

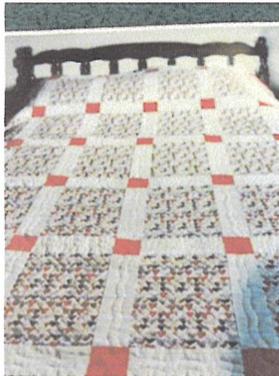
NEW BEGINNINGS

February 2026

Volume 34, Issue 9

Quilt Raffle —

The Little House Museum is raffling a queen-sized



quilt with “lots of hearts” on it. It is a chance to

surprise your Valentine with Lots of Hearts.

Or — it would make a great present for that graduate or special person in your life.

Tickets are 6 for \$5 or \$1 each. It is on display at MNB—Stratton.

Tickets are available from Janet Felt, Jane Voss at the Grocery store, Bernard Andrijeski, Monica Desautels, or at the bank.

The quilt will be given away February 12th so it can be delivered to the winner before that special day. Thanks!!



Community Meal

February 18th

Grandview Events Center

5:30—7:00

Free—All Welcome

Stratton Medical Center

Proudly serving Stratton and surrounding communities.

Celebrate With Us!

GRAND RE-OPENING

*Same trusted care. New Look.
Renewed commitment.*

Friday, February 13, 2026

1:00 PM to 3:00 PM Central Time

903 Bailey St., Stratton, NE

*Join us for the
ribbon cutting,
refreshments, and a
look at what's new!*



www.dchbenkelman.com

Our Condolences to the family
and friends of
Adelaide "Fay" Unger

Provider Schedule at
Stratton Medical Clinic



Reopening Monday February 2, 2026

WEEKLY SCHEDULE



Dr. Lori Stonehocker, D.O.

Tuesday's 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM (CT)
Closed 12:00 to 1:00



Laken Vrbas, APRN

M - W - Th
8:00 AM to 4:00 PM (CT)

Call to schedule your appointment:
308-423-2151

Join us for the
Grand Reopening
Friday, February 13, 2026
1:00 to 3:00 PM CT

903 Bailey St.
Stratton, NE., NE 69043
www.dchbenkelman.com



**Seen on National Television.
Now Seeing Patients Close to Home.**

**Dr. Jacob Khurgin, D.O.,
a board-certified urologist,
is seeing patients at
Dundy County Hospital.**



Affiliated with Maimonides Medical Center, Dr. Khurgin brings big-city expertise in general urology care for both men and women without the long drive or long wait.

From urinary concerns, erectile dysfunction, prostate concerns, cancers of the bladder and male infertility, you'll get straightforward answers, advanced care, and a doctor who takes the time to listen.

- ✓ No referral needed.
- ✓ No nonsense
- ✓ Just expert care-
right here at
Benkelman

**Call Dundy County Hospital
to schedule your appointment:**

308-423-2204



1313 N Cheyenne St.
Benkelman, NE
www.dchbenkelman.com

WHAT WILL YOUR LEGACY BE?

A planned gift is a gift for the future, often extending beyond a donor's lifetime. Making a planned gift is one of the simplest and most powerful ways to take care of your family, your community, and create your legacy. Many generous Nebraskans, like Stratton's own Janet Felt, are doing just that.

Many years ago, a group of local people had several meetings with Jeff Yost, President and CEO of Nebraska Community Foundation. It planted the seed that the Stratton community could benefit from the assistance of Nebraska Community Foundation. Later, Great Plains Communication announced that they would match funds with \$200,000 if the community could come up with \$200,000. At that point, my husband, Ed, and I were invested.

I was an "import" to Stratton. Through the school I was introduced to the community. I knew over 200 kids, their parents, and grandparents. I was accepted as a friend to all age groups. Needless to say, I could tell you stories. I still appreciate those friendships.

After Ed passed away, I donated the memorial money to the Stratton Community Foundation Fund to benefit

college students in the area. I have donated dollars for several years. With the suggestion of Nebraska Community Foundation to give 5% of your estate to support your community, I have made a planned gift to the Fund in my will.

