

COZAD LOCAL



VOL 4 ISSUE 51

02.12.26

24 PG \$2



Celebrating the Cozad LOCAL's ribbon cutting are, back row from left, Jordan Starman, Joy Heckenlively, Chuck Burgin, Tim Hansen, Darcy Bodfield, Sarah Wolf, and Hunter Royal; second row, Diana Toner, Linda Gadway, Mandy Swanson, Liz Romero, Krystle Rhoades, Mel Nutt, Kristen Bennett and Robyn Geiser; and front left, Susan Kloeping. (LOCAL Photo)

FB
FARM BUREAU
FINANCIAL SERVICES
 Jared Crick
 Cozad NE 308-784-4346

Weather Forecast

Feb. 13: 53/27	
Feb. 14: 55/27	
Feb. 15: 55/31	
Feb. 16: 59/31	
Feb. 17: 57/22	
Feb. 18: 47/20	
Feb. 19: 42/18	

Romeros Invest in Cozad's Story with Gratitude and Commitment

KRYSTLE RHOADES, CORRESPONDENT

This issue marks the last one published by Syndicate Publishing because the Cozad LOCAL is officially locally owned once again.

Liz Romero, who has served as editor of the weekly newspaper for several years, and her husband Ozzie have purchased the paper from previous co-owners John Bell and Colten Venteicher, marking a new chapter

for the publication and the Romero family; reaffirming its place as a community-centered voice in Cozad.

cont. PAGE 6 - LOCAL



PAGE 7 - Souper Bowl



PAGE 10 - Maker Fair



PAGE 12 - High School Sports

Four Days, Four Dogs, Two Turkeys, and Me

I spent four days solo.

Just me, my work schedule, and four dogs who believe personal space counts as a suggestion.

I ate nothing but junk food. I never heard the question, "What's for supper?" I accidentally stayed up way past my bedtime and slept in with zero guilt about it. I deep cleaned my house and enjoyed it uninterrupted, which felt almost suspicious. I rearranged my plants while talking to the dogs like they might offer feedback. They didn't in case you were wondering.

I had a full-blown dance party and forgot responsibility existed. I caught myself doing the robot in my car while listening to today's truly terrible pop songs. No witnesses. No regrets.

Day two brought an important horrible realization. My husband not being home meant I was fully in charge of Lloyd and Harry (the turkeys).

Crap.

That night found me outside in ratty clothes and slippers, holding a flashlight and questioning so many things while trying to slide their door shut. I finally got it closed when I felt rather than seen movement behind me.

Every scene from all the scary movies I had ever watched ran through my head, completely erasing all the badass moves I have learned from Jason Statham movies.

I love being home alone. It's one of my favorite past times. But I also scare easily. When that happens, I lose all control of my body movements and my mouth. My kid finds this deeply entertaining

Liz Romero



and tries to trigger it whenever possible.

The movement forced words to fly as I took off high-knee running toward the back door. I figured my great dane's bark would scare off most things threatening, right before he ran away himself.

Mid-sprint, I realized something was chasing me. Just knowing it had to be the big bad wolf. Somehow, I looked back and kept running without face-planting, which deserves recognition.

It was Harry. She was chasing me.

I collapsed onto the steps of the deck, clutching my side and trying to breathe, and sat directly in bird poop. Then there was Lloyd waddling toward us like he was demanding food.

Turns out, I should have checked that both turkeys were inside before closing the door. I opened it again, but the feathered pterodactyls refused to cooperate.

I have gone enough rounds with Loyd to know he is fast for a fat turkey. So, the turkeys spent four nights out in the "wild" and didn't die. That counts as a win.

Each night, the guys called and said they were ready to come home and I just slid past the comment, then my kid asked if I was ready for them to be back.

I wasn't, but his tender heart would be crushed if I said that.

I spent four days without feeling anxious. I didn't feel overwhelmed. I didn't melt down or have a panic attack. I love my family deeply, but I recharge differently than some people. Sometimes my mental health needs quiet, Liz-like peace. That doesn't mean I don't love them or want them around. It just means solitude fills my cup faster than anything else.

By day four, after enough conversations with myself, the dogs, and the plants, I decided I was ready for someone to at least pretend they were listening. And honestly, that felt like perfect timing.

So this week is about doing what you need, even if it doesn't look like what others might need.

Next week might be about the stupid man hair I found growing out of my face. I don't know, stick around and we will find out together. Just stick around. I want you here.

Your loving life friend, Liz

LOCAL Weekly Deadlines:

Ads

sales@cozadlocal.com
Friday at 4:00 pm

Content

liz@cozadlocal.com
Friday at 4:00 pm

Legals

cozadlocal@cozadlocal.com
Friday at 4:00 pm

Follow us on



SYNDICATE

Thank you Cozad for helping us make our paper great!



COZAD LOCAL

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Letters to the Editor

Letters must be signed and contain writer's contact information for verification. Phone numbers are not published. Letters may be sent via email.

Cozad Local is published weekly by Syndicate Publishing, LLC, 805 9th Street, Gothenburg NE 69138. Postage paid at Cozad, NE 69130 and at additional mailing offices. USPS Publication Number 25713. Copyright Cozad Local © 2026 Postmaster: Send change of address to: Cozad Local - P.O Box 188 - Cozad NE 69130

City Council Approves CDC Replat

MEL NUTT, CORRESPONDENT

A public hearing was held at the beginning of the Monday, Feb. 2, Cozad City Council meeting to approve a recommendation from the Planning Commission on the preliminary and final plat — CDC Addition No. 8 — a replat of Cover Subdivision Block 1. According to CDC Director Robyn Geiser, the tract/parcel needed to be enlarged to accommodate the incoming data center at the site. The recommendation for the replat was approved unanimously.

Citizen's Advisory Review Committee Chairman Tim Hansen reported that the committee had met on Dec. 30, 2025. "We found no issues and are pleased with what the CDC is accomplishing. We lost an outstanding director, Jen McKeone, but Robyn Geiser has taken over the position and will also be an outstanding director," Hansen said. Geiser accepted the position of CDC Director with a wealth of experience, having served as CDC Housing Director since July 2021.

Geiser presented the Cozad Economic Development Plan fiscal budget for Jan. 1 – Dec. 31. The beginning balance, which includes sales tax and rural workforce housing, is \$1,078,326.90. Estimated revenue totals of \$761,000 brings the estimated available revenue to \$1,839,326.90. Estimated expenditures total of \$931,900 leaves an estimated cash on hand of \$907,426.90. "We will be seeking a replacement for my position as CDC Housing Director in the near future, but right now I'm concentrating on transitioning to CDC Director," Geiser stated.

Cozad Housing Authority Director Cindy Shirley and retired CHA Director Pat Hosick presented their annual request for approval to waive the In Lieu of Taxes payment for FYE March 2027. Hosick explained that CHA

has requested this for several years and continues to appreciate the support and donations. She said there are 124 total units and that those who lost their homes in the Jan. 31 fire had the opportunity to be relocated to available units. Council members approved the request.

Cozad resident Ronna Beason submitted a Citizen Agenda Item form requesting a new stop sign at the intersection of 10th and F Streets. Beason was not present at the meeting. "There are too many cars at this corner, and it is the only corner by Veterans Park without a stop sign," Beason wrote on the form. Council President Jordan Curtice told the council he had contacted Cozad Street Superintendent Chris Miller, who explained that the matter would require a full traffic study. The item was tabled for future discussion as additional information is needed.

The final new business item was the approval of Resolution 2026-3, directing the sale of municipal real estate used by the Cozad Airport Authority. The property is located on the north side of Hendee Drive and includes Lots 1- 4 of Block 2, Airport Addition to the City of Cozad. The real estate was acquired at the cost of the Cozad Airport Authority and is no longer required for airport operations, so the Authority exercised its power to sell the property and retain the proceeds. The real estate will be sold to Marcus D. Young III and Brynn Young for a cash price of \$40,000.

City Clerk Brandi Kloeping introduced Jeff Strohmyer with five years of experience in the county assessor's office, has taken on the position of zoning administrator/building inspector/code and nuisance officer for the city. He is receiving training from Kloeping, Building, Zoning and Planning Administrator Doug Adkisson, and

Police Chief Reynolds.

Electric Foreman Eli Bennett reported that his crew remains busy trimming trees and that several students participated in their Maker Fair class.

Public Services Commissioner Jimmy Weinmaster reported that the transmission in one of their trucks had broken down and was being shipped off for repair. "We keep busy hauling limbs, changing street signs, and working on the gravel streets," Weinmaster said.

Wilson Public Library Director Laurie Yocom reported that she continues to update the library website to make it ADA compliant. "I am also working on our state report, reviewing and updating our policies, and will share this at our next WPL board meeting," Yocom said. "There are 19 entries in our Tiny Art Show, and library patrons may vote once per day," she added. Yocom also reported that plans are underway for the June 20 MESStival.

Cozad Chief of Police Nick Reynolds reported that the department has been focusing on code enforcement and technology improvements. He hopes a new data and citation system will be in place by March.

Fire Chief Jason Schneider and Rescue Chief Jennifer Schneider presented the January Cozad Fire and Rescue report. There were 37 rescue calls and nine fire calls. Volunteers contributed a total of 806 hours, including calls, meetings, training, and public relations. The value of volunteer time would amount to \$12,090 at minimum wage.

The next Cozad City Council meeting will be on Monday, Feb. 16, at 7 p.m. in the City Council Chambers. Residents are encouraged to attend; time is reserved at the end of each meeting for public comments.

UPCOMING EVENTS: THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12th - WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18th

12 THUR	13 FRI	14 SAT	15 SUN	16 MON	17 TUES	18 WED
9AM - 5:45PM Cake & Silent Auction @ Elks Club FFA CDE #2 5PM Dine In/Drive-Thru Meal @ GGC	11AM - Storytime @ WPL 6PM Daddy/Daughter Date Night @ Lex YMCA 6PM Mother/Son Nerf Night @ Lex YMCA 6PM G& B BB Away	Valentine's Day Speech @ NP TBA Boys Wrestling Away 	Boy Scouts Blue & Gold Banquet @ Cozad Church of Christ	President's Day 10AM Free Groceries @ GGC 7PM City Council TBA Girls BB Sub-Districts Away	Random Acts of Kindness Day 1:15PM Foot Clinic @ GGC 6:30PM Fat Tuesday Pancake Feed @ Lutheran Church TBA Girls BB Sub-Districts Away Girls State Wrestling	10AM Free Groceries @ GGC Girls State Wrestling GOOD LUCK  MAKERS!





