



A touch of Egypt

UNIQUE CLASSES OFFERED FOR AREA STUDENTS

NICOLE ERB
 Hastings Tribune

Since making an actual mummy like the ancient Egyptians was out of the question, children at Lincoln Elementary School turned to fruit, instead.

They learned how to mummify apples during their "Egyptian Mummy Returns" summer class this week.

"We sliced apples and put them in baking soda and salt. They became black and really soft," said Nathanael Sass, 8, of Hastings.

The class is among several being offered through the High Ability Learner summer program at Lincoln School.

Students meet daily for the two-week classes, which started June 7 and end Friday.

HAL has been offering unique and fun classes to youths in first- through sixth-grades for more than 14 years.

"These classes are open to anyone in the geographic area who want to come," said Cindy Lewis, HAL coordinator.

Lewis taught some classes in previous years. This is her first year as summer program coordinator.

HAL classes used to be offered only to those who were considered gifted or talented, but now any student who has put forth a lot of hard work and effort can participate with a teacher or parent recommendation, Lewis said.

"This year as many as eight different classes are being offered, some old and some new.

About 30 students signed up.

The program lasts all morning; students attend one session, have snack and recess, then attend a second session.

This is the first year for the "Egyptian Mummy Returns" class, and it is proving to be a huge success.

The children have been learning about ancient Egypt, mummies, pharaohs and other concepts of Egyptian culture.

The children also made jewelry and constructed sarcophagus out of cardboard boxes.

"We're making a sarcophagus right now," said Joseph Prickett, 8, of Hastings. "This is a box where kings, queens and pharaohs were kept after they died. Then they placed them in a pyramid."

Please see MUMMIES/page A6



Justine Steiner paints a cardboard box as an Egyptian mummy sarcophagus in the High Ability Learners summer class with Trish Hinrichs (upper left) Tuesday at Lincoln Elementary School.

RICK HOUGHIN/Tribune

West Nile back

FIRST HUMAN CASE OF VIRUS THIS YEAR REPORTED IN LINCOLN

SCOTT BAUER
 The Associated Press

LINCOLN — The first human case of West Nile virus in Nebraska this year has been reported in Lincoln, health officials said Tuesday.

The person is an adult living in the central part of the capital city and is recovering, the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department reported. No other details about the person were released.

The health department said an investigation is under way and the person's travel history had not been obtained Tuesday.

Please see WEST NILE/page A6

All states liable in nuke waste bill

NELSON INTRODUCES LEGISLATION

MARGERY BECK
 The Associated Press

OMAHA — As speculation swirls about whether Nebraska will consent to have a low-level radioactive waste dump built within its borders, U.S. Sen. Ben Nelson has introduced a bill to make all member states of nuclear waste compacts share the liability of such dumps.

The Nebraska Democrat's measure is intended to protect states that host dump sites from carrying any liability alone if there was a leak, accident or other problem at a dump site leading to lawsuits or legal judgments.

"It's important that if the state of Nebraska is required by the court or agrees as a result of a settlement ... to host a radioactive facility, that they're not left holding the bill when and if problems arise," Nelson said.

A federal appeals court has upheld a 2002 ruling by U.S. District Judge Richard Kopf that Nebraska acted in bad faith in blocking construction of a nuclear waste dump in northeast Nebraska. The state has been ordered to pay \$151 million in damages.

The state recently has been trying to negotiate a settlement with other members of the Central Interstate State Low-level Radioactive Waste Compact — Kansas, Oklahoma, Louisiana and Arkansas.

Please see NELSON/page A6



Nelson

HC grad tapping state in film

MARY LANNING
 MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
 ON LIST OF SITES
 IN MOVIE

TODD NEELEY
 Hastings Tribune

ROOKLYN, N.Y. — So you're planning to film a movie. You've got your to-do list: Find the money, set up auditions, refine the script, and, oh

yeah, find a small town in Nebraska where you can shoot important scenes.

