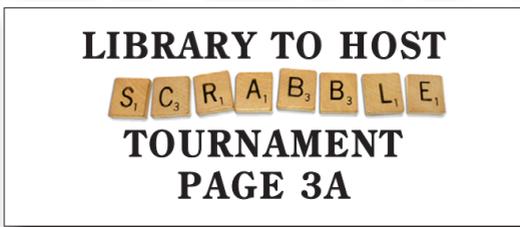


SEWARD COUNTY INDEPENDENT



Justice Center forces Extension move

by Emily Hemphill
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The Seward County Extension Office soon will move to a new location after the County Board of Commissioners decided in March that the current building would be in the way of a new \$12.3 million Justice Center.

The board notified Extension staff the same month it approved completed plans for the construction.

"I was shocked that we hadn't been included in that discussion," University of Nebraska Lincoln Extension Educator Dennis Kahl said.

Kahl said negotiations between Extension and the commissioners have been

ongoing since the board announced its decision to budget \$125,000 to move Extension to a different location.

That budget has since been reduced to \$110,000, according to Commissioner Whitney Fleischman, who serves as the liaison between the commissioners and Extension.

The current 4,600-square-foot Extension building, located at 216 South Ninth Street in Seward, was erected in the 1970s and was specifically designed for Extension programming. It includes a large meeting area, conference room, offices, a workroom and storage space.

Kahl said the staff has kept the building modern and up-to-date, providing a pleasant work atmosphere.

"The building we presently have is worth a lot," Kahl said. "They said, 'In the end, you will have just as good or better of a place as where you are now.' Since that time, plans have changed and been revised."

Fleischman said the original plans for the Justice Center would have allowed the Extension office to remain until the first phase of construction was complete.

"Then they changed how construction was going to go," she said. "They would have been coming up within feet of the building. The

plans changed and we have to move things up."

The commissioners selected the former Ehlers Electronics building as a new temporary location for the Extension office, with plans to move the office again in 18-24 months to the building on South 14th Street that currently houses the Veteran's Service office, county road department, public transportation and the county attorney's office, some of which will move to the Justice Center.

The commissioners selected the Ehlers building, located a block away from the current Extension office at 123 South Ninth

See EXTENSION, 3A



COURTESY PHOTO
Students and staff at Milford High School each received a new Eagles T-shirt when they returned from winter break. Principal Brandon Mowinkel created the 400 shirts using the school's screen printing press.

Walking a labyrinth

by Stephanie Croston
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Take a moment. Step away from the computer and the smartphone and any other electronic device you may have.

Look at the pattern of light on the floor at the Red Path Gallery in Seward. It's one of six labyrinth patterns, and you can walk it or just sit and contemplate the intricacy of the pattern.

The goal, said Gallery owner Jeannie Wiemer, is to use this tool to help cultivate creativity and reduce stress.

"The world is way too busy," she said. "We don't take time for ourselves."

The labyrinth offers a chance to take time to walk and think or meditate.

Matt Cook of Norman, Oklahoma, the machine's creator and installer, said he did his master's thesis on labyrinths and their effects on people. He installed the equipment Jan. 17.

The library at Oklahoma University in Norman has installed this equipment, and students use the labyrinths to give themselves breaks from studying.

"It helps combat the effects of technology," Cook said. "It helps elicit a state of mindfulness" or a non-judg-

mental awareness of the moment.

Cook used a gobo light, which is also used in movie projectors, to project the labyrinth designs on the floor. The higher the light, the bigger the design.

The machine at the Red Path Gallery includes labyrinth designs from six cultures, including a fictional one.

Wiemer first became interested in labyrinths when a member of The Labyrinth Society in Lincoln stayed at her bed and breakfast. Bernie Lewis, who owned a massage business in Seward for awhile, was also interested in labyrinths, and the two visited as many as they could.

"As you walk one path, you follow, reflect and return," Wiemer said. "It can enhance your creativity and help you discover your path."

Originally, Wiemer was looking for something to install at the family farm. She hoped to create a labyrinth of light for people to come and walk.

"On the ground with light in the darkness seemed unique," she said. She learned of the gobo lights three years ago but found that the labyrinths were only made in Europe. When she found Cook's creations, she jumped at the chance.

The six patterns represent different cultures. Visitors may choose the one they want. The Chartres Labyrinth

comes from the gothic cathedral in Chartres, France. It includes circles, spirals, a cross and a six-petaled rose at the center.

