

THOMAS COUNTY Herald

Your Source Of
News In The Sandhills

THOMAS COUNTY, THEDFORD, NEBRASKA 69166

(USPS 596-550)

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2018

NO. 31

Head-On Collision

Three people were transported to the hospital after a head-on collision Friday afternoon, February 9, near the Dismal River on Highway 83.

The Nebraska State Patrol reports the accident occurred at approximately 4:00 p.m. near milemarker 135 in Thomas County.

Trooper Dion Neumiller said two vehicles were involved. A 2017 Toyota RAV4, driven by Mollie Finney of Seneca, and a 2012 Ford F-150 pickup driven by Charles Rich of North Platte, collided.

Rich was attempting to pass a vehicle and the pickup struck Finney's SUV head-on. Blowing snow had reduced visibility.

Thedford Fire & Rescue was called to the scene and was assisted by Mullen Fire & Rescue. Jaws of life were used to extract Finney from her
(Continued on page 8)

Murder Mystery Night



S-T After Prom parents are hosting another murder mystery night, Saturday, February 24, at 7:00 p.m. at the Thomas County Fair Building.

There are two ways you can be involved. For \$20 you can play one of 20 suspects and receive clues and objectives for the night, or for a free will donation you may attend and enjoy the evening while watching the murder investigation unfold.

No acting is necessary, but we must know if you want to be a suspect so you can receive information before the Murder Mystery Night.

This year's murder mystery is "Murder High Reunion." Dust off your cheer uniform and letterman jacket and get ready to solve a murder!

It's the James D. Murder High 30 year reunion. You've come a long way in the last 30 years and so have your classmates. It's time to reunite with your old friends (and enemies) to see what everyone's become.

Unfortunately for one of you, it is a murderer who is destined to strike.

Will it be the math team captain who is now a financial wizard with millions? The valedictorian who refuses to let anyone top them? Ever. Or possibly the class president who is now a U.S. presidential hopeful?

You'll have but one night to figure it out and bring the killer to justice. Get ready for a night of mystery and mayhem intertwined with rivalries from the past that spill over to the present. At Murder High, it's not only what you were, but also what you've become. And let's hope it's a survivor.

It will be a reunion you won't forget – if you live to tell about it!

For more information and to sign up for a role to play, please contact Jane Haake or PJ Higgins. This is a 21 and over evening. All proceeds go to the S-T After Prom.

McPherson, Logan And Thomas County Farm Bureaus Sponsor "Road To Property Tax Reform" Forum In Stapleton



McPherson, Logan and Thomas County Farm Bureaus are sponsoring a "Road to Property Tax Reform" forum on Monday, Feb. 19 at 2:00 p.m. at the Community Center in Stapleton. The event is open to the public.

Steve Nelson, president of the Nebraska Farm Bureau, and Bruce Rieker, vice president of governmental relations, will provide updates on property tax bills pending in the Nebraska Legislature and discuss the broader property tax landscape in Nebraska.

"Whether you are a homeowner, a business owner, or a farmer or rancher, it's important for everyone concerned

about property taxes to learn what they can do to make a real difference. You don't have to be a farmer or rancher to attend. This event is open to everyone," Tammy Fiechtner, north central regional manager.

Today, Nebraskans pay the seventh highest property tax rate in the nation. As a result, property taxes are now one of the highest costs and greatest expenses associated with farming and ranching in Nebraska. "We hope to see folks Monday, February 19 at 2:00 p.m. at the Community Center in Stapleton to learn more about the 'Road to Property Tax Reform,'" Fiechtner said.

Heart of Gold

By: Otilia Jones

I remember being in awe of those girls. They seemed to win all the awards. They were much older. Sophisticated. Refined. They seemed to be able to effortlessly get their horses to do amazing things. It was not long after my 7th birthday—that day when my parents removed the blindfold from my eyes and a horse, yes a horse!—stood before me, ready to carry me through my one-lesson birthday present, that I remember listening to those girls excitedly discussing some magical, mysterious event they wanted to attend—NAJYRC. I didn't really know what they were talking about, but I knew if they wanted to go, then I wanted to also. Perhaps it started as just a little girl's dream, but it soon turned into my goal—to compete at NAYJRC, and make it to the podium.

