them when they walked in valleys. Always loving, teaching, encouraging and supporting.

Preceding Bob in death are his parents; his sister, (Billie Sue); his sister-in-law, (Jane Wisniewski); and his son, Robert Scott Tompkins (who we are sure met him at Heaven’s gate and introduced him to Jesus). He is survived by his wife, Sue Tompkins (Anadarko, Oklahoma); his sister-in-law and brother-in-law, Billie Jo and JD Hadley (Edmond, Oklahoma); his sister-in-law, Daisy Gibson (Edmond); his daughter and son-in-law, Bob and Mitzi Vavrick (Lake in the Hills, Illinois); his daughter and son-in-law, Chris and Nancy Allen (Gracemont, Oklahoma); his son and daughter-in-law, Steve and Julie Tompkins (Killeen, Texas); and seven grandchildren.

Isaiah 40:31 “But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint.”

Respecting COVID-19 Guidelines, graveside services will be private. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions are suggested to a Parkinson’s Disease charity of the donor’s choice or to the First Baptist Church of Anadarko.



Richard W. Hershberger

April 22, 1935 – Nov. 10, 2020

Richard Warren Hershberger was born in Milford on April 22, 1935, to Vernon and Lela (Eicher) Hershberger and passed away Nov. 10, 2020, in Lincoln. Dick attended and graduated from Milford High School in 1954 and graduated from Southeast Community College, Milford, in 1958. While in high school, Dick loved and participated in sports.

Dick and Carol (Hagemoser) were joined in marriage on Aug. 14, 1957, in Seward at the E.U.B. Church. To this union were born a son, Ron J. and a daughter, Darci Lynne.

Dick enlisted into the Seward Army National Guard in 1953 and served until 1959.

He worked in Lincoln as a journeyman electrician for Action Electric from 1958 until August 1972 when Phil Wurst invited him to join him in the insurance business. He truly enjoyed working with his clients and was in the business for 24 years until his health forced him to retire in 1996.

Dick was a big Husker and Seward High School fan and loved attending his grandchildren’s sporting events and musicals. His grandchildren and great-grandchildren were the light of his life.

Throughout his life, Dick enjoyed serving his church in many capacities. It brought him much joy to join his fellow Christians in singing praises to His Lord and Savior.

Dick is preceded in death by his parents; parents-in-law Paul and Fern Hagemoser; brother-in-law, Dick Hagemoser; and sister-in law, Mary J. Hershberger. His brother-in-law, Boyd Gabel, followed him in death on the same day.

Dick is survived by his wife, Carol, of Seward; son, Ron and wife Christine, Superior; daughter, Darci and husband Kurt, Norfolk; five grandchildren, Ann (Moises) Diaz, Paris, France, Jennifer (Sam) Kruvand, Columbia, Missouri, Brad (Jenna) Wittler, Omaha, Katherine (Micah) Hamik, Lincoln, and Ryan Wittler, Omaha; two great-grandchildren, Asher Diaz and Calum Wittler; sisters, Ann (Don) Danekas, Milford, and Kathy (Don) Barth, Beaver Crossing; brother, Doug (Mary L.) Hershberger, Elwood; sisters-in-law, Bonnie Hagemoser, Seward, and Molly Gabel, Seward; brother-in-law, Wayne (Marilyn) Hagemoser, Ames, Iowa; numerous nieces, nephews, cousins and a host of friends.

Visitation is 1 to 7 p.m. Friday, Dec. 4, at Zabka-Perdue Funeral Home in Seward. The family will not be present. A private family service is at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 5. Those who wish to view the service may go to Web link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89007793460?pwd=a1hGd-2dGSytrQVpLYtElbzhoVjkzUT09>. Dial-in number 1-346-248-7799 US.

Memorial contributions are suggested to the Hershberger family for future designations or the donor’s choice. Condolences may be left for the family at www.zabkafuneralhome.com.



David R. Speer

Aug. 14, 1954 – Nov. 23, 2020

David Randall Speer was born Aug. 14, 1954, in Franklin, Indiana, and died Nov. 23, 2020, at Harbor Hospice, Houston, Texas. David was a 1972 graduate of Howe Military School in Howe, Indiana, and a 1976 graduate of Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, with a BS in microbiology.

He worked as a clinical and research microbiologist for Huntington Labs and then joined the Marketing and Technical Sales Department at Vestal Lab and Betz companies prior to their merger with Unilever Labs. He was the youngest manager in the history of the Vestal company and managed the team that formulated the first hand disinfectant sanitizer with EPA registration.

David returned to school to pursue his love of medicine and in 1998 graduated summa cum laude from the University of North Florida with a BS in nursing and in 2002 graduated from the University of Florida with a MS in nursing. He was employed as an intensivist nurse practitioner at the University of Florida at Shands Hospital in Jacksonville, Florida, before returning to Indiana in 2008. He was employed at St. Vincent Seton Specialty Hospital and later at Johnson Memorial Hospital in Franklin, where he was born.

David was a life-timer learner and was enrolled in a second masters program at the University of Texas before becoming ill in 2018. He was an avid reader of ancient history, world religions, science fiction and military history and loved to travel. He was a member of the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners, the American Association of Critical Care Nurses, the American Society of Microbiology and was recognized for achievements by Phi Kappa Phi, National Academic Honor Society, Sigma Theta Tau and National Nursing Honor Society.

He is survived by his wife of four years, Margie Fougeron, Richmond, Texas; and step-daughter and family, Melissa and Matt Bueninck, and Ellie and Oliver of Houston, Texas. Known to his family as Randy or DR, he is survived by his sister, Sandy Kirts Cantrell, Columbus, Indiana; two nieces and their families, Stephanie (Randy) Johnson, Josh and Jordan, Columbus, and Shannon (Sam) Hickey, Caleb, Connor and Corban, Morgantown, Indiana; father-in-law, Gene Fougeron, Seward; sister-in-law, Donna (Larry) Heyen, Pleasant Dale; brothers-in-law, Ken (Sherry), Lincoln, and Steve (Marcy) Fougeron, Milford, and a host of nieces and nephews and friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Edgar and Lola (Perry) Speer; mother-in-law, Evelyn Fougeron; and brother-in-law, Wally Cantrell.

A celebration of life will be at a later date in Indianapolis with burial in the Pleasant Dale Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions are suggested to The Rostomily Glioblastoma Research Lab, Houston Methodist Hospital Foundation, PO Box 4384, Houston, TX 77210.



Grace E. Williams

Oct. 3, 1927 – Nov. 21, 2020

Grace Emma Williams of Lincoln was born Oct. 3, 1927, to Julius F. and Erna (Sternberg) Buell in Gresham. She attended Gresham High School, graduating in 1945. On June 24, 1950, Grace was united in marriage to Philip R. Williams at St. Mary’s Cathedral in Lincoln. She worked as a secretary for Hixson & Associates. In her free time, she enjoyed baking pies, gardening, games and puzzles. She was a history buff, liked old movies and was an avid Husker football fan.

Grace passed away Nov. 21, 2020, in Lincoln, at the age of 93 years, 1 month and 18 days. She is survived by her children, John Barry (Diane) Williams, Jacksonville, Florida, Lisa Marie (Gary) Mills, Panama City Beach, Florida, Bradley D. Williams, Lincoln, and Renee M. (Jerry) Shay, Lincoln; grandchildren, Rachel (Jacob) Holman, Bryan Mills, Laura (Logan) Cosby, Erin (Scott) Gropp, Joshua Williams and Sarah Shay; great-grandchildren, Hazel Holman, Aster Holman, Cecelia Holman, Jax Gropp, Amelia Gropp, Ava Gropp, Brielle Mills, Emmy Cosby and Xavier Williams.

Grace was preceded in death by her parents, Julius and Erna Buell; husband, Philip Williams; brothers and sisters-in-law, Herbert and Beulah Buell, Cy and Alice Buell, brother, Hugo Buell; sister and brother-in-law, Hannah and Delmer Richters; and sister, Florence Buell.

A Funeral Mass was Nov. 30 with burial at the Cedar Lawn Cemetery in Gresham. Memorial contributions are suggested to the Gresham Community Center or the donor’s choice. Condolences may be left for the family at www.volzkefuneralhome.com.



John E. Friesen

April 8, 1932 – Nov. 26, 2020

John E. Friesen, age 88, of York died Thursday, Nov. 26, 2020, at Henderson. He was born April 8, 1932, to Jacob and Marie (Thieszen) Friesen in rural Hamilton County. John graduated from Henderson High School in 1950. On Dec. 28, 1955, John was united in marriage to Lela F. Friesen at Henderson. On Oct. 27, 1989, John was united in marriage to Nancy Rice Smith at Waco United Methodist Church.

John was a partner at Hiebner & Friesen Construction and Carpentry in Henderson. He was a member of Henderson Chamber of Commerce, Henderson Fire Department/EMT and Henderson City Council. John enjoyed wood carving, crafts, canning pickles and baking zwieback. He loved his grandchildren and his whole family.

He is survived by his wife, Nancy of York; sons, Gene Friesen of Hastings and Kevin (Lisa) Friesen of Henderson; step-son, Rodney Smith of Waco; stepdaughters, Sherri (Rob) Rohren of Colorado Springs, Colorado, and Jolene Eikenhorst of York; grandchildren, Andrew Friesen, Jonathan Friesen, Rachel (Nick) Theis, Ryan (Kelsey) Rohren, Rebecca (Josh) Felts, Reid (Melissa) Rohren, Erica Tobey, Darren Tobey, Kendra (Kyle) Heidbrink and Kesia Eikenhorst; 12 great-grandchildren, Samuel, Weston, Charlotte, Rigley, Chace, Clara, MaKinley, Kyan, Kanon, Kreyson, Keely and Kirby. He is also survived by his brothers Gerald (Vernelle) Friesen of Henderson and Elroy (Nancy) Friesen of Greensboro, North Carolina.

He was preceded in death by his parents; wife; and sister, Helen Siebert.

A private family service is planned. Memorial contributions are suggested to Bethesda Lives-tream Fund in lieu of flowers and plants. Condolences may be left for the family at www.metzmortuary.com.



John W. Mueller, Jr.

Aug. 1, 1930 – Nov. 19, 2020

John William Mueller, Jr. was born Aug. 1, 1930, in Seward to John William Sr. and Theodora Natalia (Fiehler) Mueller, and passed away Nov. 19, 2020, in Seward, at the age of 90 years, 3 months and 18 days.

John grew up in Seward, where he attended St. John Lutheran School and graduated from Seward High School with the Class of 1948. He worked with his father in a building contracting business for many years and was later a self-employed carpenter. He worked as a handyman and aide at several daycare facilities. A humble man, he touched many lives. John was a lifelong member of St. John Lutheran Church.

John was preceded in death by his parents; four brothers, Reinhold Mueller, Willard Mueller, Raymond Mueller and Edgar Mueller; and four sisters, Bernice (Henry) Luebbe, Mildred (Bert) Baldinger, Elizabeth (Richard) Murphey and Harriet (Enno) Klammer.

Survivors include his sister, Verna Wied; numerous nieces, nephews and cousins.

A graveside service and inurnment will be at 1 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 3, at the Greenwood Cemetery in Seward. Memorial contributions are suggested to the American Bible Society. Condolences may be left for the family at www.zabkafuneralhome.com.



Bonita L. Smetter

March 9, 1947 – Nov. 24, 2020

Bonita Lorene Smetter was born March 9, 1947, and passed away Nov. 24, 2020. Arrangements are pending with Volzke Funeral Home in Seward. A full obituary may be found and condolences left for the family at www.volzkefuneralhome.com.

Obituaries continued on page 6

Obituaries

James R. Craig

Aug. 26, 1947 – Nov. 25, 2020

James Rodney Craig was born Aug. 26, 1947, in Seward to Gordon Calvin and Helen Marie (Bock) Craig and passed away unexpectedly Nov. 25, 2020, in Lincoln, at the age of 73 years, 2 months and 30 days.

Jim grew up in Seward where he attended and graduated from Seward High School with the Class of 1966. He worked at several places until he began his job at Lincoln Steel in 1970 and continued until his retirement in 2001. On Jan. 23, 1971, Jim was united in marriage to Janet Lauree Nichols in Seward and to this union, three children were born, Rodney, Jeremy and Kimberly. The couple lived in Beaver Crossing most of their married life until the tornado on Mother’s Day 2014. Jim then moved and made Seward his home. He enjoyed fishing, deer hunting, crocheting, cooking, baking, playing solitaire and watching old westerns. Jim loved his family very much, especially his grandchildren. He was a member of the Beaver Crossing Odd Fellows and Church of Christ in Seward.

He was preceded in death by parents; wife, Janet in 2007; son, Rodney, in 2008; brother and sister-in-law, Gary and Melody Craig; nephew, Elijah Rundell; and parents-in-law, Ervin and Zelma Nichols.

Jim is survived by his son, Jeremy and girlfriend Mandy Howry, Beaver Crossing; daughter, Kimberly and husband Shawn Hengelfelt, Lincoln; two granddaughters, Cheyenne Craig, Lincoln, and Sydney Craig, Crete; grandson, Dakota Guinn, Beaver Crossing; four siblings, Janet and husband Ligie Rundell, Pine Bluff, Wyoming, John and wife Sue Craig, Seward, Brian and wife Tami Craig, Seward, and Melissa Craig, Seward; brother-in-law, Jim and wife Sue Nichols, Beaver Crossing; three sisters-in-law, Jean and husband Chuck Eggleston, Beaver Crossing, Joanie and husband Robert Mclellan, Beaver Crossing, and Judy Schmersal, Seward; numerous nieces, nephews, cousins and a host of friends.

A funeral service was Dec. 2 at the Milford Menonite Church with graveside services and interment at the Beaver Crossing Cemetery. Memorial contributions are suggested to the Craig family for future considerations. Condolences may be left for the family at www.zabkafuneralhome.com.

Patricia S. Richert

Aug. 5, 1946 – Nov. 29, 2020

Patricia Sue Richert was born Aug. 5, 1946, and died Nov. 29, 2020. Arrangements are pending with Volzke Funeral Home in Seward. A full obituary may be found and condolences left for the family at www.volzkefuneralhome.com.

