

FUN News

for

People, Recognition, Enthusiasm, Communication

Panhandle District Monthly News

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Why Evaluations?

Starting last November, all of us have been involved in some form of evaluation or another. It started with looking over individual accomplishments from last year and setting goals for the coming year. We are now in the midst of reviewing those accomplishments and providing feedback on them, as well as future plans.

Believe me, it all takes time, but it is not a time waster. This annual assessment process helps our unit keep moving forward. The time that you take in reviewing your work and planning for the coming year is an important part of how we continue to be a productive and effective unit within the university system.

As I've seen your assessments of your work over the last year, I am mindful of the many ways we as a unit are addressing the needs of our clientele and the differences that are being made. No one has a small job within our unit, and each job is important to our overall mission. Thank you for work that is well done. Thank you for your contributions in making a difference.

Linda



Remember to visit our Panhandle Staff web page at www.panhandle.unl.edu/staff/staff.htm.

User name and password: phrec.

Adopt-A-Spot

It may seem early, but now is the time to be thinking about gardening and landscaping. The Arboretum Committee met recently and discussed plans to enhance the appearance of the Panhandle Research & Extension Center. They proposed an Adopt-a-Spot program that would give those with a green thumb an opportunity to put some of their ideas and efforts into action to enhance the appearance of the building.

A great example of the impact a small group of people can make is outside the northwest entrance by Weed Science. Bob Wilson, Lori Howlett, Trish Nielsen, and Carol Bewley turned a neglected area into a beautiful garden spot last year. They already are making plans to improve on it this upcoming summer. Pat Martin and Sharon Holman cared for the flower boxes at the entrance of the building last summer and they plan to plant and maintain those again this year.

The Arboretum Committee is offering similar sites to other groups to showcase their horticulture skills. Come on, gather some friends together and put your names in to the committee to adopt-a-spot. It doesn't take a lot of time to maintain and you get the added bonus of an opportunity for some exercise.

Contact Jim Schild, chairman of the Arboretum Committee to reserve a spot.



Comings and Goings in the Panhandle

We have several new faces throughout the District and then a few faces we will no longer see in our hallways.



Debra Austin started December 3 as the Extension Assistant in Sheridan County.



Alina Surber joined the Scotts Bluff County Extension Office as the Nutrition Education Program Assistant on January 2.



Angel Cabral began January 8 as the Custodian on the west side of the building.



Dong-Man Khu has accepted a position with the Samuel Roberts Nobel Foundation in Ardmore, Oklahoma.



Carol Bewley is leaving the Weed Science Lab and moving to Arkansas to be closer to her sister.



Dr. Wohlers' last day will be February 15. He is retiring from the Panhandle Center. Congratulations!

It is always exciting when we have new people join us, just as it is always sad to say goodbye to those moving away. We wish you all the best!

Happy Birthday!

If you all read last month's news letter you will know we are celebrating everyone's birthday this year. Many of you have shared your birthdates with us, but to include "everyone" we need a few more of you to email Sharon sholman1@unl.edu and give her your month and day only.

Each month the "birthday people" will be listed in the newsletter and then on the "third Tuesday" of each month we will have a "birthday party" in the break room at 10:00 am. The "birthday people" are invited to bring treats to share so we can all help celebrate your special day!

Dennis Morimoto read the January newsletter and brought treats (mini-eclairs) to share with everyone for his birthday which was January 17th.

Thanks Dennis!

Others who had birthdays in January are:

Deb Kraenow - January 10

Dean Yonts - January 11

Jenny Nixon - January 15

Happy belated birthday!

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Happy February Birthdays!

The only person having a birthday in February (or at least who has confessed to having a birthday in February) is Carla Mahar on the 13th. She also shared that she was born in the Year of the Rat! So this year makes her birthday extra special!!! Have a great day!!

If you are having a birthday this month, but have not shared your birthdate with Sharon, please feel free to bring treats on February 20th and we'll help you celebrate!!!

Remember, everyone has one and you don't have to tell us how young you are - Sharon would just like to know the month and day of your birth date.



Cupid Really Does Exist

On February 7, 1986 I went on my first date with Beth Vohland. A mutual friend of ours set us up for the annual Selleck Hall dormitory dance with the clever name of "Screw Your Roommate". Now exactly what this meant, I will leave to your imagination. I'm still not sure myself, but in any case, it now serves as our fateful beginning as a couple. I was a graduate student just starting my Ph.D. program and living in the graduate student section of Selleck Dormitory on UNL City Campus. I had lived on my own for about three years prior to entering graduate school and I had decided that anybody's cooking was better than mine, so the dorm was the place for me. Beth was living in the undergraduate section of Selleck.

The story goes that Beth had recently broken up with her boyfriend and her friends were determined to find her a date for the big dance - you know, the one with the clever name - so upon their insistence she pointed to me one fateful day while I sat unknowingly eating my cafeteria meal lovingly made by somebody other than me. The plan was hatched.

Now being that I had not had a date in something like a year, the thought of a date was quite intriguing when presented to me, especially once I figured out who I was being set up with. It was also quite scary. She was, after all, a good deal younger than I was. She had just turned 20 and I was 27. After much consternation and rumination, I finally said "What the heck, it's just a dance. It's not like I'm going to marry her." and I bought the tickets.

