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TALK OF THE TOWN

May, 2019
A publication of the City of Gering



436-5096 www.gering.org



Area Leaders Proclaimed May 2, 2019 as a Day of Prayer



Shown left to right: Mayor Perales - Terrytown, Mayor Curtis - Mitchell, Mayor Kaufman - Gering, Chairman Meyer - Scotts Bluff County and Mayor Gonzales - Scottsbluff. Photo courtesy of Jerry Purvis, Star-Herald



PLEASE NOTE

The City of Gering Sanitation Department requests that all residents strictly adhere to the City's requirement that NO yard waste (grass clippings, etc.) be placed in regular garbage dumpsters during the spring/summer/fall seasons. **If yard waste is found in regular dumpsters, the City of Gering will *NOT* pick up the contents of the dumpster until the yard waste has been removed.** Likewise, please **do not** place garbage in yard waste containers.

Thank you for your cooperation!

PLEASE do not put plastic bags and glass in the recyclable containers at 9th & L Street and at Northfield Church. THANK YOU!



National Hot Air Balloon Championship 2019

Old West Balloon Fest has been a community favorite for the past four years. Even before it was resurrected four years ago, it was a popular festival in the 1980's and 90's. Many valley residents remember getting up in the early mornings, going to the Albertson's parking lot, and watching 20 hot air balloons lift off. Fast forward to 2019 and the festival will look like it is on steroids with 80 balloons attending the US National Competition and Old West Balloon Fest. If you are wondering how this happened, Old West Balloon Fest submitted a bid to win the event against four other cities nationwide. Old West Balloon Fest organizers fought a hard fight to get the bid, many community members put together a fantastic welcome for the organizers of US National Hot Air Ballooning Championships on December 1, 2017. They were impressed with the hospitality of our community, the gorgeous flying



area, and the perfect weather conditions in August for a competition. We won the bid to host US Nationals for three years 2019-2021.

What is the big deal with hosting a national competition? Pilots, their crew members, and 30 Nationals staff will be traveling from all over the United States to attend and run the competition. Not to mention the thousands of visitors who will come to watch the event. It will showcase our community for everyone attending; those visitors will want to return to visit the many attractions in the area. Repeat tourism is great for everyone in the valley. It is estimated that \$1.2 million dollars will flow into the community as a direct result of hosting US National Hot Air Ballooning Championships. What a great boost for our local and surrounding economies.

It is always so exciting to see beautiful hot air balloons floating calmly over our heads. Well, get ready for the Nascar of

Hot Air Ballooning. You will see 50 balloons dodging each other, bumping each other in the sky, and ascending and descending at 1,500 feet per minute (that's about 20 miles per hour). All this just to navigate to a 100-foot X on the ground. Once over the X, the pilots will throw a two-ounce baggie on the X. Closest to the center, wins that target. They will be flying to three to five targets per day for six days, August 12-17. Then on August 16th and 17th, 30 Old West Balloon Fest pilots will join the US Nationals pilots for a total of 80 balloons in the air. Nationals organizers have agreed to put one of the targets on Mitchell Airfield for August 16th and 17th.

You will be able to watch the Old West Balloon Fest pilots lift off and then witness the spectacle of 50 competition balloons race in to score on the target. Saturday, August 17th is the last day of Nationals Competition, the scores will be tight, and typically only a few points will determine the difference between first and last place. It is very intense and can be felt by all who are participating from the pilots to spectators. Come cheer on your favorite pilot to win.

If you are not an early morning person,

you can attend one of the two-night glows celebrating everything ballooning. On Thursday, August 15th, Western Nebraska Community College will host a welcome back students night glow. The glow will be open to the public and showcase over 20 balloons including our new special shaped balloons. The second night glow will be hosted by the City of Gering and KNEB at Five Rocks Amphitheater on August 17th. This event will be open to the public as well. Be prepared for 80 hot air balloons to fire up the night sky. You cannot imagine the beauty of 80 balloons glowing with all their different shapes and colors, it brings out the child in us all.

There are many other events happening that week! Look for a full schedule of events on our website; www.theoldwestballoonfest.com.