Lillian L. Skolnik

April 26, 1927 – Nov. 23, 2020

Lillian L. Skolnik of Seward was born near Brainard to Charles and Rose (Kominck) Dolezal on April 26, 1927.

She attended country schools in Butler County and graduated from Dwight High School in 1944. She attended the University of Nebraska in Lincoln and at the age of 17, she began teaching at a Butler County Country School. She married Joseph A. Skolnik of Staplehurst on May 8, 1947, at Holy Trinity Church in Brainard.



Two daughters, Barbara and Karen, were born to this union. Lillian served on the Election Board in Seward County’s B and G precincts for many years, was active in the Nebraska Democratic Party, PCCW, ZCBJ and volunteered at the Seward Senior Center. She helped her husband with various ventures through the years, Skolnik Equipment, farming and carpentry. She loved gardening, baking, cooking, playing cards and most of all, dancing with her husband to polka music. Lillian was an excellent seamstress, making most of her clothes and loved to make quilts, having made more than 30 quilts for family.

Lillian passed away Nov. 23, 2020, at her home in Seward at the age of 93 years, 6 months and 28 days. Lillian was preceded in death by her husband, Joseph (2005); her parents, Charles and Rose Dolezal; and brother, Ernest, a 1951 Korean War casualty.

Lillian is survived by two daughters and their husbands, Barbara and Ray Leising of Lincoln and Karen and Allen Hoffbauer of Seward; five grandchildren and their spouses, Brian and Amy Leising, Christina (Leising) and Jason Howe, Amy (Hoffbauer) and Jonathan Metschke, Jason and Heidi Hoffbauer and April Hoffbauer; 10 great-grandchildren, Elyssa and Brayden Leising, Bradley, Chase and Dylan Howe, JJ, Julia, Ayda and Adalya Metschke and Holly Hoffbauer. She is also survived by her beloved dog and constant companion, Fraggie; and a brother and sister-in-law, Don and Margaret Dolezal of Brainard.

Funeral Mass was Nov. 28 at St. Vincent dePaul Catholic Church with interment at the Seward Cemetery. Memorial contributions are suggested to the Skolnik family or the donor's choice. Condolences may be left for the family at www.volzkefuneralhome.com.



Seward Police

Information provided by the Seward Police Department.

Oct. 30

10:58 a.m.—A postal carrier in the 1600 block of North First Street reported that no one has picked up mail and a garage door has been ajar for two days, which was unusual for this address. An officer contacted the homeowner and there was no problem.

11:39 p.m.—A caller in the area of Highway 34 and 238th Road reported the driver of a pickup is possibly drunk because the vehicle is going 45 mph and is swerving. An officer made contact with the vehicle and found no signs that the driver was impaired.

Oct. 31

2:32 p.m.—A caller in the 500 block of North 14th Street reported that on several occasions, a vehicle drove onto the fairgrounds and stopped under some trees. After some time, another vehicle would join it, they exchange something, then both leave. This happens several times a day. Officers responded and one man was placed into custody.

7:02 p.m.—A caller in the 900 block of North Third Street reported that neighbors had an unattended roaring fire pit. An officer determined that the fire was within code.

Nov. 1

3:33 a.m.—A caller in the 400 block of Star Street reported she saw someone on her security camera near her vehicle. They might have tried to break in. The caller was advised that if they locate any damage or find anything missing to call the police back.

4:25 a.m.—An officer made a vehicle stop in the area of North Fourth Street and made an arrest for driving under the influence.

11:33 a.m.—A caller in the 200 block of East Northern Heights reported that someone had stolen her purse sometime the night before and took \$800 from her checking account.

Nov. 3

6:50 p.m.—A caller in the 500 block of Jackson Avenue reported that a customer had left their wallet on the counter and left. An officer returned the wallet to the owner.

Nov. 4

5:56 p.m.—A caller in the 500 block of Seward

Street reported a political fight involving four people on the north side of the square, but proceeded to say the fight had stopped.

10:41 p.m.—An officer in the area of Highway 34 and 14th Street reported he would be out with a vehicle on a traffic stop. A woman was arrested on two Saline County warrants and lodged in the Seward County jail.

11:37 p.m.—A caller in the 200 block of North Sixth Street reported a white SUV with two men had just left the store and were heading north-bound on Sixth Street. Both men were visibly intoxicated inside the store. Communication advised Butler County that the suspects had David City addresses, so the vehicle might be headed in that direction.

11:57 p.m.—An officer in the 200 block of East Pinewood Avenue reported a door was open to a building. Communications contacted the facility’s manager and said it was possible there was still a janitor in the building, but would make sure someone would be en route to secure the building.

Nov. 5

2:06 a.m.—Officers were patrolling the campus in the 800 block of North Columbia Avenue, looking for a person with an arrest warrant.

8:32 a.m.—A caller in the area of North Columbia and Seward reported they had a front tire blow out. The caller was later arrested for driving under the influence and lodged in the Seward County Jail.

3:13 p.m.—An officer reported he had arrest-

ed a person in the 800 block of North Columbia Avenue on a Seward County arrest warrant.

7:49 p.m.—A caller in the 300 block of Wildwood Road reported a vehicle had driven through their front yard, into the back yard and stopped there with the engine running. Upon arrival, an officer requested a rescue unit for a man who had a recent positive Covid test. The man was transported to the hospital.

Summary of other calls:

911 misdial 2; Abuse/neglect child 6; Alarm intrusion 1; Animal at large 3; Death investigation 2; Field contact 7; Fraud 1; Gun permit 1; Harassing phone call 1; Miscellaneous 17; Parking violation 2; Property damage 1; Property found 1; Public service 1; Reckless driving 5; Two-vehicle injury accident 1; Uncontrollable juvenile 3; Welfare check 2

Nov. 10

3:24 a.m.—An officer conducted a traffic stop in the area of Sixth Street and Jackson Avenue. A person was arrested on a Lincoln Police Department warrant and local charges. The officer also found drugs in the vehicle.

Nov. 11

3:34 p.m.—A caller in the area of Sunrise and East Hillcrest reported that someone is burning leaves in their driveway in that area.

9:29 p.m.—An officer reported they would be out with someone in the 1300 block of 280th Road. The person was given a warning for urinating in public.

Summary of other calls:

911 misdial 1; Abuse/neglect child 2; Accident-parking 1; Animal found 3; Animal lost 2; Barking dog 1; Coroner call 1; Disturbance 1; Extra patrol 2; Field contact 2; Fraud 1; Funeral escort 3; Gun permit 3; Hazard-debris 1; Juvenile welfare 2; Littering 1; Miscellaneous 9; Non-injury accident 1; Parking violation 3; Property found 1; Public nuisance 1;

Reckless driving 1; Search warrant 1; Theft 1; Traffic stop 1; Uncontrollable juvenile 1

Nov. 13

6:04 p.m.—An officer in the area of Highway 15 and Spruce reported they would be on a traffic stop with a truck and trailer that had no plate on the trailer. The driver was cited for having an open liquor container.

7:33 p.m.—A caller in the 200 block of North Sixth Street reported they had found a wallet. An officer returned the wallet to its owner.

9:12 p.m.—A caller in the 200 block of North Sixth Street reported a gas drive-off in the amount of \$44.08. An officer made contact with the driver, who returned to pay the bill.

Nov. 14

9:02 p.m.—A caller in the 200 block of Lincoln Street reported a lot of people had gathered in a nearby apartment with loud music and loud talking. An officer advised them to keep the noise down.

Nov. 17

6:54 p.m.—A caller in the 900 block of Jackson Avenue reported he had accidentally discharged his weapon and no one was injured.

Nov.19

5 p.m.—Two officers reported they would be trying to serve an arrest warrant and then made an arrest.

Summary of other calls:

911 misdial 3; Abuse/neglect adult 1; Abuse/neglect child 1; Animal at large 2; Barking dog 1; Coroner call 1; Disturbance 1; Drug violation 2; Extra patrol 1; Field contact 7; Funeral escort 1; Gun permit 2; Miscellaneous 11; Motorist assist 1; Non-injury accident 2; Ordinance violation 1; Parking violation 4; Property dispute 1; Property found 2; Public nuisance 2; Reckless driving 1; Terroristic threat 1; Traffic hazard 1; Welfare check 1



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COURTESY PHOTO

Seward High freshman Julia Metschke and the Seward Chapter of Family, Career and Community Leaders of America are collecting new and “like new” t-shirts for those in need to recycle and be used by the homeless. The community is invited to donate t-shirts-new or like new. The shirts can be dropped off at the Seward Civic Center or SHS through the holidays. They will be donated to the Living Word City Mission in York after the first of the year.

Seward FCCLA collects t-shirts

Julia Metschke, Seward High freshman member of the Family, Career and Community Leaders of America Seward Chapter, volunteered to serve as the chair for a campaign to collect new and “like new” t-shirts for those in need or homeless, hoping to recycle the many shirts “just laying around.”

The local collection sites are at the Seward Civic Center, 616 Bradford Ave., by the front door and in the SHS lobby, 532 Northern Heights, through the holidays.

The FCCLA Committee is focusing on this as way to assist the homeless and is coordinating this effort with the general SHS FCCLA Chapter.

“We felt that most young adults have a drawer full of t-shirts that they may have collected through the years and never wear,” Metschke said. “We always get t-shirts at the many events and activities we attend and yet often find ourselves wearing our favorite t-shirts over and over. This has been a very successful project for the SHS FCCLA Chapter in the past and almost become an annual drive for the students, sort of like the annual food drive.

“We just feel that we can put these

t-shirts to better use and invite others to join us in this campaign to collect a ‘ton of tees’ for others! It would be great to collect a ton of tees! For example, my brother alone could fill the boxes several times over with all of his Royals tees.”

The FCCLA members are collecting new and like new shirts in all sizes and regardless of the message on front (as long as it is appropriate.).

“It would be great to collect a ton of tees, but the theme has a nice sound and yet we are also realistic, knowing a ton is a lot of t-shirts. However, whatever is collected will help those without,” Metschke said.

The FCCLA members plan to personally deliver the shirts before the start of the next school term on behalf of their FCCLA Chapter, SHS and the Seward Community.

“We have been given so much in our lives, it is nice to be able to share some things with others, and a good way to start the new year,” Metschke said.

Collection boxes will be available during the hours the Civic Center front lobby and High School lobby are open.

The Iliad! performed at CHS



STEPHANIE CROSTON/SCI

Paris (Carson Richters) and Helen (Daylee Dey) fall in love as a narrator (Reiden Fowler) watches during “The Greek Olympiaganza (The Iliad! The Iliad! The Iliad!)” performed by Centennial. The play finished second at its opening competition and second in the Southern Nebraska Conference contest. Centennial is scheduled to host the District C1-1 competition Wednesday, Dec. 2.

Organizers aim for largest blood drive in Seward County

The Seward Community Blood Bank has scheduled a stop for Wednesday, Dec. 9, at Harvest Hall at the Seward County Fairgrounds from 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Organizers hope to make this donation day

its largest blood drive with a target of 100 donors.

Presenting donors will receive a free bag of kettle corn from Nebraska’s Best Kettle Corn and a free Nebraska Community Blood Bank shirt.

Appointments are required to donate. Those interested can go to NCBB.org/search-drives and use sponsor code “SCBD” to register, or call at (402) 486-9414.

Seward’s Junto Wine featured in Nebraska Wine Passport

Seward’s Junto Wine was chosen as one of 22 wineries to participate in the Nebraska Wine Passport, sponsored by the Milford-based Nebraska Winery and Grape Growers Association.

Passports are free and can be obtained at NebraskaWines.com or from any of the participating wineries. Deadline to complete passports is Dec. 15.

Each stop in the passport program brings a stamp. Those with 10 stamps in their passport earn a passport t-shirt. Additional stamps will be entered in drawings for wine accessories and wine bucks.

The program’s goal is to raise awareness for area wineries and promote local businesses.

“There’s still time to start your Nebraska Wine Passport and receive stamps towards wine bucks, t-shirts and more,” executive director of NWGGA Kylie Schildt said. “Supporting local businesses is more important than ever, and the Nebraska Wine Passport offers a great opportunity to visit area wineries and tasting rooms with friends and family, earn stamps toward prizes and get a head start in purchasing holiday gifts.”

In addition to Junto, other wineries include Capital View Winery and Vineyards (Roca), Cellar 426 Winery (Ashland), Deer Springs Winery (Lincoln), Feather River Vineyards (North Platte), Glacial Till Vineyard

Tasting Room (Ashland), Glacial Till Vineyard (Palmyra), James Arthur Vineyards (Raymond), Mac’s Creek Vineyards and Winery (Lexington), Miletta Vista Winery (St. Paul), Native 32 Winery (West Point), Niobrara Valley Vineyards (Nenzel), Nissen Family Vineyards (Hartington), Papa Moon Vineyards and Winery (Scottsbluff), Prairie Creek Vineyard and Winery (Central City), Rich Harvest Vineyard and Winery (Syracuse), Safehouse Winery (Syracuse), Schillingbridge Winery and Microbrewery (Pawnee City), Silver Hills Vineyards and Winery (Tekamah), Soaring Wings Vineyard (Springfield), Three Brothers Vineyard and Winery (Farnam) and Whiskey Run Creek Vineyard and Winery (Brownville).

The passport program also involves seven tasting rooms throughout the state. Participating tasting rooms are: Apple House Market (Nebraska City), George Spencer Tasting Room (Gibbon), Kimmel Orchard and Vineyard (Nebraska City), The Rose Colored Glass (Stromsburg), Too Far North (Fort Calhoun), Worstrel Family’s Union Orchard (Union) and Whispering Winds Vineyards (Lincoln).

More information about the passport program or about the Nebraska Winery and Grape Growers Association can go to Nebraskawines.com or contact Schildt at (402) 761-2216.

Milford FFA competes in York



COURTESY PHOTO

On Nov. 4, 14 Milford students attended the District Livestock Judging competition in York. Competitors ranked different classes of four animals, including goats, bulls, and lambs and gave at least one set of oral reasons for why they judged the way they did. Both the Junior and Senior divisions placed eighth overall in their categories.

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Current veterinarian certificate including date of rabies vaccination must be presented for issuance of license.

