

Highly erodible land initiative announced up to 750,000 acres

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack recently announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture began sign-up for the Highly Erodible Land Initiative under the Conservation Reserve Program on July 23. The purpose of this initiative is to protect up to 750,000 acres of the nation's most highly erodible croplands. Producers may enroll at their local Farm Service Agency county office. Enrollment will continue until the 750,000 acre limit has been met.

Through this Highly Erodible Land Initiative, eligible landowners receive annual rental payments and cost-share assistance to establish long-term, resource conserving covers on eligible cropland for a period of 10 years. Croplands with an Erodibility Index of 20 or greater are eligible for enrollment.

Producers are encouraged to contact their local Farm Services Agency office or visit www.fsa.usda.gov/crp for additional information.

Changes coming to service offices

Pat L. Bohl, Farm Loan Officer, for Rawlins, Decatur, Norton, and Phillips counties of the Kansas Farm Service Agency, has announced that the Farm Loan Programs division of the agency is undergoing some changes in the State of Kansas. "Over the past several years (the agency) has been faced with the challenges of a declining budget to administer our loan programs. This has resulted in staff reductions," Bohl said. "In an effort to continue

providing dependable, effective customer service and deal with those challenges, some changes were needed in our delivery system in Kansas.

"After evaluating numerous factors, a plan was developed that realigned several program service areas in Kansas. This restructuring plan has been reviewed and approved by our National Office in Washington D.C."

The Farm Loan Programs for Rawlins County will now be

serviced by the office located in Goodland. The proposed date of the change is Aug. 1. After that date, individuals in Rawlins County who either have loans or wish to apply for a loan should direct their inquiries to the Farm Loan Programs Staff in Sherman County.

These changes only affect the delivery of the Farm Loan Programs. There will be no change in the handling of the other Farm Programs administered by the Agency.

Music festival is slated for Aug. 10-11

The sounds of country, bluegrass, jazz, cowboy, pop and gospel music blend with the charm of the renovated Holbrook School building for the third annual Burton's Bend Music Festival, to be presented Aug. 10 and 11 in Holbrook.

The Burton's Bend Music Festival is a celebration of grassroots music in its various styles. There are so many styles of music that emanate from the rural Midwest and this event celebrates those styles through the performances of local, regional and national artists.

The event is presented by the Central Plains Foundation, with support from the Nebraska Arts Council, the Nebraska Cultural Endowment and the Furnas-Harlan County Visitors' Committee, ATC Communications and several other generous area sponsors.

Artists for Burton's Bend 2012 include "Three 4 All" from Alma and Holdrege, Neb.; Alexa Whipple from Arapahoe, Neb.; "This Side of Sunday" from Council Bluffs, Iowa; Buck "The Big Man" Helton from Dallas, Texas; Tex and Mary Schutz from Streetman, Texas; Jim Barnes from Orleans, Neb.; Janet McBride from Forney, Texas; Becka Snider from Holbrook, Neb.; Carolyn and Jerry from Oklahoma City, Okla.; Van Bradley and "A Little Bit of Heaven," from Agra, and Alma, Neb.; Lorraine Worth from Springview, Nebraska; and Bob and Sheila Everhart from Anita, Iowa.

The festival opens each day at 10 a.m. with musical theme shows on a variety of topics, learning sessions during lunch breaks, with concerts and opry-style shows in the afternoons and evenings. Afternoon shows begin at 1 p.m. and evening presentations begin at 7 p.m. (A complete schedule of activities is included with this article.)

New this year is "A Gospel Music Gathering," Friday evening beginning at 7 p.m., an evening-long Gaither-style show that celebrates gospel music in several styles. Returning activities include

the "Burton's Bend Barndance," a re-enactment of an old-time radio show on Saturday evening. Theme shows during the two-day event cover such topics as cowboy songs; a bluegrass show; a presentation of poetry, prose and silly stories; guitar instrumentation styles; a tribute to the great country singers; jazz and classic pop music and even a yodeling exhibition. Learning sessions focus on the roots of country music in America and the influence of Irish, English and Scottish tunes on cowboy music, all interspersed with songs that illustrate the points.

Admission to the festival is \$20 for two days or \$11 for one day, with youngsters 12 and younger admitted free with parents or grandparents. As an added bonus, the first 24 purchasers of two-day passes will receive reserved (table) seating at the Classroom Stage throughout the weekend. Passes are available only at the door. Camping is available in the Holbrook City Park and motels are available in nearby Arapahoe and Cambridge.

Sponsors for the festival include ATC Communications and Hunt Nebraska, Arapahoe; First State Bank, Holbrook; Anderson Livestock, Holbrook; First Central Bank, Arapahoe; Golight, Inc., Culbertson; and Culligan Water, McCook. The event received grants from the Nebraska Arts Council, the Nebraska Cultural Endowment and the Furnas County Visitors' Committee.