- Colleen Johnson, Executive Director, Old West Balloon Fest



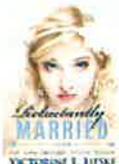


Adult Summer Reading Programming

Thursday, June 6 at 7:00 p.m. at Five Rocks

The Adult Summer Reading Program is starting off with another free concert at Five Rocks! Bob and Sheila Everhart will perform a free concert, "How Country Music Won the West" at Five Rocks Amphitheater on June 6 at 7:00 p.m. The Everharts have been performing old-time and traditional music in the "Oh Brother Where Art Thou" style with the Smithsonian Institution for decades. Bob plays the 12-string guitar, French harp, lead vocals and tells the stories behind the songs. Sheila accompanies him on the upright acoustic doghouse bass. The

Everharts built this program around the historical aspects of America's early music on the frontier; the music of the settlers and homesteaders of the great plains.



Thursday, June 13 at 5:30 p.m. at the City Council Chambers

Did you know that a New York Times Bestselling author lives in Scottsbluff? Victorine Lieske is the author of "Reluctantly Married" in which a reality show scheme has coworkers dating while being streamed online. If the couple doesn't follow along, they will lose their jobs. Sparks fly as the two try to outdo each other with outlandish date ideas. This humorous romance joins Lieske's other romance novels of the "sweet romance-suitable for all ages" variety. Writers and readers alike will enjoy Lieske's talk about her publishing journey, from self-published author to New York Times Bestseller on June 13 at 5:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers.

Thursday, June 20 at 5:30 p.m. at the City Council Chambers

Do you want a multi-cooker, or do you have one you aren't using enough? UNL Extension Educator, Tammie Ostdiek, will show us some great ways to use this handy appliance. A multi-cooker can be used as a slow cooker, a pressure cooker, a rice maker, to steam, sauté and to keep food warm. If you have one, bring it along and we will make something fun before Tammie will show us tips and tricks on using a multi cooker and safety features as well. Join us on June 20 at 5:30 in the City Council Chambers for this fun event.



Thursday, June 27 at 1:30 p.m. in the Library Community Room

This year's One Book One Nebraska is "This Blessed Earth" by Ted Genoways. If you would like to join the statewide discussion, please contact the Gering Library as soon as possible to reserve a book. "For forty years, Rick Hammond has raised cattle and crops on his wife's fifth-generation farm. But as he prepares to hand off the operation to his daughter Meghan and her husband Kyle, their entire way of life is under siege. Confronted by rising corporate ownership, encroaching pipelines, ground-water depletion, climate change and shifting trade policies, small farmers are often caught in the middle and fighting just to preserve their way of life. Following the Hammonds from harvest to harvest, *This Blessed Earth* is both a history of American agriculture and a portrait of one family's struggle to hold on to their legacy. Taken from tedgenoways.com. Food for Thought book discussion group meets June 27 at 1:30 p.m. in the library community room.

Adult Summer Programming Schedule

- June 6 at 7:00 p.m. Free Concert "How Country Music Won the West" at Five Rocks- Bob and Sheila Everhart
- June 13 at 5:30 p.m. Local Author Victorine Lieske "My Publishing Journey: from self-published author to NYT's Best Seller" at the City Council Chambers
- June 20 at 5:30 p.m. "Multi-Cooker 101: How do I use this thing?" by UNL Educator Tammie Ostdiek 5:30 p.m. at the City Council Chambers
- June 27 at 1:30 p.m. Book Group discussion of the 2019 One Book One Nebraska selection, "This Blessed Earth" by Ted Genoways

Easy way to renew your books!

Do you wake up in the middle of the night thinking, "Oh, no! My library book is due tomorrow and I forgot to renew it!" We have great news for you!



Introducing our newest staff member...Gabbie! Gabbie is our new two-way texting application. With Gabbie you can:

- Text to find out how many items you have out and when they are due
- Renew your books via text
- Communicate with a librarian (during library hours)



To set up Gabbie:

1. Make sure we have your correct cell phone number
2. Add 308-888-8596 to your contacts (so you know it's Gabbie)
3. Send Gabbie a text!

For more information please call the library at 436-7433 or check out the library website at gering.org/library.

