



## Knights of Columbus Free Throw contest held Sunday

See page 6



## Wheeler Central students lend voices to festival choir

See page 7

SERVING ANTELOPE, BOONE, and WHEELER COUNTIES, NEBRASKA SINCE 1883

# The Elgin Review

Wednesday  
February 25, 2026

Volume 143, Number 23

1 Section, 12 Pages

USPS Number 172-8220

\$1.00

## In Brief

### Elgin City Council to meet Monday night

Meeting to begin at 7:30 p.m.

The Elgin City Council is scheduled to meet in regular session on Monday, March 2.

The meeting, scheduled to begin at 7:30 p.m. will be held at city hall and is open to the public.

Among the items on the agenda will be to review the number of applications received to fill job positions. Currently, the city is seeking life-guardians and other help to operated the Elgin Swimming Pool once it opens for the season.

Also, city hall is taking applications to fill the position of city maintenance worker. An opening was created when Donnie Poulsen, Jr., announced plans to retire later this year.

### Summer ball registration to be held March 2

At the Elgin Public Library.

It's that time again when youngsters start thinking about the summer ball season.

According to Kim Fangman, the date has been set for summer ball sign up for both boys and girls teams. It will be Monday, March 2.

The event will be held at the Elgin Public Library, starting at 4 p.m. and concluding at 7 p.m. Fangman said it's possible there could be six boys teams and four girls teams this year. Also, girls 6U & 8U coaches are needed.



Courtesy photo

### Wolfpack dance team all smiles at state competition Friday in G.I.

Elgin Public-Pope John dance team showed off their many talents Friday, competing in the State Dance Championships held in Grand Island. They competed in Pom and Hip-Hop events and, although not placing in either event, they represented their school and community to the highest standards. The team did receive an academic excellence award for their work in the classroom. Dance team members competing were (l-r): Sophia Burke, Braelyn Martinsen, Molly Thiessen, Kayton Zwingman, Jael Lammers, Sadie Thiessen, Gentry Zwingman, Sydney Niewohner, Kynlee Tillis and Kierstyn Eisenhauer.

## Elgin community housing survey launches to support future growth and opportunity

The City of Elgin is launching a community-wide Housing Survey and encourages residents, employers, property owners, and community members to participate.

Housing plays a critical role in the future of the community. Whether it's supporting local businesses, attracting new families, or retaining young professionals, the availability and condition of housing directly impacts long-term growth and sustainability in Elgin.

The purpose of the survey is to gather accurate, up-to-date information about local housing needs. The survey will help identify the types of housing needed, attainable price ranges, challenges residents face, and opportunities for improvement or development.

Why does this matter? Many state and federal grant programs require documented community

need before funding can be awarded. Without clear, current data, communities often struggle to compete for valuable resources. Participation in the housing survey helps position Elgin for future funding opportunities that support:

- Workforce housing development
- Owner-occupied housing rehabilitation
- Downtown and neighborhood revitalization
- Infrastructure improvements that support new housing
- Economic development initiatives tied to housing growth

In Nebraska, programs such as the Nebraska Affordable Housing Trust Fund, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) programs, workforce housing funds, and other state-administered initiatives often require demonstrated need, local input, and documented housing gaps. The survey helps

build that foundation.

The survey is not a commitment to any specific project. It serves as a planning tool to help community leaders:

- Identify priorities
  - Strengthen future grant applications
  - Provide evidence when pursuing funding
  - Make informed decisions about development
- When paired with insights from last year's LB840 community survey, this information will help align housing priorities with Elgin's broader economic development goals.

The survey will be available online, and paper copies may be picked up at the City Hall office beginning March 2.

Completed paper surveys should also be returned to the City Hall office. The deadline to complete the survey is March 25, 2026

## Public Notices

Public notices in this week's newspaper include:

Notice of Meetings — Antelope County Board of Commissioners

The Elgin Review is the official legal newspaper for Antelope County, Antelope County Historical Society, Village of Bartlett, Upper Elkhorn Natural Resources District, the State of Nebraska, the City of Elgin and Elgin School District #18.

## Weather

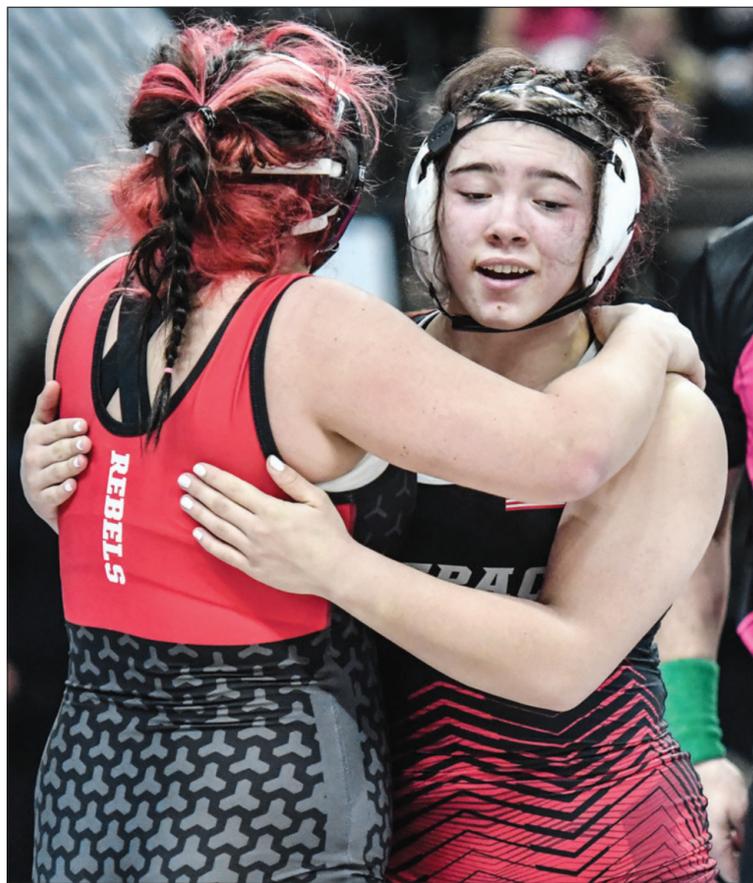
The high temperature last week was 73 degrees recorded on Tuesday, February 17.

The low temperature during the same period was 3 degrees recorded on Saturday, February 21.

Altogether, 0.25 of an inch of precipitation was recorded last week.

Following are the high and low temperatures, and precipitation amounts, as recorded by Elgin weather observer Leonard Orlowski.

Date	High	Low	Prec
Feb 15	66	26	.00
Feb 16	67	36	.00
Feb 17	73	35	.00
Feb 18	54	13	.00
Feb 19	21	05	.25
Feb 20	32	05	.00
Feb 21	32	03	.00
Total for last week			0.25
Total for February			0.25
Total precipitation 2026			0.39



E-R photo

### Once again a state medalist!

Wolfpack junior wrestler Libby Evans made it two in a row last week as she earned her second fourth place medal at the NSAA Girls State Wrestling Championships in Omaha. She won four of six matches, three by pin, at the state tournament. Congratulations!

## Extradition granted for Iowa woman charged with felony fentanyl possession

A 19-year-old Sioux City, Iowa, woman facing a Class IV felony, appeared before the Honorable Kale Burdick, Feb. 18, in Antelope County Court.

Ivy J. Romo was advised of a demand for extradition made by the State of Nebraska.

She waived extradition and agreed to voluntarily return to Nebraska.

Romo's council, Martin Klein of Neligh, requested a March 12 preliminary hearing. Antelope County Attorney Joe Smith did not object.

Burdick conducted a bond hearing. Smith requested \$10,000-10% be set, with conditions that Romo not use alcohol or controlled substances and comply with probation in Iowa.

Burdick also ordered Romo to sign a waiver of extradition as part of the bond conditions.

Romo faces one count of possession of a controlled substance, stemming from a Dec. 12 incident when she was arrested, after Antelope County law enforcement officials received a report of a reckless driver. Deputy Riley Schroeder was dispatched to Casey's General Store, where he observed a vehicle matching a description.

While Schroeder spoke with the vehicle's driver, identified as Hannah M. Thomas, of Sioux City, Iowa, the deputy observed two passengers in the vehicle and detected the smell of marijuana.

Schroeder asked the occupants to exit the vehicle due to probable cause of marijuana in the vehicle. Thomas indicated she did not know about it, but one of the passenger's, Ivy Romo, "said she had a roach on her." Romo was identified to be Thomas's daughter.

The passenger in the back seat was identified as Anthony Hayes.

The occupants exited the vehicle, and law enforcement officers began a search, where they found an open bottle of Fireball, an open Four-Loko alcoholic drink, a THC/weed vape, and a syringe in the pocket of the passenger seat on the back-side.

According to the probable cause affidavit, the syringe was tested using a drug test kit and tested positive for fentanyl.

Thomas and Romo had recently been charged for possession of methamphetamine in Sioux City.

All three suspects were arrested and transported to the Antelope County Sheriff's Office for questioning.

Thomas and Romo denied possession of the fentanyl. Romo "claimed it was from someone they gave a ride to previously."

On Dec. 18, a \$20,000 personal recognizance bond was set.

Romo was originally ordered to appear Jan. 7, but failed to appear, and a warrant was issued for her arrest.

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From JoAnn Baum's Kitchen

# Corn Casserole



Good day, In our family, February is Birthday month and my family looks forward to Mom's fried chicken supper. Well

There are never any leftovers! Give is a try next time you have a big family meal. It's so easy!

Delicious! JoAnn

that's this Sunday! Fried chicken is the main course but the favorite sides are mashed potatoes, gravy, and Mom's corn casserole. I get to make it quite a few times in a year. They all agree that using my own frozen corn is the best.

## CORN CASSEROLE

1-16 oz can cream style corn  
1-16 oz can whole kernel corn and juice. I use my own frozen corn (it's about 2 cups with the juice)

1 cup macaroni  
3/4 cup melted butter  
1 cup cubed velvet cheese  
1/2 cup mil (optional)

Mix all the ingredients together. Place in a greased casserole dish. Cover with foil and bake at 350° in the oven for 30 minutes. After 30 minutes, remove the foil and stir it and bake another 30 minutes.

Hint: You may have to add a little milk to the recipe if using your own frozen corn) Yummy.

## Branding bill subject of hearing

This past week, the Agriculture Committee heard two bills at a public hearing: LB1187 and LB1258. Both bills propose changes to the state's livestock branding law. The Nebraska Livestock Brand Act requires cattle owners in the western two-thirds of the state to comply with mandatory brand inspections. These inspections are overseen by the Nebraska Brand Committee and are meant to safeguard against cattle theft.

### LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



District 40 Senator Barry DeKay

Last year, the Agriculture Committee held an interim hearing to examine the Livestock Brand Act and the role and mission of the Brand Committee. At this hearing, the Agriculture Committee learned that the Brand Committee has a declining cash fund balance. The closure of the Tyson Beef Plant in Lexington earlier this year is anticipated to substantially reduce inspection fee revenues, requiring additional drawdown on the agency's cash fund and may potentially exhaust the fund in the near future.

My bill LB1187 would change certain inspection fees charged under the Livestock Brand Act. Today, the Brand Committee is au-

See DeKAY, Page 5 ►

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# ELGIN FFA celebrates!

our 2025-2026 members...