That one-lesson birthday present was—as my dad is fond of saying—the gift that kept on giving. One lesson turned into five, and the training horse was replaced by a leased pony, and I began competing in schooling shows. Before long I was the owner of a very special Connemara pony, Darby, who took me through third level and enabled me to earn my bronze medal when I was 12. I worked hard, but things seemed to come easily those days. Then: Enter Boegley's Mauricio, a/k/a "Mo."

An 18 year old Danish Warm Blood, Mo was a Ferrari without brakes. He had "buttons" I didn't even know existed. On Mo I quickly learned how much I didn't know about dressage. The transition from pony to a large horse was hard. He was, undoubtedly, the most difficult horse I've ridden. But with Mo I began to learn what it's like when horse and rider develop that indescribable, unbreakable bond, through countless hours of training and all the quiet time just being, together. And from Mo, I learned some painful, and beautiful, lessons of life.

When Mo and I became partners, we began show-



COURTESY PHOTOS

Tillie riding at the North American Junior & Young Rider Championships.

ing third level and schooled fourth level. Although we showed reasonably well, our first year was challenging. As we were just starting to develop our connection, I nearly lost Mo in a tragic fire that destroyed the barn where I was training and he was boarded. That opened my eyes to a harsh reality of life that any ride may be the last. But the experience also made me appreciate that every ride is special. While with Mo I also said goodbye to my beloved trainer and life-mentor, Felice Rose, who was a second mom to me. After decades of training, she was slowing down at a time when my pace was speeding up.

I don't know if it was through fate, or destiny, or just dumb luck, but Jami Kment, a trainer in Palmyra, Nebraska, agreed to help me. Jami, the owner of the aptly named Providence Farm, helped me understand Mo's quirks and how to manage his many idiosyncrasies. Mo and I developed a connection like never before, and in our second year, 2015, I finally realized a part of my

long-time dream of competing at NAJYRC, where we placed eighth in the individual test and seventh in the freestyle. We entered the Festival of Champions ranked second and placed fourth. Our incredible year continued where we placed first in the Junior team championship ride at Regionals and qualified for the open class third level freestyle, where we finished eighth at Na-

tionals against open class riders. That magical year ended by accepting an invitation to ride at the Robert Dover clinic in Wellington, Florida where we had a simply amazing week.

Realizing that a girl from Nebraska and her schoolmaster horse might actually be able to compete with the best horses and riders in the country, through the rest of the winter in

(Continued on page 8)



Tillie stands at the top of the podium after winning gold at the 2017 North American Junior & Young Rider Championships.

11th Annual Polar Bear Tank Race Planned



COURTESY PHOTO

Pictured above are some contestants from past year's finishing up the Polar Bear Tank Race. Get your entry ready this year for the 11th Annual Race.

The Sandhills Journey Scenic Byway is excited to announce the upcoming 11th Annual Polar Bear Tank Race. This unique fun-filled event will be held March 2nd and 3rd, 2018, on the Middle Loup River north of Mullen. Teams of at least four members race down the river in metal stock tanks with winning teams determined by time. The event kicks off on Friday evening with team registration and a soup cook-off. Soup entries from communities along the Sandhills Journey Scenic Byway are taste tested by tank racers and winners selected in the categories of taste, theme, and decorations. Communities and/or individuals are encouraged to enter the soup cook-off contest and help welcome visitors to our area!

Tank race teams meet for breakfast on Saturday morning and load buses to be transported to the river where they are launched in a staggered order. For those teams wishing to enjoy a relaxing float down the river, a

non-competitive category is also available. And there is even a race category for teams of women. A prime rib awards banquet will be held Saturday evening to conclude the event. The Polar Bear Tank Race offers a truly one of a kind and out of the ordinary winter experience with teams coming from across Nebraska as well as several other states. This annual event is held to create awareness of the Sandhills Journey Scenic Byway, and to allow people to participate in this unique experience of Tanking on the Middle Loup River in the winter... and as the major fundraiser for the non-profit Sandhills Journey Scenic Byway. Registration is on a first come basis so teams are encouraged to register early, as the number of team entries is limited. For more information and registration forms, please contact event organizer Mitch Glidden at 308 546-2206 or visit the Sandhills Journey Scenic Byway website at www.sandhillsjourney.com.