

# OUR TOWNS

Cedar County

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## Steffen Extends Her Extension Career

New Extension Educator Takes Reins In Cedar Co.

BY TRAVIS GULBRANDSON  
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HARTINGTON, Neb. — When Jackie Steffen got a temporary position at the Cedar County Extension office at Hartington, Neb., last summer, she had no idea she would return to make it a full-time job.

But that's exactly what she's done. Starting Monday, June 7, Steffen has worked at the office as an Extension educator.

"Each day I'm learning more than I knew the day before," she said. "It's going really well, I'm meeting some great people, and I'm kind of diving right in. We've already had a project day here (Thursday), where we had a number of children doing different projects for the county fair. We've had our library registration and (this) week we have a baby-sitting clinic, and we start our first summer program on aquatics."

"We're really busy," she said. Steffen is a 2003 Mount Marty graduate and received her master's degree in education from the University of South Dakota in 2006.

She spent the past seven years teaching second grade at Sacred Heart School in Yankton,

and currently lives in Hartington with her husband Brad and 2-year-old daughter Breah.

"This is going to be a really great opportunity for my family," Steffen said. "It's going to be nice to work in the community that I live in, so that was one of the main things that drew me to this

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JACKIE STEFFEN

position. ...

"I actually grew up in ... Randolph. So it's kind of fun to be the Extension educator in my home county," she said.

Steffen said she's excited to get a start on her new responsibilities.

"My primary focus is 4-H and youth development, so right now it's going to be the summer programs and the camps, and preparing for the Cedar County Fair in July," she said. "I'm looking forward to working with different organizations in the community, just getting to know people."

Additionally, Steffen will be working with a number of school

enrichment programs that take place during the school year, and she said she's ready to assist in their continued development.

"This is part of why she wanted to come back to the Extension office to work full time."

"I was impressed with all the summer programs that I was able to see and help with last year, and it excites me to be able to try and encourage more students to take advantage of them," she said.

One program she particularly enjoyed — and is helping to run this summer — is the Summer Reading Program, in which the Extension office is partnered with the Hartington Community Library to encourage children from preschool through sixth grade to read.

"They have a different theme each year, and then the younger kids participate in the program at the library and the fourth-through six-graders would participate with us," Steffen said. "This year's theme is water, so we're doing different water lessons with them."

Registration for the program took place last Wednesday. To become a full-time



Jackie Steffen is the newest full-time educator at the Cedar County Extension office, located in Hartington, Neb. Steffen — a native of Randolph, Neb. — worked part-time at the office last summer and began her current position last week.

Extension educator, a master's degree is required, as well as experience in working with children, Steffen said.

Additional training sessions take place, as well.

"As far as training goes, there are three training days that the University of Nebraska offers, and they have two in the spring and one in the fall," Steffen said. "So I missed the spring training,

but I'll attend the training in the fall, and then go back in the spring."

Each educator is supplied with a thick binder of information that outlines their "roles and responsibilities, program planning, professional development, the nuts and bolts, the

marketing of Extension. I'm being kind of thrown in there, and I'll learn by doing," she said.

At one week in, Steffen has a lot of work ahead of her, but she said she's looking forward to it.

"I'm still learning," she said.

## Nebraska DHHS Offers Information On Flood Related Health Issues

Because of flooding and severe storms all over the state, the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services has updated its website to include information that pertains to health issues involved in these types of disasters, as well as links to information from other state and federal agencies.

The website includes DHHS releases and Governor's Office

releases, available resources and information on safety issues facing those involved in the affected areas. It will be updated frequently with new information. The site is at [www.dhhs.ne.gov](http://www.dhhs.ne.gov).

To stay updated on the latest information, check out DHHS on Twitter (<http://twitter.com/NebraskaDHHS>) and Facebook (<http://bit.ly/btFtGH>).

## Free Workshop On International Trade Planned At Northeast

NORFOLK, Neb. — The Business, Industry and Economic Development department at Northeast Community College in Norfolk is the site of a free, one-day workshop for anyone interested in international trade.

The workshop, The "Traveling" International Office, is set for 9-11 a.m. Tuesday, June 22, in the Lifelong Learning Center on the Northeast campus in Norfolk. There is no charge.

Susan Rouch, Office of International Trade and Investment, Nebraska Department of Economic Development in Lincoln, and Meredith Bond, U.S. Commercial Service, U.S. Department of Commerce in Omaha, will host a two-hour export round table. According to Joe Ferguson, director of Business, Industry and Economic Development at Northeast, they will bring their resources, experience, and expertise to the Norfolk program.

They will also remain at the Lifelong Learning Center in the afternoon from 1-4:30 for open office hours to meet individually with business and industry leaders.

Following an introduction of speakers and guests at 9 a.m., the presenters will discuss benefits and challenges of exporting at 9:15 a.m. and resources available from the Nebraska Department of Economic Development at 9:45 a.m. A session on Readiness to Export, Export Planning is set for 10 a.m.

and a discussion on resources available from the U.S. Department of Commerce is set for 10:30 a.m.

A question-and-answer session is scheduled for 11 a.m. and will close the morning session. Open office hours for individual meetings are set for 1-4:30 p.m. Ferguson said there are no fees and no appointments are necessary. "This is a good opportunity to explore export possibilities," he said. "I encourage anyone interested in international trade to attend."

For more information, contact Rouch at (402) 471-4668 or [susan.rouch@nebraska.gov](mailto:susan.rouch@nebraska.gov) or Tracy Melcher at Northeast at (402) 844-7235 or [tracy@northeast.edu](mailto:tracy@northeast.edu).

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MONDAY-FRIDAY  
Wednesday, June 16  
7:40 Jeremy Dangel  
Thursday, June 17  
7:40 CVB;  
8:15 The Chamber of Commerce  
Friday, June 18  
7:40 Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan; 8:15 Pam Kettering

## St. Helena July 4 Festival Set

ST. HELENA, Neb. — St. Helena will host its annual Fourth of July Celebration this year.

The celebration includes co-ed softball and volleyball tournaments, beginning at 8 a.m. The lunch stand opens at 8 a.m. serving rolls and coffee and a large assortment of cool beverages, food and snacks throughout the day.

Broasted chicken and ham supper (including a salad bar, hot vegetables, and your favorite selection of desserts), will be served from 4-8 p.m. in the air-

conditioned parish hall, and as always games, bingo, raffle and a fireworks display will complete the day.

For more information, contact Jessica Merkel at (402) 357-2597 or [jwmerkel14@yahoo.com](mailto:jwmerkel14@yahoo.com).

## Boutique Slated For Hartington Center

HARTINGTON, Neb. — The Hartington Senior Citizen Center will host a "New and Almost New Boutique" on Saturday, June 26. The event runs from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Senior Center, located at 112 West Main Street.

Women's formal wear, prom dresses, business attire, casual clothes, sweaters and coats will be available. Sizes will range from 6 to 3x, along with accessories (jewelry, scarves, purses, and surprises galore).

Snacks will be available, and lunch served from noon-1:30 p.m.

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