The 2025-26 Elgin FFA Chapter members. Back row (l-r): Levi Scheer, Sheamus McClain, Jase Thomson, Aurora Burke, Cael Bottorf, Cara Romej, Dominic Durre, Cecil Shavlik, Braxtyn Eisenhauer, Ethan Hansen, Macy Rokahr and Advisor Julia Schwartz. Fourth row: Sydney Niewohner, Lillian Moser, Jael Lammers, John Zwingman, Garrett Busted, Max Henn, Joseph McNally, Raaf Klein, Christian Preister, Danyka Smidt, Rylen Schwarting, Kierstyn Eisenhauer and Bristol Buschow. Third row: Anna Dworak, Tenley Schindler, Sophia Burke, Kynlee Tillis, Gentry Zwingman, Cielo Kuhlman, Evin Pelster, Jayvin Erickson, Justice Blecher, Gavin Kallhoff, Braedon Hinkle, Molly Thiessen, Kaidynce Schrad, Sadie Thiessen and Megan Wright. Second row: Kayton Zwingman, Kinley Miller, Elizabeth Moser, Brooke Kinney, Aubrie Parks, Haley Parks, Kaiden Bode, Jarek Erickson, Trey Rittscher, Michael Selting, Madelyn Kurggweit and Zoey Buechter. Front row: Jaydalynn Chessmore, Braelyn Martinsen, Kyndal Busted, Kylee Lichtenberg, Isaac Hemenway, Brayden Burenheid, Gemma Miller and Libby Evans. Members not pictured: Kyla Donaldson, Ticen Sparr and Rylee Rokahr.

our leaders...



Front row (l-r): Junior Advisor Jaydalynn Chessmore, President Isaac Hemenway and Parliamentarian Libby Evans. Middle row: Secretary Kylee Lichtenberg, Sentinel Brayden Burenheid and Vice President Gemma Miller. Back row: Reporter Braelyn Martinsen and Treasurer Kyndal Busted. E-R photos/LMorgan

Remaining chapter activities this week:

**WEDNS.**  
Finding cow/duck continues

**THURS.**  
Necklace War (rock, paper, scissors)  
Finding cow/duck continues  
Elementary color contest concludes

**FRI.**  
Ice Cream for everyone at lunch!  
Finding cow/duck continues



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**CITY OF ELGIN MAINTENANCE**

High School Diploma or equivalent and a valid driver's license required. Successful candidate will need to live within a reasonable distance from city limits. Applicant shall have or be willing to obtain a Grade IV Water Operator's license and Grade I Wastewater Operator's license.

Job responsibilities will be across all departments - streets, water, sewer, park, pool. Work duties will be labor intensive which can include, but not limited to testing; repair and maintenance of the municipal streets, water and sewer systems; heavy equipment operator; snow removal; general labor; upkeep of city owned properties and equipment. Drug test required. Salary based on qualifications and experience.

Interested individuals should submit an application to the **City of Elgin, PO Box 240, Elgin, NE 68636** or drop off at City Hall, 104 Pine Street, Elgin, NE. Applications can be found on the City of Elgin website [www.elginnebraska.org](http://www.elginnebraska.org), or by stopping at City Hall during open business hours. Position open until filled. EOE.

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# Finding fulfillment outside of work

Our Lenten journey – our journey into the desert with Jesus – has begun.

## Faith



Elgin Columnist  
Susan Szalewski

So far, God keeps telling me that this journey will entail suffering, that it will lead to the Cross. But honestly, just one week into Lent, life has been anything but a dry, barren desert. Instead He has given me consolations and delights, even material gifts.

So much good news since Ash Wednesday: a good cancer scan for my sister; a doctor appointment set for this week for another relative, after we were told it might take months to get in; notification of a full-ride college scholarship for our youngest child; a much-needed vehicle provided for our family.

After being marked with ashes, I was prepared to fight and persevere. Instead, God is giving me joy.

In prayer, though, He's preparing me for Good Friday. In the desert, I see storms on the horizon.

Though my sister with cancer has been doing remarkably well, I wonder: How long can the good news last? When will her suffering begin in earnest? How much time do I have left with her?

A different loved one, who is struggling with neurological problems, possibly from alcohol abuse, is starting to get the help he needs.

But what will it take to turn his life around, to end an addiction that will kill him if it's not stopped?

Such dark clouds loom in everyone's life. Some of us are in the middle of storms right now.

We cannot escape the Cross. But Christ promises He is here with us. He won't abandon us.

During this Lenten journey, Jesus prepares us for our crosses. As our Guide and Teacher in the desert, He's trying to instruct us in how to bear our crosses patiently, how to unite them with His Cross, how He can use our pain and sorrow to help us and to help others.

I read with wonder and confusion how martyrs suffered so terribly – but also with grace and even joy.

They give me hope – and confidence – that God gives us all we need in the desert and on

the Cross.

How else do we endure? In the desert, during Lent, Jesus shows us how. He is the Way.

Trust Him. Follow Him. He knows what's best for us. He promises that our journey doesn't end at the Cross.

\*\*\*\*\*  
Comments are welcome and can be sent to [talesofatiredmomma@gmail.com](mailto:talesofatiredmomma@gmail.com).

# Looking Back

Sixty Years Ago

March 3, 1966

A fire Saturday morning burned and totally destroyed a calving barn at the east Wolf ranch. All of the calving records were also burned but there was no death of livestock. The records were kept in an office in the building.

Dr. W.W. Graham, 71, was seriously injured Wednesday last week when he fell down a basement stairway at the Leslie Anderson home northwest of here. Dr. Graham, Leonard Wagner, Roland Kinney, and Leslie Anderson were holding one of their weekly cribbage sessions when the mishap occurred. The accident happened around 9:30 p.m.

Elgin's St. Boniface Knights successfully defended their 1965 Dist. 10 Class D championship title here Thursday night by defeating Clearwater, 76-51. The Knights who were defeated last year in the opening round of the state Class D basketball tournament at Lincoln have now won three of five games necessary to return for their second state championship opportunity.

Orchard, Clearwater and Elgin High had easy opening round wins in the Sandhills Gateway Conference Frosh-Soph basketball tournament Monday night. The tourney is being held at the St. Boniface gym with semi-finals to be held Thursday night; runner-up and championship finals Friday night. Orchard won over Ewing, 49-27; Clearwater smashed Page, 56-16, and Elgin High bested Meadow Grove, 59-30.

Former residents of this community, Mr. and Mrs. Henry J. Beckman of Norfolk, observed their Golden Wedding Anniversary in the K.C. Hall Sunday, Feb. 27. Dinner was served to 55 guests. The children were the hosts of relatives and friends of the couple.

Fifty Years Ago

February 25, 1976

The Elgin High School will hold its Winter Festival this Saturday, Feb. 28. Crowning will take place at 8 p.m. unless there is a basketball game at Neligh. Should the latter be the case, the crowning will be held at 10 p.m. A dance will follow in the high school assembly.

This week, members of the Elgin FFA Chapter joined with over 485,000 other FFA members in the United States to celebrate National FFA Week. The local chapter is sponsoring activities to support the theme, "A Future for America."

Mrs. Joyce Schmitt, Elgin Heart Fund chairman, announced this week that the Goldenrod 4-H Club has consented to conduct the Elgin house-to-house fund drive this Saturday, Feb. 28.

The regional Knights of Columbus free-throw contest was held Sunday, Feb. 22 at O'Neill with contestants from three districts participating. Winners from the regional tournament will participate in the state tournament which will be held at a later date at Loup City.

Mr. and Mrs. Don Zegers are parents of a 9 pound 4 ounce daughter, born Feb. 14, 1976 at the Tilden Community Hospital. She has been named Melissa Sue. Mrs. Zegers is the former Judy Starman.

Carl Kallhoff lost control of the car he was driving north on main street Saturday and the auto crashed into a power line pole near the Dukes Moore residence. The accident, which happened around 9 a.m., followed a mini-blizzard Friday night and had left the streets icy.

Thirty Years Ago

February 28, 1996

The Pope John Central Catholic Sweetheart King and Queen were David Sehi and Natalie Evans. Their other attendants were Krisandra Klabenes, Monica Meis, Tanya Starman, Mike Ahlers, Tim Klein, and Matt Burbach.

A poll conducted recently by the Wheeler County Board of Commissioners showed that a majority of the registered voters and property owners who responded are not in favor of pursuing zoning.

Elgin area temperatures were mild for most of the past week, but a cold front moved into the area Monday, Feb. 26, bringing cooler temperatures. A one-inch snowfall was recorded overnight Feb. 26-27. The high was 63 degrees and the low was 10 degrees.

Sunset Lanes in Elgin was reopened Monday, Feb. 26, by owners Pete and Mary McGee. Renovation work has been underway on the 5,500-square-foot main floor since the McGees finalized their purchase of the business on Nov. 30, 1995.

Two quarter sections of land, located six miles north and 1/2 mile east of Elgin, sold at an auction Tuesday afternoon, Feb. 27. John Kerkman of Oakdale was the successful bidder at \$670 per acre on the 320 acres of pivot irrigated sand ground. The land was sold by Bill and Myla Anderson.

Twenty Years Ago

February 22, 2006

Elgin experienced its coldest week of the winter season so far last week, with low temperatures reaching minus 10 degrees or lower on three consecutive days. The area received about two inches of snow from flurries on Feb. 16 and 17.

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Silent Auction and Social beginning at 5 pm. Dinner at 6:30 pm followed by awards and the live auction.

**Tickets are \$75 per person**

Contact Pope John XXIII Central Catholic school for tickets. 402-843-5325

You are invited to a presentation on...

**Colorectal Cancer Awareness**

Monday, **March 2** • 11:40 am  
Elgin Community Center

Presented by **Dr. Troy Dawson** of Elgin AMH Family Practice Clinic

To reserve a meal, call 402-843-5757 by 9:30 a.m. that morning.

**ALL AGES ARE WELCOME!**

\*This notice is provided to inform patients of CRC screening services and location

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This Sunday, **March 1st** 2026  
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# Opinion

READ, REFLECT, RESPOND.

"To be persuasive, we must be believable; to be believable, we must be credible; credible, we must be truthful."

Edward R. Murrow

## Mentoring programs are great, but more focused effort needed to improve reading skills

Editor's note: Opinions expressed here are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of The Elgin Review.

Mentoring programs are a great thing. They help kids – mostly kids in single-parent families – gain confidence, and learn leadership and life skills from adults.

I've seen first-hand how beneficial they are, first as a "big brother" in the Big Brothers-Big Sisters program, and then as a participant in the TeamMates Mentoring program.

My "little brother" was the first in his family to graduate from high school (imagine that!) and my Team-Mate graduated from high school despite problems with attendance and discipline.

### ALL THINGS NEBRASKA



State Correspondent Paul Hammel

But I gotta say, when I read a recent story from the Flatwater Free Press about how much money the TeamMates program was getting via a state literacy program, I was more than a bit surprised.

The nonprofit news site and its reporter, Sara Gentzler, reported

that during the first three years of Gov. Pillen's administration, TeamMates received \$11.6 million in state taxpayer funds. That amounted to about 80% of the money granted out via the "READ Nebraska" program, which seeks to "expand mentorships throughout the state of Nebraska to improve the reading levels of elementary students."