Medical Minute sponsored by CozadCommunity HEALTH SYSTEM

Three Ways to Take Charge of Your Health this Heart Month

COZAD LOCAL

American Heart Association's Nation of Lifesavers initiative calls on individuals, "You are the first responder until help arrives"

More than 350,000 out-of-hospital cardiac arrests occur in the United States each year. This February, during American Heart Month, the American Heart Association is calling on everyday citizens to be agents of change by stepping in as the first responder until professional help arrives.

Nine out of every 10 people who experience cardiac arrest outside of a hospital die, in part because they do not receive immediate CPR more than half of the time. In rural areas where EMS response times can be longer, having individuals respond quickly with CPR and using an AED if one is available is key to improving outcomes from cardiac arrest. The American Heart Association, devoted to changing the future to a world of healthier lives for all, envisions communities where people don't wait for help—they become it.

The Association's Nation of Lifesavers initiative offers suggestions on how to take charge of your personal health and inspire a Nation of Lifesavers this American Heart Month:

1. Learn CPR and join the Nation of Lifesavers™. In Nebraska, individuals and families can take an online or in-person CPR course, watch a 90-second video to learn Hands-Only CPR for adults or watch this video to learn how to save an infant or child using CPR with breaths. To learn more about CPR, including new CPR guidelines published in Circulation this fall, visit heart.org/nation.

2. Make a plan. During a cardiac emergency, a well-developed plan could make all the difference. Don't wait for help, become it. Remember, you are the first responder until professional help arrives. A cardiac emergency response plan or (CERP) establishes specific steps to reduce death from cardiac arrest in any setting – be it a school, community organization, workplace or sports facility. Learn more about CERPs and find free resources at heart.org/ceerp.

3. Get Local. Join a local Heart Walk. Strong communities are built by preparedness. So, check in. Lace up. Whether it's joining a Heart Walk team, taking a CPR class or making sure your office, school or church has a plan, now is the time to take charge of your own health and the health of your community.

Cardiac arrest can affect anyone, anywhere - at the gym, in the grocery store, or during a child's soccer game. However, bystanders only intervene less than half of the time, often due to uncertainty or lack of training. Yet CPR, especially if performed immediately, can double or triple a person's chance of surviving sudden cardiac arrest.

"In an emergency, bystanders don't need medical training to save a life. All you need is knowledge, courage, and the willingness to act," said Chris Shives, Executive Director, American Heart Association – Nebraska. "I've learned through the American Heart Association that cardiac arrest can happen to anyone. But it's also true that anyone can step up and save a life, whether it's a stranger or someone they love, by learning CPR and taking action in an emergency."

The goal of the Association's Nation of Lifesavers initiative is to turn bystanders into lifesavers, so that in the face of a cardiac emergency anyone, anywhere is prepared and empowered to become a vital link in the chain of survival and provide CPR.

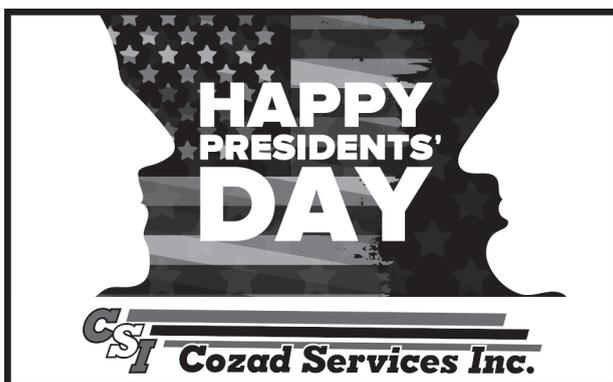
"I see it all the time. In a real emergency, the actual first responder often isn't someone in uniform, it's often a coworker or a family member," said Shives. "Learning CPR is really a civic duty. Ordinary people have the extraordinary power to make a difference in someone's life. Being prepared can turn the chaos into calm and give that person the best chance of survival."

The Association leads global efforts in public awareness, education and policy change, while also serving as the scientific authority that develops the official CPR and emergency cardiovascular care guidelines used by other CPR and first aid training providers in the U.S. and in over 90 countries worldwide.

To join the Nation of Lifesavers and continue to raise awareness during American Heart Month, visit heart.org/nation. Nation of Lifesavers is nationally sponsored by Walgreens.

About the American Heart Association

The American Heart Association is a relentless force for a world of longer, healthier lives. Dedicated to ensuring equitable health in all communities, the organization has been a leading source of health information for more than one hundred years. Supported by more than 35 million volunteers globally, we fund groundbreaking research, advocate for the public's health, and provide critical resources to save and improve lives affected by cardiovascular disease and stroke. By driving breakthroughs and implementing proven solutions in science, policy, and care, we work tirelessly to advance health and transform lives every day. Connect with us on heart.org, Facebook, X or by calling 1-800-AHA-USA1.




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AGRICULTURE



Protecting Pines and Planning Windbreaks: Building Resilient Nebraska Landscapes

ELIZABETH EXSTROM, M.S. NE EXTENSION EDUCATOR

In Nebraska landscapes, trees provide far more than aesthetic value. They offer shade, wildlife habitat, wind protection, and even help manage snow. However, trees also face challenges from pests, disease, and harsh environmental conditions. Understanding these risks — and planning accordingly — can help homeowners and land managers protect existing trees while making more resilient decisions for the future.

One serious issue impacting pine trees across Nebraska is pine wilt, a disease caused by an organism far too small to see with the naked eye. The pinewood nematode is a microscopic, worm-like organism that attacks the tissues responsible for moving water and nutrients throughout the tree. While highly destructive, the nematode cannot travel far on its own. Instead, it relies on a vector, the pine sawyer beetle, to move from tree to tree. The beetle transports the nematodes, which drop off and infest new hosts as the beetle feeds.

Not all pine species are equally susceptible to pine wilt. Mature Scotch pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) is the most vulnerable, while Austrian pine (*Pinus nigra*) has moderate susceptibility. Native pines, such as ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), or limber pine (*Pinus flexilis*) tend to be more tolerant. Other evergreen species — including spruce, fir, juniper, and eastern red cedar — are not affected because they are not pines.

Knowing what type of pine you have can help determine its level of risk. One simple identification method is counting the number of needles in a bundle, known as a fascicle. Austrian pines have two long needles per fascicle. Scotch pines also have two needles per fascicle, but they are medium in length and are slightly twisted and have a small, golf ball sized pine cone. Ponderosa pines typically have two to three needles per fascicle and produce large, prickly cones. Bark characteristics can also help distinguish species. Scotch pine bark is flaky and orange to cinnamon-colored, while Austrian pine bark is darker, thicker, and plate-like.

With a little training, pine wilt symptoms can often be recognized early. The first sign is typically a grayish-green

tint in the needles on a major branch or throughout the tree. As the nematodes multiply, needles turn tan and eventually brown. One key indicator of pine wilt is that the dead needles remain attached to the tree for a year or more. In addition, infected wood is unusually light in weight and lacks the sticky resin commonly found in healthy pine trees.

When it comes to pine wilt, treatment can come with a hefty price tag. Preventative injections may help protect high-value, susceptible trees, but treatments must be applied before infestation occurs and repeated every two to three years. Costs vary depending on tree size, but average treatments range from \$200 to \$300 for a tree approximately 10 inches in diameter. Unfortunately, there is no cure. Once a tree develops pine wilt, there aren't any curative treatments.

Prompt removal of infected trees is essential to prevent further spread of the disease. Trees that die between May 1 and October 1 should be removed and destroyed immediately. Trees dying after October 1 must be removed by April 30. The wood should be burned, buried, or chipped as soon as possible. It should not be saved for firewood, though chips may be safely used as mulch.

If pine wilt has affected your property, consider using the loss as an opportunity to improve long-term landscape resilience. Pine wilt often impacts windbreaks, making thoughtful plant selection especially important. Species should be chosen based on soil type, climate,

available space, and windbreak objectives. Diversity is key. Windbreaks made up of only one or two species are far more vulnerable to insects and diseases, while diverse plantings remain functional even if one species is affected.

Windbreaks also have a lifespan. If a planting is 30 to 50 years old or if the windbreak is mainly Scotch or Austrian pine, it may be time to consider rejuvenation or renovation. Local Natural Resource Districts (NRDs) offer low-cost seedlings through conservation tree programs for windbreaks, wildlife habitat, and living snow fences. These programs can help landowners rebuild stronger, more diverse plantings that are better equipped to withstand future challenges.

Pine wilt highlights the importance of prevention, diversity, and timely action. By understanding the disease and planning windbreaks with a variety of well-adapted species, Nebraska landowners can create landscapes that are better equipped to withstand pests, disease, and environmental stress.

Market Report

For the Week Ending Feb. 6, 2025

Nebraska Weekly Grain Prices,
Omaha-Council Bluffs
US NO 2 YELLOW CORN: \$3.81-4.08
US NO 1 SOYBEANS: \$10.00-10.25

Nutrien
Ag Solutions

Livestock Weighted Average Report for Feb. 9, 2025

STEERS - Medium and Large 1 (Per Cwt / Actual Wt)
Wt. Range - 600-649; Avg Wt - 629; Price Range -
\$419.00-477.50; Avg Price - \$459.08

HEIFERS - Medium and Large 1 (Per Cwt / Actual Wt)
Wt. Range - 550-598; Avg Wt - 574; Price Range -
\$410.00-465.00; Avg Price - \$443.17

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from FRONT - LOCAL

"I didn't want the paper to close," Romero said. "This purchase is my way of saying thank you to a community that continues to stand behind my family without fail."

Romero has been with the Cozad LOCAL since its second issue nearly five years ago, beginning as office manager before growing into the editor's role.

"At first, it was simply a job in town," she said. "Over time, it became much more than that. This newspaper feels like a way to give back, to say thank you to everyone who supported, encouraged, and prayed for my family. It's personal, and I carry that gratitude with me in the pages of this paper." She shared that this paper offers people a place to go that doesn't have an opinion, just facts, feel good facts.

Bell said the decision to step away from ownership was intentional and rooted in trust.

"The prompting to withdraw from the Cozad LOCAL is nothing more than providing Liz an opportunity to lead, which she has shown she can do," Bell said. "Owning any newspaper was never motivated by profit," he added with a chuckle. "We always knew when it was over, the effort would be chalked up to philanthropic."

Bell and his wife both worked in Cozad for years and viewed keeping a local paper alive as a way to give back. "To me, starting a paper in Cozad was nothing more than a thank you to Cozad from my family," he said.