The Burton's Bend Music Festival, was founded by director Christine Whipple in 2010. The event takes its name from Isaac "Ben" Burton, the first permanent settler of Furnas County, who, with his partner, H. Dice, established the Burton's Bend Trading Post near the bend of the Republican River at the 100th meridian. For many years the community continued to be known as Burton's Bend, but once the railroad came to the area, the name was changed to Holbrook.

Grants available for healthy habits programs

School personnel - including nurses, teachers and administrators - interested in helping their students adopt healthy habits have until Oct. 15 to apply for a Healthy Habits for Life grant from the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas Foundation.

Entering its seventh giving cycle, Healthy Habits for Life is a major grant program of the BCBSKS Foundation. For a second straight year, the Foundation is committing \$150,000 to help schools deliver programs that encourage Kansas children to reduce their cardiovascular risk, increase their physical activity or learn healthy eating habits.

"The Foundation's board of directors recognizes that our schools are at the forefront of helping turn the tide of childhood obesity and associated chronic health conditions because our children spend so much time at school," said Marlou Wegener, chief operating officer for the BCBSKS Foundation. "We also understand that school budgets are tighter than ever and administrators are making tough decisions regarding how to allocate limited dollars. Since its inception, the Healthy Habits for Life grant program has helped to ease some of that burden by providing funds for health-related curriculum, equipment or activities."

During the past six years, the BCBSKS Foundation has awarded 441 grants in excess of \$425,000, including \$150,000

distributed in December 2011. Wegener said school personnel have used those dollars to purchase nutritional and wellness curriculum, healthy snacks, pedometers for walking programs and heart rate monitors for physical education classes.

Other schools have used funds for health fairs, playground equipment or to purchase Nintendo Wii game systems to keep children active when inclement weather keeps them inside for recess.

Wegener encourages school nurses, physical education, health, and family and consumer science teachers, athletic directors, principals and other school personnel to apply for a

Healthy Habits for Life grant.

The maximum grant amount is \$1,000 and grants are limited to one per school. Healthy Habits for Life grants are available in the service area of the BCBSKS Foundation which includes all Kansas counties except Johnson and Wyandotte.

Applications must be postmarked or received no later than Oct. 15 with the funds distributed in mid-December. Grant recipients can use the funds for programs offered during the 2013 calendar year.

A grant application and additional information is available at www.bcbsks.com/foundation.

Churning up a treat



Tyler Montgomery (left), of Almena, explains how his tractor powered ice cream maker works to Small Engine judge Chris Petty, of Hill City, on Tuesday afternoon at the Norton County Fair. Petty awarded Montgomery a purple ribbon for his innovation and skill and said it was one of the more unique things he has judged. Tyler is a recent graduate of Northern Valley High School and plans to attend Kansas State University and major in Biological Systems Engineering in the fall.

-Telegram photo by Mike Stephens

Peer expansion is offered by Nex-Tech

An Information Technology Peer Group has been organized in the Hays area with over 25 members. This group consists of experts from the industries of government, utilities, banks, health-care and more. They get together every other month for a morning of technology discussion, ending with lunch at noon.

In addition to being part of the bi-monthly forum, Nex-Tech Peers have also benefitted from one-on-one time with FBI Agents specializing in cybercrime, intimate in-person conversations with representatives of companies such as SonicWALL

and Microsoft, hands-on experience with technology products when they are still in beta stages and when they are rolled out into production.

Nex-Tech is willing to originate more groups throughout Kansas. If you are an Information Technology professional, or know of other professionals who could benefit from this type of forum, please contact Trisha Sauer at 877-625-7872 or via email at tsauer@nex-tech.com. Starting a group would require at least eight to 10 professionals to have an adequate discussion session.

Plant It Pink program to help save lives

The American Cancer Society's Cancer Action Network is planting Kansas pink. Plant It Pink is the grassroots campaign to help celebrate breast cancer survivors, honor those lost to the disease, and join forces to fight against cancer by working with Congress to protect funding of the cancer research that leads to breakthrough treatments.

Through the campaign, the network hopes to sell and plant at least 2,000 boxes of Pink Impression tulip bulbs in Kansas to represent the approximate number of women in the state who will be diagnosed with breast cancer in 2012. By joining the network for \$20, people will receive a membership plus 10 Darwin hybrid tulips imported from Holland. The bulbs will be available for pick up or shipping and then planting in October during Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

ness Month.

Next spring, the tulips will bloom and remind everyone of the importance of breast cancer awareness, early detection and the steps the network is taking to ensure that all women have access to the lifesaving mam-

mograms and cancer screenings they need.

To join the network and order Plant It Pink tulips, visit plantitpink.org or call 800-359-1025. Tulips will arrive in early October. Limited quantities available.

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Open House

408 N. Second, Norton

Sat., July 28
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