Cost for male or spayed female is \$4.00; unspayed female is \$6.00.

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The Curtis family won the family category of the Christmas Lego contest on Nov. 28. Pictured are, from left, Lily, Charlie, Ella and Annie.

Curtis family among winners of Christmas Lego contest Nov. 28

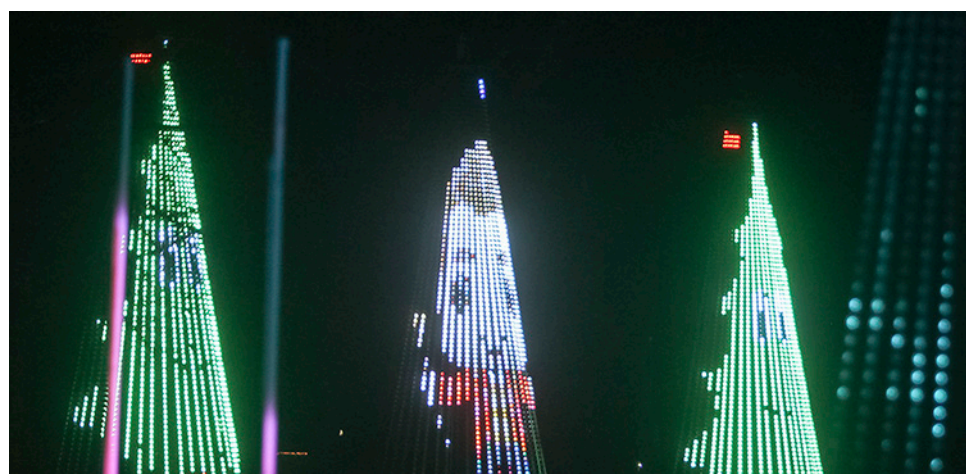
The 2020 Christmas Lego Contest was held Nov. 28 at Seward Memorial Library. Entries were separated into three age groups and there was a family category as well. Winning entries in each category were:

Ages 0-5: 1. Charlie Curtis, Seward; 2. Lily Curtis, Seward.

Ages 6-8: 1. Ella Curtis, Seward; T2. Josh Eberspacher, Beaver Crossing; T2. Matthew Wintz, Seward; 3. Liam Gerner, Seward.

Ages 9-12: 1. Jordan Ramaekers, Aurora; 2. Chloe Wintz, Seward; T3. Annie Curtis, Seward; T3. Nolan Koranda, Staplehurst.

Family: The Curtis Family, Seward.



Christmas lights arranged to show Christmas trees and toys are among the displays at the Magical Lights of Seward at Seward County Fairgrounds.

Did somebody say Christmas?

"While numbers were a bit down from some previous years, we still had hundreds of people visit the beautiful Christmas trees this year during the Seward Christmas Festival with a very steady flow of guest all day," Jean Kolterman of the GFWC Seward Woman's Club said. "Personally, I think this is the most beautiful set of decorated trees this year. They were the best yet and I encourage others to stop by the Civic Center and see the display, as many plan to keep their trees in the room. The GFWC Seward Woman's Club again hosted the annual 'Festival of Trees—Twelve Trees of Christmas' during the 2020 Christmas Festival in Seward with a free admission to all.

The exhibit of Christmas Trees featured trees sponsored by the churches in the Greater Seward Area with the exhibit opening Nov. 28 during the 2020 Seward Christmas festival.

While admission is free, the GFWC Seward Woman's Club is collecting stocking hats and socks for all ages

to be donated to the area City Missions and their "club" tree at the entrance of the Civic Center featured socks and stocking caps. The Christmas trees focused on church heritage, as well as a variety promoted the Christmas message. These trees also helped promote the area churches and many were sponsored by the outreach committees, the church's PR committee, as well as youth groups and Sunday School classes, ladies groups, and a youth/Godparent group.

Churches involved in the exhibit included The Seward United Methodist Church, Garland's Zion Lutheran Church (LCMS), Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church (WELS) in Seward, Seward's Calvary Baptist Church, Frieden's United Church of Christ in Seward, the Seward Church of Christ on Kolterman Avenue, St. John Lutheran Church (LCMS) in Seward, the Beaver Crossing United Methodist Church, Faith Lutheran Church in Seward (ELCA), St. Vincent de Paul Cath-

olic Church in Seward and Living Word Lutheran Church (LCMS) in Seward, as well as the GFWC Seward Woman's Club stocking cap tree.

The exhibit is still open at the Seward Civic Center, 616 Bradford Street in Seward in the West Fireplace room and is open when the building is open.

This is the third year the GFWC has hosted this event during the Seward Christmas Festival. This last year the GFWC Seward Woman's Club invited local schools to sponsor trees and almost every school and school district were represented in the 2019 exhibit. In 2018, the GFWC Seward Woman's Club invited civic groups to sponsor trees.

Donations of caps, both homemade and purchased, can be donated until Dec. 16 when they will be boxed up and presented to the area City Missions.

For more information contact GFWC Project Chairman, Jean Kolterman at (402) 643-3803 or email her at dko5811@windstream.net.

Christmas essay winners named

My favorite Christmas tradition is going to the Seward Christmas Festival with my family. It is a special day that happens on Thanksgiving weekend. Our whole town of Seward gets into the Christmas spirit!

First, we go downtown to see Santa and Mrs. Claus arrive in a fire truck, and we take pictures with them in their house. Then my two sisters, my brother, and I take pictures on the sleigh near the reindeer. Next, we go and make reindeer food. The sparkles in the food help the reindeer to find our house on Christmas Eve. We also get to eat yummy reindeer cookies with antlers made out of pretzels.

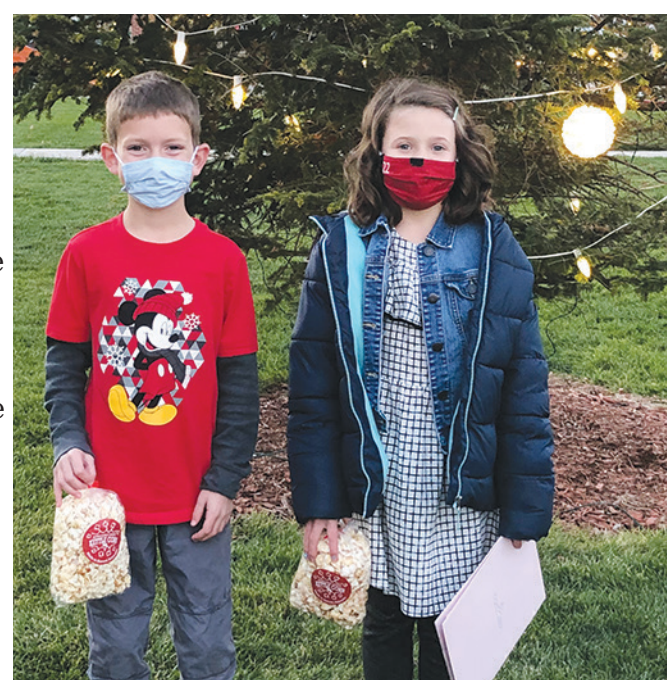
After that, it's time for my favorite part of the Christmas Festival. We walk to the Civic Center to look at all of the Legos that are on display. I enter at least one thing in this contest each year. Last year, I built a Christmas train with my older sister for the family division of the contest. I also built a Christmas spaceship to enter on my own.

Later in the day, my family and I search for a spot to sit for the Lighted Christmas Parade. I like chasing the candy that is thrown from the people on the floats. I also like seeing all of the beautiful lights on the floats. The floats are so colorful!

These are some of my biggest reasons why the Seward Christmas Festival is my favorite Christmas tradition. I can't wait to celebrate with my family at the Christmas Festival again this year!

—Landon Samuels, 8

My favorite Christmas tradition is going to my Nana and Papa's farm. At their house we play with our aunt Emily's dog, Adley. We play in the snow and build snowmen. We play in the big tree in their front yard, play in our mom's old forts, and jump on hay bales covered with snow, and



Pictured are, from left, Landon Samuels and Sawyer Wollenburg. Samuels won the Little Drummer Boy essay contest and Wollenburg won the Sugar Plum Fairy essay contest on Nov. 28.

we play with Frankie, their kitten. Frankie is light grey with dark grey stripes all over. He is really cute!!! I love him so much!

When our great aunt Doris comes, she always brings pink salad. I love pink salad!!! She also brings a delicious salad with marshmallows, which I love! Our Nana makes scalloped corn, which my big sister Mackenna loves, but I think isn't very good. Sometimes we have chicken, but most of the time we have beef from Papa's cows that he takes care of.

We each have a cow. Mine is named Alyssa, and she has a baby calf every year. This year's calf is a bull named Brown Sugar.

After dinner we all gather around the Christmas tree. We all open presents from youngest to oldest! I always get wonderful and awesome presents!!!

I have to miss it this year, but at least I get to be with my new little sister, Greta Rae, born Nov. 12, 2020. She is really cute!!! I haven't seen or held her yet but we have some really good pictures and videos of her!

This year for Christmas I am wishing for a remote-control drone and a cat (just like Frankie!)
—Sawyer Wollenburg, 9



Winners in the annual GFWC Seward Woman's Club Ugly Sweater Contest are, from left, Jacob Roberts, Melanie Roberts and Cliff Lowell.

Winners named in sweater contest

The GFWC Seward Woman's Club annually sponsors the Seward Ugly Sweater Contest during the Seward Christmas Festival.

This year the contest was Nov. 28. The contest was emceed and coordinated by GFWC Seward Woman's Club member Bonnie Kruse.

The 2020 winners included Youth Division, Jacob Roberts, "Most Clever Award;" Adult Division, Melanie Roberts, "Sexist Sweater;" and Over 50 Division, Cliff Lowell, "Ugly but Classy" Sweater Award. The Grand Prize Award was presented to Melanie Roberts.

Because of Covid-19, contestants were required to wear a mask, hand sanitizer was available and the contestants were spaced for social

distancing during the contest. Judges for the contest were volunteers from the Seward Rotary Club Jon Kruse and Zane Francescato, both of Seward. All of the participants received the Ugly Sweater card game, an Ugly Sweater button and an Ugly Sweater key chain.

Each of the Finalists/ First Place Division winners won an Ugly Sweater Christmas tree ornament and a special Ugly Sweater trophy. The Grand Prize winner received a complete kit to make and decorate an ugly sweater for next year.

All the prizes, awards and trophies were donated by the sponsor of the event, the GFWC Seward Woman's Club.

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SEWARD COUNTY INDEPENDENT

DECEMBER 4-5

Stuff the Cruiser to help local children

The annual Stuff the Cruiser toy drive will take place over two weekends this year. Seward County Mutual Aide will be hosting the drive at Walmart on Nov. 28 and 29 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day. The local campaign is scheduled for Dollar General and Orschelen's in Seward on Friday, Dec. 4, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. There is also a box for toys in the store for collections after the fact. The Stuff the Cruiser team will be at Walmart on Friday, Dec. 4, from 3 to 7 p.m. and Saturday, Dec. 5, from 10 a.m. through 3 p.m.

Toys can be dropped off at the Seward Police Department anytime. The Police Department is located at 159 S. First Street, Seward.

Parents of the children are given the opportunity to select the toys they'd like for their children during their scheduled shopping appointment on Saturday, Dec. 12, at the Seward Civic Center.

To nominate a child for gifts, contact the Stuff the Cruiser hotline at (402) 646-5755 from 9 a.m. through 7 p.m. by Thursday, Dec. 3. Information needed includes parent's name, child's name and age and sex of the child and gift ideas. A shopping time will be scheduled with the caller on Saturday, Dec. 12. The program is for children newborn through age 12.

DECEMBER 5

Milford to host Santa Saturday

The Milford Kiwanis Club will sponsor Santa Saturday at the Milford Elementary School Saturday Dec. 5, from 9 to 11 a.m. Santa and Mrs. Claus will be in the drop-off lane, and visitors will be able to drive through with a stop to share wishes with Santa. Free-will donations will be accepted and go to the PTO playground equipment project. Santa will tour the town from 3:30 to 5 p.m. with candy for those waiting for him outside.

DECEMBER 6

Holiday decorations to be judged

The Seward Rotary Club and the Seward High Future Business Leaders of America are again sponsoring a Holiday Home Outdoor Lighting Contest for the homes in Seward to celebrate Christmas in Seward on Sunday, Dec. 6. To nominate a home or self-nominate your home, contact Sandy Wright at the Jones Bank in Seward at (402) 643-3602 or email Clark Kolterman at clark.kolterman@sewardschools.org. Please share the address and name of the resident being nominated. Judging will start at 6 p.m. Dec. 6.

DECEMBER 12

Santa's coming for breakfast

The annual Seward Rotary Club Breakfast with Santa is scheduled for Saturday, Dec. 12, at 9 a.m. in the basement of the Seward Civic Center. The admission fee for all attending is \$1 per person. Andrew Malan, "Seward's Mr. Magic," will again perform. The event is co-sponsored by the Seward Rotary Club and the Seward High Family, Career and Community Leaders of America. The event features a light breakfast of donuts, juice, milk, and candy. It will also include music, magic, singing, prizes, candy and of course a visit from Santa. Door prizes will be awarded at the conclusion. Contact Clark Kolterman with questions at clark.kolterman@sewardschools.org.

THROUGH DECEMBER 13

Read and walk around square

Two holiday stories have been selected for families to enjoy through Sunday, Dec. 13. Readers will travel around the Courthouse Square to read the book pages displayed in the front windows of businesses. Another book will be located around the inside of Seward Memorial Library. Not only will the children enjoy holiday stories, but they will also discover a secret message as they visit each page. Pick up a StoryWalk® card on Nov. 28 or any time after, and join in the holiday fun. Turn in your card with the hidden message and you could win a prize in the random drawing on Dec. 14.

DECEMBER 19

Winter farmers market planned

The Winter Seward Farmers Market will be Saturday, Dec. 19, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at 612 Seward St.

DURING DECEMBER

Library winter 'card' available now

Stop in Seward Memorial Library or print online the Winter Library 'Card' reading challenge. There are new suggestions and activities on the 16 square grid. Complete a column or row, or the entire card, and turn it in for the next random cash drawing provided by the Friends of Seward Library. You will have one entry for each row or column you complete. Have fun discovering new materials in the library and maybe you will be rewarded! All cards must be returned by Dec. 31. The drawing will take place in early January.