The LOCAL's new owner, but familiar face, acknowledges the challenges facing the newspaper industry, particularly as digital platforms continue to reshape

how people consume information.

"Newspapers are dying and quickly," Romero said. "Social media provides the news, then it provides the drama. The newspaper has the details, the facts. It's so much more than a social media post."

By contrast, she said the Cozad LOCAL is intentionally designed to be a "feel-good" paper, one that reflects the heart of our town.

"It reflects who we are as a town, the kids who show kindness, the friends who support one another, the businesses that are the backbone of this community and the grandparents who don't want to miss a thing," she said. "A local newspaper preserves those stories. It provides the details of events that so many future generations will be able to utilize." She went on to express that documenting the small things, makes them bigger, and can encourage others to show small acts of kindness. She thanked Colten and John for their continued support.

Bell believes that community connection is exactly why Romero is well-suited to lead the paper.

"In a struggling industry, the papers that make it are led by someone who truly functions as the lifeblood of the community," Bell said. "Liz is that."

He added that her ability to organize the publication calendar, plan advertising opportunities, and flatten out financial fluctuations will be critical to the paper's sustainability.

For Romero, local ownership simply means the paper belongs solely to Cozad.

"While I own and operate it, this is Cozad's paper. The stories, the support and the heart behind it come from this community, I just put all the pieces together" she said. "Local ownership is a reflection of the

trust Cozad places in the LOCAL, and that's something I don't take lightly."

Looking ahead, she defines success simply: consistency, connection and community support.

"A stable, trusted newspaper where readers see people they know in the pages and local businesses see value in advertising," she said. "Showing up every week with coverage of Cozad events, schools and people."

Bell echoed that vision in his message to the community.

"Cozad, please support Liz," he said. "I know she will work for you. It takes involvement from everyone to ensure a local paper remains the keystone visual communication piece of a community."

Romero agrees. "The paper will be here as long as the community wants it," she said. "If local businesses advertise and readers subscribe, we'll continue serving Cozad for years to come."

Romero finished, "I couldn't do this without the support of our community and the help of my mom, Joy (Heckenlively), Krystle (Rhoades), Mel (Nutt), and Kelly (Aden). Ozzie is one of my biggest supporters, and he took on a lot of extra work alongside myself to make this happen. And I can not begin to thank Robyn Geiser, Jordan Starman, Bonnie Hubbard, Kelly Aden and Lindsay Wells for all their encouragement and support."

Change brings hesitation but for the Cozad LOCAL, all that is changing is their email contact information and the name on the invoice.

Liz – liz@cozadlocal.com

Joy – sales@cozadlocal.com

Legal notices – cozadlocal@cozadlocal.com

Cozad Grand Generation Center

Weekly MENU

- Thur., 2/12** Scalloped Potatoes & Ham, Corn, Peaches
- Fri., 2/13** Taco Burger, Tater Tots, Baked Beans, Fruit Cocktail, Cookies
- Mon., 2/16** BBQ Pork Sandwich, Roasted Potatoes, Coleslaw, Pistachio Salad, Mandarin Oranges, Rice Krispie Treats
- Tues., 2/17** Meatloaf, Baked Potato, Corn, Ambrosia Salad, Ice Cream
- Wed., 2/18** Oven Baked Chicken, Mashed Potatoes, Creamed Peas, Pears, Ice Cream

This weeks calendar is sponsored by:

COZADLOCAL 201 W. 8th Street, Cozad
308-784-4747
cozadlocal.com

Lexington Grand Generation Center

WEEKLY MENU

- Thur., 2/12** Italian Chicken, Potato Casserole, Buttered Cabbage, Mandarin Oranges
- Fri., 2/13** Birthday Dinner: Beef Roast Mashed Potatoes w/ Gravy, Green Beans, Fresh Fruit, Dinner Roll, Dessert
- Mon., 2/16** Valentine's Day Dinner: Baked Chicken, Scalloped Potatoes, Peas, Pineapple, Dinner Roll, Dessert
- Tues., 2/17** Cube Pork in Gravy, Red Diced Potatoes, Mixed Veggies, Mixed Fruit
- Wed., 2/18** Spaghetti w/ Meat Sauce, Tri Tater, Italian Green Beans, Garlic Bread, Pears

This weeks calendar is sponsored by:

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Winners of the 14th annual Souper Bowl at the Cozad Grand Generation Center were announced at the conclusion of the event, which featured 10 competitors this year. From left: Nick Wilkins and Mike Peters from the Gothenburg Senior Center placing 3rd with their Touchdown Chili; Robert Dyer and Sarah Wolf from Cozad Community Health System, 1st place champions with their 222 Chicken Enchilada Soup; Barbara and Tim Fink placing 2nd with their Chinese Chili; and Bob Nutt from the Cozad Grand Generation Center receiving the CRAP Award for Last Place in 2026. (LOCAL Photo by Mel Nutt)

Cozad Community Health System Voted Supreme Soup Champion

MEL NUTT, CORRESPONDENT

Cozad's Grand Generation Center hosted its 13th annual Souper Bowl Cook-Off on Friday, Feb. 6. Approximately 110 soup connoisseurs enjoyed soups prepared by 10 contestants during an evening of food and fellowship organized by GGC Director Tamie Thurn and GGC Receptionist Cecilia McBride. The Souper Bowl Cook-Off is held annually on the Friday prior to the NFL Super Bowl.

Attendees received sampler cups of the 10 homemade soups, along with crackers, cheese, biscuits, cookies, truffles, Hershey's Kisses, cornbread, and French bread from the competitors. Guests then selected their favorite soup and returned for a full-sized bowl before choosing a piece of pie and an ice cream cup to finish the meal.

The \$10 admission included one ballot to vote for a favorite soup. Extra votes were available for purchase throughout the evening from volunteers PJ Jacobson and Mike Neill.

The top three contestants received \$50, \$25, and \$10, respectively.

Thurn announced the top three soups at 7 p.m. were within six votes of each other, with what she called a lot of "ballot box stuffing."

Cozad Community Health System won the 2026 Souper Bowl Supreme Soup Championship with its entry, 222 Chicken Enchilada Soup. CCHS Recruiting and Communications Specialist Sarah Wolf prepared the soup and offered add-on ingredients including cheese, cilantro, avocado chunks, and tortilla chip strips. CCHS donated the \$50 prize money back to the center.

Barb and Tim Fink captured second place with their Chinese chili, served with cornbread.

Gothenburg Senior Center earned third place with its Touchdown Chili, represented by center director Anne Franzen and assisted by Nick Wilkins and Mike Peters. Their table featured football-themed decorations, including a blow-up goal post and football.

Bob Nutt, representing the Grand Generation Center with German Knoephla Soup, received the CRAP Last Place 2026 Award. This marked a three-peat for Nutt, who added this year's toilet bowl trophy to those

from the previous two years.

Other entries included LaVonne and Dail Vetter, Ham and Bean Soup; Cindy Schneider, Aunt Tiff's Potato Soup; Cozad Thrift Shop, Stone Soup; Lila Beenblossom, French Onion Soup; Maxx and Jake Vetter, Broccoli Cheese Soup; and Rosalie Mayfield, Chicken Noodle Soup.

Beenblossom was the oldest contestant, and Maxx Vetter, a high school senior, was the youngest.

The Thrift Shop volunteers again based their entry on the book Stone Soup. Volunteers each contributed an ingredient, including a stone, potatoes, carrots, peas, corn, tomatoes, beef broth, hamburger, salt, pepper, and other items, to create the soup.

"Sharing benefits everyone who contributes," the moral from Stone Soup, summed up this year's Souper Bowl. Contestants and attendees supported the Grand Generation Center through the fundraiser. Thurn thanked those in attendance throughout the evening for their participation and support of the event and the center.

Our Community's Quiet Angels, Cozad Volunteer Fire Department

LIZ ROMERO

The Cozad Volunteer Fire Department continues to connect with the community. Cozad resident Merna Carver shared that her 4-year-old grandson, Zavian, wants to become a firefighter. During a visit to town in October, Carver asked if he could tour the department. Firefighters welcomed him and showed him around the station, answering the many questions that 4-year-olds have.

Carver saw the department training and took photos of the exercise to share with her grandson, but said she was amazed by the accidental photo while stating the members "truly are angels."

The Cozad Volunteer Fire Department responded to 37 rescue calls and nine fire calls in January, totaling 806 hours. Those hours include emergency responses, meetings, training, and public relations work.



Cozad Volunteer Fire Department members serve as quiet angels in our community, always ready to respond. (Courtesy Photo)



MARCH 2ND - MARCH 6TH, 2026

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**MARCH 2ND -
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Ash Wednesday Marks Start of Lent

MEL NUTT, CORRESPONDENT

Churches in Cozad and around the world will observe the season of Lent beginning on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 18. There are 40 days from Ash Wednesday to Easter, excluding Sundays.

The observance of Lent has been practiced since the early Christian church and was formalized at the First Council of Nicaea in 325 CE. The term "Lent" comes from the Middle English word *lente*, meaning spring, and reflects a time of renewal. The 40-day fasting period is rooted in biblical narratives, including Noah's flood and Moses' time on Mount Sinai receiving the Ten Commandments, but it is primarily associated with Jesus' 40 days of temptation in the desert prior to his ministry.

Lent also serves as a time of reflection, and some Christians choose to donate their time and resources to those in need during the season rather than fasting or giving something up. Through the observance of Lenten traditions, Christians are reminded of their mortality, the need for God's grace, and the hope found in Christ's resurrection on Easter Sunday.

Ash Wednesday and Easter fall on different dates each year because they are based on the lunar calendar. Easter Sunday occurs on the first Sunday

after the first full moon following the spring equinox.

The spring equinox falls on Friday, March 20, and the first full moon after the equinox is the Pink Full Moon on Thursday, April 2. Easter will be celebrated on Sunday, April 5.

The Tuesday prior to Ash Wednesday is known as Shrove Tuesday, Fat Tuesday, or Pancake Day. It is a time for Christians to seek forgiveness and make amends before entering the season of reflection and, for some denominations, fasting during Lent. The term "shrove" comes from the Old English word 'shrive', meaning to confess sins and seek absolution. Shrove Tuesday traces its roots to medieval practices of confession and using up rich foods such as eggs, butter, and sugar before the fasting season by preparing cakes, pancakes, and other foods.