Responsible Pet Ownership begins with YOU! and, it's the law...

Please remember to keep your pet's vaccinations current, protect pets from harsh weather conditions, make sure they have plenty of clean drinking water, obtain a license annually and don't allow pets to run at large.



Please keep in mind that your pet can succumb to heat exhaustion and heat stroke. It's important to provide a cool, shady place for your pet to get out of the summer heat. Do not leave pets in enclosed vehicles; even with the windows cracked the heat in a vehicle far exceeds what your pet can handle. Make sure they have plenty of fresh drinking water at all times. Keep pets away from hazards such as chemicals and fireworks!

Gering Public cont.. Celebrate a Universe of Stories with the Gering Public Library



On May 29th, the Gering Library invites you to launch into **summer reading at the Universe of Stories Summer Reading Blast Off!**

Sign-ups for cosmic readers of all ages will be held from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. with fun activities and a sign up prize for kids and teens. Also, take a picture and give a high five to our special visitor, Hiram, the Western Nebraska Pioneers baseball team mascot.



This summer expect to see some changes in the annual summer program. The biggest change is that the program is only being held for the month of June. "We have noticed in the past several years that attendance and participation is huge in June and significantly dwindles as the summer progresses", said Youth Services Librarian, Christie Clarke. "We realize that families are very busy during the summer with vacations, sports, and reunions and we want to acknowledge and respect that."



"In order to administer the best experience for our patrons, we decided to provide a concentrated, jam-packed, exhilarating month of summer reading." She exclaims, "We have a myriad of out of this world events planned for all of our star readers and all systems are go!"

The summer reading program is for the entire family. There will be fun activities for all ages. The early childhood programs for our youngest patrons will be held every Wednesday morning at 10:00 during the month of June for out of this world storytimes, playtime, and hands-on activities. And here is a glimpse of just some of the other kid, teen, and family activities planned for June:

Kids



- NET Kids "Ready, Jet, Go!" movie, give-aways, meet-n-greet w/Jet Propulsion
- Edgerton Explorit Center- Spaceflight Explorers
- Theater West: "To the Moon with Love"
- Adam White magician
- Dino O'Dell "Zar and the Broken Spaceship"

Teens

- Moon Art with Gering art teacher Ryan Bosche
- Roving Around: create a moon rover with Gering vocational teacher Justin Reinmuth
- Cosmic Crafts: make a marbled moon necklace, planet pillow, and cosmic bath bomb
- Mystery Mission Escape Room



Family

Over the Moon Overnight Campout at Legacy of the Plains with Gering Boy Scout Troop 17 and Agate Fossil Beds Park Rangers.

Join us on May 29th for sign-up day or any day thereafter during June to get a calendar of events and to register for the campout. It's going to be a cosmic summer at the Gering Library; don't miss out on all the out of this world fun! For more information call 436-7433, email gpl@geringlibrary.org, visit www.gering.org/library or the Gering Public Library page on Facebook.



Don't let a good thing go to waste.

What is Stormwater?

Stormwater runoff is water from rain, melting snow or irrigation water that "runs off" or across impervious surfaces instead of seeping into the ground. This untreated runoff flows in ditches, curbs, gutters, storm inlets and is then carried to the nearest waterway such as a pond, lake, creek or river. Stormwater pipelines are separate from wastewater pipelines, stormwater is not treated and does not flow through wastewater treatment plants.

What Can I do to Prevent Stormwater pollution?

If you own a car, maintain it, so it does not leak oil or other fluids and if you wash your car at home, be sure to wash it on the grass or at a car wash, so the dirt and soap do not flow down the driveway and into the nearest storm drain.

Do not over fertilize your grass and never apply fertilizers or pesticides before a heavy rain. If fertilizer falls onto the driveway or sidewalks, sweep it up and throw it away or place back onto the grass. Make sure mulch, leaves, and grass clippings are not blown into or left in the street. Be sure to pick up all yard waste and place into a yard waste container or use it as compost to prevent yard

waste from entering into the nearest storm drain.

Other things you can do to prevent runoff on your property is to turn your gutter downspouts away from hard surfaces – instead point them into flower beds, grassy areas, or consider building a rain garden to contain the water. To avoid erosion, seed or place sod down on bare spots in your yard.