I earned my salary from this community and want to give part of it back. Supporting students remains my passion. College and trade schools are expensive and students should have every opportunity to receive scholarships. I have volunteered my time and talents to a community that I love. The people are caring folk and have been good to me in my time of need. Seriously think about putting something in your will to continue supporting Stratton. It was an easy decision for me, and I hope it will be for you.

- JANET FELT

Nebraska Community Foundation suggests leaving five percent of your estate to the charitable cause or community you care about most. This collective act would result in \$13 million to be used to improve life in Hitchcock County over the next decade. Visit fivetothrive.org for more information and to download a free will planning guide.

As with all financial considerations, we encourage you to discuss potential tax advantages and other aspects of charitable giving with your attorney, tax adviser or financial consultant.



MEET OUR FUND ADVISORY COMMITTEE!

We are proud to share that some of our volunteers are stepping into new roles! Our advisory committee meets on the third Sunday of each month to review grant applications and evaluate the long-term goals for the Fund.

Dustin Ladenburger, Co-Chair
Lisa Fox, Co-Chair
Rachel Lorens, Treasurer
Ashley Stehno, Secretary

Brad Forch
Austin Jensen
Brian Kollmorgen
Jen Moore

Sandy Renfro
Terra Riggs
Ann Sutton



Stratton Community Foundation Fund is an affiliated fund of Nebraska Community Foundation.



Thank You to my children, Jason and Ryan, for requesting a card shower for my Birthday. Thank You to my family and friends who sent cards and messages to help me celebrate my Birthday. It was great to hear from you.

Geri Downing



Little Village Daycare closed in October, 2023 after serving Stratton-area families for more than 5 years. LVD was recently able to disburse remaining funds, and we are proud to report that we were able to give back generously to the community that so kindly supported us while we were open. Funds were donated to organizations that supported us in addition to projects benefiting area youth. Organization/projects receiving donations include Grandview Community & Evens Center, Stratton Area Chamber of Commerce, Stratton Community Fund Drive, New Beginnings, Women in Faith, and the Stratton Swimming Pool. It is bittersweet to formally end this chapter, but thankful we could bless other community organizations. Thank you all for your support!



Thank you, Friends, for all the 80th Birthday Cards and good wishes. The kind words brought back many special memories of our years in Stratton.

Kerry Krutsinger



I would like to extend a heartfelt THANK YOU to everyone who helped me during and after my recent vehicle accident. I am doing much better, thanks to the kindness and support of so many.

I can't say enough about our Stratton EMS group—they were in my driveway immediately and took charge with such professionalism and care.

There are many others I would like to thank as well:

- The doctors and nurses in McCook and North Platte for their excellent care
- Everyone who sent cards, texts, and calls
- The visitors who came to see me in North Platte and Atwood
- Those who brought beautiful flowers, delicious food, and thoughtful gifts
- Our friends and neighbors who took care of things around home while we were gone.