American Lutheran Church in Cozad, located at 200 E. 12th Street, will observe Fat Tuesday with a freewill-offering pancake feed on Tuesday, Feb. 17, from 5 - 6:30 p.m. The supper will include pancakes, toppings, sausage, and orange juice or coffee.

Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, is observed by many Christians, including Catholics and some Protestant denominations. It occurs 46 days

before Easter Sunday and serves as a reminder of human mortality and the need for reconciliation with God. Worshippers receive ashes on their foreheads in the shape of a cross, accompanied by the words, "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return" (Genesis 3:19). The ashes are typically made from palm branches from the previous year's Palm Sunday and symbolize humility and repentance.

Several Cozad churches have Ash Wednesday services scheduled.

Christ the King Catholic Church, located at 613 W. 13th Street, will hold Mass at 7 a.m. and 6 p.m., including the imposition of ashes and Holy Communion.

American Lutheran Church will offer "Ashes to Go" at the front doors of the church from 11 a.m. - 12 p.m. All

are welcome to stop for prayer and the imposition of ashes. A service with Holy Communion will follow from noon to 12:30 p.m., with a free brown bag lunch available.

Cozad United Methodist Church, located at 1515 B Street, will hold a 7 p.m. Ash Wednesday service, with confirmation students and youth assisting in leading the service.

First Presbyterian Church, located at 819 E Street, will also hold a 7 p.m. Ash Wednesday service with the imposition of ashes.

Lenten soup suppers are planned at American Lutheran Church on Wednesdays, Feb. 25 and March 4, 11, 18, 25, from 5 - 6:15 p.m. A freewill offering will be taken for the meal, which includes soup, bread, and dessert. A half-hour worship service will follow each supper and conclude at 6:45 p.m.



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Maker Fair Continues to Be Huge Success

MEL NUTT, CORRESPONDENT

Cozad High School held its 12th Annual Maker Fair on Feb. 2 and 3. Students and staff look forward to these two days to rekindle and spark interest in coming to school in the middle of winter, while also giving staff and community members an opportunity to share their hobbies and passions with the CHS student body.

The annual two-day event gives CHS students the opportunity to take part in courses not typically offered, including many held off campus.

The event is funded by a grant from the Cozad School Foundation, and many presenters donate their own supplies for the courses they teach.

According to CHS Principal Corey Fisher, "The annual CHS Maker Fair is an event that provides opportunities for students to step outside the traditional classroom setting and engage in hands-on learning experiences they may not otherwise have access to. Students can choose from a wide variety of classes that spark creativity, problem-solving, and exploration. One of the most meaningful aspects of the Maker Fair is that it also helps build meaningful connections with commu-



CHS students enjoyed dancing to "Just Dance" in the new gym following lunch prior to attending their afternoon course sessions at this year's Maker Fair held on Feb. 2 and 3.

nity members who share their skills and passions. We are fortunate for the many local community members and staff who volunteer to share their expertise and talents. The Maker Fair is organized by a committee of CHS teachers who work throughout the year planning for this event. A big thank you to those who teach the classes and to the Maker Fair Committee for their dedication in organizing these two outstanding days."

The Maker Fair Committee consists of Dawn Beans, Woody Blackmore, Marcie Kostrunek, Amanda Rossell, Chris Tvrdy, and Seth Vlasak. They meet regularly beginning in August to plan and organize the Maker Fair.

This year's courses and instructors included: Antique Guns/Gun Safety, John Mulholland; The Art of BBQ, Shane Shukei; Athletic Training, Alison Feik; Beginning Chess, Woody Blackmore; Blacksmithing, Will Bilsend; Bowling, Strike and Spare Bowl, Lexington; Boxing,

Denny Nolasco; Boys' Volleyball, Amanda Rossell; Cajun Cooking, Cajun Prairie, Pat Lefleur; Card Games, Nick Broz; Chess Tournament, Woody Blackmore; Cornhole, Katy Bartell; Country Swing Dancing, Jacob and Kate Brummer; Craft Space/Perler Beads, Marcie Kostrunek and Dawn Beans; Cricut Design/Sublimation, Jordan Haarberg; Crochet, Patty Margritz; Cross Stitch, Dawn Beans; DAWs and Home Music Production, Bill Shaffer; Dodgeball, Ethan Haarberg; Door Signs, Kristen Wilkins; Electrical Linemen, Chris White; EMS/Fire Hall, Jason Schneider; Experiences in Animal Science, Eastside Animal Center – Gothenburg; Fisher's 4-Year Plan for Freshmen, Corey Fisher, Jordan Haarberg, and Daniel Revelo; French Cooking, Samuel Blackmore; German Cooking, Amara Block at Frontier Frau; Girls Self-Defense, Beth Bauer; Heartland Military Museum, Steve Zerr, Lexington; Hunting, Kaleb Pohl; Kolaches, Seth Vlasak; Lure Painting, Trey Botts; Magician/Card Tricks, DeVere Larington; Massage Therapy, Alison Feik; Mexican Cooking, Jessica DeLaTorre and Yanira Rodriguez; Mortuary Science, Tim Strauser, Blase-Strauser Memorial Chapel, Gothenburg; Oil Painting with Biz, Biz Tvrdy; Pen Making, Nick Auwerda; Photography, Kyle Vincent; Pickleball, Gayle Brownfield, Gordon and Barb Hendricks, and Cindy Thramer; Pony Beads, Libby Bennett; Puzzles, Claire Mulholland; Seed Bead Jewelry, Kristen Wilkins; Snack Bag Project, Sierra Maginnis; Sourdough for Starters, Becky Gibbens; Tennis, Gayle Brownfield, Gordon and Barb Hendricks, and Cindy Thramer; The Alternative Wholistic Wellness, Tara Niles; Ticket to Ride (board game), Jacob Brummer; Tie Dye, Kristen Wilkins; Ukulele, Brandon Horwart; Water Labs and Industry, Troy Franzen, City of Cozad; Woodworking Basics, Ryan Zoucha; and Yoga, Teri Birch.

Students selected courses based on interest and availability, with seniors having first choice, followed by juniors, sophomores, and freshmen. Courses were offered as half-day or full-day options. Morning sessions ran from 8:15 - 11 a.m., and afternoon sessions ran from 12:30 - 3:15 p.m. Lunch was served to freshmen and sophomores from 11 - 11:45 a.m., and to juniors and seniors from 11:45 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. When students were not enjoying the longer-than-normal lunch period, they gathered in the new gym to participate in "Just Dance," projected on the big screen.

An all-school photo was taken at 3 p.m. Tuesday to cap off two days for students, staff, and presenters.

The committee thanks everyone in the communities of Cozad, Gothenburg, and Lexington for their collaboration, participation, and continued support.



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CMS custodian Will Bilsend taught an intriguing course on blacksmithing on Tuesday, Feb. 3 at the annual CHS Maker Fair. (Courtesy Photos)



Tara Niles, owner of The Alternative in Cozad, demonstrated what happens in her Jump Around Classes to promote holistic wellness to an eager and delighted group of CHS students during Maker Fair on Monday, Feb. 2. (LOCAL Photo by Mel Nutt)



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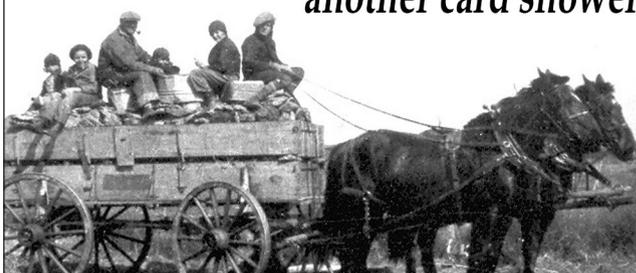
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SPORTS

Negley, Saravia State Bound After District Success

LIZ ROMERO

The Cozad Lady Haymakers competed at the 2026 NSAA B-4 District tournament on Feb. 6 and 7 highlighted by a district title run from Abby Negley and runner-up for Andrea Saravia. Both Haymakers will be advancing to state on Tuesday Feb. 17 through Thursday Feb. 19.

At 100 pounds, Betzaida Utrera opened her bracket with a fall to Capri Sayer (Southwest). Utrera moved into consolation play, where she dropped her second match to Milya Thomas

(Morrill).

Audrey Osburn (105) faced Jazzmyne Hardin (Morrill) in the opening round and was pinned early. Osburn continued in the consolation bracket but fell to Edmy Balux (Wayne).

Negley (110) delivered a dominant performance throughout the tournament. Negley opened with a pin over Charley Kerzner (Hi-Line) in 1:04, followed by a pins against Kassidy Aden (Hershey) in the quarterfinals and Lupita Alba (Wayne) in the semifinals. Neg-



Andrea Saravia (left) and Abby Negley are headed to the 2026 NSAA State Tournament for the second year in a row. (Courtesy Photo)

ley capped the day with a first-place finish after pinning Bella McLaughlin (Fort Calhoun).

Daniella Moss (120) opened with a pin over Mae Mandelko (Chadron). Moss dropped her second match to Camber Lippert (Ogallala) before rebounding with a pin against Angelina Thorsen (Gordon-Rushville) in the consolation bracket. Moss' run ended with a loss to Aspyne Houser (Sidney).

Samantha Roberts (130) fell in her first match to Alison Dill (Fort Calhoun) but responded with a pin over Bryanne Bayne (Maxwell). Roberts' tournament concluded with a loss to Megan Magnu-

son (Wayne).

Saravia (145) advanced to the championship match after a strong run through the bracket. Saravia opened with a pin against Madalinn May (Mitchell), followed by another pin over Zoe Bolles (Wayne). She earned a 6-2 decision over Callie Kenner (Valentine) in the semifinals before falling to Brianna Kalvoda (Adams Central), earning herself a second place finish.

Graciah Roberts (190) dropped her opening match to Skylar Johnson (Paxton). Roberts earned a pin against Emily Robinson (Hi-Line) but was eliminated after a loss to Noley Brower (Kimball).



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COZAD LOCAL

Hueftle Wins Title at Southwest Conference

LIZ ROMERO

The Cozad Haymakers competed at Southwest Conference on Friday, Feb. 6, in Holdrege, with several wrestlers advancing to championship matches

and earning podium finishes.

Wyatt Hueftle (106) delivered a strong run. He earned an 18-2 tech fall over Zach Longfellow (Broken Bow)



Wyatt Hueftle earned the Southwest Conference championship title in the 106-weight bracket. (LOCAL Photo by Barry Mraz)

in the semifinals before capturing first place with a pin against Brecken Carlson (Gothenburg). Hueftle's strong performance earned him the 2026 SWC championship title.

