

Local

SPONTANEOUS ART

The Route 6 Art Car Tour is making its way to downtown Hastings, but cars won't be the only thing on display Wednesday.

This year's Art Car Tour is being accompanied by an Art Melt, which will feature a variety of local talents showing off what they do best. Artists will start performing downtown at about 7 p.m.

The event was organized by Todd Brown of Hastings. The Art Melt will include different art forms and will feature many local artists, he said.

"There's so many talented musicians, dancers, artists in this town," Brown said.

The Art Melt will include acoustic musicians, artist, dancers, poets and many others.

Many downtown businesses will have promotions, and Graham Gallery and Framing will have artist demonstrations, including pottery, watercolor and running a printing press.

"We're basically inviting artists to fill the sidewalks downtown," Brown said. "It's spontaneous art."

Brown said there won't be any formal stages, just artists lining the sidewalks doing what they love to do.

State

SCOUT RESCUE

OMAHA — A troop of Boy Scouts on a camping trip to earn merit badges ended up saving an 18-month-old girl's life.

About five members of the Omaha St. Cecilia's Troop 100 were swimming in the Platte River at Two Rivers State Recreation Area on Saturday.

Eleven-year-old Christian Nanson spotted the girl, Stephanie Pacheco, floating face-down in the water. He yelled to John Fitzgerald, 9, for help, according to assistant scoutmaster Matt Fitzgerald, who is John Fitzgerald's father.

The two boys grabbed the girl out of the water while other Scouts found a cell phone to call for help and directed rescuers.

Douglas County Sheriff's Deputy David Brock said the girl was treated for hypothermia and released from the hospital on Monday. She had been family members before she slipped away.

UTILITY PROBLEM

SIDNEY — Workers in the Sidney city clerk's office suspected something was wrong when utility disconnect notices were needed for some 1,000 customers — far more than normal.

That followed calls from several customers wondering about how much they owed.

Apparently, most of the 1,100 bills the city mailed July 12 were lost in the mail.

The city billed the customers a second time rather than send disconnect notices, City Clerk Geri Anthony said. "We had just as many disconnect notices as we had bills," she said.

One customer received the original and the makeup bills, Anthony said.

"He said he got them both on the same day," she said.

The city of Sidney provides water, sewer, garbage and electric services. The city is divided into three sections for monthly billing and customers usually have two weeks to pay.

The Associated Press

Commission recommends reinspection fee

SHAY BURK
sburk@hastingstribune.com

After a short discussion, the Hastings Planning Commission voted Monday to recommend that the city establish reinspection procedures and fees for its Development Services Department.

The new code would allow the city to charge residents if they do not fix or complete what was initially inspected. Currently, the city has no provision for reinspections on its books, said Tamara Babcock, development services director.

Babcock said repeated inspection visits are an inefficient use of an inspector's time, and they cost the department money.

She recommended the city charge \$25 for certain reinspections.

After a short discussion on the proposal, commissioner Matt Valentine made a motion to table the matter. That motion failed due to the lack of a second.

The commission then voted 8-1 to recommend approval of the code change. Valentine dissented.

Before voting to approve the change, several commissioners questioned the proposal, saying some projects require numerous visits and inspections. They argued the \$25 fees would be charged for no reason.

Babcock said the fees would be charged only in certain situations. Her examples included an inspection before the work is completed or when the project is not accessible to the inspector upon arrival.

She said a normal situation would require an initial check and a follow-up visit. In some situations, the contractor or project leader does not follow the directions after the first visit, requiring a third visit to complete the requirements.

Babcock also told commissioners that she did not see the fee as a money-making source for the department. Instead, she said, she hoped it would prompt a change in those contractors who sometimes ask for inspections when the project is not to that point.

Commission Chairman Keith Napier also questioned Babcock's use of the word "may" in the proposed code. The code states "a reinspection fee may be assessed for each inspection or reinspection when such portion of work for

which inspection is called is not complete or when corrections called for are not made."

Using the word "may" could lead to an unfair charge of the fee, Napier said. Some contractors might never be charged, while others might be charged for every other inspection, he said.

Babcock said she copied the proposed amendment from the codes of several other cities. Of those, she said, a majority used the word "may," while several others used "shall" instead.

Commissioner Phyllis Salyards suggested the word "may" be left in until the point that a number of complaints about the use of the fee are brought up. At that point, she said, the commission could change the wording if necessary.



BRENT McCOWN / Tribune

Stan and Mary Karash (center) and friends have the best view of the races at Motorsport Park Hastings Sunday by standing on their bleacher truck. The couple had thought of converting the pickup into a flatbed but decided to make bleachers instead.

Modified truck provides bleacher seating

WILL VRASPIR
wvraspir@hastingstribune.com

Grandstands were not available for spectators at Motorsport Park Hastings over the weekend, but that didn't keep Stan and Mary Karash from finding a seat.

The Karashes brought a gray, 1988 Isuzu truck, which was modified to lift like a dumptruck and to provide bleacher seating.

"There were no grandstands up,

so we just loaded it up so we would have seats for all our friends," said Mary, who attended the Rocky Mountain Vintage Racing event at MPH last weekend. "We decided we would just take our own."

The Hastings couple used the truck Sunday to provide bleacher seats at MPH's inaugural asphalt event, marking the fourth time the Karashes have used the truck for seating.

Hydraulic hoists lift the bed of the

truck to about a 45-degree angle, and steel arms are used for support.