Pet owners should pick up after their pets and dispose of pet waste in the garbage. Pet waste can be a major source of bacteria and excess nutrients in local waters. When it rains, any pet waste on lawns, parks or streets washes into the storm drain system and ends up in local waterways, resulting in high E.coli bacteria levels and making waterways unusable for swimming, boating or other activities.

Keep lawn and household chemicals tightly sealed and covered in a place where they will not get rained on. Never put anything down a storm inlet! Including paint and motor oil.

And of course, please do not litter!



It's described as a "family reunion on wheels".

Tour De Nebraska, a full sagged, five-day bicycle tour will be pedaling through beautiful, scenic Western Nebraska and Gering and Scottsbluff in June. Founded in 1988, Tour De Nebraska offers a fun way for cyclists to experience the beauty and friendliness of rural Nebraska. People of all ages from nearly every part of the world have ridden Tour De Nebraska and call it the most memorable adventure of their lives! Tour De Nebraska 2019 will be a Wednesday-Sunday cycling tour; June 19-23, 2019 visiting the communities of Sidney, Kimball, Gering, Scottsbluff and Bridgeport.

Tour De Nebraska is a circle tour, which means riders enjoy the convenience of starting and ending in the same place. The TDN is limited to 500 riders, which allows for

meaningful interaction between riders and the quaint communities they visit.

Day Two of Tour De Nebraska will bring riders from Kimball to Gering (44 miles); cycling along Highway 71 for a breathtaking view as they climb over the Wildcat Hills into the North Platte Valley. They will overnight at Gering Jr. High School on Thursday, June 20th and be treated to an evening of "Burgers, Brats and Bands" at Five Rocks Amphitheater. Day Three of the Tour; Friday, June 21st, riders will take a scenic 30-mile route around Scotts Bluff National Monument or some may choose a longer 77-100-mile route up through Torrington. Tour De Nebraska will end Friday in Scottsbluff overnighing at Scottsbluff High School. Friday evening's events planned for the TDN riders will be a dine-around in downtown Scottsbluff; listening to live music while hanging out with Flyover Brewing Company, food trucks and music on the Downtown Scottsbluff Plaza.

Tour De Nebraska riders will enjoy quiet roads, dramatic

vistas and the historic-welcoming communities of Gering and Scottsbluff. During down-time off their bicycles; activities are planned for participants to visit local attractions including Scotts Bluff National Monument, Wildcat Hills Nature Center, Legacy of the Plains Museum, Brown Sheep Company, Chimney Rock National Historic Site, Courthouse and Jail Rocks.

Tour De Nebraska will bring people to Gering and Scottsbluff who enjoy cycling, meeting people, and exploring small town America at their own pace which makes this ride one of the most popular and enjoyable bike tours in the Midwest.

- Karla Nledan-Streeks, Tourism Director





Please complete the survey below and return it to the Gering Public Library.
Your assistance is GREATLY appreciated!

WHAT'S NEXT AT THE GERING PUBLIC LIBRARY? 2019 Community Survey

This brief survey is designed to gather some facts about you and identify what material/services we should continue to offer and what additional services you would like to see us provide in the future.

1. How old are you?

- 11 and under 12-17 18-25 26-35 36-45 46-55 56-65 65 and over

2. What is your zip code? _____

3. If not a resident of Gering, why do you use the Gering Public Library?

- Collections Convenient hours Convenient location Other (Please specify) _____

4. How often do you visit the library?

- Daily Weekly Monthly Rarely Never

5. If you visit the library often, what keeps you coming back? _____

6. If you don't visit the library, what would draw you there? _____

7. Please check or circle all the CURRENT library services that you believe are valuable to our community:

- | | | | |
|--|--|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Access to computers, printer, and scanner | Summer Reading Program/Children's collection | Internet and Wi-fi access | Early childhood story time |
| Large print collection | Book Discussion Groups | Fiction collection | Non-fiction collection |
| Community meeting room | Microfilm Reader | Homebound delivery service | Fax service |
| Tax forms | Author visits | Audio collection (books on CDs) | Electronic databases |
| (NebraskaAccess) | Britannica & TumbleBooks | Magazines & newspapers | Visual collection (DVDs) |
| Downloadable audio and e-books | Reference information | LEAP (school readiness program) | LEGO Club |
| SMILE (2nd graders getting a library card) | ILL (getting books from other libraries) | Public Notary | Copier |