Kenneth Hernandez (138) saw his tournament end early after falling to Cash Watson (Broken Bow) and later to Kolbe Foster (McCook) in the consolation semifinals.

Drake Hasbrouck (144) advanced to the finals after pinning Landon Hohnholt (Holdrege). Hasbrouck finished second place in the SWC tournament after a narrow 4-3 decision loss to Tristan Campbell (McCook) in the championship match.

Landon Baker (165) reached the finals following a big 11-9 decision win over Jackson Blomstedt (McCook). Baker earned runner-up after falling to Aidan Markham (Broken Bow) in the

title match.

Jaden Rodriguez (285) opened with a pin over Vicente Ramirez (Ogallala), followed by a 3-2 decision against Devon Baum (Broken Bow). Rodriguez finished second place after a loss to Chance Bailey (Holdrege).

For junior varsity Byn Sylvan (165) recorded pins over Crex Ventura (Cozad) and Deacon Burkey (Holdrege) earning himself first place.

Crex Ventura (165) took a loss from Byn Sylvan (Cozad) then earned a win by pin against Deacon Burkey (Holdrege) taking second place.

Ikensan Isonobu (215) competed in three matches, falling to Coen Greenlee (McCook), Hayden Pesek (Gothenburg), and Sage Saunders (Minden).

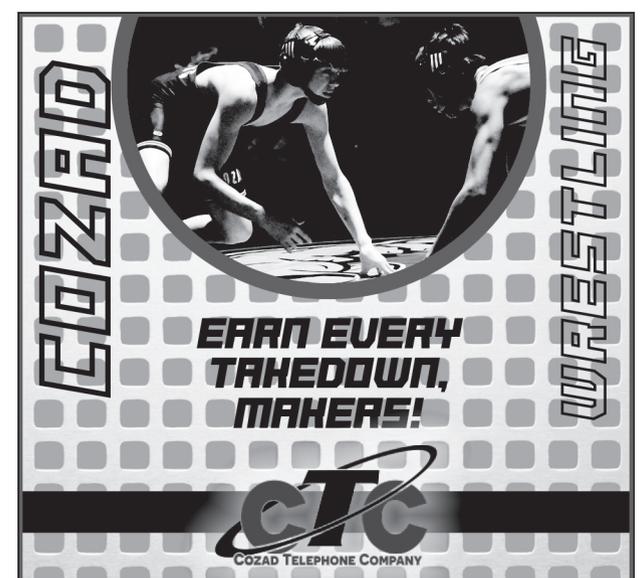
The Haymakers spent the week preparing for districts held this Saturday, Feb. 14.



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Playmaker Ollie Davis Leads Haymakers in Weekend Showcase

LIZ ROMERO

The Cozad boys basketball team hosted the Minden Whippets on Friday, Feb. 6, honoring seniors Koang Deng, Chayden Hoffmaster, Gage Strauss, Daygn Buss, and Olliver Davis.

Cozad jumped to an early lead in the first quarter, 16-12. The Haymakers' defense dominated the second, holding Minden to just 4 points while scoring 11 of their own. A fast-paced third quarter saw Cozad add 19 points but allow 17, before finishing strong in the fourth with 14 points while limiting the Whippets to 9, sealing a 60-42 win.

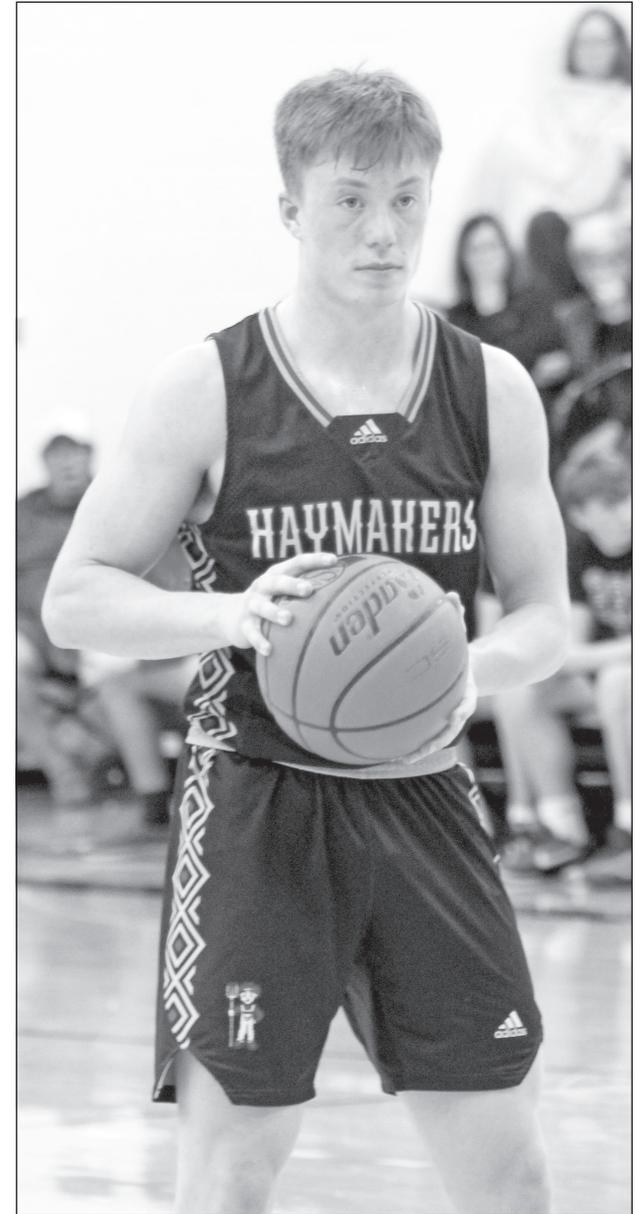
Ollie Davis was a strong leader for the Haymakers on both sides of the court with a double-double, scoring 11 points and grabbing 11 rebounds (6 offensive, 5 defensive). He also reached a major milestone, surpassing 1,000 career points, becoming only the fourth player in Cozad history to do so. Davis added 3 assists, 2 steals, and made 5/6 free throws.

Kellen Shoemaker paced Cozad, scoring 18 points, including 3 from beyond the arc, along with 2 steals and 2 assists. Strauss recorded 11 points, 4 rebounds, 1 assist, and 1 steal. Hoffmaster added 10 points and 4 rebounds, Koang Deng contributed 2 points and 1 rebound, and Daygn Buss added a steal.

The Haymakers traveled to their 20th win on Saturday, Feb. 7 against Dundy County-Stratton (DCS). Cozad held DCS to 15 points in the first quarter while scoring 20, then outscored them 21-10 in the second, taking a 41-25 halftime lead.

Cozad maintained control in the second half, winning 71-49.

O. Davis and Shoemaker each scored 19 points, with O. Davis adding 10 rebounds, 3 assists, and 2 steals. Shoemaker recording 6 assists, 3 three-pointers, 1 steal, and 1 rebound. Gage Strauss added 9 points, 6 from three-point range, and 7 rebounds, while Julien Davis contributed 9 points, 6 rebounds, 3 assists, and 1 steal. Hoffmaster and Ethan Atchison each scored 6 points, with Hoffmaster recording 4 assists, 3 rebounds, and 2 steals.



Ollie Davis hits 1,000 career points, posts back-to-back double-doubles for 40 points, 21 rebounds. (LOCAL Photo by Jennifer Walls)



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Briley Fisher brings energy and skill to the court as a key guard for the Haymakers. (LOCAL Photo by Jennifer Walls)

Lady Haymakers Face Minden at Home, Travel to DCS

LIZ ROMERO

The Cozad Lady Haymakers faced a busy weekend on the court with home and road contests that tested their depth and determination.

Cozad hosted the Minden Whippets on Friday, Feb. 6, in a tightly contested matchup. Minden took an early 9-3 lead after the first quarter. Both teams matched each other with 10 points apiece in the second quarter, sending the Haymakers into halftime trailing 13-19.

The defenses controlled the third quarter as each team scored 4 points. In the final period, Minden added 11 points while Cozad scored 6, leading to a 23-34 loss for the Haymakers. No individual statistics were available.

The Lady Haymakers returned to action Saturday, Feb. 7, traveling to face the Dundy County-Stratton Tigers. DCS opened strong, outscoring Cozad 17-0 in the first quarter.

The Haymakers responded with nine points in the second, but DCS maintained control with 16 points to take a 33-9 halftime lead. Cozad added six points in the third quarter and finished the game with a nine-point fourth quarter as DCS scored three. No statistics were reported for the game.

The Lady Haymakers hit the road again and will travel to Broken Bow on Friday, Feb. 13.



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After winning back-to-back tournaments, the Cozad youth third and fourth grade team had big smiles with their medals. From left back row: Coach Nick Broz, Assistant Holden Zook, Colston Broz, Sawyer Rutkowski, Riggs Chytka, Coach Jason Hubbard, Maddux Young, and Coach Dreu Young. Front row: Caine Osborn, Brecken Barber, Ayden Hubbard, and Braxtyn Barber. (Courtesy Photo)

Cozad 3rd/4th Grade Boys Dominate Back-to-Back Tournaments

COZAD LOCAL

The Cozad youth boys third and fourth grade basketball team brought home two championships titles after sweeping the Hershey Youth Tournament on Jan. 19 and the Maxwell Tournament on Feb. 1.

Cozad delivered strong performances

throughout both tournaments, showcasing balanced scoring, fast-paced defense and consistent teamwork in each game.

The team is coached by Nick Broz, Jason Hubbard and Dreu Young.

Team members include Brecken

Barber, Braxtyn Barber, Colston Broz, Riggs Chytka, Ayden Hubbard, Caine Osborn, Sawyer Rutkowski and Maddux Young.

With back-to-back tournament championship wins, the Cozad squad continues to build momentum and

highlight promising young talent within the community.

The team also extended its appreciation to the Cozad fifth and sixth grade boys basketball team, along with family and friends, for their enthusiastic support at the Maxwell Tournament!

Speech Team Earns Large School Sweepstakes Runner-Up Plaque

MEL NUTT, CORRESPONDENT

The Cozad High School Speech Team traveled ten miles west to Gothenburg High School to compete in its annual speech meet on Saturday, Feb. 7. Head Coach Woody Blackmore and assistant coaches Yanira Rodriguez and Omar Carlos coach the team.

In varsity competition, senior Camryn Yilk had a strong meet, medaling in three categories. Yilk earned a first-place medal in Program of Oral Interpretation. Her Serious Prose entry placed fifth, and she finished the day with an eighth-place medal in Poetry.

