



In order
Getting organized turns chaos to calm.
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Hastings Tribune



Big 12 upset
Husker men top No. 4 Oklahoma State.
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Chamber honors city's 'builders'

HPS, AC OFFICIALS
RECOGNIZED;
HOHNSTEIN RECEIVES
POSTHUMOUS AWARD

SHAY GRAVES
Hastings Tribune

The new-found unity between Adams Central and Hastings public schools was treated to a resounding standing ovation Tuesday night by more than 400 people attending the Hastings Area Chamber of Commerce annual meeting.

The superintendents and members of school boards for both schools were honored with the Max Award for the cooperative relationship that they have built. The award recognizes people who have made a significant contribution to the community or the chamber in the last year.

In September 2004, the two school boards approved an Interlocal Cooperation Act Agreement that helped to resolve a lengthy feud over school boundaries, finances and student enrollment between the two schools. The agreement was unanimously approved Sept. 29, 2004, by both school boards during a joint meeting at Adams Central.



Hohnstein

There were three main points in the eight-page agreement that pleased both sides: In the case of future annexations by the city of Hastings, AC will keep its district boundaries and students who reside in them. Meanwhile, Hastings will receive roughly 70 percent of the property tax revenue collected from areas the city has annexed.

Jackie Maynard, president of the HPS school board, said that most people thought such a cooperative agreement could not be done. It took 40 years, but now the two schools finally have made peace, she said.

"We took away the emotion, and we thought logically and sensibly and things came together," Maynard said.

She said that most of the credit goes to the two superintendents, Gene Cosby of HPS and Mel Crowe of Adams Central.

A second Max Award was presented by outgoing chamber board chairman David Brandt to four members of the chamber's board: Randy Chick, Greg Sinner, Larry Rader and Dean Moors.

Brandt said that the four "gave a selfless contribution" to the chamber through their ongoing work with the new Chamber Development Center, 301 S. Burlington Ave.

"It is not just four individuals," said Moors about the new building. "This project took a lot of people."

The project, which took more than three years and the work of numerous chamber businesses to complete, had its grand opening last summer.

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RICK HOUCHIN/Hastings Tribune

School board members from Hastings and Adams Central work out a cooperative agreement last September. From left are Hastings members Darci Karr and Jim Heyen and Adams Central president Tom Behmer. Officials from the two schools received the Max Award from the Hastings Area Chamber of Commerce Tuesday night.

Armed for battle



BRENT McCOWN/Hastings Tribune

Adams Central's Adam Drudik (34) shoots over St. Cecilia's Brennon Kitten (55) and Tyler Wissing (43) during their C1-9 boys sub-district basketball game Tuesday night. The 56-45 loss ended St. Cecilia's season. Please see story on page B1.

Hastings man driving force behind car bill

ANDERSON TESTIFIES BEFORE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

LINDA GARCIA
Hastings Tribune

A bill dealing with titling replica cars would help bring hundreds of thousands of dollars in sales tax revenue to Nebraska, according to George Anderson of Gessford Machines in Hastings who testified for the measure Tuesday.



Anderson

The Legislatures' Transportation and Telecommunications Committee heard testimony Tuesday in Lincoln on LB587, a bill Anderson has proposed that would create a definition of replica cars and would allow

those cars to be titled, registered and taxed in Nebraska.

The bill was introduced by Sen. Carroll Burling of Kenesaw, with Sens. Ray Aguilar of Grand Island, Tom Baker of Trenton and Arnie Stuthman of Platte Center listed as co-sponsors.

Burling introduced a similar bill last year, but it didn't make it past the committee, Anderson said in a phone interview this morning. But a resolution calling for an interim hearing on the subject did pass, bringing members of the transportation committee to Hastings to gather more information on the bill.

Anderson said he's excited by the fact that three members of the transportation committee, including Baker, the chairman, are co-sponsors of the bill.

Anderson was the only proponent of the bill at the hearing. No one spoke in opposition, and two state representatives offered neutral testimony about the bill.

Please see **CAR**/page A7

USD board says no to school closure policy

DONNA CHRISTENSEN
Hastings Tribune

LAWRENCE — After another spirited discussion, the board of a regional unified school district turned thumbs down Monday on the latest proposed resolution setting guidelines for when a member school should close.

The board of South Central Nebraska Unified School District No. 5 voted 7-3 against a newly drafted resolution proposed by the superboard's finance committee.

What happens next was left an open question, but the board president called for more input from USD patrons.

Monday's latest draft would have required at least two of four key criteria to be met before the USD would cut off funding for one of its schools.

In previous proposals, funds to a school would have been cut off after one of three criteria were met.

Please see **USD**/page A7

Forums to analyze local needs

NANCY FOSTER
Hastings Tribune

A string of upcoming forums will give local residents and organizations the chance to analyze the community's needs as part of a Community Grant Writing Program.

The program was recently launched by the Hastings

Community Foundation and was designed to bring groups together to increase their chances of obtaining a grant. Instead of groups applying separately for a grant, they can collaborate and apply together.