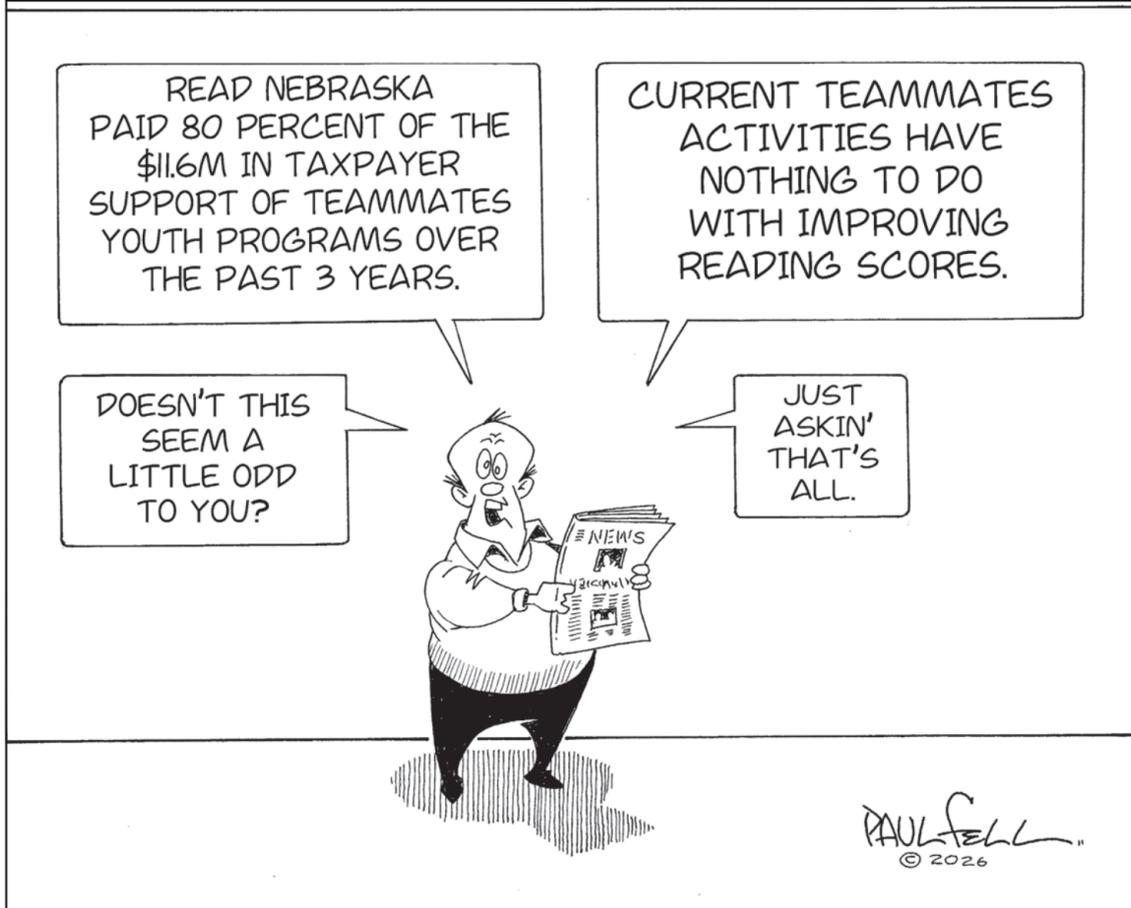
Since I no longer chase state senators through the halls of the Legislature, I've got the time to volunteer at a Lincoln elementary school. Many kids need help with reading, there's no doubt about that.

And, as stated above, mentoring programs like TeamMates and Big Brothers-Big Sisters are great programs that accomplish great things. (Anyone with the time, who wants to help kids, should sign up.)

But I never imagined that my work as a TeamMate was designed to help my kid's reading proficiency.

We played games in the school library, or shot baskets or played catch with a football in the school gym. And we talked about what was happening in his life, and what his goals might be in the future.

I don't recall any specific work on



my TeamMate's reading skills, or a directive to do that.

As most of us know, TeamMates was founded by former Nebraska football coach Tom Osborne and his wife, Nancy. And we all know that Gov. Jim Pillen was a player for Osborne at NU. Pillen also served on the Board of Directors of TeamMates before becoming governor, and is a huge advocate for mentoring.

So there's an appearance that this cash outlay from the state shows favoritism by the governor to a mentor of his. A representative of Common Cause Nebraska, a state government watchdog, said as much.

A spokeswoman for Pillen, as well as Coach Osborne, disputed that in the Flatwater story, pointing out that the READ grants are handed out on a per-capita (per-mentor match basis), and TeamMates has the largest number in the state.

To be sure, TeamMates was able to recruit about 2,400 new mentors to match with students over the past three years.

Much of the state funds received by TeamMates was spent on recruiting new mentors, and the costs of recruitment events. So the money is expanding mentoring. That's a good thing.

But it's worth noting that the second-largest recipient of the money, Big Brothers-Big Sisters, used its state money, \$851,000 over three years, on specific "literacy support programming." That sounds like an effort to improve reading skills.

I want to be clear – mentoring programs are a great thing. They instill confidence in these kids, provide them with a friend and life guidance coach, and – it's been shown – help increase graduation rates.

It's also clear that reading proficiency is dropping, and something needs to

be done. "Reading mentoring," where someone works with a student three to four times a week, has been proven to work.

If Nebraska wants to increase mentoring, then this READ Nebraska program is doing that.

But if the goal is improving reading proficiency, there has to be a better, more focused way to do that, other than playing "Scattergories" or "War" in the school library or shooting hoops in the gym.

\*\*\*\*\*

Paul Hammel has covered the Nebraska state government and the state for decades. Prior to his retirement, he was senior contributor with the Nebraska Examiner.

He was previously with the Omaha World-Herald, Lincoln Journal Star and Omaha Sun. A native of Ralston, Nebraska, he loves traveling and writing about the state.

## Upholding the rule of law

Drive across Nebraska on a clear evening and you'll see why we call it "The Good Life."

Small towns where neighbors still wave. Safe communities where kids ride their bikes home at dusk.

Main streets where people know your name and your word still means something.

That kind of life doesn't happen by accident. It exists because we respect the rule of law.

We believe in fairness, and we take responsibility for our communities and for each other.

Those same Nebraska values should guide our elections.

In America, voting is how we determine the direction of our nation. Every time Nebraskans step into a polling place —

from Scottsbluff to Nebraska City — we are not just casting a ballot. We are choosing the direction of our schools, our businesses, our communities, and our country.

The right to vote is sacred, and one that must be defended.

A recent Gallup poll builds on this sentiment, finding that 80% of Americans believe one should have to prove they are a U.S. citizen before voting. That overwhelming majority reinforces what we all know to be true: American elections should be decided by American citizens.

In Congress, I am proud to cosponsor commonsense legislation like the SAVE America Act, designed to protect and preserve that right.

The SAVE America Act would require individuals to present an eligible photo ID before voting.

It would require proof of citizenship — in person — when registering to vote, and it would require states to remove non-citizens from existing voter rolls.

These are not radical ideas, but commonsense safeguards that reflect what a majority of Americans believe should be standard practice.

In Nebraska, we already understand this. You show ID to board a flight out of Scottsbluff or to enter a federal building.

You need identification to open a bank account, buy certain products, or rent equipment.

We don't see those rules as burdens — we see them as responsible security measures.

Why should voting, one of the most important acts in a democracy, require less?

The Good Life is built on trust. Trust that our streets are safe. Trust that laws are enforced fairly. Trust that when election results are announced, they reflect the lawful will of the people.

If we allow even the possibility that non-U.S. citizens could participate in deciding our leaders, we risk weakening that trust.

Let me be clear: defending our nation's election integrity is not about limiting anyone's rights.

Instead, it is about protecting the rights of American citizens while preserving confidence in the system that sustains our republic.

The Good Life depends on strong communities, clear rules, and equal application of the law. Protecting our elections through the SAVE America Act is one more way we uphold those values.

The House passage of the SAVE America Act marks an important first step toward strengthening safeguards, improving accountability, and reinforcing public trust in our democratic process.

At the end of the day, democracy only works when the rule of law does — and in Nebraska, we still believe in both.

### FROM THE HILL



Congressman Adrian Smith

## A less taxing season for Nebraskans

Tax filing season is here, and Nebraska families are once again sorting through W-2s, logging into tax software, and bracing for the familiar anxiety of figuring out what they owe. It's never a fun process — but this year, there's genuinely good news: because of the Working Families Tax Cuts, which I voted for last summer, you will likely keep more money in your pocket than you did last year.

For years, Nebraska families have felt the squeeze. Groceries, gas, rent, and childcare all got more expensive,

### Guest column

### Value-added producer grants help producers grow their bottom line

By Val Ankeny, senior policy associate, Center for Rural Affairs

A U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) program is helping producers turn raw commodities into value-added products, allowing more of the income to remain in rural communities.

The Value-Added Producer Grant (VAPG) program, administered by USDA Rural Development, supports agricultural producers, as well as farmer and

while paychecks struggled to keep up. The Working Families Tax Cuts are a direct response to that pressure.

So, what does the law actually do? At its core, it makes permanent the lower tax rates established in 2017, raises the standard deduction, and increases the Child Tax Credit. Without this legislation, all those benefits would have expired — amounting to the largest tax increase in American history. By acting, Congress blocked a \$4 trillion tax hike and locked in savings that show up directly when you file your return.

For Nebraska specifically, the impact is substantial. The average Nebraska family will avoid a tax hike of more than \$2,400 a year. More than 868,000 Nebraska households will benefit from the expansion of the full standard deduction, which we made permanent through this law. We also increased the full Child Tax Credit to \$2,200 per child, which will help more than 239,000 Nebraska families. Over 44,000 family-owned farms and business are protected from a sharp reduction in the estate tax exemption — often called the "death tax" — which could otherwise have forced families to sell land that's been in their name for generations. And the law protects roughly 37,000 Nebraska jobs.

The law also includes new provisions that are worth knowing about. Workers who earn tips or overtime pay will now owe no federal income tax on that income.

Seniors receive an additional deduction as well. This relief is real and meaningful.

One provision I'm especially proud of: the bill made permanent my Paid

Family and Medical Leave Tax Credit — the first federal policy of its kind in the country, which I originally established in 2017. This credit encourages employers of all sizes to voluntarily offer paid leave to workers welcoming a newborn or caring for an aging parent, rather than through a government mandate. Making it permanent gives employers the long-term certainty they need to support employees as they care for their families without sacrificing their job or paycheck.

Tax season will never be anyone's favorite time of year. But this year, filing your return may bring a bit of welcome relief. That's something worth knowing as you sit down with your paperwork this season.

### WASHINGTON REPORT



U.S. Senator Deb Fischer

### Numbers to Know

President Donald J. Trump, 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, D.C. 20510; phone (202) 456-1111.

U.S. Senate Website: [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov)

Senator Deb Fischer: 825 B Hart Senate Office Bldg., Washington D.C. 20510. Phone: (202) 224-6551. Fax: (202) 228-1325.

Senator Pete Ricketts: 386A Senate Russell Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. Phone (202) 224-4224.

U.S. House Website: [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov)

Representative Adrian Smith: 503 House Office Bldg., Washington, D.C. 20515-2703. Phone (202) 225-6435. Fax: (202) 225-

0207. E-mail: <http://www.house.gov/writerep/>.

Nebr. Unicameral Website [www.unicam.state.ne.us](http://www.unicam.state.ne.us)

Governor Jim Pillen: Executive Suite, P.O. Box 94848, Lincoln, NE 68509. Phone: (402) 471-2244.

Lieutenant Governor Joe Kelly: Office of the Lt. Gov., P.O. Box 94863, Lincoln, NE 68509-4863. Phone: (402) 471-2256.

District 40 State Senator Barry DeKay: P.O. Box 94604, Lincoln, NE 68509. Phone: (402) 471-2801. E-mail: [bdekay@leg.ne.gov](mailto:bdekay@leg.ne.gov).



Volume 143, Wednesday, February 25, 2026 Number 23

Published weekly on Wednesday at Elgin, NE 68636 Entered at the Elgin Post Office and Periodicals Postage Paid at Elgin, NE 68636 Telephone: (402) 843-5500



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**The men who signed the Declaration of Independence**

*Editor's note: This week marks the second installment of a new series tied to our nation's 250th birthday in July 2026. As time draws near to Celebrate 250 years of Independence, it seems appropriate to review the Declaration of Independence and to explore the background of those who created and signed the most important document in our country's history. It is written by Caroline Epp of Giltner, Nebraska.*

After graduating from Yale in 1737, Philip Livingston became a successful businessman in New York City and served as a city alderman. He was elected to the state House of Representatives, becoming its speaker, actively participated in events leading to the Revolution, sent as a delegate to the First Continental Congress in 1774, and two years later signed the Declaration of Independence. During the Revolution, he served in the state legislature, was a prominent leader in business and educational societies, but sadly, dying in 1778 while attending the Continental Congress before freedom was realized.

Phillip came from an exceptionally privileged family, one of the most influential colonial families in New York with British approval. But the Livingston family, willing to sacrifice their position, became leaders in founding the US.