We went to Grandmothers, the restaurant owned by former governor Bob Kerry, for dinner. I believe it was during dinner that I learned that Beth grew up on a farm just outside Minatare. I thought that was pretty cool, since I was spending my summers in Scottsbluff doing research for my dissertation. If this date thing worked out, we just might be able to see each other during the coming summer. After dinner we went to the dance. As I recall, I tore up the dance floor with my athletic, graceful dancing. As Beth recalls, I sat along the wall most of the night while one boy after another took her out on the dance floor. I'll let you decide which version is correct.

The dance ended about midnight. I was tired from all the dancing - or was it all the beer? The amazing thing to me was this little 20-year-old girl was still full of energy and wanted to go out for an after-dance bite to

eat with a group of friends. If my counting was correct, she had consumed more alcohol than I had and I outweighed her by 60+ pounds. The physiology of this remarkable feat still amazes me. In any case, we did go out to have an early morning snack. I think I spoke one or maybe two words during this phase of the date. I was, for all intents and purposes, asleep. We returned to the dormitory about 2 AM. I managed to say "goodnight" and then went promptly to sleep. She had enjoyed the dance, but thought I did not since I spoke hardly a word after the dance was done. When I showed up in her hallway the next day - a place I had hardly ever ventured to before - she thought maybe I had enjoyed myself after all. I had, and the rest as they say, is history.

Drew Lyon

Valentine Trivia



1. How many roses will be sold and delivered within a three-day time period?
2. Where are these roses grown?
3. Who buys the majority of the roses?
4. How many Valentine's Day cards are exchanged each year?
5. What age group gives the most Valentine cards?
6. Besides giving a card, how will Valentine's Day be celebrated?
7. Who created the "Conversation Hearts"?
8. How many heart-shaped boxes of chocolate are sold?
9. Valentine's Day is big business - just how big is it?
10. This question is just for the men - Should you feel bad if you don't have big plans for Valentine's Day?

Happy Valentine's Day!!

Treat yourself and others to a "sweet" day!

What's Cooking?



Our guest chef this month is Pat Neben, Office Manager in the Central Sandhills Extension Office.

It just so happens that her favorite recipe was published in the Nebraska Life Magazine Cookbook in the fall of 2006. This recipe is a simple one but is enjoyed by everyone at family meals and branding meals. She was going to skip taking this to a branding one year and her husband's boss at the time said if she didn't bring the Salted Nut Bars, she couldn't come. She has had this recipe since her oldest child was a baby and he's 25 now so she guesses it has become a family recipe that will probably be passed on to future generations. It's one of those recipes that she's made so many times that she very seldom eats it herself, but she knows everyone else enjoys.

Salted Nut Bars

Crust:

- 1 ½ cup flour
- 2/3 cup brown sugar
- ½ tsp. Salt
- ½ tsp. soda
- ½ cup oleo, softened
- 1 tsp. Vanilla
- 2 egg yolks
- 3 cups mini marshmallows

Combine all items except marshmallows till crumb mixture forms. Press in bottom of ungreased 9 X 13 pan. Bake @ 350 degrees for 12 minutes. Immediately sprinkle marshmallows over crumb mixture. Return to oven 1-2 minutes, till marshmallows puff. Cool.

Topping:

- 2/3 cup corn syrup
- 1/4 cup oleo
- 2 cups peanuts
- 12 ounces peanut butter chips (can also use Butterscotch chips for different flavor)
- 2 cups Rice Krispies
- 1 tsp. Vanilla

In large saucepan or microwave dish, heat corn syrup, oleo, vanilla and chips till melted and smooth, stirring as needed. Remove from heat, stir in cereal and peanuts. Spread over marshmallows while warm. Cool and cut into bars. Enjoy!

Valentine Trivia Answers

1. *110 million roses, the majority red, will be sold and delivered within a three-day time period. Valentine's Day is the big time of year for red roses; Mothers' Day means more pastel roses.*
2. *California produces 60 percent of American roses, but the vast number sold on Valentine's Day in the United States are imported, mostly from South America.*
3. *15% of U.S. women send themselves flowers on Valentine's Day. 73% of people who buy flowers for Valentine's Day are men, while only 27 percent are women.*
4. *About 1 billion Valentine's Day cards are exchanged each year. That's the largest seasonal card-sending occasion of the year, next to Christmas. More than 50 percent of cards are sold the week of the holiday, with the largest and most elaborate Valentine cards sold 48 hours before February 14.*
5. *Children ages 6 to 10 exchange more than 650 million Valentine's cards with teachers, classmates, and family members. Teachers will receive the most Valentine's Day cards, followed by children, mothers, wives, and then, sweethearts.*
6. *70 percent of those celebrating the holiday give a card, followed by a telephone call (49 percent), gift (48 percent), special dinner (37 percent), candy (33 percent) restaurant meal (30 percent), and flowers (19 percent).*
7. *In 1866, candy manufacturer NECCO made the first "Conversation Hearts" — then called "Motto Hearts." According to NECCO, eight billion of these little candies are sold between January 1 and February 14.*
8. *More than 35 million heart-shaped boxes of chocolate will be sold for Valentine's Day.*
9. *Consumers will spend an average of \$77.43 on Valentine's Day gifts this year. E-commerce retailers expect to rack up about \$650 million in sales of food, candy, flowers, and other Valentine's Day gifts. Of that amount about \$350 million will be for gifts and flowers and another \$45 million will be spent on food (including chocolate) and wine.*
10. *In the United States, 64 percent of men do not make plans in advance for a romantic Valentine's Day with their sweethearts.*