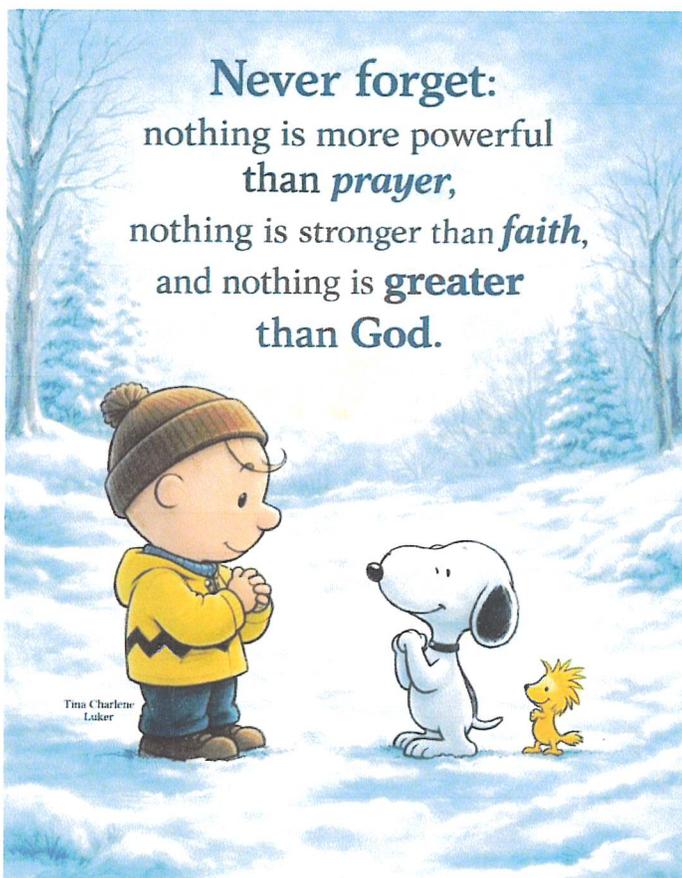
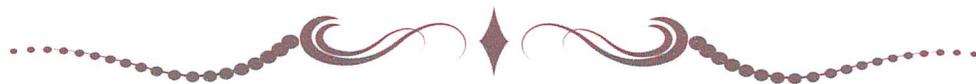


I appreciated every kind gesture more than I can express.

Most of all, thank you to my family—Brendan, Travis, and Marci for being there with me, and Kelsi for cheering me on from Michigan. Your love and support meant everything.

I am truly grateful to live in such a caring community.

Linda Zahl



THINGS TO PONDER 🤔

1. If the No. 2 pencil is the most popular, why is it still No. 2?
2. Why do we press harder on the remote control when we know the batteries are getting weak?
3. Why are you "in" a movie, but "on" TV?
4. What was the best thing BEFORE sliced bread?
5. Why do we drive on parkways & park on driveways?
6. Why do "fat chance" & "slim chance" mean the same thing?
7. Why do British people never sound British when they sing?
8. At a movie theater, which arm rest is yours?
9. When does it stop being partly cloudy & start being partly sunny?
10. When French people swear do they say "Pardon my English?"
11. Why do people say "heads up" when you should duck?

LARRYS FUNNY POSTINGS

Stratton Public Library News February 2026

HOURS: MONDAY 12-7 THURSDAY 12-5

New books on the shelf just waiting to be checked out!

Adult Selections: The Quarry Girls-Lourey, The Choice-McAllister, The Bone Code, Fire and Bones, Cold Cold Bones & Conspiracy of Bones-Reichs, I Know This Much Is True-Lamb, Day After Night-Diamant, Dead Guy Next Door & The Corpse in the Closet- Score, Dead Woman Crossing & Last Day Alive- Rose, The Frozen River-Lawhon, All the Light We Cannot See- Doerr, Absolute Power-Baldacci, I Who Have Never Known Men-Harpman, The Housemaid's Wedding-McFadden, The Man Who Died Twice, The Bullet that Missed & The Last Devil to Die-Osman, Close Your Eyes and Count to Ten-Unger, Don't Let Him In-Jewell, The Black Wolf-Penny, The Widow-Grisham, Protect and Defend-Flynn, Blink of an Eye-Johansen, Mother's Promise-Hepworth, The Price You Pay- Petrice Gunslingers-Breihan, Spearhead-Makos

Juvenile: American Girl Series- The Silent Stranger, A Thief in the Theater, Peril at King's Crossing, Traitor in Williamsburg, The Stolen Sapphire

Children's: Dolphins, Stranger in the Woods, Lost in the Woods, First Snow in the Woods, Don't Eat the Teacher

Mark your calendars for Mondays in June for the 2026 Summer Reading Program

UNEARTH a STORY

More details coming this Spring!

Lots of pages being read for our January Challenge

"How many pages can you read in a month"

Winner will be chosen at the conclusion of January.

Coffee and Conversation is happening at the Stratton Public Library every Thursday from 2:00-4:00. Stop in for a few minutes or stay the whole time.