COURTESY PHOTO

From left, Jim Dowling, Waco Product Supply Site Lead, Krista Koranda, Waco Product Supply Production Lead, Jake Polk, Centennial Elementary physical education teacher, and Ashleigh Browning, Waco Breeding Operations Lead, prepare to distribute balls to students at Centennial Elementary.

Waco facility helps Centennial students

Play ball!

Employees from the Waco Breeding and Product Supply Corn Facilities partnered with Centennial Public Schools to sponsor an initiative created by Jake Polk, Centennial Elementary physical education teacher, called "Ball for All."

The purpose of the initiative is to get a sports ball into the hands of all elementary students to stay active while at home.

"I hear from individual students on multiple occasions about not having a ball at home to play with and it breaks my heart," Polk said.

As part of Bayer's vision – Health for All, Hunger for None, the Bayer facilities acted immediately upon this initiative and helped bring it to life with Polk. During a trying time, this initiative focuses on healthy and active youth development and Bayer is

proud to be able to give students in the local community a way to stay active at home. 240 elementary students at Centennial Elementary were able to choose either a basketball, volleyball or football. On Nov. 13, a team of Bayer colleagues and Centennial staff hand delivered the balls to each student.

"For me to know that young students will now have a new means to stay active at home, with sports ball that they got to choose themselves, is such a great feeling. To be a part of a company that allows us to help our community when asked and help bring the initiative Ball for All and the Bayer vision, Health for All, Hunger for None to life is an amazing feeling," Jerry Garcia, Waco Breeding Site Lead, said.

Memorial ornaments on display

Ornaments donated in memory of loved ones can be viewed in the display case at Seward Memorial Library during December. If you would like to remember someone special, the library will accept ornament memorials throughout the month. Ornaments and information about the deceased should be given to staff. The memorials will be available for viewing each December so the legacy of your special person will continue.

Santa makes plans to be in Seward

Santa and Mrs. Claus will be in their house on the north side of the courthouse on Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays in December. Hours are Thursdays, Dec. 3, 10 and 17, from 6 to 8 p.m.; Saturdays, Dec. 5, 12 and 19, from 3 to 5 p.m.; and Sundays, Dec. 6, 13 and 20, from 1 to 3 p.m. Visits will be contactless, and masks are encouraged.

JANUARY 29

Save the date and study up

The 11th annual PTL Trivia Night is coming to the Ag Pavilion on Friday, Jan. 29. Doors open at 5:45 p.m. and trivia starts at 7:15 p.m. The team with the most correct trivia answers wins \$400; second place wins \$200. All proceeds will benefit the children of St. John. Cost is \$200 per table of eight players, and must be paid in advance. Registration opened Oct. 5, and closes Jan. 22. You may register your team at <http://www.tinyurl.com/stjohntrivia>. The event will follow public gathering guidelines from Four Corners Health Department. Participants will be asked to wear masks when

Stuff
cruiser

The Seward Rotary Club and the Seward Police Department, along with the help of the Seward Blue Valley Community Action program, the Seward County Diversion Office, Seward County Mutual Aid and the Seward Concordia Rotaract Club, will collect toys for their annual toy drive campaign to Stuff the Cruiser for disadvantaged/underprivileged children of Seward County.

The groups are accepting new toy donations and cash gifts to supplement the campaign.

The local campaign is scheduled for Dollar General and Orschelen's in Seward on Friday, Dec. 4, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. There is also a box for toys in the store for collections after the fact.

The Stuff the Cruiser team will be at Walmart on Friday, Dec. 4, from 3 to 7 p.m. and Saturday, Dec. 5, from 10 a.m. through 3 p.m.

To nominate a child for gifts, contact the Stuff the Cruiser hotline at (402) 646-5755 from 9 a.m. through 7 p.m. by Thursday, Dec. 3. Information needed includes parent's name, child's name and age and sex of the child and gift ideas.

A shopping time will be scheduled with the caller on Saturday, Dec. 12. The program is for children who are newborn through age 12.

If you are unable to come the date of distribution, arrangements will be made to pick up gifts at the Seward Police Station.

AREA
CHURCHES

Calvary Baptist Church

208 East Bek Ave. • Seward • 402-643-3575

www.cbcseward.com

Pastor Timothy A. Ruegg

Sunday School (all ages).....10:00 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship11:00 a.m.
Sunday Evening Worship 5:00 p.m.
Wednesday Prayer/Bible Study 7:00 p.m.

Church of Christ

1422 Kolterman Ave. • Seward • 402-643-5802

www.sewardchurchofchrist.com

Pastor: Dr. Mike Case

Sunday Worship 9:30 & 10:30 a.m.
Wednesday Bible Study Small groups

Faith Lutheran Church (ELCA)

1245 North 2nd St. • Seward • 402-643-6116

www.faithseward.org

Pastor Greg Gabriel

Sunday Worship9:15 a.m.
Sunday School for all ages.....10:45 a.m.

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

2668 Hwy 6 (1 mi. West of Milford) • 402-761-3416

www.goodshepherd-milford.org

Pastor Steve Stork

Sunday Adult Bible Study.....9:00 a.m.
Sunday Worship10:00 a.m.
Monday Worship..... 6:30 p.m.
Adult Bible Study.....Thurs., 8:30 a.m.
Kids' Bible Classes, Pre-K through 6th grade
..... (during school year) Wednesday, 6:30 p.m.
Confirmation Class.....
..... (during school year) Wednesday night

Grace Evangelical
Lutheran Church (WELS)

746 Pinewood Ave. • Seward • 402-643-4131

www.graceseward.org

Pastor Mark A. Haefner

Sunday Bible Class8:00 a.m.
Sunday Worship8:45 a.m.
Sunday School and Fellowship9:45 a.m.

Great Plains Community Church

1155 May St. • Goehner • 402-730-2594

Pastor Galen Skinner

Sunday Worship10:00 a.m.
Wednesday Night, Adult Bible Studies,
Children and Teen Activities..... 7:00 p.m.

Hillcrest Evangelical Free Church

2433 Progressive Rd. • Seward • 402-643-2316

Senior Pastor Curt Coddington

Administrative Pastor Brant Taylor

Associate Pastor Brad Johnson

Worship Pastor Kyle Soffin

Youth Pastor Zach Mulvihill

Sunday School & Adult Bible Classes....9:45 a.m.
Sunday Worship8:15 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.
Wednesday
Children and Teen Activities..... 6:30 p.m.

Holy Cross Lutheran Church (LCMS)

1042 May St. • Goehner • 816-308-7859

Pastor James Dahlke

Sunday Worship9:30 a.m.
Sunday School & Adult Bible Class Following Worship

Lighthouse Pentecostal Church

201 S. 11th • Seward • 402-641-3494

Pastor Timothy Daywitt

Sunday Worship10:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.
Wednesday Worship (Deaf Signing)7:00 p.m.

Living Word Lutheran Church (LCMC)

1300 West Hillcrest • Seward • 402-643-6445

www.livingwordsew.org Following Worship

Pastor Scott Krohn

Saturday Worship (1st & 3rd Sat.) 5:30 p.m.
Relaxed Worship

Sunday Worship 9:00 a.m.
Traditional; Communion 1st & 3rd Sundays
Bible Study11:00 a.m.
Words on Wednesday (WOW).....6:30 p.m.
Varied activities by age, from youth to adults

away from their team table. For more information, email stjohntrivia@gmail.com or call Michelle Meyer at (402) 219-3008. Also, contact Meyer to be a corporate or memorial sponsor for a team or trivia round. The backup date is March 26.

THURSDAYS

Family history questions? Society can help

The Seward County Genealogical Society meets every Thursday from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. downstairs at the Civic Center.

TOPS meets weekly

Take Off Pounds Sensibly, a nonprofit weight management organization, meets every Thursday in the Audio-Visual Room at the Seward Civic Center. Weigh-in starts at 11:15 a.m., with meetings from noon to 12:30 p.m. The first meeting is free. Masks are worn and social distancing is practiced.

FRIDAYS

Test Nebraska set in Seward

Test Nebraska will be available in Seward on Fridays in December from 9 to 11 a.m. in the west parking lot across the street from the Seward Family Medical Center. Individuals must register for testing. Visit testnebraska.com to take the online assessment to see if you are eligible to receive a free COVID-19 test. For more information, visit Test Nebraska.

Some churches have resumed services with restrictions. Please check with the church before attending any services.

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Sunday Worship 11:00 a.m.

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church (LCMS)

3.5 miles west of Staplehurst • 402-535-2625

Pastor Shawn Kitzing

Worship (church in the country)..... 9:00 a.m.

Sunday School (school in Staplehurst)..... 10:30 a.m.

Bible Class (school in Staplehurst) 10:30 a.m.

Sacred Heart Catholic Church

401 Dimery • Beaver Crossing • 402-532-2545

Msr. Mark Huber

Saturday Worship5:00 p.m.

Mon., Tue., Thurs., Fri. Mass.....8:00 a.m.

Confessions 30 minutes before every Mass

Seward United Methodist Church

1400 N. 5th St. • Seward • 402-643-4156

Rev. Dr. Mary Kay Totty, Lead Pastor

Rev. JoEllen Axthelm, Associate Pastor

Sunday Traditional Worship

(in person and online) 8:00 a.m.

Sunday Small Groups 9:15 a.m.

Sunday Praise Worship

(in person and online) 10:30 a.m.

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

6th & Hillcrest • Seward • 402-643-3829

Rev. Pam Williams

Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m.

Sunday School 10:30 a.m.

Clergy office hrs. Wed. by appt.

St. John Lutheran Church (LCMS)

919 N. Columbia • Seward • 402-643-2983

www.stjohnseward.org

Pastor Scott Bruick • Pastor Andy Schermbeck

Pastor David Rempfer

Saturday Worship5:30 p.m.

Sunday Worship. 8:30 & 11:00 a.m.

Sunday Education Hour 10:00 a.m.

St. John's Lutheran Church (LCMS)

200 Paris St. • Cordova • 402-576-3211

Pastor Brian Tuma

Sunday Worship. 9:00 a.m.

Sunday School/Adult Bible Study 10:30 a.m.

St. Patrick's Catholic Church

110 3rd St. • Utica • 402-532-2545

Msr. Mark Huber

Sunday Mass9:00 a.m.

Wednesday Mass7:00 a.m.

Confessions 30 minutes before every Mass

St. Paul Lutheran Church

1100 'D' St. • Utica • 402-534-2200

Pastor Jon Dunbar

Pastor of Visitation: Pastor Richard Gudgel

Sunday Worship9:00 a.m.

Sunday School & Adult Bible Study 10:15 a.m.

St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church

152 Pinewood Ave. • Seward • 402-643-3421

www.stvincentseward.org / See our FB page

Msr. Robert Tucker

Saturday Evening Mass5:30 p.m.

Sunday Mass8:00 & 10:00 a.m.

Confessions 30 minutes before each Mass

The Rock (LCMS)

237 S. 3rd • Seward • 402-643-6624

therockseward.org • info@therockseward.org

Pastor Michael Meyer

Sunday Worship 10:00 a.m.

Zion Lutheran Church (LCMS)

370 Fourth Street • Garland • 402-588-2229

Zionlcms@revdobb.com

Pastor David Dobbertien

Sunday Worship9:00 a.m.

Meals on Wheels Thanksgiving delivery continues

by Dr. Paul Hoff
Seward Meals on Wheels

About 48 years ago, a much younger JoAnn Hoff and her good friend Jane Jones got the idea to start a service for people who needed a meal. It might be temporary, like after a hospital stay, or after losing a spouse or hundreds of other reasons. These were people who could stay in their own home, but needed a well-rounded meal at least once a day. Soon after, Meals on Wheels of Seward began. This was not to take the place of food stamps or other coun-

ty or state programs and no federal, state or county funds would be used at any time. But that's a whole other story. This story is about Christmas and Thanksgiving. In the beginning, we wanted to give the cook, Della Miers, Thanksgiving and Christmas off. Jane said she would take Christmas and Jo would take Thanksgiving and they would prepare and deliver meals on those days. Jane passed away a number of years ago, but JoAnn has continued the tradition for 45 out of the past 47 years. Even though she has a

condition called 'retinitis pigmentosa' and has lost 90% of her sight, she was determined to provide for our customers that would be home alone this Thanksgiving. Usually, we would have five to eight takers on the holidays and pick up our meal from St. John Lutheran, but this year because of the virus St. John canceled their Thanksgiving dinner. A record 18 people asked for a meal. "Not to fret," she said, "We'll just buy a second turkey." So, starting on Tuesday night, the dessert was pre-

pared (a pumpkin recipe from our youngest daughter), followed by the cranberries – fresh, of course. On Wednesday the turkeys were thawed, and the potatoes were peeled. Next came all the dressing plus the gravy, of course. All was ready for Thursday when she called on her hubby to do the carving and dishing out. He always knew she was a wonder but couldn't believe how an 85-year-old mostly-blind woman could take on 21 meals (three more, of course, because she had asked our neighbor to join us for dinner after deliveries) like it was a walk in the park.

That neighbor, Charles Ore, took one batch of food and hubby took the other and all was delivered and back home in time for a scrumptious dinner of our own by 12:30 p.m.. Mission accomplished. I did hear her mention, however, that she thought maybe this should be the last time. Opportunity is calling for anyone so inclined – meanwhile Seward Meals on Wheels continues as it has for going on 48 years – and nary a dime of taxpayer's money involved. Volunteerism does work. Meanwhile if you'll excuse me – nap time.

Ready, set ... show your holiday cheer in annual lighting contest

The Seward Rotary Club and the Seward High Future Business Leaders of America are again sponsoring a Holi-

day Home Outdoor Lighting Contest for the homes in Seward to celebrate Christmas in Seward on Sunday, Dec. 6.

To nominate a home or self-nominate your home, contact Sandy Wright at the Jones Bank in Seward at (402) 643-3602

or email Clark Kolterman at clark.kolterman@sewardschools.org. Share the address and name of the resident being nomi-

nated. The homes will be judged on Sunday, Dec. 6, starting at 6 p.m. A large category of awards will

be presented by the judges. The winners and honorable mention awardees will be announced in the Independent.