John Ferrone, a consultant for the Hastings Economic Development Corporation and other community organizations, first introduced the

program to organizations in a round of seminars about one month ago. An unexpected 55 organizations attended the seminars and identified areas of need in the community, such as crisis intervention and job creation.

Now, Ferrone is giving the organizations and the general public a chance to assess those needs.

"The next step is to get people back together and focus on those needs and spend our time talking about what do we really need and how are we going to go about tackling these needs," Ferrone said. "That's what these next series of meetings are about."

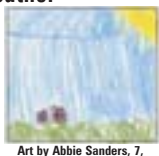


Ferrone

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Weather

Lo: Partly cloudy this evening.
25
Hi: Mostly sunny Thursday.
45



Art by Abbie Sanders, 7, Minden East Elementary

MANURE FIRE QUILTS

MILFORD — It took nearly four months, but to the relief of neighbors around, a burning manure pile has been extinguished.

David Dickinson, owner and manager of Midwest Feeding Co.,

said Wednesday that several weeks of pulling the 2,000-ton pile apart proved effective by late last week.

"We got far enough through it, that it quit," Dickinson said.

Dickinson's feedlot takes in as many as 12,000 cows at a time from farmers and ranchers and fat-

tens them for market.

Byproducts from the massive operation resulted in a dung pile measuring 100 feet long, 30 feet high and 50 feet wide. Heat from the decomposing manure deep inside the pile is believed to have eventually ignited the manure.

The Associated Press

State

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Chamber: HPS, AC officials, others honored

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Chick said that this "one-stop shop" brought about the enhanced ability to help developers.

Paul Hohnstein, who died at age 86 last September, was posthumously honored with the Community Service Award presented by Fred Teller.

Hohnstein was the founder of Hastings Irrigation Pipe Co. "He was a boss who worked alongside his co-workers always caring about and alert to their



Thom



Sinner



Rader



Moors



Chick

lives," Teller said. Hohnstein was active in the Hastings community for many years.

He served on the first board of governors for Central Community College and was presented an honorary degree as well.

After attending a dinner theater performance at CCC, Hohnstein became interested in

theater and served for years on the Hastings Community Theatre board.

He even worked to rebuild the old Spencer Park School at Good Samaritan Village. That building is still in use today as the Hastings Community Theatre.

"Paul loved his family," Teller said. "And if Paul was a workaholic he was also a familyaholic."

The award was presented to Hohnstein's daughters, Paula Beiw and Nancy Pavelka.

Beiw thanked the crowd as tears came to her eyes, while Pavelka said a few words about her father.

"Dad was a good man and a hard worker," Pavelka said. She said that he always thanked others that he worked with and never took full credit.

"He would have been honored to accept this award," she said.

The Pioneer Spirit award was established to honor companies who have made significant contributions to the community in the areas of leadership and philanthropy for at least the last 20 years.

This year's award recipient was T-L Irrigation, which is currently celebrating its 50th anniversary. Jim Thom accepted the award on behalf of the family.

T-L Irrigation not only employs more than 200 people in the area, but it also makes other significant contributions to the community.

The Thom family, who owns T-L Irrigation, and their business have made ongoing financial contributions over the years to organizations such as Hastings College, United Way, Salvation Army, Crossroads, Big Brothers-Big Sisters, Central Community Foundation, Hastings Community Foundation, Hastings Catholic

Schools, Zion Lutheran School, Tri-Family Ministries, Hastings Junior Achievement, Hastings Library Foundation, Hastings Museum, Hastings Symphony Orchestra, American Cancer Society, Boy Scouts of America and Nebraska Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

With a theme of "Building Today to Keep Building Tomorrow," the 101st annual meeting honored those who have worked to build a better and stronger Hastings.

Lt. Gov. Rick Sheehy of Hastings spoke about the past and the future of Hastings.

"We're beyond being under construction; we're open for business," he said.

USD: Board says no to latest school closure policy

Continued from page A1

While any site-closing policy would affect the future of the four schools the USD operates, Nelson and Lawrence patrons sense it would affect them most.

Superior and Sandy Creek, which is near Fairfield, both offer classes for kindergarten through 12th grade. Lawrence/Nelson Elementary School in Lawrence serves students in grades K-6, while Lawrence/Nelson Junior-Senior High in Nelson serves grades 7-12.

One proposed resolution, action on which was postponed in January, stipulated that funding for an attendance center would cease at the end of a given school year if (a) that school's September enrollment dropped to 35 or below; (b) the district's certified state aid for the following year was \$2.75 million or less; or (c) the district

was projected to end the current fiscal year with a cash balance of \$2 million or less.

Action was postponed in January so the superboard's newly reorganized finance committee could discuss the issue.

At Monday's meeting, superboard president Tim Kinnaman of Guide Rock called three times for a motion to approve the proposed resolution from January. Since he received no response, that item died for lack of a motion.

The board then turned to the new resolution. Kerry Corman of Superior moved for approval, and Janice Tordrup of Superior seconded the motion.

The new resolution would have added a fourth criterion for closing a school — namely, that an override of a state-imposed property tax lid be in effect for the superdistrict.