The Cornhusker state isn't exactly high on the list for movie makers, but Hastings College graduate Margaret Norwood appreciates the intrinsic value of Nebraska's prairies, the farmland and its storytellers.

While colleagues at the New York-based Baby Lion Productions L.L.C. thought maybe a scene in Norwood's upcoming film "Independence" could be shot in

upstate New York, she quickly scoffed at the idea.

"It's not a huge industry in Nebraska," she said, "but the thing is, storytelling is storytelling. You can tell stories in many ways. The feel at the place (Nebraska) is inspiring to the arts and storytelling. I've always felt talent isn't geograph-



Norwood

ical. I think percentage-wise, you have just as many people who are talented in the rural communities. The rural community can tend to have people who are wise to the world."

Norwood is one in a cast and crew consisting of mostly Nebraskans. Scenes from the film will be shot at Mary Lanning Memorial Hospital in Hastings and in a local cemetery, as well as several locations in Cozad and Lexington.

The dates and times for those scenes are yet to be

determined.

Auditions took place in Hastings in April, resulting in Nebraskans filling 20 of 30 speaking roles and 16 of 24 full-time crew positions.

Norwood, who plays the main character, Sam, said she incorporates many of her own life experiences in the film.

In "Independence," the main character is attending Hastings College at the time her father dies of cancer.

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Weather

Lo: 55
 Hi: 70s
 Thursday.



Art by Kelsey Willnerd, 11, St. Michael's School

CATS ON A LEASH?

LINCOLN — If city officials get their way, cats roaming the streets here freely may be a thing of the past.

Attorneys are drafting a cat-at-large law aimed at eliminating strays by requiring that cats be on leashes when not on their owners'

State

property. Officials have cited both health and annoyance concerns.

No cases of rabies in cats has been reported in Lancaster County this year, but rabies in cats have been reported elsewhere in the state.

Cats are one of the most common, domestic transmitters of the

deadly disease nationwide, said Jim Weverka, director of Animal Control.

Beth Boal, president of The Cat House, a licensed organization that cares for abandoned cats, said the issue is emotional.

The Associated Press

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Celebration to remember tornado

Hastings Tribune

DESHLER — Remembrance, Recovery and Renewal.

As Deshler prepares to mark the first anniversary of tornadoes that took one life and wrecked a large part of the town, those three "Rs" are among citizens' watchwords.

On Friday, the community's annual Deshler Daze celebration will kick off with a special program commemorating the storms of June 22, 2003.

"The Deshler Tornado, One Year Later" begins at 7:30 p.m. in the grandstand at the Thayer County Fairgrounds — a structure that itself was severely damaged by the winds.

The program will include recollections of last year's Sunday evening storm and recognition of those who helped the community get back on its feet. Photos will be on display and a video shown under the grandstand.

The Rev. Alex Lissow, pastor of Abiding Word Lutheran Church, will deliver a message and sing a solo. The crowd will join in singing "Amazing Grace" and "America."

The weekend's events will begin with a chicken barbecue sponsored by the Deshler Chamber of Commerce. Serving in the City Park runs from 5-7 p.m.

The Thayer County Ag Society will sponsor a dance to Groove Puppet from 9 p.m. to 12:45 a.m. at the fairgrounds. The beer garden will be open from 7 p.m. to 1 a.m.

Saturday events kick off early with the Deshler Lions Club pancake feed from 7-8:30 a.m. at the Senior Center.

Midwest Bank will sponsor a Fun Walk and Aluminum Can Drive from 8-8:30 a.m. Registration is at the bank. Proceeds go to Relay for Life for cancer research.

The Kids' Fishing Contest, sponsored by the Isaak Walton League, begins at 8:30 a.m. at Gabby's Pond.

Community garage sales begin at 8 a.m. Maps will be provided.

The Deshler Recreation Board will serve hamburgers in the park for lunch, beginning at 11 a.m.

Registration for the Little Tuggers Tractor Pull Contest begins at 12:30 p.m. in the park. Pulls begin at 1 p.m.