- Phillip's brother William, a member of the Continental Congress before July 1776; was an army general and wartime Governor of New Jersey

- A cousin, Edward Livingston was a student until 1781 of John Witherspoon, a strong biblical administrator at Princeton, then became a lawyer and member of the U.S. House from New York, moved to New Orleans and from there served in the U.S. House, the U.S. Senate and was on Andrew Jackson's cabinet

- An older brother to Edward, Robert Livingston, was on the committee drafting the Declaration of Independence, though called away before signing. Robert served as the chief executive of New York under the Articles of Confederation and administered the oath of office to President George Washington in 1789.

- Walter Livingston, a nephew to Philip, was a member of the New York assembly in the 1770's and 80's and the Continental Congress under the Articles of Confederation

- Phillip Livingston had another nephew, Rev. John Livingston who was a pastor, theologian and President of Rutgers University

It was said the family line was traced back to Alfred the Great. Many founders had to make choices of great consequences. Philip Livingston could have supported the British to protect his wealth and pleasant life. Pastors were pointing the way to biblical principles for true freedom as a country, which, I'm sure his grandfather, who had been a pastor in Scotland, emigrating to Netherlands due to persecution, had influenced his life. Though Livingston hesitated, knowing disorder would come, chose principles over wealth and liberty over security.

Despite failing health, confiscated land and displaced family, he pushed on as a leader, even dying when away from his family before true freedom arrived. He had such burning desire to see this country free from tyranny. His example should challenge each to consider if we are sacrificing enough for this God-ordained country on behalf of our descendants and the world. Do we allow principles to triumph over comfort? Are we willing to work at putting God back into our society; the principles upon which this great nation was founded? The "American Revolution was not just a military conflict but a complete reimagining of governance requiring the talents of merchants, lawyers, diplomats, and administrators." (Who Was Philip Livingston? A Brief Biography of a Declaration of Independence Signer, 6/19/25 Brian D. Colwell, Political Science)

**DeKay**

◀ FROM Page 2

thorized by law to collect an inspection fee not to exceed \$1.10 per head and charge for actual mileage of the inspector to travel to an inspection location. LB1187 would increase the maximum per head inspection fee from \$1.10 to \$1.50 and authorize the Brand Committee to collect a uniform travel surcharge of no greater than \$30 per stop. LB1258 by Senator Hansen seeks to eliminate mandatory brand inspections in favor of a statewide voluntary system. Specifically, the bill would abolish the Brand Committee as a standalone agency. In its place, the divisions of Brand Registration, Brand Inspection, and Livestock Theft Investigation would be created within the Department of Agriculture and take over carrying out some of the duties of the Brand Committee. The bill would also eliminate the provisions of the Livestock Brand Act that provide for mandatory brand inspection upon certain movements and transfers of ownership of cattle. Instead, the Department of Agriculture would provide for voluntary brand inspection as proof of ownership upon request for a fee.

The public hearing on LB1187 and LB1258 was well attended and resulted in lengthy discussion by both the supporters and the opponents. The Brand Committee, Independent Cattlemen of Nebraska, Nebraska Cattlemen, and other farm advocacy organizations expressed support for more brand inspection fee authority to ensure the Brand Committee remains solvent and opposed the adoption of a statewide voluntary brand system. Meanwhile, the Nebraska Beef Producers, an organization consisting of a number of livestock feeders in the state, expressed opposition to expanding fee authority for mandatory brand inspection and argued that LB1258 represents a way to modernize brand inspection and treat all cattlemen the same across the state.

Thursday, February 19 marked the deadline for senators and committees to designate their priority bills this year. Senator Dorn prioritized his bill LB1187 to address brand inspection fees. LB1258 by Senator Hansen was not prioritized, meaning this bill is unlikely to be debated this year unless efforts are made to amend this legislation into another bill on the floor.

I invite you to let me know your thoughts or concerns. My Capitol office telephone number is (402) 471-2801 while my email is [bdekay@leg.ne.gov](mailto:bdekay@leg.ne.gov).

**Grants**

◀ FROM Page 4

rancher cooperatives, that want to start or expand value-added activities. Producers can apply for up to \$50,000 in planning grants or up to \$200,000 in working capital grants. Applications are due April 22.

Funds can be used to pay for eligible post-harvest operational costs directly related to the processing and/or marketing of the product, such as turning fruit into jam, milk into cheese, or finishing and processing beef cattle for direct-to-consumer sale.

Kyle and Morgan Lammers, owners of KL Beef Co. near Hartington, Nebraska, used a VAPG award to strengthen their direct-to-customer beef business by improving shipping and investing in professional marketing. What started as a way to add income to their cattle operation has grown into a thriving business that connects customers directly to Nebraska-raised beef.

VAPG can help address a common challenge for small family operations: finding time and resources for anything beyond the daily work of the farm. Planning grants can be used for feasibility studies or business and marketing plans. Working capital grants can support processing, packaging, advertising, and certain inventory or staffing costs.

The goal is simple: generate new products, open new markets, and increase producer income, while keeping more value in rural communities.

For more information and application assistance, contact your local USDA Rural Development office. A list of office locations can be found at [rd.usda.gov](http://rd.usda.gov).

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1 CORINTHIANS 16:13-14  
"BE WATCHFUL, STAND FIRM IN THE FAITH, ACT LIKE MEN, BE STRONG. LET ALL THAT YOU DO BE DONE IN LOVE."

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**How is your faith? Could it use a boost?**  
Attending church services has so many benefits...spiritual growth, community connections, and - believe it or not - positive health outcomes. Regular church attendance can also give you opportunities for personal development, service, and a deepening your faith. If your faith could use a booster shot, attend a service of your choice.



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It's not about a new wardrobe.  
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This week in church, hear how baptism accomplishes that.

**...You must be born from above.** John 3:1-17  
Genesis 12:1-4a Romans 4:1-5, 13-17 Psalm 121  
Revised Common Lectionary © 1992 by the Consultation on Common Texts for  
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Second Sunday In Lent

For from him and through him and for him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.  
Romans 11:36

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[cppnebraska.org](http://cppnebraska.org)

**St. Bonaventure Catholic Church**  
Raeville, NE  
Fr. John Norman, Pastor  
Fr. Frank Baumert, Associate Pastor  
Weekend Mass: 1st, 3rd & 5th Sunday, 8 am.  
[cppnebraska.org](http://cppnebraska.org)

**Park Congregational U.C.C. Church**  
Elgin, NE  
Congregational  
Sunday Worship Service: 9:15 am.  
Sunday School: 10:15 am.  
Communion Sunday: 1st Sunday of each month. Park Women's Fellowship: 2 pm on the 3rd Thursday of each month at the church. Parish Council: 7:30 pm on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at the church.

**St. John the Baptist Catholic Church**  
Petersburg, NE  
Fr. John Norman, Pastor  
Fr. Frank Baumert, Associate Pastor  
Weekend Mass: 2nd & 4th Sunday, 8 am.  
[cppnebraska.org](http://cppnebraska.org)

**Bartlett Church of Faith**  
Bartlett, NE  
Pastor Mark Hoffman  
Sunday Worship Service: 9 am.  
Sunday School: 10-10:45 am.

**Calvary Bible Church**  
Neligh, NE  
Pastor Peter Sample  
Sunday School: 9:30 am.  
Worship Service: 10:45 am.

**Trinity Lutheran Church**  
Elgin, NE  
Vacancy Pastor Brian Bucklew  
Sunday Worship Service: 8 am.  
Sunday school follows service.  
Saturday Evening Service: 6 pm on the 2nd Saturday of each month.

**Elgin Community Christian Church**  
Elgin, NE  
Pastor Jonathan Braden  
**605-430-9171**  
Sunday Worship Service: 9:30 am.  
Church Council: 2nd Tuesday of each month.

**St. John's Catholic Church**  
Rural Clearwater, NE  
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Fr. Frank Baumert, Associate Pastor  
Weekend Mass: 1st, 3rd & 5th Saturday, 5:30 am.  
[cppnebraska.org](http://cppnebraska.org)

**St. Paul Lutheran Church**  
Chambers, NE  
Pastor Leif Hasskall  
Sunday Worship: 8:30 am.  
Sunday School/Bible Study: 9:30 am.

**Immanuel-Zion Lutheran Church**  
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Pastor Elizabeth Goehring  
Worship Service: 9:30 am.  
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Sunday School: 10:30 am.  
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**~ Proverbs 19:11 ~**  
A person's wisdom yields patience; it is to one's glory to overlook an

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**Faith**  
is confidence is what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.  
Hebrews 11:1



Boys free throw winners (l to r) were Judd Schindler, Cole Niewohner, Mark Schindler and Reid Kielty.



Girls free throw winners Sunday were (l to r) were Hayley Selting, Kinley Selting, Tenley Schindler and Chloe Kielty.

### Boys, girls free throw contest held Sunday

Elgin's finest free throw shooters competed Sunday afternoon at the Knights of Columbus Free Throw Contest. Held at St. Boniface Auditorium, Elgin youth were ripping the nets in competition to see who would advance to the next level of the statewide competition.

Winners in the girls division were:  
 9 (years old) — Hayley Selting  
 10 — No contestants  
 11 — Kinley Selting  
 12 — No contestants  
 13 — Tenley Schindler  
 14 — Chloe Kielty  
 Boys division winners were:  
 9 — Judd Schindler  
 10 — Cole Niewohner  
 11 — Mark Schindler  
 12 — Reid Kielty  
 13 — No contestants  
 14 — No contestants

E-R photos/DMorgan

### PJCC speech team excels at Burwell meet

The Pope John speech team had an incredible day today competing at Burwell on Saturday, February 14.

According to speech coach Amy Klein, everyone competed in the varsity competition.

The OID of Aiden Klein, Camry Kittelson, Tessa Barlow, Brooke Kinney and Matthew Kerkman were meet champions, bringing home the gold!

Earning third place in serious prose was Raaf Klein.

Also medaling in serious prose was Reese Stuhr, taking fourth.

Kinley Druke brought home fourth place in humorous prose while Jovie Borer medaled at sixth place in POI and Lillian Moser brought home the sixth place medal in poetry.

Receiving superior ratings were: in duet, Aiden Klein and Brooke Kinney; also in duet Matthew Kerkman and Christian Preister; and Harlie T. in both poetry and informative.



Raaf Klein placed third and Reese Stuhr took fourth in serious prose at the Burwell speech meet.



Taking sixth in poetry was Lillian Moser.

