

Northwest Rural Public Power District

Hay Springs, NE 69347

March 2024

Dream Becomes Reality For New Kritter Kennel/Kamp

"So far, it has been awesome being able to play with the dogs. Sure beats a desk job and is a lot better for my stress level," noted Michele Rickenbach, after making a drastic career change. Rickenbach had basically worked in offices the majority of her life, until she decided to move to the country and launch her new business, "Crescent Ridge Kennels, LLC and Kritter Kamp" at the end of last year.

"I worked at CSC for almost 30 years in the Registrar's Office," said the twice widow. Her first husband, David Kruse, and the father of her son, Michael, passed in 1999. She later married Todd Rickenbach, who was a pilot for Frontier Airlines. "We had discussed living in the country, but while Michael was in school we liked being in town. After his passing in 2014 we decided we wanted to make the move to the country," she explained. "My mother-in-law Sharon showed me the perfect property, which was on the Rickenbach farm/ranch. We are so fortunate as there is a view from every window and the only neighbor is the Bordeaux Creek Wildlife Management area. It's also the perfect place for dogs to run and play," she added.

In addition to working at CSC, she was store supervisor for Posh in Chadron, so that was quite the change from an office. She enjoyed interacting with the customers and being downtown among the other business owners. She briefly worked for Chadron Public Library in the Children's Library. "My last job, prior to this endeavor, was in the Billing/Insurance Office at Chadron Community Hospital. I loved working there as they really focus on creating positive morale," said Rickenbach, who was born in Lemmon,

Michele Rickenbach, owner of the new Crescent Ridge Kennels, LLC and Kritter Kamp, located six miles east of Chadron along the scenic Pine Ridge area. She is pictured here with her dog Scottie Brodie outside of the newly constructed kennel.

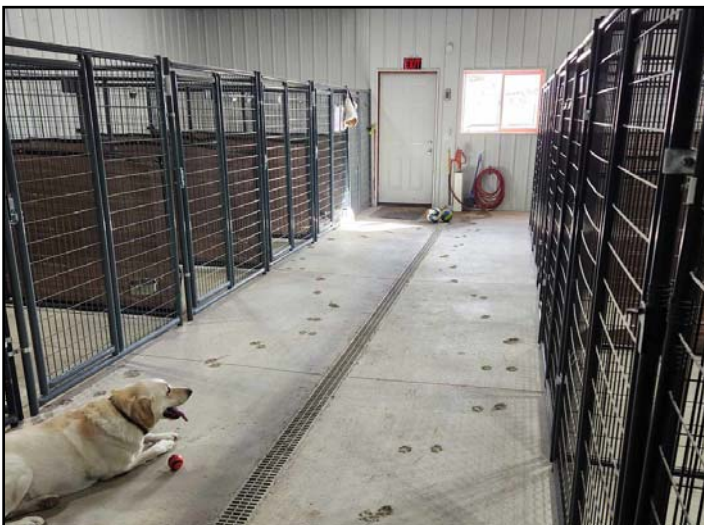


S.D. and graduated from Spearfish High School in 1983. She went on to receive her Bachelors in Business Administration from CSC in 1987, then her Master of Science in Organizational Management in 2009.

On Dec. 22 last year, they opened for boarding after construction of the kennel. "This has been a dream of mine for a long time. When Michael was younger, we adopted several dogs. From visiting rescue organizations, we always talked about the possibility of starting a rescue. Of course life gets in the way and our dreams sort of stay dreams. Later, I thought maybe that a boarding business would be helpful in Chadron, as only vets were doing it at the time. Around that time, Terri Lemmon opened Playful Pastures, so I didn't feel the timing was right," she noted.

"Two years ago my son Michael's girlfriend, Theresa, starting working at a boarding/daycare facility in Lincoln and we started discussing the idea more seriously," said Rickenbach. "At that time they were wanting to leave Lincoln, so we decided we wanted to move forward. Originally we thought about moving elsewhere to start the business. After looking in different areas and assessing how costly that could be, we thought maybe just having it on our property here could be manageable."

(Continued on Page 2)



A peak inside of the new Crescent Ridge kennel.

Crescent Ridge Kritter Kamp -

(Continued from Page 1)

"We knew that Playful Pastures was hugely successful and she had waitlists for boarding and daycare, so we felt we could be a good addition. Terri had quit offering boarding around the time we started getting contractors arranged. She was a huge help for me as she was a great sounding board and a positive supporter. I was sad to hear that she planned to close, but felt it was the sign we needed that this dream could be a reality," explained Rickenbach.