MARKETPLACE

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UNDER CONTRACT

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OPEN HOUSE

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1:00–2:00 p.m.
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All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Fair Housing Act which makes it illegal to advertise "any preference limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, family status, or national origin, or an intention, to make such preference, limitation or discrimination." Family status includes children under the age of 18 living with parents or legal custodians; pregnant women and people securing custody of children under 18.

The Independent will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain of discrimination call HUD toll-free at 1-800-642-6112. <http://www.nol.org/home/NEOC>.

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Biofuels brace for winter while battling in court

by Brady Oltmans
editor@sewardindependent.com

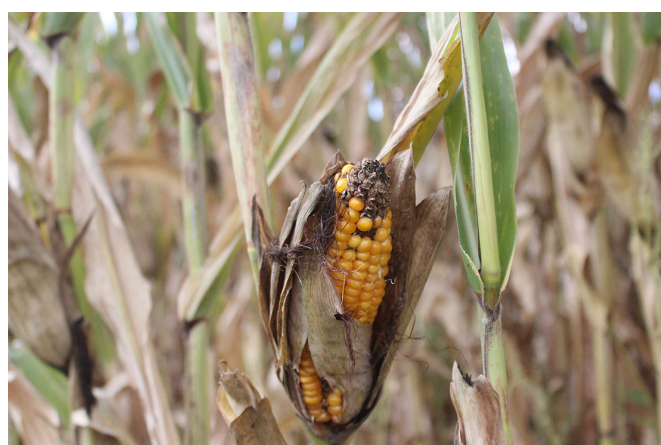
The recent rise in coronavirus cases across the country, and updated restrictions to limit further exposure to the virus, could slow the biofuel industry's recovery.

In a recent interview, Renewable Fuels Association President and CEO Geoff Cooper said the latest rounds of restrictions have impacted fuel consumption. That, in turn, has been harmful for the industry still recovering from travel reduction in March and April.

"COVID-19 cases and increased restrictions are having some impact on vehicle travel and fuel consumption again," Cooper said. "The latest government data showed a pretty big dip in gasoline consumption, and we saw a drop in ethanol blending."

Cooper reiterated that these concerns are compounded by the winter months, which typically lead to decreased travel.

"We're keeping a close eye on the situation and we're crossing our fingers that we don't have a repeat of anything nearly like what we saw in March and April," he said. "I think the industry is sort of battenning down the hatches to



BRADY OLTMANS/SCI

Corn sits in its husk in a field before November harvest. This year's corn crop was subject to dry conditions late in the season.

try to get through the winter and get to a time when a vaccine is broadly available."

The biofuel industry has also been affected by government action through small refinery exemptions. A coalition recently took that issue to the courts.

Renewable Fuels Association, Growth Energy, National Corn Growers Association,

National Biodiesel Board, American Coalition for Ethanol, National Farmers Union and National Sorghum Producers filed a motion in the U.S. Court of Appeals in the District of Columbia asking the court to enforce its 2017 decision requiring the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to address its improper waiver of 500 million gallons

of biofuel demand in the 2016 renewable volume obligation.

The motion specifically requires the EPA to issue a 500 million gallon "curative obligation" on obligated parties to make up for the lost gallons, require the EPA to do so no more than six months after the court's order, require obligated parties to show compliance with additional obligations no more than three months after EPA issues the curative obligation and declare that it will not extend

these deadlines.

The coalition established its calls for action in a statement.

"It is simply unconscionable that EPA would so brazenly ignore a federal court's order. The agency must do right by America's farmers and biofuel producers and supporters. Together, our coalition represents millions of rural families, who should not have to resort to more court proceedings to hold EPA accountable to the law. It's well past overdue that

EPA restore the 500 million gallons and focus on restoring integrity to the Renewable Fuel Standard," the statement read.

In July 2017, the U.S. Court of Appeals' ruling invalidated the EPA's waiver of 500 million gallons in the 2016 renewable volume obligation and ordered the EPA to revisit the rule. The court held the EPA's interpretation of a waiver provision ran contrary to how the program is supposed to work.

Soybean export sales drop to low again

Soybean export sales hit marketing year lows for the third consecutive week.

According to the USDA's Weekly Export Sales report, soybean sales fell 42% from the previous week and dropped 47% from the previous four-week average.

Corn sales, meanwhile, jumped 53% with 1.84 million tons in sales. Increases came from Mexico, Colombia, South Korea and China.

The USDA's next set of supply and demand estimates is scheduled to release Dec. 10.



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Bruntz finishes harvest after COVID recovery

by Brady Oltmans
editor@sewardindependent.com

A farmer, a planter and his crops. That's David Bruntz's life broken down to common denominators.

When the pandemic crept into Nebraska he wasn't concerned. A farmer's job involves social distancing. In most cases, it's required.

He existed independent from the novel coronavirus, his farm outside of Friend not oblivious to the virus but not concerned. Then the Nebraska Corn Board president started running a high fever accompanied by a dry cough in late June.

Bruntz told KETV



David Bruntz

in September that he doesn't know how he contracted the virus, he just knew he tested positive. Causing even more confusion, his close contacts all tested

negative.

"It's very strange," he said. "We don't have all the answers. We know we have to be very careful."

Bruntz isolated and rested for two weeks while his brother, nephew and a hired farmhand kept the 3,000 acre operation moving. He said he's thankful to have contracted the virus early, as opposed to during harvest.

As president of the Corn Board, he sent a memo to organization members. That memo called upon farmers and rural residents to prevent accidents and ensure safety. Bruntz was quoted in that memo, giving members

a trusted, familiar face they could associate with the pandemic.

"As someone who contracted COVID-19 earlier this summer, I can adamantly say this is a virus you want to avoid, and it's definitely not something you want to get during harvest," he said. "Oftentimes, as farmers, we think our occupations are prime for social distancing. While that may be true, this virus spreads easily,

so we need to take precautions, such as keeping our distance from others, wearing masks in public places and washing our hands and using hand sanitizers often."

That memo instructed farmers to have a plan in place to reduce stress in the event of an accident or illness.

Harvest is nearly completed across Ne-

braska as the coronavirus continues to spread throughout rural communities at a higher rate than urban states. Public Health Solutions, which oversees Saline County in its health district, confirmed 1,421 cases in the county as of Nov. 27 – at least four times as much as neighboring Fillmore, Thayer and Jefferson counties.

Rural Affairs to launch pilot

The Center for Rural Affairs recently announced plans to begin offering single family housing and homeownership loans in rural Nebraska by leveraging existing business lending capacity.

The endeavor began when the Center explored rural housing last year. Then came a \$557,000 grant from the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund at the

Department of Treasury. The Center will begin a pilot lending phase in the coming months.

Brian Depew at the Center for Rural Affairs said rural areas suffer from low home-vacancy rates, aging housing stock, insufficient rehabilitation and lack of new home construction.

In a release, Depew wrote the rate of homeownership by minorities nationwide remains significantly lower than

those of white neighbors. In Nebraska, he wrote, the homeownership rate for Latino residents is 42% compared to 70% for non-Latino white residents.

"We strive to address these challenges by offering housing loans that increase homeownership opportunities for low- and middle-income and minority residents in rural Nebraska," Depew wrote.

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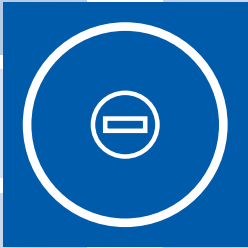
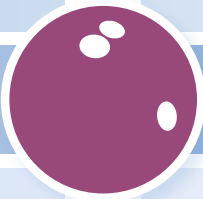
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Right: The 2020 cheer squad at Seward High includes, from left: (first row) Margaret Glenn, Alexandra Sick, Allysen Gross, Carissa Gottschalk and Jayden Novak; (second row) Natalie Keller, Hannah Johnson, Sarita Richards and Tara Higgins; and (third row) Brenna McAdam, Layla Sugden, Alexis Howell and Rebecca Koch.



A group photo of the SHS cheerleaders. There are 12 girls in total, arranged in three rows. They are all wearing blue long-sleeved turtleneck uniforms with yellow lettering that says "SHS" and yellow geometric patterns. The girls are smiling and posing in front of a light-colored brick wall.

Left: The 2020-21 cheerleaders at Centennial High are, from left, Cheyenne O'Donnell, Kim Nitz, Morgan Steckly, Keelie Bronson and Kenzie Steckly.



The Seward High Starlettes in 2020-21 are Ella Davis-Schmit, Claire Geidel, Noelle Geidel, Natalie Keller, Haley Kimbrough, Becca Koch, Brenna McAdam, Kambryn Nelson, Sarita Richards, Layla Sugden and McKinley Voss.



Members of the 2020-21 dance team at Centennial High are, from left, Krislyn Green, Jayden Foreman, Aubree Wolfe, Morgan Steckly, Keelie Bronson and Ellie Tempel.

An advertisement for Davisson Furniture Center. The top and bottom of the ad are decorated with a border of white stars on a dark blue background. The main text, "Davisson Furniture Center", is in a large, bold, dark blue serif font. Below it, the website "www.davissonfurniture.com" is displayed in white text within a dark blue rectangular box. To the left, the store's hours are listed: "Open 10-6" and "Sun 1-4" in a bold, black serif font. Below the hours, the address "2767 Progressive (South Hwy 15) Seward, NE 68434" is written in a black serif font. To the right of the address, the phone number "402-643-3777" is prominently displayed in a large, bold, black serif font. Below the phone number, the text "Like us on Facebook" is written in a black serif font, accompanied by the Facebook logo. On the right side of the ad, there is a colorful illustration of a wizard in a blue and gold robe, holding a wand and pointing it at a target. The target is a circular board with various symbols and numbers, and a yellow streamer is attached to it. The bottom of the ad features the phrase "The Magic Starts Here!" in a large, elegant, black cursive script. At the very bottom, the text "OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK" is written in a bold, black serif font, flanked by white stars on a dark blue background.



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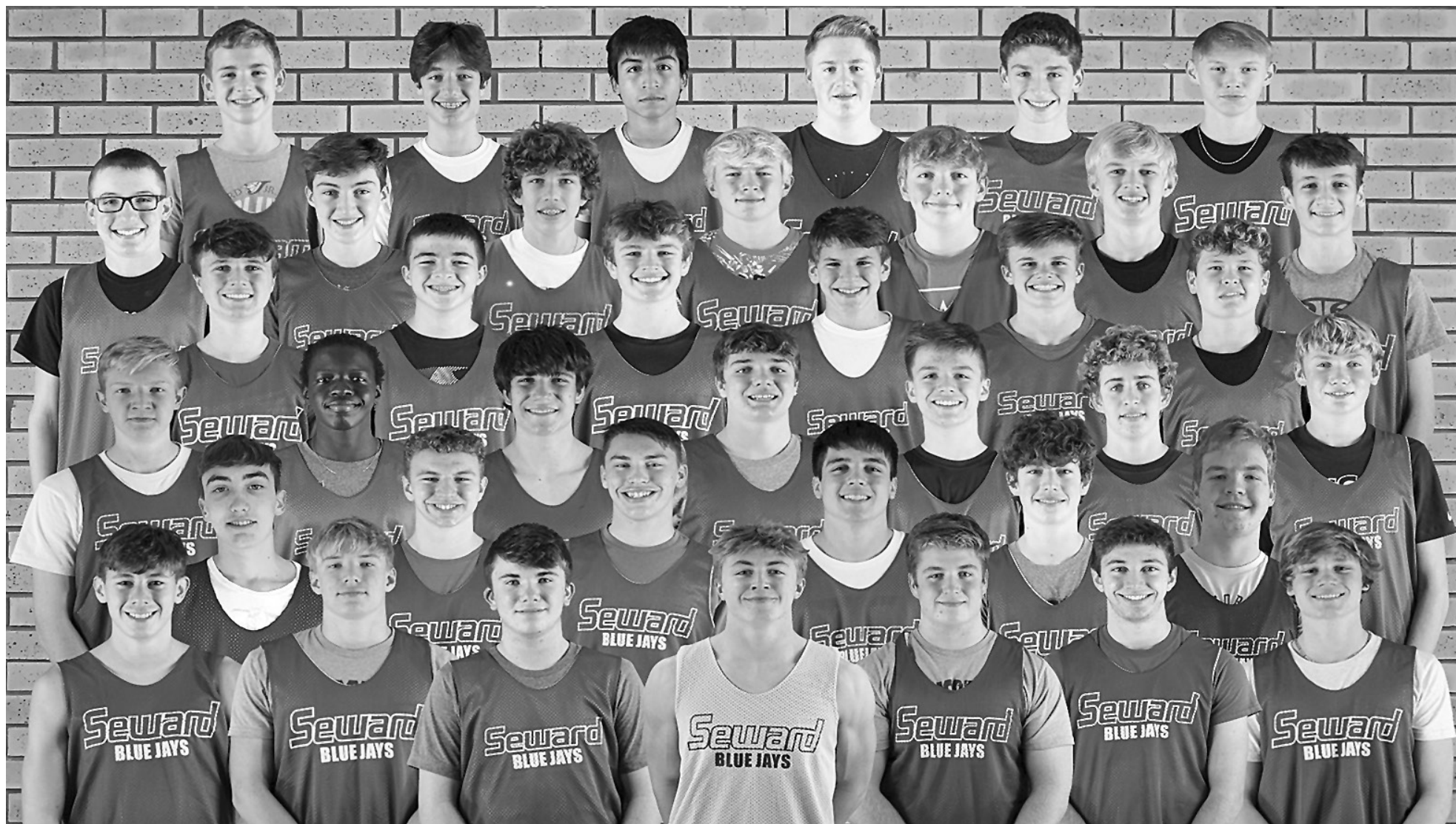
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Boys' basketball



COURTESY ILLUSTRATION/SCI/MT

The 2020-21 Seward High boys' basketball team includes, from left: (first row) Cole Gray, Micah Hackbart, Drew Covalt, Gavin Sukup, Trevor Ruth, Bryce Piskorski and Jackson Trost; (second row) Dylan Read, Sam Schroeder, Leighton Limback, Dalton Burt, Traetyn Schaefer and Nathan Miller; (third row) Andrew Frazey, Sabit Duol, Luke Wegman, Braiden Herring, Jacob DeGroot, Sam Schrad and Kameron Dyer; (fourth row) Larson Goldsmith, Braden Hartman, Max Summa, Malachi Limback, Hank Hughes and Finn Hochstein; (fifth row) Cole Luebbe, Kyle Peery, Talan Schaefer, Andrew Gendron, Collin Nagel, Connor Matzke and Matthew Wegman; and (sixth row) Drew Collings, Caden Brooks, Jacob Mueller, Josh Ringler, Evett Howe and Gage Smith-Voshell. Braeden Dey is not pictured.

