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FINAL EDITION

Or is it?

By KENT WARNEKE
regional@norfolkdailynews.com

The primary role of a headline is to attract a reader's attention. Chances are, the headline on this story did just that. To be clear, this is NOT the final edition of the Norfolk Daily News. The Daily News will be published tomorrow, next week and into the future.

But that isn't the case elsewhere in the nation, and, as a result, it's not an exaggeration to say our freedom as citizens is at risk. While freedom of the press is enshrined in the First Amendment of the Bill of Rights, its impact is greatly diminished if there is no local, community newspaper for citizens to rely upon.

Since 2005, more than 25% of U.S. newspapers have ceased publication. That has contributed to an estimated 70 million Americans now living in what's come to be known as a "news desert" — where there is no or just one local news source in a community or county.

Even when publications continue, many have been faced with severe staff cutbacks. For example, the Gannett Co. — the nation's largest newspaper chain — has eliminated 54% of its combined workforce since it merged with GateHouse Media less than five years ago.

Here's a specific example: The Salinas Californian newspaper continues to operate but has no locally based reporters in a community of about 160,000.

Ironically, all this comes at a time when citizens across the nation want quality, community journalism.

The American Journalism Project recently spoke with about 5,000 Americans located across the U.S. about their journalism preferences, and several themes emerged, including:

- People want more local news, with the emphasis on local.
- People want a shared, trusted source of facts.
- People want the full story of their commu-

SUPPORT COMMUNITY JOURNALISM

- People want to know about decisions before they're made, and they want decision-makers to be accountable for outcomes.
- People want to see themselves in the news.

Those five tenets are what the Daily News strives to provide, but it's proving more challenging in a changing world involving the proliferation of social media.

The stakes are incredibly high. Without support for quality, local journalism, not only will communities suffer, but so will democracy in the U.S. as a whole.

That's the focus of the "Protect the Pillar" series of stories kicking off today and continuing — in print and online — through Friday, Aug. 25.

The title is a reference to the free press being known as the "Fourth Pillar" of democracy along with the legislative, executive and judicial branches of government.

Tomorrow's series installment will focus

on that topic.

In the series, readers also will learn more about:

- The growing number of "news deserts" throughout the nation and the impact of that trend.
- The important role newspapers can play in serving as a community advocate.
- The priority that needs to continue to be placed on local news.
- The traditional and crucial role newspapers play in seeking out optimum solutions as issues and problems arise in a community by providing a forum for civil discourse and debate.
- The recognition of how important it is for communities to have a trusted, reliable source of information.

The series will conclude with a direct message from Bill Huse, publisher of the Daily News, about how he and the Huse family are committed to continuing to provide quality, reliable, local journalism for Norfolk and the area — and how readers and advertisers can join in that effort.

Look for the "Protect the Pillar" series on the front page of the Daily News — and prominently online, too — for the next seven editions. Northeast and North Central Nebraskans are encouraged to read the series from start to finish.

Tomorrow, we begin.



Awaken, Educate, Motivate

TODAY

SERIES INTRODUCTION

DAY 2

THE FOURTH PILLAR

DAY 3

NEWS DESERTS

DAY 4

COMMUNITY ADVOCATE

DAY 5

LOCAL NEWS COVERAGE

DAY 6

DEBATE SHARPENS TRUTH

DAY 7

TRUSTED, RELIABLE NEWS

DAY 8

LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER

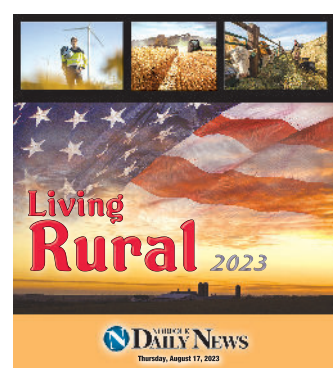


ONLINE EXTRA

The Protect the Pillar series, to date, may be found by scanning the QR code or going to www.norfolkdailynews.com



INSIDE



Look for Living Rural stories in today's paper. Pull out special section

NEWS BRIEFS

NORFOLK

School tax credit

An education tax credit became the focal point of discussion at the Madison County Republican Party's monthly meeting Wednesday afternoon at Black Cow Fat Pig in downtown Norfolk.

See page 2

Park improvements

Close to 150 city officials, community leaders and volunteers converged on Liberty Bell Park to lend a hand in the construction of a new playscape.