So the construction began working with local contractors. "It was on the advice of Will Wild, who prepared the building site, that I reached out to Wesley Tlustos who owns Tlustos Renovation. He did the construction of the building. Thankfully he knew a concrete guy for the slab, his brother-in-law Austin Reed, owner of Reed Enterprises. Hency Plumbing got our water in and Brennan Electric finished wiring, lights, and a heater for the building," said Rickenbach. Given that there are statutes governing the care of animals in a



A view of where the dogs have room to roam in a safe fenced in space.

boarding facility, they needed to have things in line with those requirements. "All the contractors were great at making that a reality. After construction was complete, an inspector from the Nebraska Department of Agriculture came to inspect the facility and cleared the business for licensure," she added.

Crescent Kennels has 13 kennels that can accommodate 26 dogs. All are 5'x10' so can hold two average sized dogs comfortably. "We also offer daycare during the week and we feel that 10 dogs per day is manageable in our outdoor spaces, she noted. They have had dogs from one night up to one week. "It varies but weekends are the most common."

"Given that Playful Pastures closed, we are the only boarding business in Chadron. Also, we focus on giving the dogs as much outdoor time to run and play as possible. Many boarding places just have small exercise areas used mainly for calls of nature. We want your dog to play ball, dig in the sandbox, take hikes, or play on a splash pad. We are trying to achieve a camp feel for your dog," said Rickenbach.

Kots and water dishes are provided, but owners are asked to provide blanket(s), food dishes, and food. If not provided, Kritter Kamp food can be provided for \$5 per day.

They do offer transportation for \$5 a day. Hours begin with Drop off after 7:30 a.m. with a pickup time of before 4 p.m. Monday thru Friday. Drop-ins are available Monday through Friday but only by appointment and depending on availability. They also offer In Home Pet Care (dogs and cats) with varied prices which include watering, feeding, play and medication administration if needed.

When Rickenbach isn't busy with "the critters" she enjoys spending time with family and friends having a great meal and/or playing games. She also enjoys reading, crafts, movies, and in the warmer weather she golfs in a ladies league. She currently serves on the Capital Campaign committee of the Chadron Public Library Renovation and Expansion project.

The Richenbachs are also a small breeder of ACK Scottish Terriers focusing on "quality, not quantity". "The parents are out pets, and the pups are treated like part of our family."

To learn more about Crescent Ridge Kennels, you can visit her Facebook page, call 308-360-1926 or email crescentridgekennels@yahoo.com.

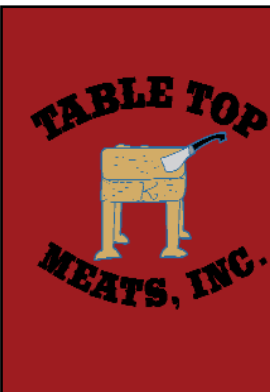


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As in any outdoor work, be careful not to raise any equipment such as ladders, poles or rods into power lines. Remember, non-metallic materials such as lumber, tree limbs, tires, ropes, and hay will conduct electricity depending on dampness and dust and dirt contamination.

(Continued on Page 5)



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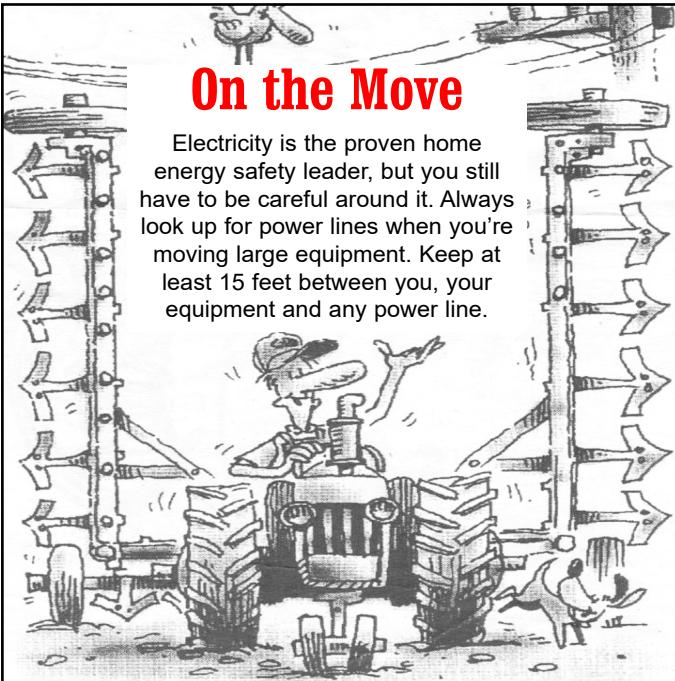
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Farm Safety--