Boys' basketball

Coach's name: Trevor Menke

Sport: Seward boys' basketball

Last season's record: 5-15

Assistant coaches: Wade Miller and Tanner Shuck

Seniors on this year's team: Cole Gray and Nathan Miller

Returning letter winners: Traetyn Schaefer, Sam Schroeder, Drew Covalt

Holes to fill from last season: We are very young. Traetyn and Sam were only part-time

starters last year due to injury. We lack experience at the varsity class B level.

Strengths of this year's team: We have some hungry kids. They are not afraid of work and we are going to play hard.

Changes with COVID for this season: We are going day by day. Some December games are in jeopardy with teams in Lancaster County. We play Lincoln Christian, Norris and Lincoln Lutheran all before Christmas. We are pretty healthy and haven't been bitten by the Covid bug much since the start of school here.

Teams to watch in conference/district:

Adams Central (favorite) in conference. District is wide open.

Coach's name: Cam Scholl

Sport: Centennial boys' basketball

Last season's record: 21-5

Assistant coaches: Craig Barjenbruch, Bob Fish, Jordan Ortmeier and Stan Erks

Seniors on this year's team: Cooper Gierhan

(continued on page 4)



STEPHANIE CROSTON/SCI/MT

The 2020-21 boys' basketball team at Centennial includes, from left: (first row) Maj Nisly, Mike Nisly, Jake Bergen, Cooper Gierhan, Lance Haberman, Carson Prochaska, Shawn Rathjen and Jayde Gumaer; (second row) Jayden Hartshorn, Justin Rumery, Conner Clouse, Alex Hirschfeld, Elijah Utter and Jacob Warm; and (third row) Jesse Dunbar, Jonathan Hoops, Reiden Fowler, Ben Sams, John Fehlhafer and Clinton Turnbull. Levi Zimmer and Lane Zimmer are not pictured.

(continued from page 3)

Returning letter winners: Cooper Gierhan, Jake Bergen, Lane Zimmer, Levi Zimmer, Mike Nisly, Maj Nisly, Lance Haberman

Holes to fill from last season: We will really miss Joel Bergen and Caleb Horne.

Strengths of this year's team: Cooper Gi-

erhan and Jake Bergen give us a great 1-2 punch.

Changes with COVID for this season:

Too many to list. Going to have to be flexible.

Teams to watch in conference/district:

GICC in our district, Milford, Wilber, Sutton and Heartland in our conference.

Coach's name: Chris Lewandowski

Sport: Malcolm boys' basketball

Last season's record: 7-17

Assistant coaches: Zach Wehner and Jordan Case

Seniors on this year's team: Maclain
(continued on page 5)

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STEPHANIE CROSTON/SCI/MT

The 2020-21 Malcolm boys' basketball team includes, from left: (first row) Brayden Boehle, Malcolm Saltzman, Gavan Dunse, Jacob Schweitzer, Ethan Robotham, Maclain Beach, Trentyn Beekman and Connor Zegar; (second row) Brett Rhone, Anthony Kouma, Lucas Beckman, Hayden Frank, Drew Johnson, Lucas Christensen and Karter Kopecky; and (third row) Sam Burbach, Noah Gonyea, Carson Ramsier, Dalton Amen, Maddox Meyer, Noah VanEvery, Garret Bietz and Luke Schmidt. Owin Little and Cody Sykes are not pictured.

(continued from page 4)

Beach, Malcolm Saltzman, Gavan Dunse, Jacob Schweitzer, Trentyn Beekman, Ethan Robotham

Returning letter winners: Maclain Beach, Malcolm Saltzman, Ethan Robotham, Hayden Frank, Drew Johnson

Holes to fill from last season: Replacing inside presence of Jaydin Little who led the team in scoring and rebounding last year.

Strengths of this year's team: This group

loves the game and has strong basketball intelligence. We are going to have to do the little things really well to accomplish the goals that we have set. I have definitely seen this group get after it and compete during the summer.

Changes with COVID for this season: Obviously our start has been delayed until Dec. 7. We will have to get some things accomplished virtually and work out on our own until then. Hoping we are able to get going as soon as we can.

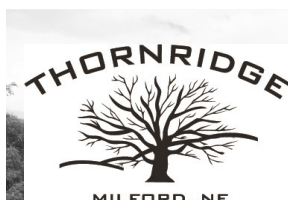
There will definitely be plenty of postponements and cancellations.

Teams to watch in conference/district: Auburn and Freeman will be two teams to watch in the conference. Milford and Lincoln Christian will be strong in the districts.

Coach's name: Tony Muller

Sport: Milford boys' basketball

(continued on page 6)



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CAITLYN NELSON/SCI/MT

The 2020-21 Milford High School boys' basketball team includes, from left: (first row) Jaxon Weyand, Cabe Schluckebier, Seth Stutzman, Maddox Baack, Isaac Yeackley, Collin Piening, Camden Springer and Micah Hartwig; (second row) Camdon Alaniz, Parker Roth, Colton Hauder, Carter Roth, Dylan Kroese, Garret Watenpaugh, Ayden Shook and Jamison Miller; and (back row) Orlando Rakow, Hudson Mullet, Nelson Girmus, Cayden Baker, Alec Shook, Chase Nitzsche, Omarion Weaver, Reice Stutzman and Kaden Guerra. Kaleb Miller, Bryce Jakub and Cason Tucker are not pictured.

(continued from page 5)

Last season's record: 11-13

Assistant coaches: Brett Troyer, Eric Lund, Todd Vegas

Seniors: Isaac Yeackley, Bryce Jakub, Cason Tucker, Kaleb Miller, Collin Piening

Lettermen: Isaac Yeackley, Bryce Jakub, Kaleb Miller, Cason Tucker, Seth Stutzman, Micah Hartwig, Cabe Schluckebier, Maddox Baack, Camden Springer, Jaxon Weyand (Crete).

Graduated: Carson Stauffer (2-year starter), Matt Walker - both forwards.

Strengths: We seem to have good depth at the guard position. We have good quickness and smart players. We need to develop more depth at forward and gain varsity experience.

COVID changes: We are practicing 100% in masks. You never really know who will be there from one day to the next because of the quarantining protocol. It makes it more difficult to get in

a flow with practices. It will definitely change the schedule of games.

Teams to watch: Sutton, Centennial, Heartland

MILFORD BASKETBALL

Dec. 4	host Fillmore Central	6/7:45p
Dec. 5	at Raymond Central	2/3:45p
Dec. 11	host Fairbury	6/7:45p
Dec. 12	at Lincoln Lutheran	3:45/5:30p
Dec. 15	host Ashland-Greenwood (G)	6p
Dec. 18	at Centennial	6/7:30p
Dec. 19	host Ashland-Greenwood (B)	3:30p
Dec. 21	host BDS	6/7:45p
Dec. 22	at North Bend Central	6/7:45p
Jan. 2	at Holiday Tournament	1/2:30p
Jan. 8	at Malcolm	6/7:45p
Jan. 9	host David City	6/7:45p
Jan. 12	at Syracuse (G)	6p
Jan. 16	host Thayer Central	6/7:45p

Jan. 19	at Lakeview	6/7:45p
Jan. 22	at Elmwood-Murdock	6/7:45p
Jan. 26	host Sutton	6/7:45p
Jan. 29	at Wilber-Clatonia	6/7:45p
Feb. 1-6	at Southern Nebraska Conf.	TBA
Feb. 12	host Sandy Creek	6/7:45p
Feb. 13	at Boys Town (B)	3:45p
Feb. 15-18	at Subdistricts (G)	TBA
Feb. 20	at District final (G)	TBA
Feb. 22-25	at Subdistricts (B)	TBA
Feb. 27	at District final (B)	TBA
March 4-6	at State (G), Lincoln	TBA
March 11-13	at State (B), Lincoln	TBA

times listed girls/boys varsity



Girls' basketball



COURTESY ILLUSTRATION
 Playing basketball for the Seward High girls' team in 2020-21 are, from left: (first row) Jayden Fernau, Ellie Greisen, Abbey Ringler, Anna Hughes, Hannah Benedict, Desirae Hibbert and Tarryn Hartman; (second row) Sofia Heaston, Eden Schulz, Keira Lliteras, Tanya Miller, Madison Dominy and Drew Kratochvil; (third row) Ona Stutzman, Lovely Hibbert, Ava King, Emmalee Herring and Haylie Sloup; (fourth row) Libby Kratochvil, Dalaney Anderson, Izzie Peetz and Katelyn Imig; and (fifth row) Maryn Johnson, Rilee Kreutz and Coral Collins. Isabelle Vanbeek is not pictured.

Girls' basketball

Coach's name: Beth Bohuslavsky
Sport: Seward girls' basketball
Last season's record: 6-14
Assistant coaches: Brock Anderson, Tanner Roth and Grace Barry
Seniors on this year's team: Anna Hughes and Abbey Ringler

Returning letter winners: Hannah Benedict, Ava King, Tanya Miller, Tarryn Hartman, Madison Dominy, Keira Lliteras and Eden Schulz
Holes to fill from last season: We will need to identify our roles and players will need to step and score. We will also need to be able to defend and rebound the ball. We also need to play with
(continued on page 8)

SEWARD BASKETBALL

Dec. 3	at Hastings	6/7:30p	Jan.25-30	at Central Conference	TBA
Dec. 5	host North Bend Central	2:30/4p	Feb. 2	host Lakeview	6/7:30p
Dec. 8	at Lincoln Christian	6/7:30p	Feb. 5	at Blair	6/7:30p
Dec. 12	host Northwest	2:30/4p	Feb. 9	host Fairbury	6/7:30p
Dec. 15	host Elkhorn North (G)	6:30p	Feb. 11	host Wayne	6/7:30p
Dec. 18	at Norris	6/7:30p	Feb. 12	at York	6/7:30p
Dec. 22	host Lincoln Lutheran	6/7:30p	Feb.15-18	at Subdistricts (G)	TBA
Dec.28-29	at Wahoo tournament	TBA	Feb. 20	at District final (G)	TBA
Jan. 8	at Beatrice	6/7:30p	Feb.22-25	at Subdistricts (B)	TBA
Jan. 12	host Schuyler	6/7:30p	Feb. 27	at District final (B)	TBA
Jan. 14	at Platteview (B)	7p	March 4-6	at State (G), Lincoln	TBA
Jan. 16	host Waverly	6/7:30p	March 11-13	at State (B), Lincoln	TBA
Jan. 19	at Crete	6/7:30p			
Jan. 22	host Aurora	6/7:30p			

times listed girls/boys varsity

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STEPHANIE CROSTON/SCI/MT

The Centennial girls' basketball team for 2020-21 includes, from left: (first row) Kailey Ziegler, Maddie Avery, Jaycee Stuhr, Kate Hirschfeld, Kiley Rathjen, Asia Nisly, Daylee Dey and Jaci Opfer; (second row) Karley Naber, Kia Brown, Gracen Fehlhafer, Halley Heidtbrink, Maddie Brandenburg, Alex Galavez, Brylie Streit and Savannah Horne; and (third row) Ariel Stuhr, Cora Payne, Ava Fischer, Molly Prochaska, Lillian Butzke and Rylee Menze. Not pictured are Kierra Green, Halle Kinnett, Krislyn Green, Jillian Bailey, Mallory Rozendahl and Aubree Wolfe.

(continued from page 7)

confidence.

Strengths of this year's team: Our girls work hard! Our team chemistry has been great and will only get better as we start to play with each other more. Our leaders have been stepping up to help our young girls. We return a lot of guards so our guard play will help us in the transition game.

Changes with COVID for this season:

Masks will be the big thing. We will wearing them as much as possible. We want to be playing in March, so we will be doing our part so the girls can have their season.

Teams to watch in conference/district:

Adams Central, York and GI Northwest

Coach's name: Jake Polk

Sport: Centennial girls' basketball

Last season's record: 16-9

Assistant coaches: Mark Ortmeier and Ann Endres

Seniors on this year's team: Kate Hirschfeld, Asia Nisly, Jaycee Stuhr, Kiley Rathjen, Daylee Dey, Kierra Green, Jaci Opfer, Kailey Ziegler, Maddie Avery, Jillian Bailey

Returning letter winners: Kate Hirschfeld, Asia Nisly, Jaycee Stuhr, Kiley Rathjen, Daylee Dey, Kierra Green, Kailey Ziegler, Maddie Avery, Halley Heidtbrink, Maddie Brandenburg

Holes to fill from last season: Interior post - Kaitlyn Fehlhafer

Strengths of this year's team: We are a very experienced team, but we also have a lot of length and skill. We will be able to press almost

every team we play, and we will be really good in transition. Our team has some good shooters that will need to find some consistency in order to open up the floor for our offense.

Changes with COVID for this season:

We are following all the expected and required precautions in regards to COVID this season.