Senior teammate Elliott Blackmore earned an eighth-place medal in Program of Oral Interpretation.

The varsity Oral Interpretation of Drama team, comprised of Taegan Dexter, Eh Thaw Hser, Ava Joyce, and Talyn Propp, delivered a strong performance and earned third-place medals.

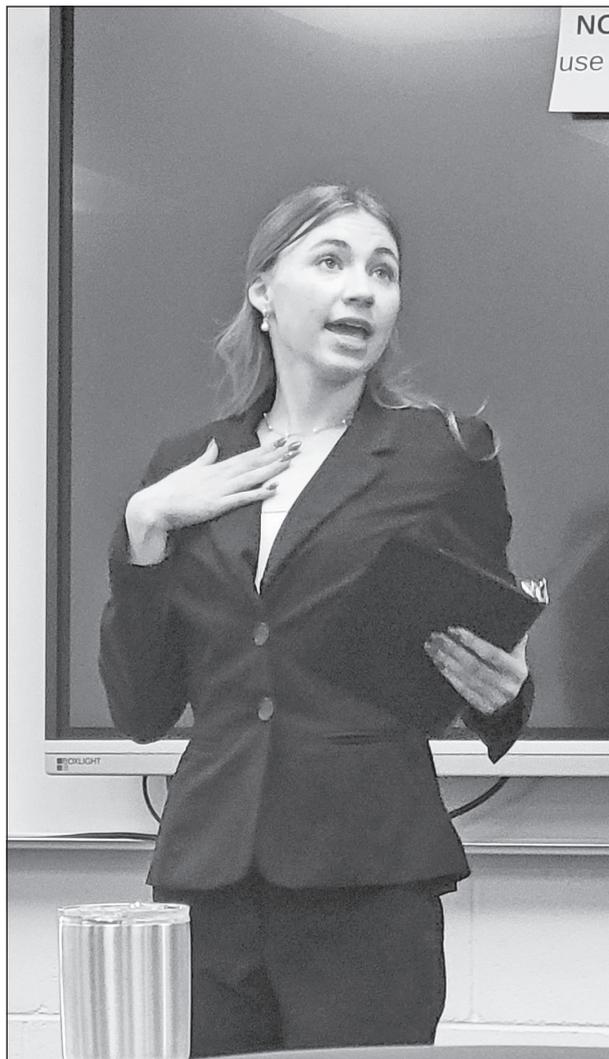
In novice competition, Aiden Allbright received a fourth-place medal in Humorous Prose.

Rebecca Burns and Adeline Joyce continued their winning ways by placing first in Duet Acting.

The novice Oral Interpretation of Drama team, with members Aiden Allbright, Rebecca Burns, Reagan Chrisinger, Adeline Joyce, and Hayden Revelo, continued to score high, capturing second-place medals with their entry.

A highlight of the awards ceremony came when officials announced the team received the 2026 Large School Sweepstakes runner-up plaque.

The team will compete in the Blue and Gold Speech Meet hosted by North Platte High School on Saturday, Feb. 14.



LEFT: CHS senior Camryn Yilk had a phenomenal day at the Gothenburg Speech Meet on Saturday, Feb. 7, medaling in all three of her varsity events. Camryn placed first in Program of Oral Interpretation, fifth in Serious Prose, and eighth in Poetry. (Photo Courtesy of Elizabeth Yilk) **BELOW:** CHS novice team members Rebecca Burns and Ava Joyce continued to dazzle the judges as they captured first place medals in Duet Acting at the Gothenburg speech meet on Saturday, Feb. 7. (Photo Courtesy of Yanira Rodriguez)



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When the Going Gets Tough

SENATOR TERESA IBACH, LD DISTRICT #44, NEBRASKA

Lexington is facing a difficult week. Following Tyson's announcement to close its meat processing plant, local services, schools, and residents have been forced to confront a new economic reality while working quickly to chart a path forward for the community.

A recent University of Nebraska report outlines the

magnitude of the challenge ahead. The numbers are sobering: an estimated \$3.28 billion in annual economic losses, more than 7,000 jobs impacted statewide, and over \$530 million in lost labor income. State and local governments are also expected to feel the strain, with millions in lost income and sales tax revenue each year.

There is no denying the impact will be real and deeply felt. But Lexington is not standing still. Leadership at both the city and county levels is strong, engaged, and committed to the community's future. Local services, hospitals, schools, and law enforcement agencies have already begun adapting to this new reality and are working together in a coordinated, resilient response focused on protecting essential services and positioning Lexington for recovery.

That commitment extends beyond the local level. I,

along with city leaders, the Governor and Nebraska's federal delegation, are engaged in efforts to help bridge conversations and identify pathways forward. We agree that if Tyson will no longer occupy the building, the opportunity to make the space available to a future employer is critical next step. This level of coordination will be critical as Lexington navigates the months ahead.

Rural Nebraska is unique and vital to the strength of our state, and while challenges related to workforce, infrastructure, and economic development exist, we must also recognize the serious impact to Nebraska's beef industry. We must be determined to address these challenges. Conversations with my colleagues in the Legislature have resulted in my introduction of language aimed at strengthening not only Lexington's future, but rural communities across Nebraska. When rural Nebraska is strong, all of Nebraska prospers.

How we respond to the changes we face will define our future. I believe Lexington—and Nebraska—will meet this moment with resolve and purpose. It's time for the tough to get going.

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TRUCKS & PICKUPS: 1989 Freightliner day cab, 1970 Ford F600 straight truck, GMC 5500 w/ feedbox, Chevy C50 w/ Oswalt 370 feedbox & scale, Ford 600 w/ DuAl 600 manure spreader, 1989 Chevy 2500 w/flatbed, 1989 Chevy 2500 w/ Deweeze bale bed, White/Freightliner w/ stackmover, 2000 Chevy 2500 Ext. cab 4x4, Int. BC160 straight truck, 2004 GMC 2500 4x4 w/ flatbed

SKID STEER & TRAILERS: 2014 Bobcat 650S w/ 6ft. bucket, 1981 Guthrie cattle pot, 1998 Elite 20ft. flatbed goose neck, 1978 Hale 16ft. goose neck stock trailer

EQUIPMENT: 2023 Baasch Loading Chute, JD 569 Mega Wide Plus baler, JD 535 baler, Orthman 797 graincart, JD 8300 grain drill, 2011 MacDon R85 Rotary disc swather, Oswalt 420 feed wagon, Krause 1415 disk, Kramer Ranchhand bale processor, Alloway 1220 auger, Heil CC11 dirt 14yd. scraper, DuAl 600 manure spreader, Krause 18ft. disk, JD 246 box drill, Alloway flail shredder, A&L 650T grain cart - tandem, 4 - Kelly Ryan feed wagons, Baasch drive over dump auger, Apache portable creep feeder, Vermeer 6 wh. V rake, JD 235 disc, plus misc. livestock equipment and more.

UTV & ATV's : 2016 Polaris Sportsman 570 4 wheeler, 2011 Polaris 550 4 wheeler, 2014 Polaris XP900 UTV

HAY : Multiple lots of prairie hay, round bales, round bales of cane, abundance of alfalfa hay in round bales

Contact Clay Patton, Auction Manager
719-760-0747

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Obituaries

Ross Christian Ostergard was born July 7, 1958, and passed away on Jan. 30, 2026.

Ross came into the world two months early, weighing a bit over 4 pounds. Born to Jack and Mary Ostergard, Ross grew up on a cattle ranch outside Gothenburg. He went to Etna School and graduated from Gothenburg High School with the class of 1977. Ross worked with his dad on the ranch until he and his parents moved to town.

When his sister lived in Key West, Florida in the 1980s, Ross visited often. He loved the island and Key West loved him back, especially his



sister's in-laws, Ana and Carl Weekley Sr.

Ross became an extraordinary storm spotter. For more than a decade, he worked with the weather crew in North Platte and was a trusted source of on-site information during tornado season. After his parents passed, Ross moved to Cozad to his own apartment (across the hall from his best friend, Steve) under the auspices of South Central Developmental Services. He participated in cooking classes for a while

and swapped recipes with 'Sis'. He had his favorite French toast (with cinnamon AND vanilla!) for break-

fast every morning and he loved the Rodeo Channel, especially bareback broncs, like his dad. Like his dad, Ross hated broccoli.

Ross was a member of the United Methodist Church for more than 50 years. He was also a member of People First of Dawson County.

Thanks to Jayne Weaver, Ross' professional and compassionate Guardian for six years, and to the wonderful and caring staff at South Central Development Services in Cozad. Thanks to Kayleen, Tonn and Holly Ostergard for their steadfast love and support.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be directed to the Gothenburg Senior Center, the Gothenburg Roping Club, or South Central Developmental Services.

Harvey Lee Moore, 66, of Prosser passed away on Feb. 7, 2026. A celebration of life open house will be held from 1 to 3 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 15 at Craig Funeral Home in Minden. Private family inurnment will be held at a later date. Memorials in Harvey's honor are kindly suggested to the family for future designation. Arrangements are under the care of Craig Funeral Home in Minden.



Diana; son, Jason McAlevy and Jade of Kearney; daughter, Tina and Cody Flint of Syracuse, and daughter, Becky and Joe Anderson of Minden. His father, Clifford Moore, of Gothenburg. Siblings, Tommy, Wayne, Clifford, Dorothy, Rosa and Julia, many nieces and nephews, and his beloved dogs Gracie and Daisy Pig.

He leaves behind a large and loving family of grandchildren: Megan and Sean McFadden of Axtell; Molli and Keatton Reese of Pleasanton; Madison and her fiancé, Micheal Root of Kearney; Grady and Karys McAlevy of Minden; Bridget and Adam Zeman of Des Moines, Iowa; Daytona and Tyler Brown of Lincoln; Dawson and Madison Flint of Ord; Brayden Behrends and Tavia Hausman of Lincoln; Broghan Behrends and Kalliah Johnson of Syracuse; Lane Anderson and Emily Spurgin of Minden; Abigayl Anderson and Robert Heck of Minden;

Lexi Anderson and Calub Clark of Kearney; and Drake Anderson of Minden.

Harvey was also blessed with great-grandchildren: Jordan, Randy, and Synthia of Axtell; Ashton and Vivian of Syracuse; Parker and Peyton of Minden, with three more expected soon.

He was preceded in death by his mother, Dorothy Moore; his mother- and father-in-law, Melvin and Leona

Miller; sister-in-law, Doris Applegarth; and nephew Shannon Williamson.