8. Please check or circle the POTENTIAL features and services that would enhance our library to become a destination for generations:

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <u>Basic Building Blocks</u> | <u>Adventure for All Ages</u> | <u>Design to Support the Physical, Mental & Social Wellness Needs of Our Community</u> |
| Collection display and storage that is easily reached | After-school/adult learning activities (Lego, art, quilting, study sessions) | Universal Design (accessibility for all) |
| Flexible community rooms | Designated teen area/activities | Sit/stand work areas |
| Drive through window for returning books | Creative space (3D printer, maker space, equipment, art) | Safe, secure storm shelter space |
| Kitchen facilities | In/Outdoor multipurpose spaces | Sustainable landscape |
| Accessible family restrooms | Performance area (recitals, readings, programs, presentations) | Innovative use of indoor/outdoor design encouraging wellness |
| Technology access stations | Space for future innovations | Parking access |
| Quiet study areas | Interactive displays (kiosks, hands-on exhibits on loan from regional attractions, play centers) | Alternative transportation (bike racks, bus stop) |
| Landscaping | | Natural lighting & motion activated LED lighting |
| | | Ethical earth practices (materials used, recycling) |

9. How do you learn about library activities?

- Signs or flyers in the library Television Radio Website
 Facebook Newspaper Word of mouth Other (specify) _____

10. Please feel free to provide any additional comments that you feel would help us improve our services.

Please return the completed survey to the Gering Public Library, 1055 P Street, Gering NE 69341.
You can also go to the City's website, www.gering.org, and fill it out electronically. Thank you!



On May 2, 2019 the Mayors of Gering, Terrytown, Scottsbluff and Mitchell as well as the Chairman of the Scotts Bluff County Board of Commissioners, joined together to sign a proclamation proclaiming May 2, 2019 as a day of prayer. This event took place in conjunction with National Day of Prayer activities that occurred all over the United States.

On April 17, 1952, President Harry Truman signed a bill proclaiming the National Day of Prayer into law. President Reagan amended the law in 1988, designating the first Thursday of May each year as the National Day of Prayer. The National Prayer Committee was formed in the United States in 1972. From that was created the National Day of Prayer Task Force, with the intended purpose of coordinating

events for the National Day of Prayer. People are encouraged to pray for their local and state governments, the military and first responders, local, state and national leaders and the nation as a whole.

Through the efforts of the National Day of Prayer Task Force, more than 35,000 prayer gatherings are conducted by 40,000 volunteers across the United States and millions of people participate in this call to prayer.



Shown left to right: Mayor Perales - Terrytown, Mayor Curtis - Mitchell, Mayor Kaufman - Gering, Chairman Meyer - Scotts Bluff County and Mayor Gonzales - Scottsbluff. Photo courtesy of Jerry Purvis, Star-Herald



2019 Junior Fire Patrol graduates

Gering Fire Department conducts fire safety education for 5th grade students

Gering Fire Department graduated 28 - 5th grade students from their annual Junior Fire Patrol program on April 12th. During this six week course, students from the area learn about fire safety, prevention, first aid and extinguishers.



On graduation night the fire department recognized the students' achievements by handing out certifications, awards and naming outstanding students. Afterwards everyone enjoyed cupcakes and rides on the fire trucks.

This year, our officers are (from left to right) Bridger Wallace - Lieutenant, Frost Wallace - Lieutenant, Trinity Hedman - Captain, Dawson Stricker - Fire Chief, Avah Hessler - Captain, Jaedyn Morales - Assistant Chief

Ordinance Reminder from Gering Code Enforcement

City Ordinance 53.45 ALLEYS; Use of Alleys are public thoroughfares and are to be kept clear of obstructions at all times. Containers must be placed in such a way that they will not obstruct the use of the alley as a public thoroughfare at any time, and provided that not permanent bases or foundations for such containers be permitted in the city alleys or street. If other collection facilities are to be used, they must be placed within the boundary of the private property, and immediately adjacent to the alley used by the Sanitation Contractor for pick-up service. It shall be the duty of the property owner adjacent to the alley to keep the alley clear of weeds, and to prevent obstruction of the alley by overhanging shrubs and trees.