Our team is separated into two locker rooms at

(continued on page 13)

CENTENNIAL BASKETBALL

Dec. 3	host David City	6/7:30p	Jan. 23	host Centura	2:30/4p
Dec. 5	at Nebraska Christian	4/5:30p	Jan. 26	host Fillmore Central	6/7:30p
Dec. 10	at Sandy Creek	6/7:30p	Jan. 29	at Thayer Central	6/7:30p
Dec. 15	at Fairbury	6/7:30p	Feb. 1-6	at Southern Nebraska Conf.	TBA
Dec. 18	host Milford	6/7:30p	Feb. 9	at Yutan (G)	7:30p
Dec. 19	at Superior	3:30/5p	Feb. 13	host Malcolm (B)	4:30p
Dec.29-30	at Malcolm tournament	TBA	Feb.15-18	at Subdistricts (G)	TBA
Jan. 2	host Heartland	3:30/5p	Feb. 19	host Wilber-Clatonia (B)	7:30p
Jan. 8	host Sutton	6/7:30p	Feb. 20	at District final (G)	TBA
Jan. 9	at Raymond Central	2:30/4p	Feb.22-25	at Subdistricts (B)	TBA
Jan. 12	at Shelby-Rising City	6/7:30p	Feb. 27	at District final (B)	TBA
Jan. 15	at Lakeview	6:15/8p	March 4-6	at State (G), Lincoln	TBA
Jan. 16	host Central City	2:30/4p	March 11-13	at State (B), Lincoln	TBA
Jan. 19	host Wilber-Clatonia (G)	7:30p	<i>times listed girls/boys varsity</i>		

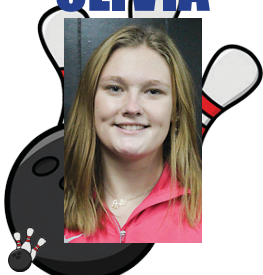
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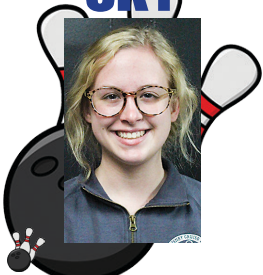
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OLIVIA



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SKY



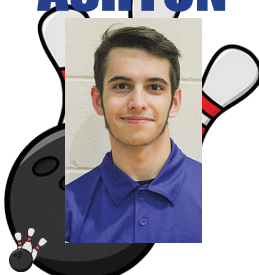
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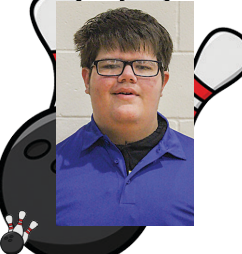
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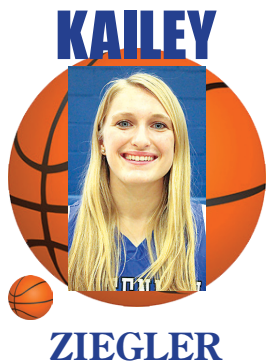
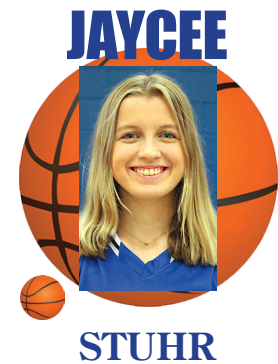
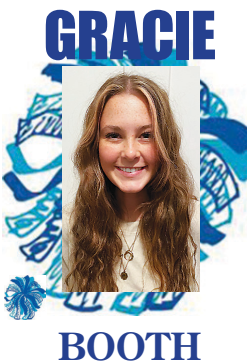
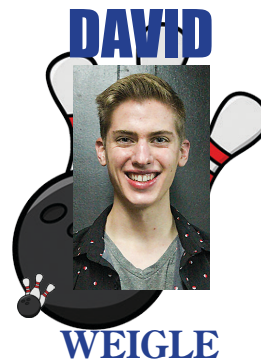
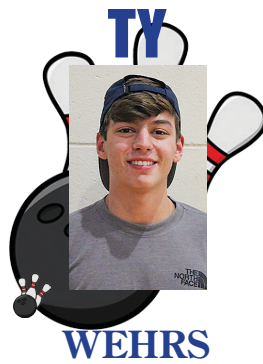
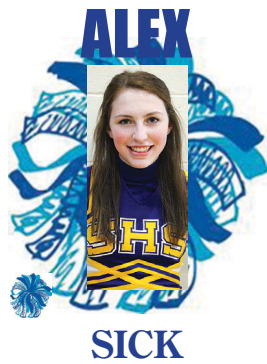
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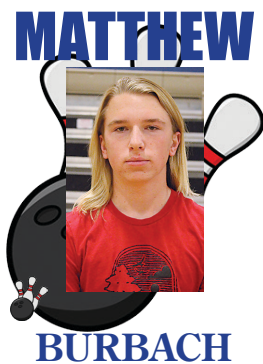
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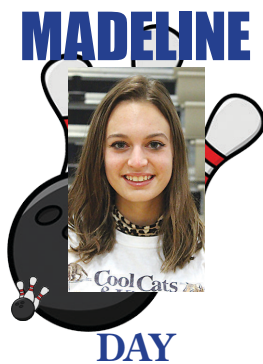
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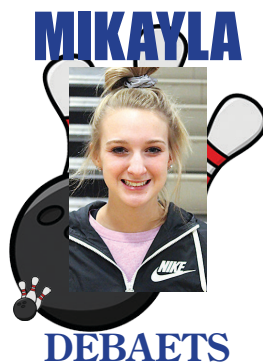
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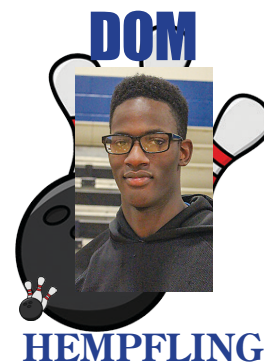
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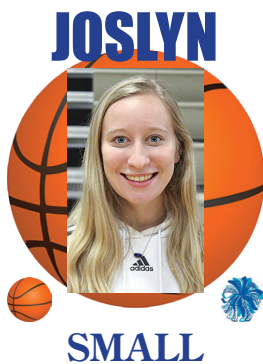
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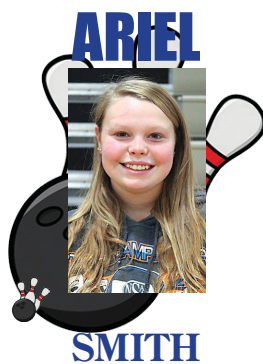
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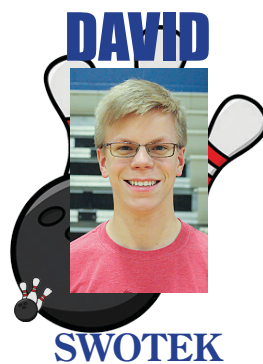
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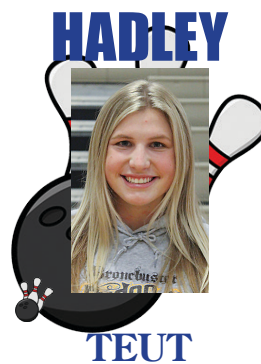
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THE MILFORD
Times

(continued from page 8)

our school to give the girls more space. In practice and in games, the coaching staff and managers will always be masked. We want to have a season, so we are willing to do whatever it takes, following whatever guidelines, in order for these girls to showcase their talents and represent their school.

Teams to watch in conference/district:

Conference: Sutton; District: Cross County

Coach's name: Andy Klepper



STEPHANIE CROSTON/SCI/MT

Playing basketball for the 2020-21 Malcolm girls' team are, from left: (first row) Heidi Wessel, Ashlynn Sehi, Joslyn Small and Jasmine Small; (second row) Riley McCall, Kennedy Cole, Jordan Denton, Reagan Wondercheck, Kiley Elkins and Lauryn England; (third row) Kyle Petersen, Alanea Babb, Diamond Sedlak, Alyssa Fortik, Addyson Hanson, Emma Brown and Madison Schultz; and (fourth row) Ava Helms, Camry Sehi, Jhordyn Kirkpatrick, Karter Kinkaid, Keira Farritor and Abby Zegar. Mattie Kucera, Delaney Wollberg, Cora Schweitzer and Luci Brockhaus are not pictured.

Sport: Malcolm girls' basketball

Last season's record: 19-7

Assistant coaches: Michael Trausch, Jonathan Hunt

Seniors on this year's team: Ashlynn Sehi, Joslyn Small, Jasmine Small

Returning letter winners: Alyssa Fortik, Emma Brown, Joslyn Small, Ashlynn Sehi, Diamond Sedlak, Jasmine Small, Jordan Denton, Lauryn England, Kiley Elkins, Reagan Wondercheck

Holes to fill from last season: We have our main group back from last season. We need to develop more scoring and find ways to rebound the
(continued on page 14)

MALCOLM BASKETBALL

Dec. 4	host Weeping Water	6/7:30p
Dec. 5	host Auburn	6:30/8p
Dec. 8	at Conestoga	6/7:30p
Dec. 12	host Cross County	6/7:30p
Dec. 15	host Elmwood-Murdock	6/7:30p
Dec. 19	at Raymond Central	2:30/4p
Dec. 22	host Louisville	6/7:30p
Dec. 29-30	host holiday tournament	TBA
Jan. 7	at Palmyra	6/7:30p
Jan. 8	host Milford	6/7:30p
Jan. 9	at UNK (G)	11:45a
Jan. 12	host Fillmore Central	6/7:30p
Jan. 15	at Yutan	6/7:30p
Jan. 16	host David City	6/7:30p
Jan. 19	host Freeman	6/7:30p
Jan. 22	at Wilber-Clatonia	6/7:30p
Jan. 23	host Mead	4:30/6p
Jan. 26	host JCC	6/7:30p
Jan. 30-Feb. 6	at ECNC	TBA
Feb. 9	at Wahoo (G)	7:30p
Feb. 13	at Centennial (B)	4:30p
Feb. 15-18	at Subdistricts (G)	TBA
Feb. 19	at Ashland-Greenwood (B)	7:30p
Feb. 20	at District final (G)	TBA
Feb. 22-25	at Subdistricts (B)	TBA
Feb. 27	at District final (B)	TBA
March 4-6	at State (G), Lincoln	TBA
March 11-13	at State (B), Lincoln	TBA

times listed girls/boys varsity

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Members of the 2020-21 Milford High School girls' basketball team are, from left: (first row) Hannah Kepler, Kaitlyn Klug, Makena Stutzman, Alayna Piening and Mariah Richards; (second row) Josie Hansen, Kaitlin Kontor, Sydney Stelling, Taylor Roth, Celia Bontroger, Camille Stauffer, Amy Bousquet and Rebecca Freeman; and (third row) Ava Maple, Mackenzie Watenpaugh, Hannah Schilz, Sarah Spahr, Maddie Roth, Addi Mowinkel and Macy Stutzman. Abby Houk is not pictured.



(continued from page 13)

ball.

Strengths of this year's team: We will play great defense and play with a lot of energy. I also like our ball handling which should lead to fewer turnovers per game.

Changes with COVID for this season: We can't practice or play until Dec. 7. We might have to play a game on Dec. 8 without any practices since we are in Lancaster County.

Teams to watch in conference/district: Hopefully we are the team to watch in conference play. C1 will be very competitive as always. We have an experience advantage over a lot of teams, but they are getting extra practice and game time while we have to sit out.

Coach's name: Phil Stauffer

Sport: Milford girls' basketball

Assistants: Michele Kontor, Bobbi Broekemeier

Last season: 17 - 7

Seniors: Abby Houk , Hannah Kepler , Kaitlyn Klug , Alayna Piening , Mariah Richards , Makena Stutzman

Returning letter winners: Hannah Kepler , Abby Houk

Holes to fill: Need to find some scorers on offense. Not a lot of experience but think we can grow into a pretty good team.

Strengths: Will have good height this year and deep bench. These girls have played really

well together the last few seasons. Should be good defensively.

COVID: We are just doing everything we can to do our part so we can play this season. Taking it a day at a time and hopefully everything works out.

Conference teams: Sutton, Centennial and Superior should all have good teams this year. Our district is always tough with MalcoIm, Christian and Lutheran in our subs again.

Good luck area schools!

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Wrestling



COURTESY ILLUSTRATION/SCI/MT

The 2020-21 Seward High wrestling team includes, from left: (first row) Treyton Hobson, Cash Duncan, Conner Rosendale, Matt Flyr, Nolan Hill, Riley Prochnow and Nolan Stanton; (second row) Zack Vrbka, Ethan Woolard, Eli Hiser, Dustin Hurley, Xander Foulk and Thunder Hayek; (third row) Mason Bisbee, Daniel Clark, Reid Schanou, Boone Duncan and Breckin Schoepf; and (fourth row) Conner Towle, Hunter Novacek, Cameron Schrad and Jackson Warren.

Wrestling

Coach's name: Bob Core

Sport: Seward wrestling

Assistant coaches: Nate Stepp, Bill Covert

Seniors on this year's team: Jackson Warren, Daniel Clark, Hunter Novacek, Boone

Duncan, Cameron Schrad, Reid Schanou.

Returning letter winners: Cash Duncan, Jackson Warren, Daniel Clark, Mason Bisbee, Breckin Schoepf, Nolan Hill, Conner Rosendale.

Holes to fill from last season: We lost some good upper weight wrestlers at 182, 195, 220.

Strengths of this year's team: Our middle weights should be our strength.

Changes with COVID for this season: Our schedule seems to change daily. They will do a subdistrict and then a district tournament. State
(continued on page 16)

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(continued from page 15)

has been restructured. **Teams to watch in conference/district:** Aurora and GINW will be the teams to watch at conference. Blair and York will be the teams at districts.

Coefficient's name: Phil Payne
Sport: Centennial wrestling
Last season's record: 7-10
Assistant coaches: Wayne Heine and Jake Prochaska
Seniors on this year's team: Ryan Payne and Tyson Rodewald

Returning letter winners: Ryan Payne, Tyson Rodewald, Keenan Kosek, Colby Martin, Garrett Schernikau, Sam Payne, Carson Fehlhafer

Holes to fill from last season: 138-145
Strengths of this year's team: Seniors and junior with experience, young freshman with a lot of potential as a group.

Changes with COVID for this season: We already did most of it, just being diligent. Schedule will change considerably.

Teams to watch in conference/district: Logan View and Aquinas

nas at Districts, David City in Conference.
Coefficient's name: Joe Schluckebier

Sport: Milford wrestling
Last season's record: Sixth place Class C

Assistant coaches: Barry Erb, Jonah Peterson, Ken Burkhardt Jr.
Seniors on this year's team: Konner

Schluckebier, Trent Stauffer, Lorenzo Temple, Isaac Voboril
Returning letter winners: Konner

Schluckebier, Carter Springer, Jack Chapman, Lorenzo Temple,
(continued on page 17)



STEPHANIE CROSTON/SCI/MT

Centennial's wrestling team for 2020-21 includes, from left: (front row) Trayton Stewart, Ryan Payne, Jarrett Dodson, Garrison Schernikau, Cyrus Songster and Dakota Gwinn; and (back row) Samuel Payne, Tyson Rodewald, Carson Fehlhafer, Nickolas Keith and Austin Patchin. Keenan Kosek, Colby Martin and Garrett Schernikau are not pictured.