"It takes about 10 minutes to set up and unload them," Mary said. "It can't come down because of the bars on each side. It's good and sturdy."

In addition to seating about 20 people, the truck also provided something most bleachers don't — umbrellas for shade.

"That was a lifesaver," Mary said. Stan said he and his wife constructed the truck a couple years ago as a

winter project with the help of their friend, Dan Marshall of Harvard. They named the truck Madd Max in honor of another friend.

"We named it after a good friend of ours," Mary said. "He (had) just passed away."

Mary said the truck was originally a pickup truck that was supposed to be transformed into a flat-bed truck, but the project got out of hand.

"It became quite a neat little truck," Mary said. "It was a fun deal."

Suffrage celebration in Nebraska

WILL VRASPIR
wvraspir@hastingstribune.com

Women's suffrage in Nebraska will be remembered at 2 p.m. Saturday during the annual Sister Suffragist Celebration at the Adams County YWCA, 604 N. St. Joseph Ave.

Lisa Marvel, executive director of the YWCA, said the presentation this year will focus on the women's suffrage movement in Nebraska with a reading of "Nebraska Next: A Play about Suffrage" by Carson Becker.

"This really hones in on the Nebraska history of suffrage," Marvel said. "We do something

a little bit different every year."

She said the play was originally performed last year by a group that traveled statewide, but the group has since disbanded.

"We were really lucky to be able to get the script, so we can do it ourselves," Marvel said.

To unify readers and audience members, she said anyone attending should wear white hats or clothing similar to that worn in 1920, when the 19th Amendment was ratified to give women the right to vote.

"It's a way we can feel united as a group as we celebrate

women's rights," she said.

Marvel said coffee, tea and treats of the period will be provided. Anyone planning to attend should register by Thursday, she said. The program is free and open to the public, but she said registration would help ensure there are enough treats.

Though both men and women are invited, very few men generally attend, she said.

"This is an event that is celebrated nationally," she said. "The main purpose is to celebrate the women's right to vote."

Middle school plans move forward

SHAY BURK
sburk@hastingstribune.com

Plans for the future site of the new Hastings Middle School continued to move forward Monday.

The Hastings Planning Commission unanimously approved the final plat for the new building during its meeting Monday. The 135,000-square-foot building will be constructed on the southwest corner of Marian Road and Second Street.

Due to concerns about the adjacent wetlands, Olsson Associates representative Ryan Kavan, who helped with the plat, said the boundaries of the property were laid out to

exclude any portion of the wetlands. A large wetland sits just west of the school property.

When Hastings Public Schools named the site as one of its top choices for a new building, several patrons spoke out against the site due to the proximity of the wetlands. Some worried about bird droppings and mosquitoes, which could carry the West Nile Virus, because of the close proximity.

The HPS Board of Education eventually voted in favor of the Second and Marian site, but decided to exclude the wetlands from the property it is purchasing.

During Monday's meeting, several commissioners asked

how the wetlands would be affected by their proximity to the new middle school, such as drainage from the building.

Kavan said it was unlikely that the water table in the wetlands would rise at all from school property drainage.

Even if the water table did rise, it would have no effect on the school or nearby homes, Kavan said. The school and homes are all 5-10 feet higher than the wetlands, he said.

The commission also voted unanimously to recommend rezoning the property to change the area from three zonings to only one.

Please see PLANS/page A7

B&B code change could benefit local homeowners

SHAY BURK
sburk@hastingstribune.com

The Hastings Planning Commission has recommended expanding the city code to allow bed-and-breakfast establishments in residential districts.

During Monday's meeting, the commission unanimously approved recommending the city's code be changed to allow the lodging option in residential areas.

Development Services Director Tamara Babcock said she wanted the amendment to make bed-and-breakfast establishments a more available option in the city.

"I hope this would allow the use and keep the integrity of the area at the same time," she said.

The establishment of a bed-and-breakfast inn in a residential area will require a conditional use permit from the city. These establishments are allowed in agriculture and commercial districts without a conditional use permit if all of the requirements are met.

Babcock said by allowing these lodging experiences in

residential areas, owners of larger homes could find a way to use the extra space in a progressive way.

Lana Waldron of 302 West Seventh St. spoke out in favor of the code change saying she wanted to turn her family home into a bed-and-breakfast establishment.

Waldron, who moved to Hastings from Boulder, Colo., said she loved all of the older homes and buildings in the community.

"I was impressed by Hastings and the feel of the town," she said.

Waldron also said older homes needed to be used as a teaching tool for the community and to educate those who visit Hastings.

"I think things like this need to be shared," she said.

The commission discussed the stipulation that guest rooms would not be allowed in the basement. Babcock said this stipulation would be for safety and fire reasons for the guests, but that the home's permanent residents would be allowed to reside in the basement.

Please see B&B/page A7

Calendar

HASTINGS

Alcoholics Anonymous, noon, 5:15 and 8 p.m. Wednesday, 521 S. St. Joseph Ave.

Alanon, 8 p.m. Wednesday, First United Methodist Church.

Gamblers Anonymous, 8 p.m. Wednesday, Mary Lanning Memorial Hospital Education Building, Room D.

Lotteries

WINNING NUMBERS

Monday
Nebraska Pick 5 . . . 18-21-29-34-38
Jackpot: \$70,000
2by2 Red 24-25, White 9-10
Nebraska Pick 3 2-3-1
Kansas Pick 3 9-5-0
Super Kansas Cash . . . 5-9-14-17-25
Super Cashball 9