Admission to the Pool will be free in the afternoon.

A paintball tournament begins 2 p.m. south of the ballfield.

Deshler High School alumni will gather at the fire hall from 5-6 p.m. for a social hour with banquet to follow.

The Deshler Volunteer Fire Department will sponsor a street dance to Hannah McNeil and the Rebel Heart Band from 8:30 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. Admission will be charged, but DHS alumni will be admitted free with their banquet ticket.

On Sunday, Reinke Manufacturing Co. will offer a free lunch and plant tours in celebration of its 50th anniversary. Hours are 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Council rejects bids on HU truck

TODD NEELEY
Hastings Tribune

When Frontier Ford's Dave Collett assembled a bid on a specialized truck for Hastings Utilities, he thought he had done the city of Hastings a service.

Collett says he made sure the bid met or exceeded all minimum specifications for the \$105,000 item — it had above the minimum horsepower needs, and like other bids, it offered some exceptions to the minimum specifications.

Prior to the Hastings City Council's vote Monday to reject all bids on the vehicle, Collett said the process was a bit confusing to bidders.

"The concerns are that we conform to the bid specifications," he said, "when it comes to the actual power train of the vehicle, we conform. I guess what I need to know is, if the next time we go to bid on a city vehicle, would it be OK to send a second bid that doesn't conform?"

As a result of the council's action, HU will have to make new bid requests for the equipment.

Collett said HU's request for bids allowed companies to bid below specs.

Council members questioned apparent "inconsistencies" in the way the city solicits for bids.

HU Manager Marv Schultes said HU officials vary the way they set specifications on bids — some requests for bids ask for specific items, others ask for general specifications to allow bidders some flexibility in making bids.

Councilman Vern Powers said the city needs to set specifications and stick to them.

"When we bought a vehicle (for the fire department) we held to specs on

that," he said. "Then in the last four years we bought an underpowered tractor."

Councilman Chuck Shoemaker said it appears HU officials gave bidders too much leeway on the latest bid.

He said HU shouldn't accept a bid that includes specs below minimum requirements on critical items like engines and transmissions.

"I think we do want to have alternatives as a possibility in the bidding process," he said. "But in this one it looks like we allowed alternatives and then allowed to stretch them. If we're going to stretch, let's stretch in favor of the hometown bidder. What we're doing to the process is to accept a recommendation and go forward, then we're telling people the specs on the bid aren't meaningful."

Councilman Matt Rossen expressed concern that HU may not have been fair to all bidders.

"If we were bidding this apples for apples," he said, "I'd support this. We should just vote this down and bid over."

Councilman Tom Yilk said he thought HU had been fair to bidders.

"Everyone out there who bids on these things knows the rules," he said.

Several weeks ago the HU Board of Public Works decided to go with a bid from an out-of-town company for a truck that didn't meet the minimum requirements for horsepower. However, the bid was about \$900 less than the Frontier proposal.

In May the council voted to send the bids back to the HU board for further review after several council members expressed concern that the contract would be awarded to an out-of-town contractor who didn't meet the minimum specifications on key items

such as engine size.

HU officials recommended awarding a bid to Hansen International in Grand Island for the truck cab and chassis, and to Terex of Commerce City, Colo., for an aerial device.

On May 24, the council voted down a motion to award the contract to Frontier for the truck cab and chassis, and to Terex for the aerial device.

HU received six bids for the new truck, with all six including various exceptions.

The HU board opted to send the bid recommendation back to the council, after board attorney Steve Scherr of Hastings said the council would have to vote on the board's recommendation only and would be unable to reconstruct the bid.

In other business, the council:

◆ Voted for an amendment to a conditional use permit for parking at the new Crossroads Center location, at the former Sunnyside Home, 1401 N. Hastings Ave.

Under the terms of the amendment, Crossroads will be allowed to create 25 parking stalls.

◆ Approved an ordinance on final reading to adopt the city's new zoning district base map.