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Dermatology -- Dr. Clarey	MAR. 26 <sup>th</sup>
Endocrinology -- Dr. Brau/Leah Haak-Beck	MAR. 10 <sup>th</sup>
General Surgery -- Dr. Schneider/Dr. Luebbe	MAR. 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 9 <sup>th</sup> , 16 <sup>th</sup> , 23 <sup>rd</sup> and 30 <sup>th</sup>
Heartland Radiology	MAR. 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 6 <sup>th</sup> , 9 <sup>th</sup> , 13 <sup>th</sup> , 16 <sup>th</sup> , 20 <sup>th</sup> , 23 <sup>rd</sup> , 27 <sup>th</sup> and 30 <sup>th</sup>
Neurosurgery -- Dr. Bixenmann	MAR. 4 <sup>th</sup>
Norfolk Cardiology -- Dr. Hartzell/Dr. Rome	MAR. 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 17 <sup>th</sup>
OB-GYN -- Dr. Albin	MAR. 11 <sup>th</sup>
Orthopedics -- Dr. Ochs/Kendra Thiem	MAR. 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> , 10 <sup>th</sup> , 17 <sup>th</sup> , 18 <sup>th</sup> , 24 <sup>th</sup> , 25 <sup>th</sup> and 31 <sup>st</sup>
Orthopedics -- Dr. Rickert/Sean Craig	MAR. 12 <sup>th</sup> , 26 <sup>th</sup>
Otolaryngology -- Dr. Jazwick/Dr. Mawn	MAR. 6 <sup>th</sup> and 20 <sup>th</sup>
Podiatry -- Dr. Borer	MAR. 13 <sup>th</sup> , 25 <sup>th</sup>
Pulmonology -- Dr. Stritt	MAR. 18 <sup>th</sup>
Urology -- Dr. Hill/Dr. Stegman/Schiessler	MAR. 5 <sup>th</sup>
Wound -- Dr. Kohl/Candice Schnoor	MAR. 6 <sup>th</sup> , 13 <sup>th</sup> , 20 <sup>th</sup> , 27 <sup>th</sup>

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**FFA STUDENT of the MONTH**

**John Zwingman**

John Zwingman is the FFA Student of the Month. John is the son of Dan and Kim Zwingman of Elgin. John is a freshman member, but began his membership as an 8th grader with participation in the Nebraska State FFA Beef Show. During his 8th-grade year, he participated in JH FFA Quiz Bowl and other chapter activities. This school year, he has been a busy member, competing in numerous contests such as range and livestock judging, agronomy, agriscience, and the agriscience fair. Recently, John competed in UNL's Haskell Lab contests in Concord. He was a member of one of Elgin's two agronomy teams. As a freshmen he did very well, finishing in the top 20 and the 4th-best Elgin participant. John also submitted a Mechanized Ag Agriscience Fair project dealing with how different electrodes weld based on different storage methods with his partner Jayvin. They recently found out their project qualified for State FFA in their respected category. John will be competing in the District Agronomy CDE on March 3rd for another chance to compete at State FFA later in March. Great Work, John!

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End of season volleyball awards handed out Sunday night

The 2025 Wolfpack volleyball season was celebrated Sunday night with end of season awards.

Players and parents joined together to share the success of the 2025 season where the Wolfpack finished 21-11, reaching the district final - one step away from the state volleyball tournament.

Overseeing awards night were Wolfpack coaches Jordynn Luettel, Sandi Henn and Jill McNally.

Twelve players were awarded varsity letters during the program held in the EPS gymnasium.

Earning letters were Tessa Barlow, Camry Kittelson, Gentry Zwingman, Brooke Kinney, Kayton Zwingman, Braelyn



E-R photos/DMorgan

**Wolfpack letter winners** during the 2025 season were (front row, l-r): Braelyn Martinsen, Brooke Kinney, Gentry Zwingman, Mady Kurpgeweit, Elizabeth Moser and Tessa Barlow. Back row: Jael Lammers, Lillian Moser, Kayton Zwingman, Camry Kittelson and Sophia Burke. Not pictured: Aubrie Parks.

Martinsen, Mady Kurpgeweit, Jael Lammers, Lillian Moser, Sophia Burke, Elizabeth Moser and Aubrie Parks.

Wolfpack awards were handed out. Among them were:  
Most Valuable Player — Braelyn Martinsen (V), Elizabeth Moser (JV) and Sydney Niewohner (C)

Offense — Braelyn Martinsen (V), Jael Lammers and Lillian Moser (JV) and Sydney Niewohner (C)

Hustle — Brooke Kinney & Gentry Zwingman (V), Sophia Burke (JV) and Libby Evans (C)

Defense — Gentry Zwingman and Braelyn Martinsen (V), Sophia Burke (JV) and Libby Evans (C)

**City of Elgin**

**SUMMER HELP WANTED**

- Pool Manager
- Pool Staff
- Summer Maintenance Help

For details, contact City Hall at **402-843-5822** or send your application to:

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PO Box 240  
Elgin, NE 68636-0240

Apply by Monday, **March 2, 2026**

**Elgin Community Center menus**

**Monday, March 2:** Polish dogs & kraut, hashbrowns, baked beans, tropical fruit, milk.

**Tuesday, March 3:** Corn chowder, roast beef sandwich, carrots/celery, cheese/crackers, cottage cheese, pineapple, milk.

**Wednesday, March 4:** Fried chicken, mashed potatoes & gravy, candied carrots, apple cake, bread & butter, milk.

**Thursday, March 5:** Chili cheese dogs, french fries, corn, fruit cocktail, milk.

**Friday, March 6:** Tuna & noodle casserole, peas, lettuce salad, apricots, bread & butter, milk.

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Wolfpack awards, voted on by the players, were presented to (front row, l-r): Brooke Kinney, Gentry Zwingman, Mady Kurpgeweit, Camry Kittelson and Elizabeth Moser. Middle row: Braelyn Martinsen, Lillian Moser, Sophia Burke and Libby Evans. Back row: Jael Lammers, Sydney Niewohner and Macy Rokahr.

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VOLITANT AGRICULTURE



Photo submitted

**Wheeler Central** students attending 'Sing Around Nebraska Festival Choir', Saturday, February 14 at Kearney High School. L-r: Braxton Senn, Camaraderie Armknecht, Adynn Smith, Huxley Kleebe, Jaycee Wagner, Cory Freouf, Easton Kasselner, Aden Swick, Warren Sallach and Darren Reich.

**Bartlett News**

Ten Wheeler Central 5th and 6th graders attended the 'Sing Around Nebraska-Festival Choir' at Kearney High School on Saturday, February 14.

They were Braxton Senn, Camara Armknecht, Adynn Smith, Huxley Kleebe, Jaycee Wagner, Cort Freouf, Easton Kasselner, Aden Swick, Warren Sallach and Darren Reich.

Approximately 260 students participated in the Kearney Festival. They hailed from Adams Central Elementary, Amherst Public School, Anselmo Public Schools, Barr Middle School, Broken Bow Middle School, Bryant Elementary, Buffalo Hills Elementary, Central Elementary, Emerson Elementary, Engleman Elementary, Gates Elementary, Giltner Public Schools, Hastings Middle School, Horizon Middle School, Kenwood Elementary, Litchfield Public Schools, Meadowlark Elementary, North Park Elementary, Northeast Elementary, Park Elementary, Pleasanton Public School, Ravenna Public School, Sumner-Ed-dyville-Miller School, Sunrise Middle School, Thayer Central Public School, Wheeler Central and Windy Hills Elementary.

Erica Wieseler, who is currently a General Music and Junior High Choir Teacher in Gothenburg, was the guest clinician. The pianist was Marilyn Musik who presently works at UNK as a collaborative pianist and lecturer in organ and is an organist at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Kearney.

Songs performed at the evening performances were *Risseldy Rosseldy*; *Blake Richter*; *Three Quotes*; *Andrea Ramsey*; *Ad Astra (To the Stars)*; *Jacob Narverud*; *Fly Away Home*; *Pinkzebra and Storm*; *James M. Desjardins*.

Students gave two concerts, one at 4 p.m. and one at 4:30 p.m. due to the high amount of people attending. Over 1,100 tickets were sold.

**ATHLETES OF THE WEEK**

**our Pride of the Pack**

**MICHAEL SELTING**  
BOYS BASKETBALL  
A junior, Michael led the Wolfpack boys in scoring last Friday. In the regular season's final game against O'Neill St. Mary's, Michael scored 10 points.

**MADY KURPGWEIT**  
GIRLS BASKETBALL  
A junior, Mady scored 15 points, had 13 rebounds and 3 blocked shots against Plainview. The Wolfpack were upset by Plainview, their season ending early in subs.

**LIBBY EVANS**  
WRESTLING (GIRLS)  
A junior, Libby's 3rd trip to the state meet resulted in another medal for her collection. In the 170 lb class, she won 4 of 6 matches over 2 days, finishing with the 4th place medal.

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**The Elgin Review**

# OBITUARIES PUBLIC NOTICES

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## Mary Elizabeth Rotert Koch, 85

Passed away February 13, 2026

Born in Elgin in 1940, she was married for 63 years to Gail Koch of Petersburg. They were trailblazers in everything they did.



Marilyn Elizabeth Rotert Koch, 85, of Spokane, WA, passed away in her home on February 13, 2026, in the presence of loved ones.

Marilyn was born in Elgin, NE in 1940 to Josephine Schindler and Anton Rotert. She married Gail Koch of Petersburg in 1959, who died from a sudden heart attack in 2022, after 63 years of marriage. She bore five children: Rick Figone, Tony Koch, Lori Koch DeVilbiss, Mary Jo Navarra, and Sara Koch. She has five beautiful grandchildren, a great grandchild, with another on the way in March in Japan.

She and Gail raised four of her children in Norfolk, NE where she was the proprietor of several small businesses, including Marilyn's Place Day-care Center, as well as Paulyn's Dance Studio. She and Gail were heavily involved in the Catholic Church, where they served on Parish Council (as the first ever couple to hold the position jointly), School Board, and the Lead Team Couple in Marriage Encounter for all of Northeast Nebraska--one time even braving a blizzard in a small prop plane in order to make it to the weekend retreat on time!

Marilyn and Gail were true trailblazers wherever they went. The dance studio they co-founded put on Norfolk's first ever production of The Nutcracker in 1984, a herculean undertaking, borrowing retired costumes from Omaha Ballet's costume department for the affair, as well as learning how to make it snow during the Snow Queen scene. She even attended night school at local community colleges in the two decades she was raising her children, graduating with her Master's Degree in Social Work at The University of Nebraska at Omaha the same day her youngest child graduated high school in 1990. She and Gail then moved to Anchorage, Alaska, where she worked tirelessly with homeless women and children in the shelter system. In 1995, they returned to the lower 48 in North Idaho, to help care for their newly born grandchild for the next several years. She and Gail also became Bronze Ambassadors in the Reliv International nutrition company during this time.

Marilyn was an avid hospice volunteer throughout her life, bringing The Holy Sacrament and Meals on Wheels to the sick

The Elgin Review • February 18, 2026

## Court News

All fines in addition to \$49 court costs. \*Denotes an amendment of original charge(s).

Benjamin L Lancaster, Yankton, SD 12/30/25 Speeding 80/67 MPH, Fined \$125.00 - Hartley.

Steve K Olson, Clearwater, NE 1/6/26 Speeding 70/65 MPH, Fined \$50.00 - Detlefsen.

Nevaeh R Kurpgewit, Neligh, NE 1/12/26 No valid registration-car/pickup/stepvan, Fined \$25.00 - Wiggins.

Bernadette Martinez, Aurora, CO 10/24/25 Speeding 79/65 MPH, Fined \$125.00 - Barker.

Alma Marrufo Zubaran, Neligh, NE 12/25/25 Disturbing the peace, Fined \$100.00 - Miller.

Sean R Tyler, Norfolk, NE 11/11/25 Drive under susp/before reinstated-state, Fined \$100.00/Speeding 77/65 MPH, Fined \$125.00 - Ahrendt.

Sarah L Gwatney, Upland, CA 1/5/26 Speeding 85/65 MPH, Fined \$200.00 - Hartley.

Austin D Bauer, Elgin, NE 12/27/25 No valid registration-car/pickup/stepvan, Fined \$25.00 - Johnson.

Jesse J Borer, Neligh, NE 8/29/25 DUI-.15+ OR refusal (1 prior conviction), Sentence

in their homes/hospital, dragging her often reluctant and petulant small children behind her to teach them a lifelong core value: that serving people is more important than all else.

Much to their children's dismay, their car was often the last one standing in the church parking lot after church every Sunday, their children dutifully melting in the summer heat waiting to go home already. In the end, following the church's sex abuse scandals, she adamantly transitioned to attending St. Clare's Ecumenical Catholic Church in Spokane, WA, in the last years of her life. In 2024, she was diagnosed with Cerebral Amyloid Angiopathy (CAA), a form of dementia.

Marilyn is preceded in death by her parents, Josephine and Anton Rotert, her husband Gail Koch, and by 4 of her 5 siblings—Moe Rotert, Bill Rotert, Jerry Rotert, and Joyce McKenna. She is survived by her sister Cheryl O'Neill, and her 5 aforementioned children/multiple offspring.