Figures released Feb. 1 indi-

cate USD No. 5 will receive \$3.61 million in aid for 2005-06. That's down from the \$3.9 million the USD is receiving for the current school year.

The USD's total tax rate for this year is \$1.099. That rate complies with the state's \$1.05 lid, since it includes collections for exempt needs including the building fund.

Joe Theer, a member of the Lawrence local school district board, read a response he had prepared for Monday's meeting. He said he was concerned that not all districts would be treated fairly under the proposed policy.

"This resolution bothers me a lot," he said. "It is possibly the most counterproductive thing to come out of this unification."

To begin with, he said, Lawrence and Nelson did not have adequate input in the drafting of the resolution.

Also, he said he was bothered that the superboard was establishing a minimum enrollment number to be plugged into the resolution, when the local district board should be part of that decision.

He also voiced disagreement with the idea of a state aid figure being used as a criterion. He said he believed there would be times when property tax would produce enough revenue to fund school operations even if state aid was down.

He suggested that the USD reduce its administrative staff, eliminating one of the two superintendent positions, before considering any site for closure.

He also said the USD ought to attempt to bring neighboring school districts into its fold, as had been suggested when the unification agreement was forged in 2000.

Too much time has been spent discussing a site-closing policy, Theer said, without thought as to the value of each site to the effectiveness of the entire USD.

"In order for this marriage to survive, all partners needed to be treated equal," Theer said.

The original unification agreement expires in 2007.

Kinnaman challenged all board members to ask questions of patrons in their local districts about the future of the unification and each site. He said he had expressed such a challenge before, but with little response by local boards.

"Now that the resolution for site closure has been raised, we have aroused the community's interest, and it is time to consider and talk to patrons about the effectiveness of each site," Kinnaman said. "Can we afford

to operate as separate districts? Should there be changes in administration?"

The Nebraska Legislature is dealing with school-related issues this winter, and its decisions will have an impact on the USD's funding considerations, as well as the guidelines that will be needed for its survival, Kinnaman said.

One patron speaking at the meeting expressed concern for the emotional trauma being caused by the school-closing issue. The patron thought the local districts should decide whether they want to remain unified before site-closing recommendations are put into play.

Other comments, pro and con, were voiced before the vote was taken. In the end, Corman, Tordrup and Kinnaman were the three superboard members voting in favor.

Car: Anderson testifies before transportation committee

Continued from page A1

"I told the committee it would be great for economic development in Nebraska," Anderson said this morning. "It would create hundreds of thousands of dollars in sales tax on cars I would complete here."

Anderson builds engines and transmissions for Cobra replica cars.

Under the bill, a vehicle like a Shelby Cobra could be designated as a replica car if it is created using the exact body style and factory specifications of a previous model year, using major component parts by the original manufacturer or owner of the original manufacturing rights. So a replica of a 1967 Cobra, for example, would then

be designated as a 1967 Cobra replica for the registration.

The car owner would need a manufacturer's statement of origin for the replica designation.

Anderson presented a letter from Carroll Shelby, who created the Shelby Cobra, saying that the bill would be good for Hastings and might lead the company to consider moving the production of rolling chassis cars here.

A rolling chassis car is a car with no engine or transmission. Anderson builds engines and transmissions for the cars that are installed later.

"In Nebraska, if you build a turn-key car (one that's ready to drive), you have to be a manufacturer and comply with emis-

sions and (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration) regulations, but if you build a rolling chassis, it's like a kit car; you can do it yourself," he said.

Anderson said a letter hearing went well, although a representative from the Department of Motor Vehicles raised three issues that he didn't get a chance to respond to. The representative wanted to know how the DMV will know who the original manufacturer is, how annual taxes would be collected and she interpreted the law to allow the manufacture of turn-key cars.

He was unable to respond during the hearing because Burling, who would have been allowed a last chance to speak,

was called away to another hearing. So Anderson sent an e-mail to the bill's sponsors explaining his answers for consideration, he said.

The bill would make a difference

for Anderson because he would be able to sell more cars, which he could then license in Nebraska on behalf of clients. Some of those clients might even have Hastings addresses, at the condo-garages he

proposed to build with the racetrack at Hastings.

Registering and titling the cars in Nebraska would allow the state to collect the sales tax on the cars.

Forums: Analyzing local needs

Continued from page A1

There are five different times for the forums, but people need only to attend one, Ferrone said. He said it's important for people who are interested to come and share their insights.

The following forums are scheduled at the Hastings Public Library auditorium:

◆ 10 a.m. Friday

- ◆ 2 p.m. Friday
- ◆ 3 p.m. Tuesday
- ◆ 6:30 p.m. March 2
- ◆ 10 a.m. March 3

Those interested in participating should contact Julia McCoy at (402) 461-8414.

"There's no wrong answers, just open-ended, and I encourage everyone to attend," he said.

After the round of forums, Ferrone said the next step will

be to summarize the results.

"That's going to provide me and the grant writing program direction to explore where I'm going to spend my time," he said.

After identifying the needs to focus on, he'll spend time with the necessary organizations involved. Then, he'll facilitate grant planning and conduct another series of meetings.

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