The Celtic labyrinth features familiar elements of Celtic art—the knotwork, interlaced panels, patterns and spirals. The Vedic labyrinth comes from India and is based on a defensive battle formation.

The Serbian design is based on mathematics and includes equilateral triangles. Some use it as a yoga or a dance template, according to the information card at the Gallery.

The Pima design comes from southern Arizona and northern Sonora. The design includes a mythological character who escaped punishments by retreating through a labyrinth.

The fictional city of Minas Tirith is represented by the Literary Labyrinth. J.R.R. Tolkien created Minas Tirith in *The Lord of the Rings*. The design is based on the city's seven-level format and includes the White Tree at the center.

Wiemer said the grand opening for the equipment will be Saturday, Feb. 14, during the Second Saturday activities. There is no charge to walk any of the labyrinths, and there is no time limit.

The most famous labyrinth comes from Greek mythology and housed the Minotaur, a creature with the body of a man and the head and tail of a bull.

The creature was the offspring of Queen Pasiphae of Crete and a bull sent by Poseidon in response to a request from King Minos, Pasiphae's husband. The creature was named Asterion. Because he was neither man nor beast, he couldn't find food and started to eat people.

King Minos ordered Daedalus and Icarus to build a maze known as the Labyrinth where the Minotaur could live. The people of Athens, as punishment for killing Minos's son, sent seven young men and seven young women as sacrifices to the Minotaur.

Theseus, son of the king of Athens, volunteered for the third set of offerings. When he arrived at Crete, King Minos's daughters Ariadne and Phaedra fell in love with him. Ariadne begged Daedalus for the secret of the Labyrinth and used it to help Theseus. Theseus killed the Minotaur and followed the string Ariadne provided to return to the doors.



STEPHANIE CROSTON/SCI
Matt Cook shows Jeannie Wiemer how the labyrinth projector works after installing the equipment at the Red Path Gallery in Seward Jan. 17.

Eagles surprised with new T-shirts

by Emily Hemphill
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Milford High School students returned from winter break on Jan. 6 to find brand new T-shirts in their lockers.

"It was a welcome back to school type thing," Principal Brandon Mowinkel said.

Mowinkel said the shirts were "just another Milford Eagle thing to do. As a school pride thing and a gift to them."

The white shirts feature a purple stripe with the Milford 'M' above the words "Milford Eagles" in black ink.

Mowinkel said the idea was born when the school was trying to get its screen printing press up and running for mass production.

"We've had a printing press at the school for about 10 years. We use it for some graphics classes, industrial tech and art classes," he said.

Mowinkel and his colleagues found blank shirts online for under \$2 apiece. He sent out a Google survey before the holiday

break, asking students and staff to fill out their shirt size. Most students completed the survey, Mowinkel said, but staff had to guess on sizing for those who didn't.

During the break, Mowinkel went to work printing the shirts with a two-screen process - one screen for each color.

"It took a long time. Ten plus hours," he said, to make 400 shirts for each student and staff member.

He used to operate the press when he taught shop class at the school.

"I've always wanted to do something like this for our students," he said.

The school's sportsmanship committee and activity fund absorbed the \$800 for the cost of the shirts plus ink.

Mowinkel said he has a few extra shirts available at the school for parents or others in the community who may be interested.

"I heard a lot of thanks," Mowinkel said. "It was a fun thing to do when students came back."

County grants clean-up funds

by Amanda Woita
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The Seward County Commissioners approved a request to give funds for the annual Spring Clean Up Day at their latest meeting.

On Jan. 20, the commissioners gave \$500 to the Spring Clean Up program.

Scott Willet, who spoke at the meeting, said last year, the clean-up collected 15,000 pounds of electronics and 11,000 pounds of scrap metal.

Willet also said that this gives high school students a chance to volunteer.

The clean-up day is free, with the exception of a \$10 charge for televisions and

computer monitors.

"It seems like it's very well-used," Commissioner Chairman Roger Glawatz said.

The Four Corners Health Department will also hold its hazardous household waste collection on the same day, according to Willet.

Also at the meeting, the commissioners discussed starting a Justice Center Committee that would stay updated on the building progress of the new justice center and report to the commissioners.

Commissioners Glawatz, Mike Luebbe and Whitney Fleischman said they would be interested

See CLEANUP, 3A

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