Harvey's legacy lives through the many lives he touched with his strength, generosity, and unwavering work ethic.

May his memory bring comfort to those who knew him.

Tributes and memories can be shared with the family at www.craig-funerals.com.

Born on Aug. 19, 1959, in Loup City, Harvey lived a life marked by dedication and resilience.

A hardworking man known for his skill as a jack of all trades, Harvey brought determination and craftsmanship to everything he did. Whether working with his hands or lending them to others in need, he was someone who could be counted on to get the job done right.

Harvey is survived by his wife,

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Not One Way: Brushing, Rinsing, and Listening

I had a conversation with my son the other day about brushing teeth. Yes, he is an adult, so no, I don't need to remind him to brush.

Still, the conversation took an unexpected turn. I asked whether he rinsed his mouth with warm or cold water after brushing.

You see, it has never occurred to me to rinse with anything other than cold water. For more than five decades of brushing my teeth, I have always rinsed my mouth with cold tap water. Always.

Then, I discovered that someone dear to me rinses with warm water. I learned this quite by accident. Brushing our teeth side by side, I reached for the water to rinse and discovered that it was warm, almost hot. Repelled by the idea, I quickly withdrew with an audible, "eww."

As I shared this experience with my son, I reflected on how such a simple moment reminded me that not everyone thinks and operates the way I do. That may seem obvious, but when you live inside your own brain, it's easy to forget that entirely different views, opinions, perspectives, and experiences exist



outside of your own.

To my surprise, my son announced that he doesn't rinse his mouth at all after brushing. At all. Apparently, a dentist told him that leaving the fluoride from the toothpaste on his teeth is beneficial. I was stunned.

If people close to me can hold such differing views on something as simple as rinsing after brushing, then no wonder an entire nation struggles with differing perspectives on far more complex issues. It's easy to see the world only through the lens most familiar to us and to forget that there are other approaches—often many of them— to every topic.

The bigger struggle for me arises when the

subject isn't as innocuous as brushing teeth. A dear friend sat across the table from me this past week and admitted that she didn't know if she was doing enough in the face of widespread controversy. When issues carry greater weight, teetering toward injustice, it becomes harder to understand all the angles or to know when to stand up for what seems right to me.

This is when listening becomes imperative. We cannot understand what we refuse to hear. Speaking the truth in love matters, too. I can offer a different approach respectfully. And when the time comes to act, to take a stand, to speak out, and to demand change, we must not let ourselves or others down.

The truth is, the teeth got brushed in the mouths of all three individuals, despite their different rinsing approaches.

And maybe that's worth remembering when the differences aren't quite so simple, and the temptation to pull away feels stronger than the invitation to stay curious.



**As of March 29th, 2026
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Emily Krolkowski

& VISITING CARDIOLOGISTS

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1st and 3rd Monday

Dr. Rick Heirigs
Every 1st Wednesday

Dr. Kevin Hall
Every 1st Thursday

Dr. Bassent Botros
Every 3rd Thursday

Legals

Notice

NOTICE OF AMENDMENT

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Bazata Insurance Agency, Inc., a Nebraska Corporation, has amended its street and mailing address of the registered agent for service of process and the initial designated office of the company to the following: Davis Law, LLC, 729 Meridian Ave., PO Box 263, Cozad, NE 69130.

Bazata Insurance Agency, Inc.
By: Brian J. Davis, #22884
of Davis Law, LLC
729 Meridian Ave, PO Box 263
Cozad, Nebraska 69130
T: 308.784.4880
F: 308.784.4881

Feb. 5, 2026
Feb. 12, 2026
Feb. 19, 2026
(19) znez

Notice

NOTICE OF SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the City Council of the City of Cozad, Nebraska, by Resolution No. 2026-3 adopted on February 2, 2026, has authorized the sale of the following described real property located in Dawson County, Nebraska, to Marcus D. Young III and Brynn Young, to wit: Lots 1, 2, 3 and 4, of Block 4, Airport Addition to the City of Cozad, Dawson County, Nebraska. Conveyance of the said tract of real estate shall be by Warranty Deed, upon payment of a consideration of Forty Thousand Dollars (\$40,000.00) to the City for said tract. Said sale will be completed thirty (30) days from and after the approval and publication, in pamphlet form of Resolution No. 2026-3, namely: from February 3, 2026, unless an objection of remonstrance to such sale, signed by legal electors thereof equal in number to thirty percent (30%) of the electors of the City voting at the last regular municipal election be filed with the City Clerk on or before March 5, 2026. By or-

der of the City Council of the City of Cozad, Nebraska, February 2, 2026.

MARCUS KLOEPPING
MAYOR
ATTEST:
BRANDI KLOEPPING
CITY CLERK

Feb. 12, 2026
Feb. 19, 2026
Feb. 26, 2026
(43) znez

Notice

PUBLIC NOTICE OF MEETING COZAD COMMUNITY SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION DAWSON COUNTY NEBRASKA MONDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2026, 7:00 PM

Notice is hereby given that a Board of Education Regular Meeting of the Cozad Board of Education, District 11 of Dawson County, Nebraska will be held Monday, February 16, 2026, 7:00 PM, at the Office of the Superintendent, 1710 Meridian Avenue, Cozad, Nebraska, which meeting will be open to the public. An agenda for such a meeting, which shall be kept continually current, is available for public inspection at the superintendent of school's office during normal business hours.

Dr. Dan Endorf,
Superintendent
Cozad Community
School District No. 11

Feb. 12, 2026
(29) znez

Notice

NOTICE OF MEETING

Notice is hereby given that a meeting of the City Council of the City of Cozad, Nebraska will be held at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, February 16, 2026, at the City Office Building, which meeting will be open to the public. The Mayor and City Council reserve the right to adjourn into executive session as per Section 84-1410 of the Nebraska Revised Statutes. An agenda for such

meeting kept continually current is available for public inspection at the City Clerk's Office during normal business hours.

Brandi Kloepping
Cozad City Clerk

Feb. 12, 2026
(21) znez

Notice

NOTICE OF ORGANIZATION OF 3 BANDANAS BAKERY, LLC

Notice is hereby given of the organization of 3 Bandanas Bakery, LLC, a Nebraska limited liability company. 1. The name of the company is 3 Bandanas Bakery, LLC. 2. The street and mailing address of the initial designated office of the company is 720 10th Street, Gothenburg, Nebraska 69138. 3. The initial agent for service of process of the company and its street and mailing address is Antonia M. Mendez, 720 10th Street, Gothenburg, Nebraska 69138. Dated: January 22, 2026.

By: Antonia M. Mendez,
Organizer
By: Noe N. Mendez,
Organizer
Prepared by:

Galen E. Stehlik, #15578
Stehlik Law Firm P.C., L.L.O
724 West Koenig Street
Grand Island, NE 68801
Telephone: (308) 675-4035
Fax: (308) 6754038
Email: galen.stehlik@stehliklawfirm.com

Feb. 5, 2026
Feb. 12, 2026
Feb. 19, 2026
(32) znez

Notice

IN THE COUNTY COURT OF DAWSON COUNTY, NEBRASKA ESTATE OF AEOTA M. NIELSEN, DECEASED ESTATE NO. PR26-5

Notice is hereby given that on January 20, 2026, in the County Court of Dawson County, Nebraska, the Registrar issued a written statement of Informal Probate of the Will of said Decedent and that Frank L. Koehn, 2 Dry Bay Drive 15, Johnson Lake, NE 68937, was informally appointed by the Registrar as Personal Representative of the Estate. Creditors of this Estate must file their claims

with this Court on or before March 30, 2026, or be forever barred.

Myndee M Hagan
Clerk of the County Court of
Dawson County
700 N. Washington
Lexington, NE 68850
Claude E. Berreckman, Jr.,
#17049
of Berreckman & Bazata,
P.C., L.L.O.
801 Meridian Ave, PO Box 214
Cozad, NE 69130-0214
(308) 784-2040
(308) 784-2043 - fax
claudejr@cozadtel.net

Jan. 29, 2026
Feb. 5, 2026
Feb. 12, 2026
(38) znez

Notice

IN THE COUNTY COURT OF DAWSON COUNTY, NEBRASKA ESTATE OF DONNA D. HILD, DECEASED ESTATE NO. 26-6

Notice is hereby given that on January 22nd, 2026, in the County Court of Dawson County, Nebraska, the Registrar issued a written state-

ment of Informal Probate of the Will of said Decedent and that Leslie A. Dickerson of 7626 NW Folkstone Way, Lawton, Oklahoma 73505 was informally appointed by the Registrar as Personal Representative of the Estate. Creditors of this Estate must file their claims with this Court on or before March 30, 2026 or be forever barred.

Myndee M Hagan
Clerk of the County Court
700 N Washington
Lexington, NE 68850
Wilson J. Hupp,
Bar I.D. #27338
Hart, Huyser & Miller,
P.C., L.L.O.
121 E 8th St
PO Box 229
Cozad, NE 69130
Tel: (308) 784-4580
Fax: (308) 784-4581
Email: whupp@hhatorneys-atlaw.com