(Continued from Page 3)

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NORTHWEST RURAL ACTIVITIES

Gordon-Rushville Mustangs

Fri., March 2 Speech at Mitchell, 9 a.m.
Tues., March 5 End of Third Quarter
March 6-8 Spring Break - NO SCHOOL
 Boys State Basketball
 Wed., March 6 FFA Ag Ed Contest in Kimball
 Mon., March 11 Board Meeting
Tues., March 12 Honor Band at Gordon-Ruhville
 Fri., March 15 C1-6 District Speech at Wallace, 10 a.m.
March 19-20 GES Dental Screen Follow Up
Thurs., March 21 WTC Quiz Bowl at home, 9 a.m.
 Fri., March 22 HS Track at Scottsbluff
Sat., March 23 Prom, 6 p.m.
Wed., March 27 WTC Quiz Bowl
 Thurs., March 28 HS Track at Bayard, 9 a.m.
Mar. 29-Apr. 1 Easter Break
 April 2-6 FFA at Nebraska State Convention
 Thurs., April 4 HS TR at Mitchell, 9 a.m.
 Sat., April 6 MS TR at Chadron Invite, 9 a.m.
 Mon., April 8 MS TR at Bayard, 9 a.m.
Board Meeting, 5:30 p.m.
 Tues., April 9 B Golf at Mitchell, 9 a.m.
 Fri., April 10 Junior ACT Day

Crawford Rams

Sat., March 2 Speech at Mitchell
Tues., March 5 Parent-Teacher Conf.,
12:30 Dismissal Students

Wed., March 6 FFA District CDE's in Kimball
 Sat., March 9 District Speech at Gering
Mon., March 11 Board Meeting, 6 p.m.
 Fri., March 15 PAC Quiz Bowl at Harrison, tbd
 Mon., March 18 Quiz Bowl at Sioux Co., 1 p.m.
 Fri., March 22 State Speech at Kearney
Sat., March 23 FFA Labor Auction & Steak Feed
 Mon., March 25 PAC Music at Morrill, 8 a.m.
 Tues., March 26 FFA Meeting, 6 p.m., Commons
 Thurs., March 28 HS Track at Bayard C-D, 9 a.m.
Golf Dual at Home vs. Chadron, 4 p.m.
March 29-Apr. 1 NO SCHOOL - Easter Break
 April 3-5 FFA State Convention in Lincoln
 Wed., April 3 Golf at Sidney, 9 a.m.
 Thurs., April 4 HS Track at Mitchell, 9 a.m.
 Sat., April 6 JH Track at Chadron, 10 a.m.
Prom
 Mon., April 8 JH Track at Bayard, 9 a.m.
Board Meeting, 6 p.m.
 Tues., April 9 Golf at Mitchell, 9 a.m.

Hemingford Bobcats

March 1-2 Girls State Basketball at Lincoln
 March 6-9 Boys State Basketball at Lincoln
 Wed., March 6 FFA Ag Ed Contest, 9 a.m.
Fri., March 9 End of Third Quarter
March 11-15 District Speech
Mon., March 11 Board Meeting, 5 p.m.
FFA Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
Tues., March 12 Science Olympiad
WTC Honor Band

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NORTHWEST RURAL ACTIVITIES

Wed., March 13 NO SCHOOL - Teacher Workday
Parent-Teacher Conferences 1 p.m.

March 14-15 NO SCHOOL

March 20-23 State Speech

Thurs., March 21 Quiz Bowl, 9 a.m.

Fri., March 22 Track (V) at Morrill Invite, 9 a.m.

Sat., March 23 **Dinner Theater**
Class C All State Band

Sun., March 24 **Dinner Theater**

Mon., March 25 PanCo Music Contest at Morrill
Quiz Bowl at Home, 9 a.m.

Thurs., March 28 Track (V) at Bayard Invite, 9 a.m.

Mar 29-April 1 NO SCHOOL - Easter Break

Tues., April 2 Track (V) at Creek Valley, 8:30 a.m.

April 3-5 FFA State Convention

Thurs., April 4 Track (V) at Mitchell

Sat., April 6 Track (JH) at Chadron, 9 a.m.