◆ Passed an ordinance on final reading amending the comprehensive land use plan from residential medium-high density to general commercial, in the vicinity of Wabash Avenue and Wayfair Drive.

◆ Approved an ordinance on final reading, making an amendment to the city gas code.

◆ Awarded a paving bid to Vontz Paving Inc. of Hastings for resurfacing projects on Lincoln Avenue from Third to Ninth streets and on Lexington Avenue from Seventh to Eighth streets, for \$84,877 and \$23,087, respectively.

Mummies: Special classes in Hastings

Continued from page A1

The children also decorated the sarcophaguses as they would have been decorated in ancient Egypt and placed wrapped bottles inside of them, replacing the mummies.

"They always have a human head with a lion's body on them, and they always have hieroglyphics on them telling about the person and their name," Prickett said.

"Sometimes they were buried with animals and jewelry, too," Sass said.

The children in the class also played games and mummified apples.

In the "Wet Paint" class, students got to bring out their creative and artistic sides.

"I've taken art in school, but we mostly just use markers and colored pencils," said Chelsea Vonderfecht, 10, of Hastings. "Here we get to do a lot more with paint."

The children have been able to experiment with water colors, tempera paints and marbling, to name a few.

"I'm using acrylic paint onto a canvas to paint a picture of my dog and my dog's friend watching the sunset with dolphins jumping out of the water," said Kelli Poplau, 10, of Hastings.

In the broadcast journalism/television production class, students got to film their own footage, record voice-overs, conduct interviews and edit their material into a news program.

"We first started out filming each other as practice, but now we've started filming the other classes," said Shruti Nayar, 11, of Hastings. "At the end we will put all of our material together and make a news program."

"I just thought that our teacher would tape us. I didn't know we'd actually be filming and editing ourselves," said Courtney Kramer, 11, of Hastings.

Other classes offered during the two-week session are "Rocket to the Moon," where children are learning about space and the planets through literature and art projects; and "Poetry Workshop," where kids write and keep a book of their own poetry.

In "Printmaking," students are making their own products, and in "Chess-N-Math," students are learning math and problem-solving skills used in chess.

All of the children's artwork, projects and news programs will be available for parents to see during the open house on the last day of classes Friday.

Nelson: Bill holds all states liable

Continued from page A1

If that settlement includes agreeing to have the nuclear waste dump built in Nebraska, the state should at least be protected from carrying the full weight of liability for the dump, Nelson said Tuesday.

"I think it's a matter of fairness," Nelson said. "It's simply not fair to the host states to assume all future liability for the radioactive waste generated by other states."

Gov. Mike Johanns, who is on a trade mission to China, would need more information about the legislation and an opportunity to review it before he could comment, said his spokeswoman, Terri Teuber.

Attorney General Jon Bruning had no immediate comment, said his spokeswoman, Holley Bolen.

Alan Peterson, attorney for the compact suing Nebraska, said Tuesday the Central Interstate compact does provide for shared liability, but said he did not have time to detail what that shared liability entails.

Nelson, who was cited by a federal judge as having engaged in a politically motivated and orchestrated

"It's simply not fair to the host states to assume all future liability for the radioactive waste generated by other states."

- Ben Nelson

plot while governor to keep the dump from being built in Nebraska, said he is not inclined to distance himself from the nuclear waste issue.

"I don't shirk leadership," he said. "I didn't shirk it when I was governor, and I'm not going to do it here."

"I still care about what's best for Nebraska; that hasn't changed," Nelson added. "And criticism by a court or by others isn't going to change my view. I will not be intimidated by that kind of activity."

West Nile: Disease back for second season in state

Continued from page A1

Nebraska becomes the seventh state this year to report a human contracting the virus, which is transmitted through the bites of infected mosquitoes. Other states that have reported human cases are Arizona, New Mexico, California, Wyoming, South Dakota and Colorado, said state Health and Human Services System spokeswoman Marla Augustine.