Marilyn was a beloved wife, mother, grandmother, great grandmother, friend, team leader, caretaker, master pie baker, and teacher of how to make the world's best apple butter. (Secret: slow roasted in the oven for 24 hours on low, waking up in the night every two hours to stir it, "otherwise, forget it".) She and Gail were known for throwing the most wonderful meals for family and friends, the best love language of them all. Known for her outlandish red hats and matching Norwegian boots, she was an iconoclast who knew how to have fun and enjoy life, who did not shy away from telling it like it is. She was nothing if not committed to excellence, advocacy of those living in the margins, and most of all, putting people before comfort. Upon reflection of her imminent death, after a lifetime of exploration on how to more fully truly love people, (having read all the books and developing a raging case of Seminar-itis), she died with the conclusion that people who know how to truly love another human being, are as rare as they come...and well worth the effort. As she would always sing to her children bickering in the back seat of the station wagon: "Love One Anotherrrrr."

Memorial Donations can be sent to:  
St. Clare's ECC  
PO Box 9686  
Spokane, WA 99209

## Orchard man requests continuance, negotiates for resolution

A 32-year-old Orchard man appeared in Antelope County Court, Feb. 18, for a preliminary hearing.

The Honorable Kale Burdick heard a status report from county attorney Joe Smith in a case against Michael F. Doty, who faces one count of possession of a firearm by a prohibited person, a Class IB felony, and two counts of terroristic threats, both Class IIIA felonies.

Doty's attorney, Kaz Long, requested a continuance prior to the court date, noting that the "defendant is negotiating a resolution in county court hopefully."

If an agreement isn't reached by March 12, a preliminary hearing will be held at that time, according to Burdick.

Doty's arrest stems from a July 29 911 call made by an Orchard resident, who reported Doty possessed a firearm between July 26 and 29 and, during that time period, threatened two individuals with violence with the intent to terrorize another.

Doty allegedly left the residence after the emergency call was placed. At the time, law enforcement officials issued a warrant for his arrest. He turned himself in to Antelope County law enforcement officers on Aug. 5.

A condition placed on Doty's bond was amended to allow him to leave the State of Nebraska. The bond amount - \$50,000-10% - remains in place.

## Community Calendar

\* See ad/story in this week's Elgin Review

**Friday, February 27**  
Elgin Knights of Columbus Fish Fry @ the KC Hall\* ■ Petersburg Fish Fry @ Legion Hall\*.

**Monday, March 2**  
Deadline for non-incumbents to file for election ■ Regular meeting of the Elgin City Council ■ Elgin Summer Ball Signup @ Elgin Public Library\*.

**Tuesday, March 3**  
Regular meeting of the Antelope County Board of Commissioners.

**Friday, March 6**  
Petersburg Fish Fry @ Legion Hall\*.

**Tuesday, March 10**  
Regular meeting of the Antelope County Board of Commissioners.

**Wednesday, March 11**  
Regular meeting of the District #18 Board of Education.

Events listing courtesy of  
**ELGIN VETERANS' MEDICAL CLINIC**  
an outpatient department of Boone County Health Center  
116 N 2nd Street, Elgin  
**402.843.5910**

## NOTICE OF MARCH MEETINGS

THE ANTELOPE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

**NOTICE OF MEETINGS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, ANTELOPE COUNTY, NEBRASKA FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH, 2026**

Notice is hereby given that the County Board of Commissioners of Antelope County, Nebraska will hold meetings in the County Com-

missioner's meeting room in the Antelope County Courthouse Annex, Neligh, Nebraska on the following dates and times:

March 3, 2026 at 9:00 AM  
March 10, 2026 at 8:00 AM

Meetings will be open to the public. An agenda, kept continuously current, is available for public

inspection at the Antelope County Clerk's office and may be modified at such meeting to include items of an emergency nature pursuant to Section 84-1411 of the Nebraska Revised Statutes.

PUBLISH: February 25, 2026  
ZNEZ

## Order Your Conservation Seedlings For Spring Planting! PLACE ORDERS NOW!

As the demand for conservation tree seedlings grows, the Upper Elkhorn NRD will be taking orders from now until March 1st. Trees are available on a first come first serve basis and are available in a variety of species consisting of conifers, broadleaves and shrubs. Hand plant trees should be ordered in bundles of 25 while machine plant orders will be based on the windbreak design. The NRD can provide technical assistance to cooperators who would like help designing a new windbreak or renovating an old one. The technician will suggest the type of trees best suited for your soil type and design a layout beneficial to your area. The NRD also offers conservation weed mulch to help promote the survival of new seedlings. Conservation weed mulch is installed over the seedlings to help control weeds and retain moisture. This practice can be very beneficial to young windbreaks and should be considered when placing your order. Trees and mulch purchased from the Upper Elkhorn NRD may be eligible for local or state cost share funds. For more information or to place an order, contact your local NRCS office, the Upper Elkhorn NRD at 301 N. Harrison Street, O'Neill (402) 336-3867 or visit our website at [www.uenrd.org](http://www.uenrd.org).

### AVAILABLE TREE SPECIES

<b>Conifers:</b>	Eastern Red Cedar Norway Spruce	Rocky Mountain Juniper Jack Pine	Colorado Blue Spruce Ponderosa Pine
<b>Shrubs:</b>	Caragana Sandcherry Cotoneaster American Plum Buffaloberry	Sumac Elderberry Woods Rose Golden Current Serviceberry	Chokecherry Lilac Dogwood Chokeberry
<b>Broadleaves:</b>	Native Cottonwood Black Walnut Honeylocust Silver Maple Red Oak	Swamp White Oak Hackberry Black Cherry Amur Maple Hybrid Poplar	Bur Oak American Elm Catalpa

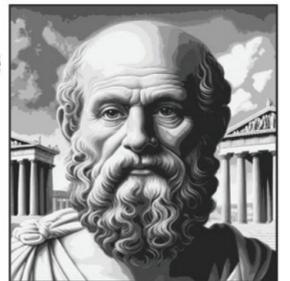


**2026 Cost of Trees and Materials**  
(Prices subject to change):

Hand Plant Trees-Storage-Tax:	.....\$1.58/tree
Machine Plant Trees-Storage-Tax:	.....\$263.00/100
Pull In Charge/Site Prep for < 150 trees:	.....\$200.00
Weed Mulch (Installed/tilled):	.....\$.95/foot
Weed Mulch (by the roll):	.....\$250.00/500 feet
Weed Mulch Squares	.....\$2.85 each

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Deadline Tuesday at 10:00 a.m.

## Thank You!

We would like to express our deepest gratitude for the incredible support and compassion you have all shown during this difficult time of the passing of our mother and wife Judy Zegers. Your kindness has been a beacon of comfort for our family and we are truly touched by the outpouring of love and care.

Thank you to everyone who contributed food, prayers, hugs, memorials and words of encouragement. We are beyond blessed.

Father Frank for the beautiful services, Mark and Julie for the beautiful music, Levander Funeral Home for the exceptional services and compassion, St. Boniface Altar Society and all the ladies that provided food and helped served the delicious meal.

Boone County Health Center staff for all the health care through the years, Alpine Village staff for the special care and love you all showed for Mom, it was supposed to just be rehab, but God had other plans.

We are so very grateful to those who sent flowers, plants, and angels (Judy loved angels), Your beautiful contributions added a sense of peace to the memorial.

Once again, thank you for being there for us in this time of sorrow. Your generosity and heartfelt gestures have uplifted our spirits and helped us find hope amidst our grief. It shows us just how special of a lady she was. God Bless you all.

With heartfelt appreciation  
Gayle Zegers  
Craig & Barb Zegers  
Chuck & Marci Zegers  
Chris & DeLynn Minarik  
Mike & Kristin Zegers

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tfn

### Elgin Community Center fund drive, meals available

A fund drive continues for necessary repairs/improvements at the Elgin Community Center.  
The building is in need of a second handicap-accessible entry door for its south entrance door at the ramp, a new opening mechanism for the main front entrance door, repair work needs to be done to the south exterior of the brick building and a mini-split (heating/air conditioning unit) is needed for the food storage area. The current goal is \$16,500.

Also, the center is making Wednesday meal deliveries to our neighbors in Petersburg. In the month of February, the center was delivering hot meals to the Petersburg fire hall on Wednesdays where a meal was picked up. If enough interest is indicated (minimum of 10 meals), the center would be able to continue the Petersburg deliveries - and would work on adding more days of the week. For more information on meals from the center (or to reserve your meal - before 9:30 a.m. of the day you wish to eat), call the center at 402-843-5757.

Regular monetary donations and specific food donations are always welcome, especially with the high costs of meats (especially beef). While the center "houses" the senior center, weekday noon meals are for everyone of ALL ages.

While breeding season may be a ways off, making sure our bulls are cared for throughout the winter—and ready to go when it's time to turn out—is critical. A sound and fertile bull can mean the difference between success or failure of next year's calf crop. While AI is a valuable tool, across the U.S. about 87% of operations still utilize bulls in some capacity.

Winter care for bulls can be broken down into two categories: body condition and fertility. Let's look at body condition first. Bull condition going into breeding season is a major factor in breeding success. A bull-to-cow ratio in the 1:20 to 1:30 range is often a reasonable starting point, but pasture size, terrain, multiple breeding groups, bull age, and social dominance can shift that number. Libido and dominance matter, too—one study noted individual bulls servicing anywhere from 4 to 80 females during the breeding season.

The energy required to meet the demands of breeding is

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Beef Systems  
Asst. Ext. Educator  
**Ben Beckman**

substantial, and bulls can be expected to lose 100 to 250 pounds during the course of the breeding season—sometimes more in tough conditions or very active breeding situations. Getting bulls back into condition for next year is one of the primary winter goals. Typically, we want bulls back to about a Body Condition Score of 5½ to 6 before turnout next year.

To do this, take a body condition score now if you haven't already and develop a plan for feeding. Remember that young animals may not yet be fully grown, so they'll need additional energy and protein to continue growth and build condition. For this reason, depending on the number of bulls in a herd, separating mature and younger animals into separate groups can make meeting feed requirements for each group easier.

Meeting mineral requirements is also important. Research has shown that selenium and zinc are key in supporting reproductive function and sperm production, and other trace minerals like copper and

manganese also play roles in overall structural soundness. The key is a balanced mineral program.

The second factor to consider with bulls during the winter is fertility. Major impacts on fertility in the winter months are cold stress and frostbite on the scrotum. Even minor injury can affect fertility, but we really want to protect against major damage that can eventually result in blistering and scabbing. At that point, sperm production can be significantly impacted. Sperm production takes roughly two months, so damage can have longer-term effects. Watch for swelling, discoloration, scabs, or roughened skin when you're checking bulls.

Even in a winter like this—more open, dry, and fairly mild overall—cold injury can still happen. All it takes is a sharp, windy cold snap along with mud or wet bedding. If bulls can't get out of the wind or stay dry, frostbite risk goes up fast.

If you suspect cold injury, make a plan early. Consider evaluating injured bulls and scheduling a breeding soundness exam about 45 to 60 days after an injury has occurred. Even if animals appear sound, don't forget to schedule a regular BSE 30 to 60 days before turnout so you have time to

make replacement decisions if needed. It's better to know early that a bull won't be ready than scrambling last minute.

To keep cold damage to a minimum, do your best to protect animals from wind and cold. Provide plenty of space for animals to find shelter and use windbreaks to cut down on wind-chill impacts. A layer of bedding helps insulate animals from the cold ground and—just as importantly—helps keep them dry, reducing the risk of cold injury.

While bulls may not be our first focus this time of year, don't forget to give their care some thought. Evaluate body condition and have a plan to get bulls back to a BCS 5½ to 6 before breeding season. Maintain a balanced mineral program, keep an eye on feet and mobility, and provide wind protection and bedding during cold stretches. A little attention now helps safeguard fertility and prevent unwanted surprises later on.