April 7-9 FCCLA Leadership Conference at Lincoln

Tues., April 9 Track (JH) at Bayard

Wed., April 10 ACT for Juniors
12th Grade WNCC Spring Career & Internship Fair

Chadron Cardinals

March 1-2 Musical Production, CHS, 7 p.m.
Girls State BB in Lincoln

Sun., March 3 Musical Production, 2 p.m.

March 6-9 Boys State BB at Lincoln

March 6-8 NO SCHOOL - Spring Break

Mon., March 11 Speech Public Performance, time tbd

Thurs., Mar. 14 3rd-4th Concert, 7 p.m., HS Auditorium

Fri., March 15 Speech at Gering, 8 a.m.

Sat., March 16 Track (V) at Chadron State, 9 a.m.

Tues., March 19 6-12 Band Concert, 7 p.m., CSC

Wed., March 20 State Speech at Kearney

Fri., March 22 MS Scholastic Day (Quiz Bowl), tbd

Tues., March 26 Boys Golf at Alliance Skyview, 4 p.m.

Thurs., March 28 Track (V) at Ogallala, 10 a.m.
Boys Golf at Crawford Legend Buttes, 4 p.m.

Mar. 29-Apr. 1 NO SCHOOL - Easter Break

Tues., April 2 Track (MS) at Scottsbluff, 2:30 p.m.

April 3-5 FFA State Convention at Lincoln

Thurs., April 4 Boys Golf at Sidney Hillside Course, 9 a.m.
Track (V) at Mitchell Invite, 9 a.m.

Sat., April 6 Track (MS) at Chadron Invite, 9 a.m.

April 7-9 State Leadership Conf. in Lincoln

Hay Springs Hawks

Sat., March 2 Mitchell Speech Invite

Tues., March 5 Family Speech Night, Cafeteria, 5:30 p.m.

Wed., March 6 FFA District Contest at Kimball
Hawk Talk at Senior Center, 8 a.m.

Thurs., March 7 FFA Labor Auction

Fri., March 8 HS Hal Trip

Sat., March 9 District Speech at Gering,

Mon., March 11 Board Meeting

(Continued on Page 8)




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- Thurs., March 14 6th, 7th, 8th Grade Spring Concert, 7 p.m.
- Mon., March 18 Quiz Bowl at Sioux County, 1 p.m.
- Wed., March 20 NHS Induction, 3:30 p.m.
- Fri., March 22 State Speech at Kearney
- Sat., March 23 Class D All State Band Track (V) at Morrill, 9 a.m.
- Mon., March 25 PanCO Music at Morrill
- Tues., March 26 ACT Juniors



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Recipes



Do you have a recipe you would like to share with our readers?

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Stout Slow Cooker Corned Beef and Veggies

- 1 ½ (12 fluid ounce) cans or bottles Irish stout beer (such as Guinness), divided
- 1 (4 pound) corned beef brisket
- 1 ½ cups brown sugar
- 3 sweet potatoes, cut into chunks
- 1 head cabbage, cored and coarsely chopped
- 2 large sweet onions, chopped
- 6 large carrots, chopped
- 3 red potatoes, cut into chunks

Pour 1 bottle Irish stout beer into a slow cooker.

Rinse corned beef brisket and pat dry. Rub with brown sugar, including the bottom, and gently place brisket into the slow cooker with the stout beer.

Arrange sweet potatoes, cabbage, onion, carrots, and red potatoes on and around the brisket in the slow cooker.

Pour remaining 1/2 bottle Irish stout beer on and around brisket and vegetables to moisten the brown sugar.

Cover the cooker and cook on Low until corned beef is tender, 6 to 8 hours. Allow brisket to stand 5 minutes before slicing. Serve hot and enjoy!

* * * * *

Reuben Nachos

- ¾ cup mayonnaise
- ¼ cup ketchup
- 2 tablespoons sour cream
- 1 tablespoon sweet pickle relish
- ½ tablespoon minced red onion
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- ¼ teaspoon garlic salt
- 1 (11 ounce) package tortilla chips
- ¼ teaspoon garlic salt
- 2 cups shredded Swiss cheese
- 1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese
- ½ teaspoon dried dill weed
- 2 cups shredded cooked corned beef brisket
- 1 cup Bavarian-style sauerkraut with caraway seeds, drained

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.

Mix mayonnaise, ketchup, sour cream, relish, red onion, Dijon mustard, and garlic salt together in a small bowl until well blended. Set aside.

