HELPING 4-H’ERS PROGRAM
Nebraska Extension and 4-H in Southwest Nebraska is reaching out to our communities to participate in the 4-H’ers Helping 4-H’ers program. The bomb cyclone that created devastating flood and blizzard conditions across much of Nebraska is a month behind us however, the reality of it continues for many families as they work to rebuild what they lost. These events has impacted the lives of many 4-H’ers and we are asking residents and businesses from Arthur, Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Lincoln, Keith, Perkins and Red Willow counties to help us reach the goal of helping 100 4-H’ers with disaster relief. When a 4-H member is in need, we want them to know that Southwest Nebraska cares.

LAWMAKERS UNVEIL A NEW PLAN
Nebraska lawmakers have unveiled a new plan to reduce property taxes by boosting state aid for K-12 schools, raising the state sales tax and eliminating tax exemptions. Members of the Revenue Committee announced the proposal Wednesday but say it’s still subject to change. The measure would increase state equalization aid to schools from roughly $1 billion to $1.5 billion a year in an effort to reduce the taxes schools generate through local property taxes. School property taxes would decline by an average of 20 percent. It also would raise the state sales tax rate from the current 5.5 percent to 6.25 percent and eliminate sales tax exemptions for junk food, bottled water, storage, plumbing and HVAC repairs. Gov. Pete Ricketts opposes any plan that lowers one tax by raising another.

CALL BEFORE YOU DIG
As the signs of spring appear, weather warms and the ground is ready for digging, eager do-it-yourself residents and contractors are jumping into projects. Whether putting in a fence, planting a tree or building a deck, knowing where the utility lines are before you dig helps prevent injuries, property damage and inconvenient utility outages. A recent national survey by the Common Ground Alliance (CGA) revealed that 42 percent of homeowners who plan to dig this year for projects like landscaping, installing a fence or mailbox, building a deck, pond or patio and other DIY projects, will put themselves and their communities at risk by not calling 811 a few days beforehand to learn the approximate location of underground utilities. CGA is a national advocacy organization focused on preventing damage to underground infrastructure. Contacting Nebraska 811 notifies the appropriate utility companies of the intent to dig. Utility representatives are then sent free of charge to the requested digging sites to mark the approximate locations of underground lines with flags or spray paint. For information on safe digging best practices and other damage prevention information visit www.ne1call.com
SPORTS

The McCook Bison golfers picked up their first invite win of the spring season, winning the Gothenburg Invite at Wild Horse yesterday. The Bison posted a team score of 341, four strokes better than North Platte. Brady Esch led the Bison with an 81, good for second-place overall. Brandon Eckhardt finished eighth with an 86.

Joel Gray and Logan Barenburg shot rounds of 87 and 89, good for 13th and 15th overall. No team scoring was kept at yesterday's Don Bader Track Invite at Lexington. MHS senior Morgan Fawver jumped over 23 foot for the first time and a second-place medal. Fawver joined Carbin Jernigan, Alec Burger and Seth Dugger on the winning 400 meter relay team that ran a season-best 43.7 seconds. D.J. Gross finished second in the shot-put and discus at yesterday's KU Relay meet.

The McCook Community College golf team is in third place after the first round of the Central Wyoming Tournament. The Indians trail first place Eastern Wyoming by 26 shots and third place Central by three shots heading into final-round action Friday. The Lancers lead with a 285, Central shot a 308 and MCC a 311. “It was such a nice day, with temperatures in the mid-60s with just a slight breeze, unfortunately it didn’t result in a day that meets our standards,” MCC Coach Tyler Loop said. MCC’s Cameron Lampe (Windsor, Colo.) had the best individual round of the day with a 76, which was tied for sixth place. Sophomore Ronnie Quick (London, England) shot a 77, which was tied for 11th place. “We left a lot of strokes out there via bad putting, mis-clubbing, etc.,” Loop said. “The good news is tomorrow is forecast to be another nice day, so we have a chance to redeem ourselves.” Sophomore Graham Gaspard (Breckenridge, Colo.) and freshman KC Carlson (Delta, Colo.) both shot 79s. Freshman Chesney Tatman (North Platte) had an 80. Competing as an individual, freshman Trevor Oberg (McCook) shot 82.

The first story of a rabbit (later named the “Easter Bunny”) hiding eggs in a garden was published in 1680.