- Ben Beckman is a beef systems Extension Educator serving north-east Nebraska. He is based out of the Cedar County Extension office in Hartington. You can reach him by phone: (402) 254-6821 or email: [ben.beckman@unl.edu](mailto:ben.beckman@unl.edu)



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# Wolfpack Sports



E-R photos

Libby Evans recorded three pins in six matches to finish fourth in the 170# division at Omaha last week.

## Evans medals at state for second year in a row

OMAHA — What began in December came to fruition in February as EPPJ's Libby Evans stood on the medal stand as one of the best wrestlers in the state.

The junior placed fourth in the Class B 170# division Wednesday night, capping a two-day tournament where she faced and defeated talented foes from across the state.

Compiling a 4-2 record at state, Evans did the following:

- She pinned three opponents
- She had one major decision victory

She opened the tournament against Maura Vrbka of Fillmore Central. Evans dominated

the action from the start, building a 9-0 lead before getting the pin at 2:27.

In the quarterfinal round, Lakeview's Emma Finecy (who would reach the finals) handed Evans her first loss, a 14-0 major decision. Finecy scored seven points in the first period, then added seven more in the final period.

Evans began the second day of the tournament wrestling in the consolation rounds. Facing Cross County/Osceola wrestler Ema Dickey, it was scoreless til Evans recorded an escape in the third period.

Thirteen seconds later, Evans recorded a pin.

Next up was Nevaeha Sorensen of Adams Central. Evans had two near falls before finishing the match with a major decision 13 to 0.

The consolation semifinals pitted Evans against Rylee Kursave of Arcadia/Loup City. After a near fall in the second period, Evans pinned Kursave in the third period.

Her last match Wednesday was the consolation finals against Wilber-Clatonia's Faith Klabenes. Klabenes had Evans number in this match as she pinned the Wolfpack wrestler in 1:28.

Evans finished the season with a 39-11 record.

Making her first appearance at state, Wolfpack freshman Anna Dworak wrestled hard under the hot spotlights, but dropped both of her matches. Hayleigh Darling of Yutan was Dworak's first opponent. Darling dominated from the start, pinning Dworak in less than a minute.

Dworak returned to the mats Wednesday morning to face Ord's McKenna Hernandez. The Wolfpack wrestler was in contention midway through the second period before Hernandez pinned her at 2:15, ending Dworak's season. Dworak's caps her first year of varsity wrestling with a 28-19 record.

Individual results were:  
100 pounds — Anna Dworak (EPPJ) was pinned by Hayleigh Darling (Yutan) in 53 seconds; Dworak was pinned by McKenna Hernandez (Ord) in 2:15

170 — Libby Evans (EPPJ) pinned Maura Vrbka (Fillmore Central) in 2:27; Evans lost 14 to 0 MD to Emma Finecy (Lakeview); Evans pinned Ema Dickey (Cross County/Osceola) in 3:23; Evans won 13 to 0 MD over Nevaeha Sorensen (Adams Central); Evans pinned Rylee Kursave (Arcadia/Loup City) in 3:35; Evans was pinned by Faith Klabenes (Wilber/Clatonia) in 1:28



Wolfpack freshman Anna Dworak wrestled twice at state last week, dropping matches to wrestlers from Yutan and Ord.

## EPPJ duo cap careers competing against the best at Omaha

OMAHA — Wolfpack senior wrestlers' Landyn Veik and Grady Druke stay at the NSAA State Wrestling Championships was way too short.

The tournament began Thursday at CHI Health arena and, by Friday night, both Wolfpack wrestlers seasons were over.

Veik's quest for a second state medal came up one match short while Druke dropped his first two matches to see his season come to an end. For both, it wasn't a lack of effort, but rather the quality of competition that comes to Omaha in February. There are no easy matches. It's survive and advance in each match.

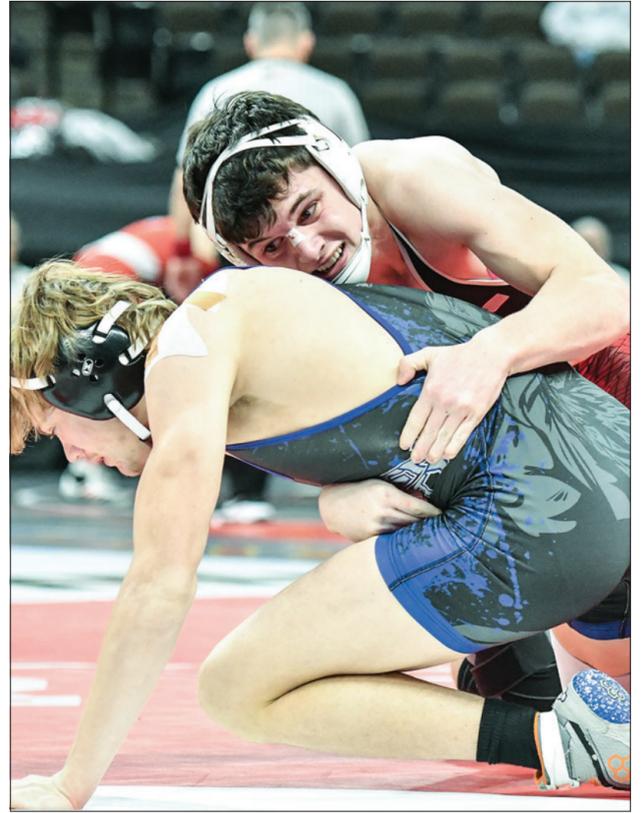
Veik began the tournament by pinning Stratton Sellin of Winside in 3:01. Veik led three to zero entering the second period before getting Sellin on his back for the pin.

Next up was a quarterfinal round match pitting Veik against Breckyn Collins of North Platte St. Pat's.

Veik was first on the board, in the first period with a take-down. Collins then scored the next eight points to lead eight to three after one period.

Collins added eight points in the second period. But, in the third period, Veik scored a near fall. Collins then got a reversal to finish with a major decision.

Veik came back strong Friday, wrestling in the consolation round #2. Matched up against Garden County's Jase Roberson, Veik jumped out to a six to nothing lead in the second period. Roberson cut the margin to three points, six to three, entering the final period. Veik then gave Wolfpack fans something to roar about as midway through the period he recorded a near fall for four points. Roberson came back with a reversal but it was too little, too late as



E-R photos

Garden County's Jase Roberson had no chance in his consolation round #2 match against Wolfpack senior Landyn Veik Friday.

Veik advanced with a 10 to five victory.

Veik then, on Friday night in consolation round #3, paired up against Gavin Ironshell of Wilcox-Hildreth.

Scoreless after two periods, Veik took the lead with an escape early in period #3. Ironshell answered back less than 30 seconds later with a take down.

Veik managed another escape to cut the margin to one point

but that was as close as he would get as Ironshell hung on for the victory.

Veik finished the season with a 32-9 record.

Druke's first match was Thursday afternoon against Pleasanton's Sawyer Gillming.

It was a tightly-contested match as Gillming led one to zero early in the second period before registering a pin.

The loss sent Druke to a Friday afternoon match in consolation round #1 against Micah Gerlach of Cambridge.

Gerlach jumped out to a 14 to 0 lead after two periods. That's when Druke made it interesting as early in the third period he recorded a takedown and near fall to trail 14 to 7. Gerlach then scored the final four points to seal the victory and advance.

The loss ended Druke's senior season, one which he compiled a 27-18 record.

Individual results:  
150 pounds — Grady Druke (EPPJ) was pinned in 2:40 by Sawyer Gillming (Pleasanton); Druke lost 18 to 7 to Micah Gerlach (Cambridge)

165 — Landyn Veik (EPPJ) pinned Stratton Sellin (Winside) in 3:01; Veik lost the match 18 to 8 MD to Breckyn Collins (North Platte St. Pat's); Veik defeated Jase Roberson (Garden County) 10 to 5; Veik lost 3 to 2 to Gavin Ironshell (Wilcox-Hildreth)



Grady Druke capped his wrestling career, competing in two matches at state. He finished the season with a 27-18 record.

## Rittscher, Erickson chosen for NEN All-Star Football Classic

Trey Rittscher and Jarek Erickson from Elgin Public-Pope John have been chosen to play for the South team in the Northeast Nebraska Football All-Star Classic.

The game will be played on Friday evening, June 12, beginning at 7 p.m.

Chris Koozer of Norfolk High will lead the White Team and Johnnie Ostermeyer of Crofton will lead the Red Team.

Joining Koozer on the White

side will be Matt Skiff and Ken Swanson (Norfolk), Ryan Miller (Lyons-Decatur Northeast), Dalton Tremayne (West Point Beemer), and Kalin Koch from Twin River.

Joining Ostermeyer on the Red sideline will be John Connot (Crofton), Jaxson Kant (Lutheran High Northeast),

Andy Osborne (West Holt), Tyler Legate (Pierce) and Jon Baue (Wausa Osmond).

Officials for the 2026 All Star game will be Referee Larry Wells, Umpire Jordan Wells, Linesman Travis Baumann, Line Judge Kyle Finke, Back Judge Shane Anderson.

RED Team players: Hayden Bauer, Pierce; Jace Jorgensen, Wayne; Gage Hedstrom, St. Marys; Porter Mathews, O'Neill; Callen Marshall, Norfolk Catholic; Drew Schmaeder, Stuart; Reece Heineman, Pender; Nathan Timmerman, Norfolk Catholic; Breton Whitmire, Cedar Catholic; Lane Bybee, St. Marys; Jace Panning, Crofton; Marek Dvorak, West Holt; Jackson Lynde, Crofton; Mason Krause,

Hartington-Newcastle; Kotner Koch, Wynot; Carter Kelly, Hartington-Newcastle; Brady Hochstein, Cedar Catholic; Bryce Lindstrom, Pierce; Taven Ocampo, Wayne; Brock Jeanoutot, Bloomfield; Grady Welke, O'Neill; Sam Wiebelhaus, Cedar Catholic; Edwin Alarcon, Norfolk Catholic; Cody Smith, Bloomfield; Noah Manchester, O'Neill; Jared Rutar, Cedar Catholic; Aiden Gallop, Lutheran High Northeast; Carter Wise, Wayne; Christian Nordby, Pierce; Tyson Sanger, Crofton; Anthony Steffen, Crofton; Boston Krueger, Pierce; Tate Stolpe, Wausa Osmond; Aaron Medina, South Sioux City; Jagger Sims,

South Sioux City and Parker Schmidt, Wynot

WHITE Team players, in addition to Rittscher and Erickson, are: Tanner Wagner, Norfolk; Konner Bourek, Howells-Dodge; Cash Hanis, North Bend Central; Braylon Wegner, Bancroft Rosalie; Jarett Werner, Elkhorn Valley; Tregan Fitzke, Logan View; Ethan Kester, Summerland; Bodonn Sweeney, Madison; Isidro Rosas, Norfolk; Peyton Penrose, West Point Beemer; Hunter Swanson, West Point Beemer; Myles Nielsen, West Point Beemer; Cash Wickersham, Verdigre; Tucker Mathies, Clarkson-Leigh; Gavin Groteluschen, Humphrey; Dane

Meyer, Howells-Dodge; Tucker Czanick, Archangels Catholic; Casey Schnebel, Battle Creek; Logan Nelson, Wisner Pilger; Kaden Knaak, Lyons Decatur Northeast; Korbin Werner, Elkhorn Valley; Maverik Smith, Guardian Angels Central Catholic; Cohen Skiff, Norfolk; Nathan Tomcak, Howells-Dodge; Gatlin Davidson, Stanton; Carson Tomasek, Stanton; Regan Raabe, Wisner Pilger; Nate Van Greind, West Point Beemer; Blake Ransom, Humphrey; Tatum Anderson, Norfolk; Korbyn Anthony, Wisner Pilger; Lucas Engel, Bancroft Rosalie; Chase Freudenburg, Archangels Catholic and Josh Arens, Stanton



Jarek Erickson



Trey Rittscher

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# EPPJ's postseason dreams crushed by Lady Pirates Tuesday

BLOOMFIELD — One and done. Elgin Public-Pope John's aspirations for the postseason came crashing down last week, losing in the opening round of subdistricts to Plainview 55 to 48.