Photos courtesy of Tracy O'Neal (drone view), Kathy Welfl (top right)



While summer approaches and more people are getting out with their dogs, this also means that construction work increases. As the number of dogs visiting Monument Dog Park is growing every day, we want to keep users updated on our building projects for this year. We are in the process of starting the cement pathways through the larger free-play area. This section of the park might be temporarily closed to allow for safer operations while the construction crews work. We are estimating that construction will take approximately three weeks, we will try to keep the section open as often as we safely can during the construction.



With hot summer months coming please remember to give your animals plenty of fresh, cool water to keep them hydrated. - Common Grounds Dog Park Committee



Watch for Water Leaks - The City of Gering has over 70 miles of water mains buried under streets and alleys and in utility easements. Water leaks can and will happen anytime of the year. Over the last couple of years, the City has experienced water leaks where the street, sidewalk and yard has settled causing tens of thousands of dollars in damages and repairs. The City is asking customers to help prevent these expensive repairs. If you see any settlement in your lawn, driveway or a street, call the Utility Office to report a possible leak. The City does not charge to check for leaks, even after hours. (308) 436-6800.

What to look for to determine if there is a water leak

Outside the home;

- Check for garden hoses left running
- If an area of your grass is greener and growing substantially faster than the rest of the lawn, there could be a leak
- Look for grass that is soft and spongy in one area of the lawn
- Water bubbling up from underground in the lawn, sidewalk or street
- Sudden settlement of curb, sidewalk, driveway, street or lawn
- Slow settlement of curb, sidewalk, driveway, street or lawn
- A sound inside the home of water always running but the water meter is not turning

Water leaks may begin leaking days, weeks or months before the leak will surface. Water leaks should be immediately repaired to prevent damage to structures, lawns and pavement. Water can travel along the pipe and under the home and cause costly repairs to the home that your insurance company may not cover. Water leaks can be very expensive to repair. The City recommends you check with your insurance company to verify if you have or can get coverage for the cost of damages and repairs from water leaks.

Inside the home;

Look for your water meter, once you've located your water meter check the low flow indicator to see if it is moving, (low flow indicators are a red triangle, black triangle, red needle or on digital meters it is a small circle with + flashing inside the circle to indicate flow). If the triangle or needle are moving or the + is flashing in the circle you have water flowing through the meter. Make sure all faucets and appliances that use water are turned off. Again check the low flow indicator on the water meter, if the indicator is moving then water is still running through the water meter and you may have a leak.

Common water losses in the home;

- Leaking toilet (most common)
- Underground sprinkler system valves or pipe leaking
- Leak under a concrete floor
- Garden hose left running (set the oven timer to remind you to move the sprinkler or shut off the garden hose)
- Leaking faucets

If you know or suspect you have a water leak please call the City of Gering Utility Office at 436-6800.



City of Gering Environmental Services



(308) 436-7568



BLUE CONTAINERS

The Single Stream Recycling Program continues...
 - The City has residential carts available
 - North of "Q" Street is picked up on one week and South of Q Street is picked up on the other week.

Commercial size containers are also available!

Drop boxes at Northfield Church and at the corner of 9th & L are available for Recyclables!
 NO GLASS OF ANY KIND
 NO PLASTIC BAGS OF ANY KIND
 DO NOT PLACE RECYCLABLES IN PLASTIC BAGS

GREEN CONTAINERS - Yard Waste

- Residential alley containers are for grass and leaves only
- If you have larger yard waste debris take it directly to the landfill
- Yard waste is collected through the first of November

REMINDER - Free dump pass!

Gering residents have a free monthly dump pass for excess trash they need brought to the landfill. We would also like residents to consider recycling. Recycling keeps trash out of the landfill and numerous products get recycled and reused.