Dundy County Stratton Jr/Sr High School

Second Quarter Honor Roll

All "A" Honor Roll

Emma Baldeh	Abigael Spargo
Dylan Freed	Tagen Yrkoski
Kevin Garcia Guzman	Char Lutz
Miles Hanes	AnnaLee Shapley
Dante Horner	Bailey Stehno
Lexie Yrkoski	Tenlee Havel
Brock Bailey	Hattie Blecha
Kimberly Escobar Ferando	Leighton Bradney
Emily Schack	Tanya Wallace
Breck Horner	

3.5 Honor Roll

Ethan Latta	Adeya Hanes
Kennedy Bailey	Ava Lutz
August Shaw	Dustin Stamm
Clara Spargo	Maelee Forch
Klinton Rinne	Cooper Henderson
Kassadee Barbour	Autumn Sutton
Carlos Diaz Cortes	Lila Baldeh
Alyssa Stamm	Esmaye Killough
Braxton Merklin	Trynt Unger
Jacob Fanning	Reid Mathews
Slade Marlin	Charli Shaw
Owen Mathews	Gary Stamm
Blake Nickerson	Dairian Jarmin
Blaine Aldridge	Camdyn Chamberlain
Leila Bernard	Tristauna Bernard
Noah Wiese	Jayde Fiedler
Tel Donohue	Molly Ladenburger
Scot Ladenburger	Emily Trisdale
Avery Sutton	Henry Blecha
Saige Wiese	Lauren Schack
Diego Alvarez	Raelee Forch
Cooper Shaw	Melanie Serna Apodaca
Xander Cardoza	Theodore Brewer
Evan Freed	Nevara Hanes
Jerri Clark	Danica Merklin
Abigail Gierhart	Cassidy Henderson
Bree Lutz	Elijah Jacobitz
Hunter Clark	Havelynn Sutton



Front row: Daniel Brewer **Second row:** Deb Clingan, Janet Felt, Candace Briles, Phyllis Medrano, Cheryl Bohochik, Lenay Johnson **Third Row:** Lisa Fox, Roberta Loescher, Linda Zahl, Donita Clark, Carrol Kadlecek

FROG Fitness Class Keeps Stratton Seniors Moving

For nearly two decades, the FROG Fitness class at the Grandview Event Center has been helping local adults stay active, healthy, and strong. FROG stands for Fitness Reaching Older Gen's, an exercise and nutrition program developed by the Southwest Nebraska Health Department in 2007 to improve strength, balance, and mobility in older adults.

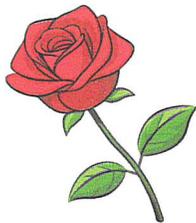
The goal of the FROG program is simple but important—to help prevent injuries caused by falls and to promote a more active and enjoyable lifestyle. As we age, normal changes such as decreased strength, flexibility, and endurance can increase the risk of falls. Regular exercise and good nutrition play a key role in keeping bones and muscles strong and flexible.

Stratton's FROG Fitness class meets every **Tuesday** and **Friday** at 10:00 a.m. CT at the Grandview Event Center. The one-hour class is led by longtime instructor Linda Zahl and includes low-impact exercises focused on flexibility, muscle strength, balance, and cardio-respiratory endurance. Movements are designed to support everyday activities and are adaptable for all ability levels. No special equipment or experience is needed—just come as you are and join the fun! Fitness balls and elastic stretch bands are provided at the class. Participants enjoy gentle workouts set to music, along with plenty of laughter and encouragement from friends.

New participants are always welcome. If you're looking for a safe, enjoyable way to stay active, come join the FROGS and see what the program is all about!

Ever wondered why red roses are so popular on Valentine's Day? It's because red roses symbolize passion and romance.

Other flower colors have symbolism, too: pink is associated with femininity and grace, while peach represents sweetness and gratitude. Meanwhile, yellow embodies happiness and positivity, orange symbolizes enthusiasm and success, and white illustrates purity and sympathy.



Blessing Box

Located in front of the Church of Christ

Take what you need, leave what you can. Donations may include—Non-perishable food items: Rice, pasta, cereal, nuts, seeds, granola bars, instant oatmeal packets, dried fruit, cake mixes, soup mixes.