Last year the first person to contract the virus in Nebraska came down with symptoms around the same time, in mid-June, Augustine said.

It's hard to know whether the timing of this year's case is significant, said Wayne Kramer, the state's entomologist.

"I don't think it's necessarily indicative that it's automatically going to be a bad year or that we're not going to see a lot of activity," Kramer said.

West Nile virus spreads when mosquitoes bite infected birds. The insects can then transmit the virus to humans.

Last year 29 Nebraskans died from the virus and 2,366 were infected. Nationwide 220 people died.

The virus rarely kills humans, but about one in 150 people who get it will

develop potentially deadly encephalitis or meningitis.

The report of a human case this year comes before any birds have tested positive for the virus in the state. The virus typically appears in birds before it does in humans. Last year the first bird to test positive was found in May. The year before it was found in June.

Human cases also preceded any birds being detected with West Nile in South Dakota, Wyoming and Colorado, Kramer said.

The question for people tracking the virus is whether fewer birds are con-

tracting it or fewer people are submitting dead birds to be tested, Kramer said.

So far this year only about 50 birds have been turned in, he said.

"That's not a big number," Kramer said.

Precautions against getting West Nile include wearing insect repellent, staying indoors at peak times for mosquitos at dusk and sunset, wearing long-sleeved clothing and eliminating standing water where mosquitos can breed.

The first year the virus was detected in Nebraska was 2002. Eight people died that year.

Film: Hastings, state featured in movie

Continued from page A1

As a result she becomes desperate for money and decides to sell fireworks to make ends meet.

Eventually, the main character's mother also dies. In real life, however, Norwood said both of her parents are alive and well.

"It's sort of about me and based on my own life," Norwood said. "It is fictionalized. My parents are really offended that I killed both of them in the movie."

Leading up to the film's shooting to begin around July 7, cast and crew members will be selling fireworks in the Russ's Market parking lot at

Seventh Street and North Burlington Avenue on June 25.

Proceeds will help fund various expenses related to the film's production, which is expected to come in at less than \$100,000.

The winner of a drawing will have a special featured role in the film designed specifically for them.

Norwood, who wrote the script for the movie, said she's hopeful the film will get attention at various film festivals across the country.

The cast and crew will be getting local help along the way, she said, as Hastings College has offered housing during

filming locally.

She said it's difficult to determine how the communities involved will benefit.

However, Norwood said she has been excited to show cast and crew members from both coasts exactly why she wanted to film in Nebraska.

"I get to share Nebraska with New Yorkers and Californians," she said.

What's more, Norwood said the cast and crew are excited to find ways to put Nebraska on film.

"This is a big puzzle we've been working on," she said. "How do you show and capture how that feels, to have a sense of openness of space?"

Movie cast, crew

Nebraska members of the cast and crew are:

CAST

◆ Hastings: Mariah Bates, John Paul Schwab
◆ Grand Island: Brian Burkes, Garrett Coble, Troy Fry, Kevin Tibbitts
◆ Kearney: Janice Fronczak, Bob Geiger, Cheryl Plonkey, Scott Schneider, Bill Wood
◆ Holdrege: Robert A. Ayers, Bodie Knight
◆ Aurora: Rob Schepers
◆ Callaway: Tom Helberg
◆ Central City: Micah Carlson
◆ Cozad: Loren Leonard
◆ Lexington: Sally

Knudsen

◆ Lincoln: John Nellessen
◆ Omaha: John Michael Zeurlain

CREW

◆ Hastings: Mark Booker, Lon Dean, Erica Jaffe, Leanne Meyer, Matthew Norwood, Kevin Taylor, Colleen Williams
◆ Grand Island: Pamela Haessler, Courtney Patcher
◆ Kearney: Brian Gragert, Marylyn Barnett, Erin Jones
◆ Lexington: Pat Clark, Taem Sonthana
◆ Cozad: Robert Peters, Ellen Myer
◆ Lincoln: Dave Briggs, Vida Sanchez
◆ Norfolk: Terry Gsell



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