BROWN CONTAINERS - Residential Waste
 Residential alley containers are for residential waste only, NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION DEBRIS.
 If you have construction debris take it directly to the landfill.



PLEASE do not put plastic bags and glass in the recyclable containers at 9th & L Street and at Northfield Church. THANK YOU!

PLEASE RECYCLE!

The Environmental Services Department would like more people to participate with recycling in the City of Gering. We have gained landfill space because of the people who are currently recycling in Gering and we applaud their effort and participation! If interested please call 436-7568 for information on recycling carts.

LANDFILL

located at 200531 West 'U' Street, (308) 436-7568
Hours of Operation:
 Monday through Friday,
 6:30 am to 2:30 pm.
 No hazardous or liquid wastes accepted.

Parks & Recreation Department



It's almost time to break out your swimming suits and sunscreen!

The Gering Pool is aiming to open on Saturday May 25th. The date may be pushed back due to weather. The pool will be open seven days a week from 1:00 PM to 8:00 PM with family swim from 5:00 PM to 6:00 PM. Adults may join us for lap swim from noon to 1:00. This summer the Gering Pool lifeguards will be offering group swimming lessons; the classes will run on weekdays, one starting at 9:00 AM and another starting at 10:00 AM. The first session will be held June 17-28 and the second session will be held July 15-26. We offer a wide variety of lessons ranging from teaching young swimmers safety and confidence in the pool to helping mature swimmers refine their stroke technique. Spots are limited, please email kmartindale@gering.org to sign up for lessons or call the Gering Pool after May 25th at 308-436-1876. The staff at the Gering Pool are excited to kick off the summer and keep the pool a safe, fun environment for all.

Season Passes

- Family - Gering Pool only (including use of Water Slide) - \$120.00
- Single - Gering Pool only (including use of Water Slide) - \$65.00

Daily Admission

- Adult (16 & up) - \$4.00
- Youth (5 to 15) - \$3.50
- Children (4 & under with Adult) - FREE

Swimming Lessons

- COST: \$20 with season pass \$30 without pass



Shown Right: Tim Maxcy, Parks Board Member, with 4th Grade students from Northfield Elementary.
Shown Left: Don Gentry, Parks Board Member.

Celebrating



The Gering Park, Tree and Cemetery Board hosted the 2019 City of Gering Arbor Day Celebration on Thursday, April 25th in the Northfield Park & Charlie Fenster Arboretum. Northfield Elementary 4th graders were special guests at the celebration and observed the reading of the Arbor Day Proclamation by City Council Member, Michael Gillen. They also heard about the history of Arbor Day, learned how to plant trees by Nebraska Forest Service Community Forester, Chrissy Land, and then assisted in planting 10 Bur Oaks, 10 Ponderosa Pines and 10 Rocky Mountain Juniper seedlings on the north-facing slope of the park in the natural area. To wrap up the day the students participated in a tree-related scavenger hunt while enjoying popsicles provided by the Gering Parks Board members.



PAWS-4-PAWS

PAWS-4-PAWS is a fundraising event for Skipper's Cupboard with a secondary purpose of promoting community art and area artists. Nearly forty painted "icon" dogs have been touring the area since being unveiled to the public in April.

The painted pack of dogs will appear in Gering at the Oregon Trail Days Kiddie Parade on July 12th as well as the larger parade on Saturday, July 13th. Plans also call for the Paws 4 Paws painted dogs to appear on June 29th at Gardner Park as the summer reading program, conducted by the Gering Public Library, comes to an end for the season.

According to the FBI data compiled by SafeHome.org, an online supplier of home security systems, **Nebraska's safest city is Gering**, population 8,335. Gering's safety rating is 91.11.



Other top 10 cities in Nebraska include: Seward, Columbus, Alliance, La Vista, Nebraska City, Blair, Norfolk and Papillion



Nebraska's Safe Drinking Water Act

requires water systems to implement an on-going cross connection control program. An important part of this program is public education. It is believed that a well-informed public will be more aware of the possibility of cross connections within their property and will take reasonable and sensible precautions to avoid creating cross connections. This article is intended to explain what a cross connection is, what causes it, what some of the consequences can be and how they can be prevented.