STEPHANIE CROSTON/SCI/MT

Wrestling for Milford High in 2020-21 are, from left: (first row) Keenan Troyer, Conner Kohout, Eli Vondra, Konner Schluckebier, Carter Springer, Brody Mach and Hunter Oborny; (second row) Thomas Vance, Cale Burkhardt, Kasen Petsch, Trey Lyon and JJ Sage; and (third row) Ethan Buchli, Trent Stauffer, Lorenzo Temple, Isaac Voboril, Jack Chapman and Christopher Scdoris. Scott Klinginsmith and Joey Kenning are not pictured.

Wrestling for Malcolm in the 2020-21 season are, from left: (first row) Zack Pasco and Trevor Lohrman; (second row) Luke Walters, Caleb Courter, Kale Nordmeyer, Gavin Zoucha, Cooper Witte and Riley Donahoo; (third row) Cheyenne Benischek, James Watts, Elliott Robotham, Colt Reiling, Zane Zoucha and Josh Stewart; and (fourth row) Cydnee Loos, Cayden Witzel, Bricen Wilke and Bryce Teut. Aidan Hardin is not pictured.



(continued from page 16)

Thomas Vance, Joey Kenning, Trent Stauffer, Trace Rowland, Isaac Voboril, Christopher Scdoris, Ethan Buchli, Eli Vondra

Holes to fill from last season: We lost two outstanding seniors in Jeaven Scdoris and Ethan Zegers, but we have multiple guys ready to step up and score big points for us.

Strengths of this year's team: We should have a full line-up for maybe the first time in school history, and we have a lot of returning experience including being led by one of the first state champions Milford has had in 31 years in Konner

(continued on page 18)

CENTENNIAL WRESTLING

Dec. 3	at Freeman Duals	4:30p
Dec. 5	at Friend Invite	9a
Dec. 10	at County Triangular, Seward	6p
Dec. 17	host Triangular	5:30p
Dec. 19	at Wahoo Invite	9a
Dec. 22	at Sutton Duals	11a
Jan. 8-9	at High Plains Invite	10a/10a
Jan. 14	host Quad	5p
Jan. 15	at Minden Duals	3p
Jan. 22	at David City Invite	10a
Jan. 30	at SNC, Wilber	10a
Feb. 5-6	at Subdistrict C3-A, Aquinas	TBA
Feb.12-13	host District C3	TBA
Feb.19-20	at State, Omaha	4p/1p

MALCOLM WRESTLING

Dec. 4	at Broken Bow Invite	9:30a
Dec. 12	at Crete Invite	9a
Dec. 18	at Crete	6:30p
Dec. 19	at Wahoo Invite	9a
Dec. 31	at JCC Quad	9a
Jan. 8	host Broken Bow	7p
Jan. 9	host Malcolm Invite	9a
Jan. 14	host Raymond Central	7p
Jan. 16	at Schuyler Invite	9a
Jan. 22	at David City Invite	10a
Jan. 23	at Oakland-Craig Invite	9a
Jan. 28	at David City Triangular	6:30p
Jan. 30	at Raymond Central Invite	9a
Feb. 5-6	at Subdistrict C3-A, Aquinas	TBA
Feb.12-13	at District C3, Centennial	TBA
Feb.19-20	at State, Omaha	4p/1p

SEWARD WRESTLING

Dec. 3	host Triangular	5p
Dec. 5	at Cozad Invite	9:30a
Dec. 10	host County Triangular	6p
Dec. 12	at Crete Invite	9a
Dec. 18	at Platteview Invite	2p
Jan. 8	at Ashland-Greenwood Invite	4:30p
Jan. 12	at Platteview Duals	5:30p
Jan. 14	at Northwest	7p
Jan. 16	at Nebraska City Invite	10a
Jan. 21	host Schuyler	6p
Jan. 23	at Plattsmouth Invite	9:30a
Jan. 28	host Double Dual	5:30p
Jan. 30	at Central Conference	9:30a
Feb. 5-6	at Subdistrict B2-B, York	TBA
Feb.12-13	at District B3, Blair	TBA
Feb.19-20	at State, Omaha	9a/9a

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Malcolm's unified bowling team in 2020 includes, from left: (front row) Matthew Burbach, Dom Hempfling, Hadley Teut, Ariel Smith, Madeline Day, Mikayla De-Baets, Sami Koso and Emma Brown; and (back row) Addyson Hanson, David Swotek, Katie Lewis, Danielle Fortik, Abby Cantrell, Connor Zegar and Brayden Boehle.



MILFORD WRESTLING

Dec. 3	host Triangular	5:30p
Dec. 5	at Friend Invite	9a
Dec. 10	at County Triangular, Seward	6p
Dec. 12	at Crete Invite	9a
Dec. 15	at Axtell Invite	11a
Dec. 19	at tournament, TBA	TBA
Dec. 22	host Quad	4p
Jan. 8	at Wilber-Clatonia Duals	3:30p
Jan. 9	at Aquinas Invite	10a
Jan. 14	at York Triangular	5:30p
Jan. 16	at Arlington Invite	9:30a
Jan. 22	at David City Invite	10a
Jan. 30	at SNC, Wilber	10a
Feb. 5-6	at Subdistrict C3-A, Aquinas	TBA
Feb. 12-13	at District C3, Centennial	TBA
Feb. 19-20	at State, Omaha	4p/1p

(continued from page 17)

Schluckebier. We have eight freshman this year, and a few of those will have an immediate impact on our lineup. Konner Schluckebier (first) and Eli Vondra (fifth) are our two returning state medalists.

Changes with COVID for this season:

Tournaments are adhering to the 8-team limit and some are changing to dual format.

Teams to watch in conference/district:

SNC Conference is always tough. We were runner up last year to the eventual state champion David City. Wilber is always a tough conference opponent, and Centennial and Fairbury have some good youth to help out their lineups. Our district will include Aquinas for the fourth year in a row, and Logan View which are the two toughest teams on paper.

Coach's name: Matt Coufal

Sport: Malcolm wrestling

Assistant coaches: Cole Gore and Cole Jividan

Seniors on this year's team: TJ Lohrman and Zack Pasco

Returning letter winners: TJ Lohrman, Zack Pasco, Caleb Courter, Zane Zoucha, Kale Nordmeyer, Gavin Zoucha, Riley Donahoo

Holes to fill from last season: Dylan Zoucha, one of most decorated wrestler in school history, third place finish last year at state

Strengths of this year's team: Good group of experience and youth on this years team. Should fill all weight classes. Have a core group of returning state qualifiers, medalists and point scorers that will do a nice job of leading the team.

(continued on page 19)

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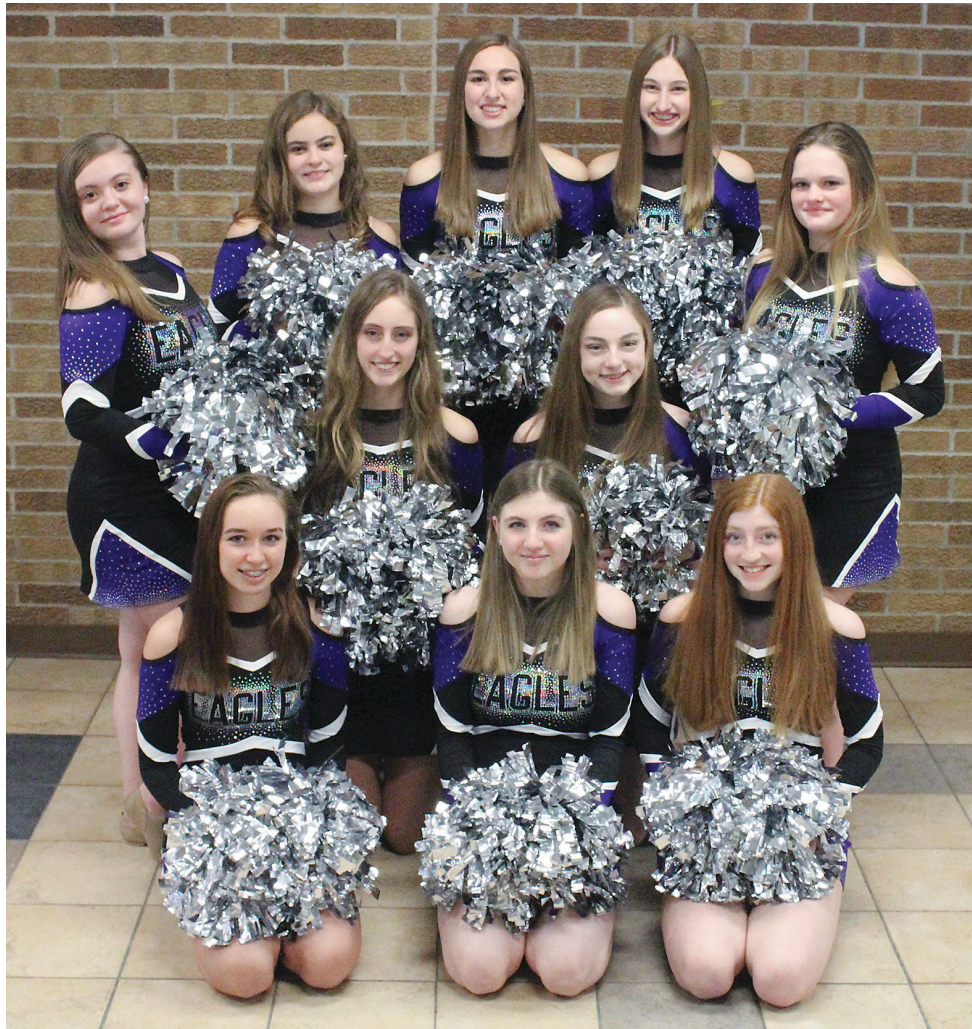
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Good luck, Eagles & Broncos!

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(continued from
page 18)

Have 20 out so also a very solid number to work with.

Changes with COVID for this season: Where to begin... Unable to compete at always tough Schuyler invite because of eight-team recommendations. Start of season - including practice - put off until Dec. 7 at the earliest. This really puts us in a

STEPHANIE CROSTON/SCI/MT

Left: The 2020-21 Milford High dance team includes, from left: (first row) Addison Sample, Hannah Wittstruck and Brooklyn McDonald; (second row) Emma Hershberger, Phoebe Kolb, Abigail Hovendick and Morgan Havlat; and (third row) Ally Taylor, Savannah Spahr and Sarah Spahr.



COURTESY PHOTO

The 2020-21 cheerleading squad at Malcolm High includes, from left: (front row) Hana Maddox, Mackenna Henson, Joslyn Small, Piper Beatty, Jasmine Small and Reagan Wondercheck; and (back row) Berkley Barrett, Kennedy Cole, Bailey Hraban, Sidney Holliday, Emma Meyers, Katie Lewis, Abby Zegar and Scarlett Battles.

bind being 15 practices behind everyone else not in Lancaster County. We'll deal with it, get through it, and compete.

Teams to watch in conference/district:

Aquinas Catholic and Milford are both in our subdistrict. They both

return some depth and talent. Conf. final will be more individually based so we'll have to wait and see on that. Within our conference Yutan and Auburn will have solid teams. Not sure on Falls City as we haven't competed against them much.

*From our team to yours,
Good Luck!*



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Bowling

A new sport joins the Nebraska School Activities Association this season – bowling. In the past, bowling was a club sport, which meant it didn’t fall under a school umbrella.

The 32 schools with bowling teams will be in one class.

Bowling

Coach: Julie Benes
Sport: Seward High girls’ bowling
Assistant coach: Steve Conner
Seniors: Olivia Benes and Sky Brumm
Strengths: Our two seniors will definitely be our leaders, but all of our bowlers bring strength to our team thanks to the strong bowling presence in Seward.
 COVID won’t affect bowling quite as much as other sports, but wearing a mask will be

different. And hopefully no quarantine!
Teams to watch: Pius is always tough, and I’m sure the Omaha teams will be good. This being the first year for NSAA will be different.
 We are so excited to finally be a part of NSAA, we can’t wait for the season to start!
Coach: Steve Conner
Sport: Seward High boys’ bowling
Seniors: Ashton Conner, Hunter Kitzing, James Murray, Ty Wehrs and David Weigle
Returning starters: Dane Conner, Ashton Koetter
Holes to fill: Lost four seniors/starters
Strengths: Some seniors with experience and who are good bowlers; others with the

potential to do well
COVID: Masks are mandated in bowling alleys. Some places will

limit fans because of space.
Teams to watch: Because bowling is

a new NSAA sport, districts have not been assigned. However, Fremont, Columbus and

Millard North and West are strong programs.



The 2020-21 bowling team at Seward High includes, from left: (first row) Timmy Taylor, Riley Daniel, Ty Wehrs, Owen Sackschewsky, Dane Conner, Ashton Koetter, Noah Brumm and Ashton Conner; (second row) Carl Taylor, Zac Shepard, Dawson Dlouhy, Eric Strole, Kohltyn Lindau, Kretyn Roth and David Weigle; (third row) Maddie Viger, RaeLynn Sugden, James Murray, Colin Standifer, Alexis Pallat and Audrey Davis; and (fourth row) Olivia Benes, Sky Brumm, Eve Brumm and Megan Hague. Hunter Kitzing, Ethan Ostrander and Tanner Todd are not pictured.

SEWARD BOWLING

Dec. 19	at Double Dual (TBA)	10a	Jan. 19	host Gretna	4:30p
Dec. 21	at Maplewood Lanes, Omaha	9a	Jan. 23	host Wayne	noon
Dec. 29	at Sun Valley Lanes, Lincoln	10a	Feb. 1-3	at Districts, TBA	TBA
Jan. 9	host Double Dual	noon	Feb. 8-9	at State, TBA	TBA



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