Baby essentials: Diapers, wipes, baby formula. Hygiene items: Toilet paper, feminine products, soap, shampoo, conditioner, toothbrushes, toothpaste, deodorant. Warm clothing: socks, mittens, hats, hand warmers, blankets.

New Beginnings is published monthly by the Community Builders Academy. In order to assure a timely issue, articles must be submitted by the 25th of the month to Julie Bernt. Articles may be emailed to rbernt@gpcom.net. or mailed to MNB Bank, PO Box 367, Stratton, NE 69043. **Colored copies of New Beginnings are included on the Village of Stratton website.** Thank you to this month's donors:

- Bill Condon
- Stratton Community Foundation
- Geraldine Downing
- Little Village Daycare
- Erwin & Joyce Cushing
- Mel & Virginia Campbell
- Earl & Marjorie Denio
- Art Hawkinson
- Kerry & Cindy Krutsinger



Saturday Night from 7-9
Bring your family friendly
games to
Grandview Events Center
Join the Fun

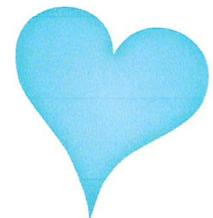
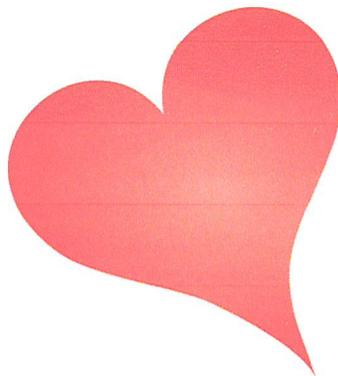
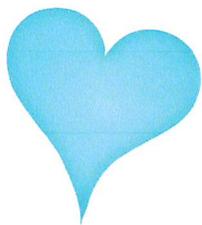
Quick and Easy Valentine's Day Dessert Skewers

Ingredients

- 7 oz angel food cake, cubed
- 2 cups strawberries, washed and de-stemmed
- 1/2 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips, **melted** and warm
- 8 skewers

Directions

Place the strawberries and angel food cake cubes onto the skewers. Leave enough room on the ends for the skewer to be held. Make sure the strawberries on the ends are placed pointed side out (it just looks better like that). Repeat for the remaining skewers. Dip a fork into the melted chocolate and flick it back and forth over the skewers spreading chocolate joy all over.



"Vinegar Valentines" were used to discourage suitors

During the Victorian Era, "vinegar valentines," also known as penny dreadfuls, were anonymously sent to fend off unwanted suitors. Unlike traditional valentines, these cards were filled with insults and rejections rather than sweet sentiments, according to [History.com](https://www.history.com).

Heart-shaped chocolate boxes were introduced in the 1860s — and now more than 36 million are sold each year

Chocolate dates back to at least 450 B.C., but it was revolutionized in the 1800s by brothers Richard and George Cadbury. When they took over their family's chocolate business in 1861, they introduced Fancy Boxes — decorated, chocolate-filled packages. A few years later, they discovered a way to use excess cocoa butter to reinvent the way people ate "chocolates." By 1868, they were selling heart-shaped boxes of chocolates, establishing them as the perfect Valentine's Day gift.

Today, it's estimated that more than 35 million heart-shaped boxes of chocolate are sold each year for Valentine's Day, per [Sugar Plum Chocolates](https://www.sugarplumchocolates.com).

CHAPLAIN'S CORNERR

"What if", famous words. "What if" diamonds grew on trees or rib eye steaks were free, would you be in line to get yours? "What if" you knew that Jesus was coming back **tomorrow**, would you be in line and be ready to go, your ticket punched and ready to get on the train? What about your neighbors , do they know the Good News about Jesus coming back, have you shared it with them or did you keep it to yourself? "What if" they don't get to go because nobody told them? Have you told them what Jesus has done in your life? Have you invited them to a Bible study and shared the Good News with them? The book of John works great because it shows how Jesus loved us and laid down His life for us.