It seemed like an episode from the TV show 'The Twilight Zone' as everything that helped make the Wolfpack a team to fear during the season changed, but not for the better.

Plainview came into the game with nothing to lose as the #3 seed.

They trailed by one point, 13 to 12 after the first quarter, then took control of the game.

The Pirates scored nine unanswered points early in the second quarter to go up 21 to 15, taking a lead which they would not relinquish the rest of the way.

Time and time again the Wolfpack missed scoring op-

portunities. Three-point shots missed the mark, putbacks bounced off the rim and free throw shooting went cold as the game progressed.

Jael Lammers had the team's last four points of the first half to close to within three at 28 to 25 with 44 seconds left. The Pirates then scored the final five points of the half, the final three coming on a long-range trey by Pressley Alexander which banked in at the buzzer to put Plainview up 33 to 25.

After the Pirates' lead grew to nine points, 38 to 27, midway through the third quarter, Wolfpack junior Braelyn Martinsen completed a three-point play to cut the lead to seven points. EPPJ wouldn't get any closer til the final seconds ticked off the clock as Mady Kurpgeweit got by 6'1" Riley Miller to score.

Plainview, as they did time and time again, answered back, growing the lead to nine points

early in the fourth quarter. With under three minutes to play, Elizabeth Moser scored on a steal to cut the lead to 48 to 45. The Pirates then went to the free throw line to seal the victory.

They made seven of eight free throws in the final 1:33 of the game to end EPPJ's season.

Martinsen and Kurpgeweit each scored 15 points in the game, Moser and Lammers each had six.

Kurpgeweit pulled down 13 rebounds and had three blocked shots.

EPPJ made just 24 percent of their field goal attempts, compared to Plainview who shot 32 percent (15 of 46). EPPJ made just one of 15 three-point shots, Martinsen made the lone trey with 27 seconds left in the game. Plainview connected on four of 15 treys.

Another telling statistic was free throws. EPPJ made 15 of 28

(53 percent), Plainview made 21 of 30 (70 percent).

The loss ended EPPJ's season with an 18-6 record. Plainview's record is now 8-15.

**Plainview 55, EPPJ 48**  
 Wolfpack.....13 12 14 9 — 48  
 Pirates.....12 21 11 11 — 55  
 Wolfpack — Kayton Zwingman 1-12 2-2 4, Gentry Zwingman 1-2 0-0 2, Elizabeth Moser 3-4 0-1 6, Kinley Druke 0-3 0-0 0, Braelyn Martinsen 5-20 4-11 15, Kinley Miller 0-0 0-0 0, Jael Lammers 2-6 2-2 6, Kierstyn Eisenhauer 0-0 0-0 0, Mady Kurpgeweit 4-18 7-12 15. Team totals: 16-65 15-28 48. Three-point shots — Wolfpack 1-15 (Martinsen 1). Plainview team totals: 15-46 21-30 55. Three-point shots — Pirates 4-15  
 Team statistics: Rebounds — Wolfpack 37 (Kurpgeweit 13, K. Zwingman 7), Pirates 47. Assists — Wolfpack 3, Pirates 10. Steals — Wolfpack 19 (19 (G. Zwingman 6), Pirates 10. Turnovers — Wolfpack 15, Pirates 24.



E-R photo/DMorgan

A senior, Kayton Zwingman (1) played her final game as a member of the Wolfpack. Here, she drives to the basket avoiding 6'1" Riley Miller.

*Congrats Libby!*  
medaling at State



*Good Luck*  
**WOLFPACK BOYS**  
in the subdistricts/districts

**BOYS VARSITY BASKETBALL**

Feb. 26 ...@EPS, Boys Subdistrict Finals .....6:00  
 Feb. 28 ...Boys District Finals .....TBA  
 March 11-14...State Basketball Tourney ..... TBD



**SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

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## Wolfpack 'shot down' Friday at St. Mary's

O'NEILL — What fans from both schools expected to be battle, turned out to be the opposite.

O'Neill St. Mary's jumped out to a 20-point lead and went on to defeat the Wolfpack boys 77 to 34.

The Wolfpack's chances for victory seemed to go south right from the opening tip-off. EPPJ managed just three first quarter points, a two-pointer from Michael Selting and a free throw from Karson Kallhoff.

At the other end of the court, Logan Brabec was a '3-machine' with three treys in the opening quarter as he and teammate Ben Barlow (both juniors) had seven points.

The next time the Wolfpack scored, at the 6:23 mark of the second quarter on a trey by Selting, EPPJ trailed 27 to six. The game's outcome, at that point, had already been decided. What remained to be determined would be the margin of victory.

Over the final two quarters, St. Mary's outscored the Wolfpack 25 to 16, finishing the game on a running clock.

For the game, St. Mary's made 30 of 49 shots from the field (61 percent). From three-point range they were 14 of 26. It's hard to beat any team competing against those kind of numbers.

On this night, playing their final regular season home game, St. Mary's had all the answers, leaving Coach Matt Euse and the Wolfpack to ponder what changes to make for the third matchup between the schools which could hap-



E-R photo/DMorgan

Michael Selting led the Wolfpack with 10 points.

pen this Thursday night in the subdistrict final which would be played at EPS.

Selting led the Wolfpack with 10 points followed by Jarek Erickson 9.

### St. Mary's 77, EPPJ 34

Wolfpack.....3 15 10 6 — 34  
 Cardinals.....23 29 17 8 — 77  
 Wolfpack — Michael Selting 4-9 0-2 10, Joseph McNally 0-0 0-0 0, Karson Kallhoff 1-4 1-2 4, Evin Pelster 2-2 0-1 4, Brayden Burenheide 0-2 1-2 1, Jarek Erickson 3-7 2-2 9, Max Henn 0-5 0-4 0, Braedon

Hinkle 0-2 0-0 0, Christian Preister 0-0 0-0 0, Justice Blecher 0-2 0-0 0, Jayvin Erickson 2-5 0-0 6. Team totals: 12-38 4-13 34. Three-point shots — Wolfpack 6-22 (Jv. Erickson 2, Selting 2, Kallhoff 1, Ja. Erickson 1). St. Mary's team totals: 30-49 3-4 77. Three-point shots — St. Mary's 14-26. Team statistics: Rebounds — Wolfpack 17 (Henn 5, Ja. Erickson 4), Cardinals 28. Assists — Wolfpack 5 (Kallhoff 2, Ja. Erickson 2). Turnovers — Wolfpack 12, Cardinals 3.

## Spinning Tales

### What a rollercoaster of a week

ELGIN — Every year, the third week of February seems to be one of the busiest weeks of the year if you're a Wolfpack sports fan.

And, during that week, your heartbeat rises and falls, your emotions become like a roller coaster if you are watching from the bleachers or at home on Hudl.

This year was no different. In a span of four days, we saw it all before our very own eyes. Some saw more than others, some seemed to be everywhere at once, and others watched just enough and went on with their lives.

I saw almost everything unfold and, by Saturday needed a break.

It all began Tuesday in Omaha and Bloomfield. History was made for the Wolfpack with TWO wrestlers competing at the girls NSAA State Wrestling Tournament. Anna Dworak, the 100# wrestler with the biggest smile, got her first taste of competing on the 'big' stage. Albeit brief, she and that smile will be back. Her teammate Libby Evans split her first two matches, creating an 'eye of the tiger' look which she took into Wednesday's matches. One thing about Evans - there's no quit in that girl.

That night, in the Bloomfield bee hive (gym), an average Plainview team went ahead early and kept the lead, upsetting EPPJ to end the Wolfpack's season. I jokingly thought someone must have put something in the Wolfpack's water bottles because I hadn't seen 'this' team

play all season. Everything we normally do, we didn't do. Put backs which seldom miss, bounced off the rim. Plainview had our number on this night. Victory tastes sweeter when you least expect it. They savored the moment. On the other side of the court, EPPJ players and fans were stunned. The season wasn't supposed to end this way, but it did.

Wednesday had the girls back on the mats again. Evans won three matches in a row to reach the consolation semifinals. Six minutes later her season was over, but not before winning the fourth place medal, a testament to what hard work can do. She's now a two-time state medalist and, next year, will have the chance to become the first Wolfpack wrestler to earn three state medals.

Thursday began the boys state wrestling tournament and our two seniors (Grady Druke and Landyn Veik) were in the mix to chase down a medal. Druke lost a close match that day, then lost again Friday morning, showing there are NO easy matches in Omaha. Ever.

A district champion one week ago, Landyn Veik opened the tournament the way he opened seemingly every tournament this season - with a pin. There were as many fans celebrating at home and on social media as there were in the stands at CHI Health Center. Thursday night came the shocker. A wrestler named Collins from North Platte St. Pat's won a major decision. I, for one, didn't see that coming, neither did many

others. Again, there are no easy matches in Omaha.

Friday felt like a yo-yo covering Veik's matches. He won a big match over the Roberson boy from Garden County. Then, with all on the line, suffered a one-point loss to Gavin Ironshell of Wilcox/Hildreth. What a name for a wrestler - Ironshell. When the third period ended, so did Veik's chance at a second state medal. It also marked the end of an outstanding career, one where every time he stepped onto the mat victory was in his grasp. Hard to see it end, glad to have the chance to watch him become a great wrestler.

At the same time as Veik was wrestling Ironshell, the Wolfpack boys basketball team was taking on O'Neill St. Mary's. We lost by a margin I didn't think we could lose by.

The Cardinals flew high on their home court in this, the second clash between the two teams. They soar with the three-point shot and with it they took EPPJ down. We simply had no answer on this night. But, an answer will come.

Round three is likely Thursday night. Be there!

### SPINNING TALES



Publisher  
Dennis Morgan

**EVIN PELSTER**

We are so proud of you! Give it all you got and keep working hard!

Good luck Evin #12 and team!!

Love - Mom, Dad, Logann and Brycen

#12

**MICHAEL SELTING**

Michael, you and your teammates have been so fun to watch this season!

Good luck in the post season and Play Big!

Love - Mom, Dad, Ally, Liz, Collin and Ady

#2

**MAX HENN**

Best of Luck in the Post Season, Pete!

Proud of you and the whole Pack!

Finish strong!

Love - Dad, Mom, Blake and Chloe

#24

**JAREK ERICKSON**

Jarek, such a fun season watching you play, and being a great leader and teammate!!

Keep working hard!! We love you 2!!!

Love - Mom, Aaron, Rhyson and Ridge

#21

**JUSTICE BLECHER**

Best of Luck Justice and team!!

Get after it!

Love - Mom, Dad, and Grant

#34

**KARSON KALLHOFF**

It's been such a fun ride this season and we are so proud of you!

Let's keep it rolling Wolfpack!

Love - Mom and Dad

#4

**JOSEPH MCNALLY**

Proud of your hard work!

Good luck!

Love - Dad and girls

#3

**JAYVIN ERICKSON**

Keep playing hard and get those rebounds. So fun to watch you and your brother play together! Lets keep those recipes going! : )

Love - Mom, Aaron, Rhyson and Ridge

#44

**TICEN SPARR**

Ticen, We are so proud of you.

Good luck at sub-districts!

Love - Dad, Lizz, Braxton and Kellan

#0

**BRAEDON HINKLE**

Good luck to you, the Wolfpack basketball team, and coaches! We're proud of you and have enjoyed watching you continue to develop and grow your basketball skills this season!

Love - Mom and Dad

#30

**BRAYDEN BURENHEIDE**

Brayden, Good luck to you and your team as you compete in post season! We are so proud your hard work & dedication! Go 'Pack!

Love - Mom, Gary, Alyssa, John, Oakley, Marley, Nash, Natalie, & Mic

#15

**CHRISTIAN PREISTER**

Christian: You Got This!

Love - Mom and Dad

#33