See page 10

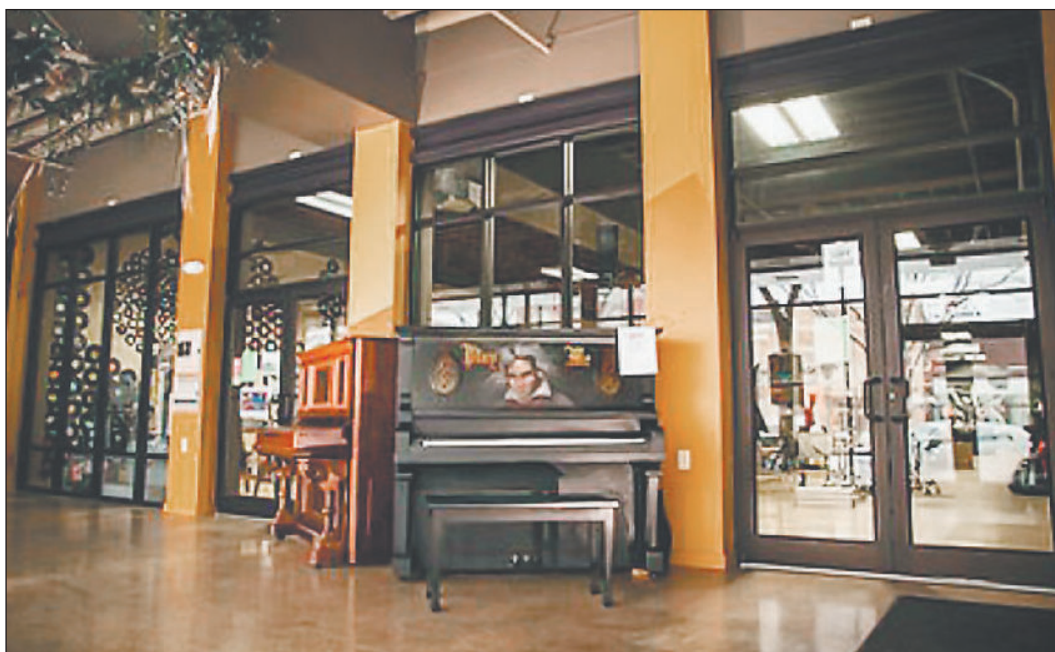
Meet six new teachers in Norfolk schools.

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137th year, No. 91



COURTESY PHOTO

PIANOS SIT outside the entrance to Midwest Music Center, one of Norfolk's creative businesses. "We're a little niche and a little bit of everything," said owner Chad Barnhill, who also participates on the creative district advisory committee.

Creative businesses 'a great benefit for our community'

Editor's note: This is the final part of a three-part series on Norfolk's recent designation as a creative district and what it means for the arts. The previous stories were published on Monday and Wednesday.

By MILANA DONE
mdone@norfolkdailynews.com

When the original owner of Norfolk's Ravenwood wanted to open a shop in 1985, the Small Business Administration conducted a community survey to determine if the unique shop would be successful since it was one-of-a-kind.

Now, Ravenwood is one of many creative businesses that characterize Norfolk Avenue — and the River Point Creative District.

A creative business is characterized by local creativity and innovation and may include such places as restaurants, salons and anywhere that hosts live music.

"Creative businesses, that's where people

►Please see CREATIVE, page 6



MILANA DONE/DAILY NEWS

DISTRICT TABLE and Tap, a creative business on Norfolk Avenue, encourages local business in its outdoor eating area. A creative business is characterized by local creativity and innovation and may include such places as restaurants, salons and anywhere that hosts live music.

Sale of Kensington building finalized

Special to the Daily News

The sale is finally official. On Aug. 4, the acquisition of the Kensington in downtown Norfolk by Ho-Chunk Capital was finalized, a sale that has been in the works for several months.

The Norfolk Housing Agency board approved an offer from Ho-Chunk Capital to purchase the Kensington last November. The more than \$14 million redevelopment project will convert the historic downtown building into a boutique hotel.

"This begins a new chapter in the life of the Kensington. We're excited to watch its evolution and eventual return to a hub of activity and hos-

pitality in the heart of downtown Norfolk. We appreciate Ho-Chunk Capital's investment in Norfolk's growth and confidence in our future," said Norfolk Mayor Josh Moening.

Ho-Chunk Capital — a division of Ho-Chunk Inc. — has emerged as a leader in real estate development in the region in recent years. Major investments include areas of downtown Sioux City and the Flatwater Crossing master-planned community in South Sioux City.

"We look forward to preserving and revitalizing this historic Norfolk building," said Dennis Johnson, CEO of

►Please see SALE, page 6

Voters in Humphrey say no to new school

By PATRICK MURPHY
regional@norfolkdailynews.com

HUMPHREY —Humphrey Public School's attempt to build a new 7-12 facility was defeated Tuesday 634-455 in a mail-in ballot election.

The general obligation school building bonds were not to exceed \$39.5 million to construct a 7-12 facility.

"The results are in and, unfortunately, the bond did not pass," said Brice King, Humphrey superintendent. "For those who are disappointed, we are, too. That said, it is encouraging to see the number of people in support of our

school and understand the needs of our students.

"We hope that all members of the district will thoughtfully consider the next steps forward as the issues facing Humphrey Public Schools facilities are real and not going away. We thank all individuals who invested time in the process. We hope the next steps will result in a positive outcome and provide many additional opportunities for the students of our communities."

According to Platte County election commissioner Eryn ►Please see SCHOOL, page 6



FRIDAY
89 70
Sunny, windy
Wind: S 21



SATURDAY
99 72
Mostly sunny
Wind: SSW 11

12 pages \$1.00



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