In the book of Romans there are several verses called the Roman Road, that when put together work well for showing the way to salvation. They are;

Romans 3:10; "There is none righteous."

Romans 3:23; "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

Romans 6:23; "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Romans 5:10; "For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled we shall be saved by His life."

Romans 9, 10, 13; "That if you confess with our mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

It seems in some circles that our relationship with God is a private thing and is not to be shared and that is the exact opposite of what the Bible teaches us. The birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ has had more effect on mankind than anything else since the creation of this world. If you know Him as your Savior, share Him.

Richard Stahly

Women's Prayer Breakfast

February 21, 2026—9:00 am

-HOSTED BY-

St. Joseph Catholic Church



MEN'S PRAYER BREAKFAST

March 7th—8:00 am

--HOSTED BY--

Church of Christ

Church Worship Service Schedule

Comm. United Methodist Church

10:00 a.m. Church Services

Christian Union Church

9:30 a.m. Sunday School

10:45 a.m. Church Services

St. Joseph Catholic Church

8:30 a.m. Mass

Church of Christ

10:30 a.m. Sunday School

11:00 a.m. Church Services

Southwest Nebraska Holiness Church

10:30 a.m. Sunday School

11:30 a.m. Church Services

7:00 p.m. Church Services



FEBRUARY 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 NATIONAL BLACK HISTORY	2 NO SCHOOL Teacher In-Service 2:00 pm - 6:00 pm Parent Teacher Conferences 4:00 JH Quiz Bowl @Southwest	3 2:00 pm JH Boys BB @Southwest 4:00 pm G/B JV/V BB @Southwest	4 8:00 am FFA State Degree Interviews @McCook 12:07 pm MPCC College Rep in Media Center	5 8:00 am Wesleyan Honor Choir 4:00 pm JH G/B BB @CCS	6 8:00 am Wesleyan Honor Choir 8:30 am Boys Wrestling @Southwest 12:00 pm Girls District Wrestling @Ogallala 3:30 pm G/B JV/V BB Hershey	7 8:00-12:00 pm Cheer Camp @HS 8:00 am Speech @Ogallala 8:30 5 th /6 th BB HC @Elem Gym 1:00 G/B JV/V BB Cozad Cheer Camp Halftime performance
8	9 12:00 pm RPAC Vocal @Hayes Center, Concert 6:00 pm 4:00 Boys JH BB @Perkins County 4:00 pm Boys JV BB @Arapahoe 6:00 pm Board Meeting	10 6 th period UNO College Rep 4:00 pm G/B JV/V BB NPSF-5 th /6 th boys play at halftime-Parents Night	11 7:30 am Inter High Day @MCC 8:00 am FFA @Curtis 12:07 pm CCC Rep Media Center	12 12:07 pm WyoTech Rep Media Center 6:30 pm HOSA Slices & Scrubs @Dundy County Hospital	13 1:30 pm Boys District Wrestling @Southwest 3:30 pm G/B JV/V BB @Southern Valley	14 Valentines Day 8:00 am G/B JH BB @Wauneta-Palisade 8:00 am Boys District Wrestling @Southwest 8:00 am Speech @Ogallala
15	16 TBA Girls Sub-District BB	17 Girls State Wrestling @CHI Health Center	18 8:00 am RPAC Speech @Medicine Valley 12:07 UNK College Rep in Media Center UNK	19 TBA Girls Sub-District BB	20 4:30 pm Boys BB @Medicine Valley	21 8:00 am Speech @Ogallala
22 	23 8:30 am FFA @Curtis 12:07 Fort Hays Tech Rep in Media center TBA Boys Sub-District BB	24 TBA Boys Sub-District BB	25 8:00-3:00 pm Career Discovery Day @McCook Hospital	26 TBA Boys Sub-District BB	27 TBA Girls District BB	28 Grand Islanders Show Choir Competition 8:00 am Speech @Holdrege TBA Boys District BB
<p>FCCLA Week Feb 9-13 FBLA Week Feb 8-14 FFA Week Feb 21-28</p>						
						MARCH 2025