Jan. 29, 2026
Feb. 5, 2026
Feb. 12, 2026
(39) znez

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COOVER & ASSOCIATES INCOME TAX & BUSINESS SERVICES

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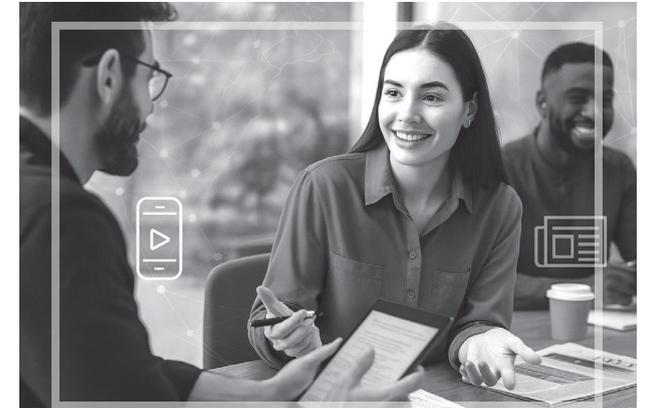
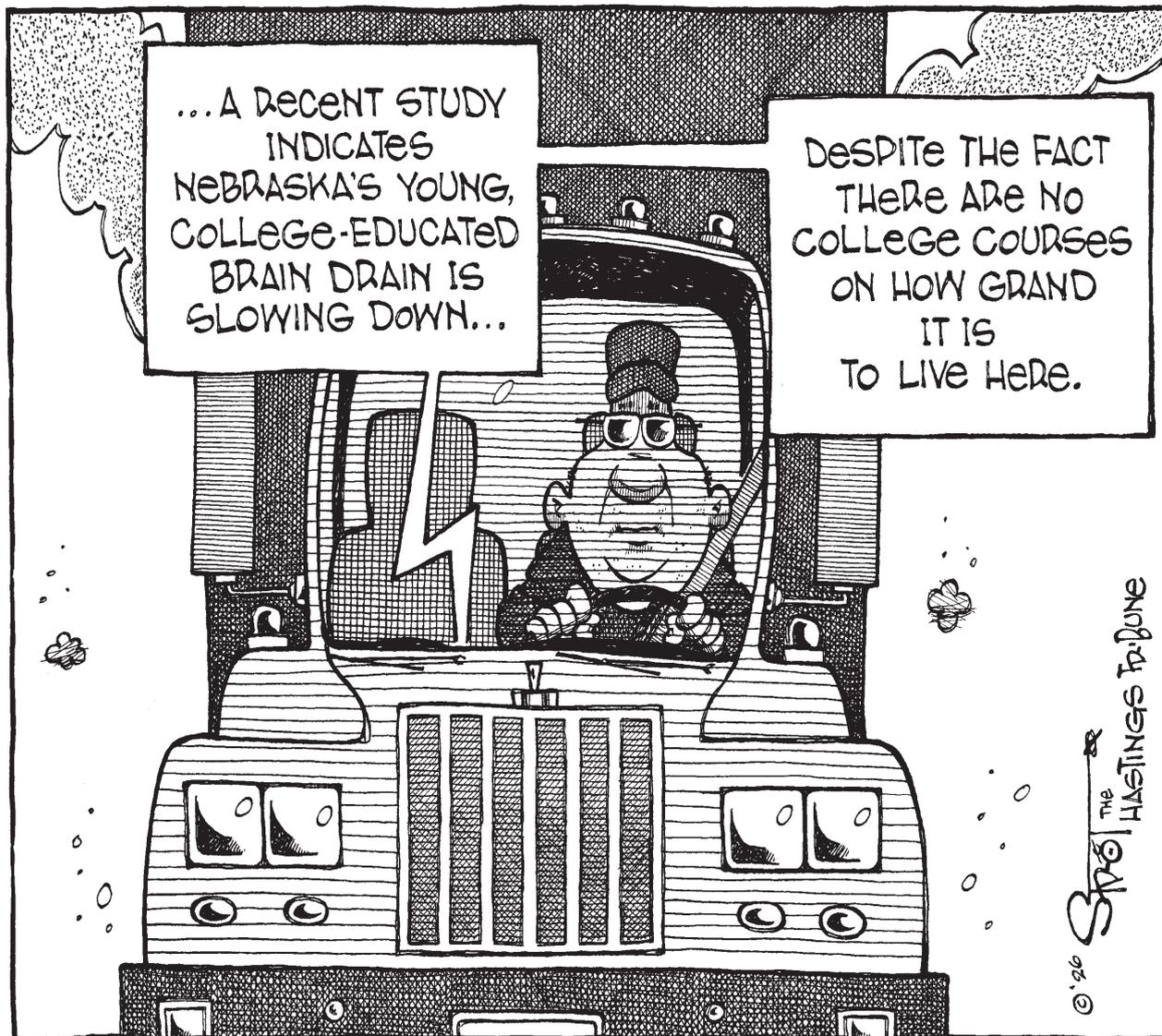
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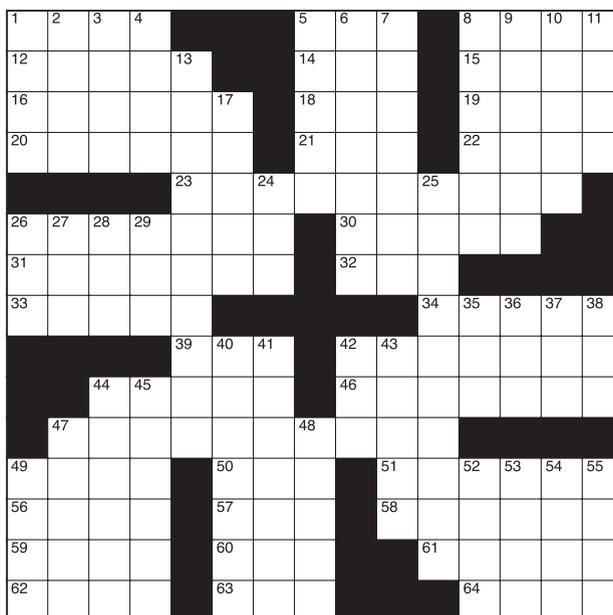
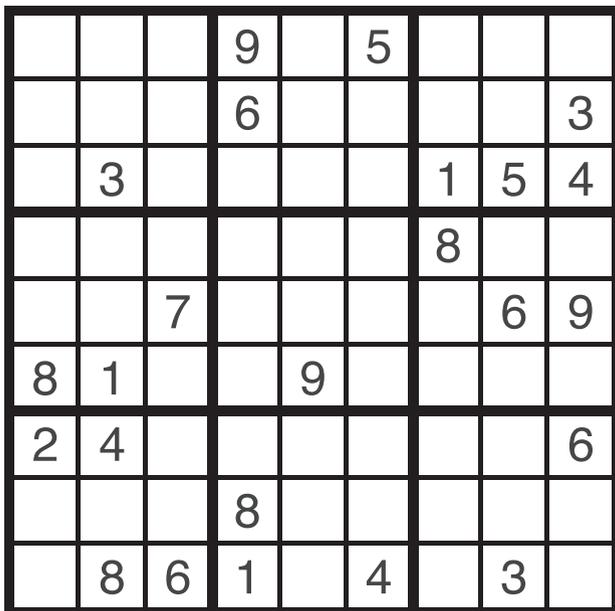
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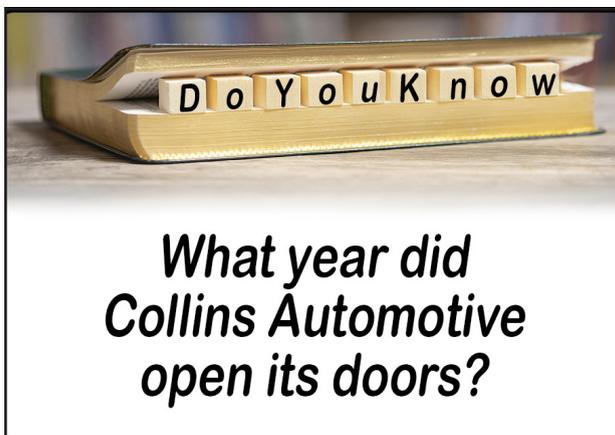
- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 44. Philippine island | 27. They ___ |
| 46. A witty saying | 28. Bitterly regret |
| 47. One who summarizes | 29. Not even |
| 49. Covered in | 35. A way to drop |
| 50. Mimic | 36. Title of respect |
| 51. Henry was a notable one | 37. World leader |
| 56. Daughter of Hera and Zeus | 38. Georgia rockers |
| 57. Retired NFLer Newton | 40. National capital |
| 58. Playground equipment | 41. Great Plains people |
| 59. Concept | 42. Duck-sized dinosaur genus |
| 60. Satisfaction | 43. Architectural recesses |
| 61. Fishing net | 44. Member of U.S. Navy |
| 62. Hammer end | 45. Mountainous |
| 63. A father's male child | 47. Kite bird |
| 64. Japanese drink | 48. Sweetheart (archaic) |
| | 49. Popular snack made of potato |

CLUES DOWN

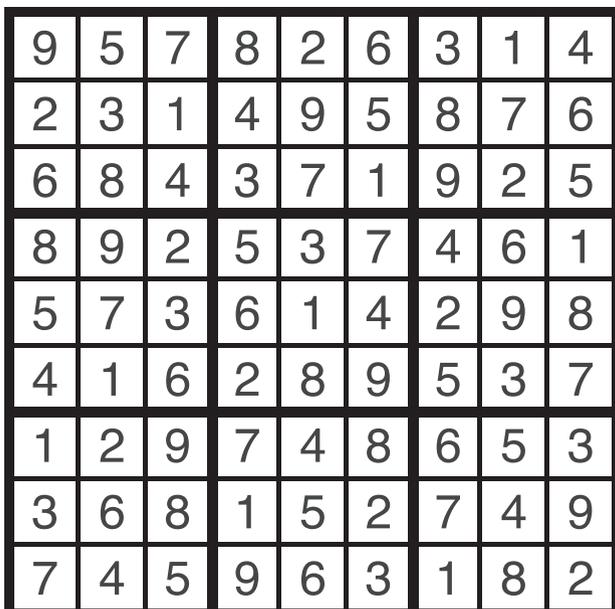
1. Off-Broadway figure
2. Gelatinous substance
3. Concern
4. "Lick It Up" rockers
5. Serbian river
6. Part of a hat
7. Bowl-shaped drinking vessel
8. Semitic language
9. Utter a shrill cry
10. Long times
11. Animal parts
13. Causing annoyance
17. Amorous talker
24. Attempt
25. Harmonic effects
26. Cost per mile

CLUES ACROSS

1. What travelers must do
5. Calendar month
8. Hopefully quickly
12. Once more
14. Bravo! Bravo! Bravo!
15. "Cheers" actress Perlman
16. Astronomy unit
18. Savings vehicle
19. Get your ducks in this
20. Right away
21. Popular sports league
22. Containers
23. Entireties
26. One who wassails
30. Turned-up position
31. Extreme modesty
32. Writing utensil
33. Rewards (archaic)
34. Ancient capital
39. S. American wood sorrel
42. General discomfort



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VOL 3 ISSUE 45 01.02.25

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Cozad's Old-Fashioned Christmas a Day to Remember
Updated Dec 11, 2024
Mel Nutt
Cozad's annual "Old-Fashioned Christmas" was a rousing success as attendees enjoyed strolling through downtown, shopping, and participating in...

HEADLINES

- Cozad Graduate Lori Long Receives Award
- A New Chapter Will Begin Soon for Local Museum
- Paying Homage to Old West History
- Cozad Cuts the Ribbon on a Bright Future
- Cozad's Old-Fashioned Christmas a Day to Remember

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19. Ann
20. Cassia tr
22. Surround
23. Crisp and Pebbles are

20

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