What is a cross connection? A cross connection occurs whenever there is an actual or potential physical connection between the public drinking water system and any possible source of contamination. Contamination can cause illness or death. Low or non-hazardous materials which are mainly just a nuisance can cause the water to look, taste or smell unpleasant. Although the high hazards are the primary

concern in a cross connection control program, your water utility strives to provide both safe and good quality water to its customers. Whenever there is a loss of pressure in the public water supply, these cross connections can allow unsafe substances to enter the public water supply.

What causes cross connections? Cross connections can be caused by both permanent and temporary "piping". An example of a cross connection being permanently piped in is the drain on a water softener. Many times these discharge lines are connected directly to the sewer line without any type of protection. Hot tub and whirlpool fill pipes and swimming pool and boiler make-up lines are other examples of permanently piped cross connections.

The most common example of a temporary piped cross connection is the common garden hose. It is estimated that 90% of all cross connections are caused by the inappropriate use of garden hoses. Garden hoses are frequently used to apply fertilizer and pesticides to lawns and gardens. They are also used to fill swimming pools, wash cars, and in rural areas they are often used to fill stock tanks for watering livestock. Other temporary piping cross connections occur when hoses are used to fill waterbeds or are connected to utility sinks to fill wash tubs or mop buckets.

What are the consequences of cross connection?

The consequences of cross connections can range from something as simple as "dirty water" to something as severe as serious illness or even death. There are many recorded instances of non-hazardous contamination of public water supplies caused by cross connections. Instances were also recorded where people have been made seriously ill or even died due to cross connections. There have been cases where dysentery, diarrhea, hepatitis and other diseases have been contracted as a direct result of cross connection.

How can cross connections be prevented?

The best way to prevent cross connections is for each customer to examine the plumbing on their premises and look for any permanent or temporary piped cross connections. Any time there is the possibility of a cross connection between the water supply and any hazardous or unknown sub-

stance, there should be an air gap between the faucet and the questionable use. In cases where this is not possible, as with a garden hose, a proper backflow prevention device or assembly should be installed on the supply faucet. This will protect both the public water supply and the inhabitants of the building from contamination. In situations where extremely high hazards exist in a building or location, it is sometimes necessary to contain that entire system from the public water supply with a backflow preventer to protect the public water supply from the substances being used on that site.

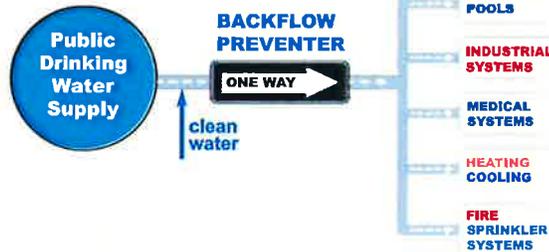
What you can do to prevent cross connections and keep your drinking water safe.

1. Check your faucets to be sure that all faucet end-points are above the flood level of the sink, tub, basin, or other apparatus they supply.
2. Protect faucet extensions by installing proper backflow prevention devices (i.e. hose bib vacuum breakers) on all faucets capable of having a hose or other extension attached.
3. Check drain lines (refrigerator drink dispensers, water softeners, heat exchangers, etc.) to be sure there is an adequate air gap between the drain line and the floor drain or sewer line into which they discharge.
4. Never use unprotected faucets to fill non-drinking water containers (i.e. water beds, wading pools, stock tanks, hot tubs, etc.)

AIR GAP

Air gaps are the most common means of protecting against backflow, and they are also the best protection. An air gap is simply a physical break between the source of the water and the container into which it is running. Air gaps are built in to most sinks found in residences. Kitchen and bathroom sinks, as well as bathtubs, showers, washing machines and dish washers are designed with an air gap to protect the water supply. Placing a hose on the end of these faucets will render the air gap useless and could allow the contents of the sink to be drawn back into the water supply. Water bed filler kits and old fashioned spray hoses that fit over the faucet are common ways of bypassing an air gap. These should be avoided at all costs.

Backflow preventers keep contaminants from flowing back into the drinking water supply.



Following these guidelines and using common sense will help to eliminate the possibility of you contaminating your drinking water.