Layer 1/2 of the tortilla chips in an even layer on a baking sheet. Top with 1 cup Swiss cheese, 1/2 cup Cheddar cheese,

and 1/4 teaspoon dill. Repeat layers on top.

Bake in the preheated oven until cheeses are melted, about 5 minutes. Remove from oven. Set an oven rack about 6 inches from the heat source and preheat the oven's broiler.

Top nachos evenly with corned beef and sauerkraut. Broil until heated through, 1 to 2 minutes. Top nachos with the mayonnaise sauce.

* * * * *

St. Patrick's Day Cake

- 1 cup Irish stout beer (such as Guinness®)
- 1 cup butter, cut into pieces
- ¾ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 2 large eggs
- 2/3 cup sour cream
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 cups white sugar
- 1 ½ teaspoons baking soda
- ¾ teaspoon salt

Frosting:

- 3 cups confectioners' sugar, or as needed
- ½ cup butter at room temperature
- 3 tablespoons Irish cream liqueur (such as Baileys®)
- 8 ounces bittersweet chocolate, coarsely chopped
- 2/3 cup heavy cream
- 2 tablespoons butter at room temperature

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Line two 9-inch cake pans with parchment paper and lightly coat with cooking spray.

To make the cake: Pour stout into a saucepan and add butter; bring to a simmer over medium-low heat. Remove the pan from heat, then whisk in cocoa powder until smooth. Set aside to cool.

Beat eggs and sour cream in a medium bowl with an electric mixer until well combined. Stir in stout mixture until incorporated.

Mix flour, sugar, baking soda, and salt together in a large bowl. Pour stout mixture into flour mixture and gently combine with a spatula; pour batter into the prepared pans.

Bake in the preheated oven until a toothpick inserted into the center of a cake comes out clean, about 30 minutes. Let cakes cool in the pans for 5 minutes before inverting them onto wire racks to cool completely.

To make the frosting: Mix confectioners' sugar, butter, and Irish cream liqueur together in a medium bowl until smooth and spreadable. Add more sugar or liqueur to reach desired consistency. Spread 1/2 of the frosting on top of each cooled cake layer.

Place chopped chocolate into a heat-proof bowl. Bring cream to almost boiling in a small saucepan over medium-high heat; pour over chocolate. Add butter and stir until chocolate is melted and mixture is very smooth. Allow to cool until pourable but not thin or overly runny, 10 to 15 minutes.

Stack a cake gently on the other, frosting sides facing up. Carefully drizzle chocolate mixture over the top, allowing decorative drips to run down the sides.

National Ag Day Slated For March 19, 2024

The Agriculture Council of America (ACA) announced March 19, 2024, will be National Agriculture Day with the theme of “Agriculture: Growing a Climate for Tomorrow.”

Activities planned for March 19 feature a virtual Ag Day program, and in-person events in Washington DC. ACA will invite students to interact virtually with legislators and agency representatives, delivering the Ag Day message. A core leadership team of college students will participate in the DC events, along with representatives of national farm and commodity organizations, representatives of the food, fuel, and fiber communities.

Jenny Pickett, ACA President says students from AFA, 4-H, FFA, and MANNRS participated in 2023 National Ag Day. “Students are interested in advocating on behalf of agriculture and their future roles in the industry. Their participation in National Ag Day activities provides a glimpse of the future of agriculture. It’s exciting to learn from the students what they think agriculture will be like in the years ahead, and how their involvement will shape the industry and America as a whole.”

According to USDA Economic Research Service* more than 22 million full- and part-time jobs were related to the agricultural and food sector, or roughly 10 percent of all US employment. On-farm jobs represented about 2.6 million jobs, or a little over one percent of US employment. Take that a step further, agriculture- and food-related jobs totaled more than 19

million.


“More and more, students and individuals are finding careers in agriculture. The industry needs scientists, biologists, food safety technicians, livestock nutrition specialists, arborists, conservationists – one doesn’t have to be a farmer or have a direct on-farm job to be involved in the agriculture industry,” Pickett says.

2024 National Ag Day marks the 51st year of the nationwide effort to share real stories of American agriculture, and remind citizens that agriculture affects everyone. “From the food we eat and the fuel for our vehicles, to the fiber in the clothes we wear, and the oil used to make kids’ crayons, agriculture touches everyone in some way,” Pickett says.

The National Ag Day program encourages every American to:

- Understand how food, fiber, and fuel products are produced.
- Appreciate the role agriculture plays in providing safe, abundant, and affordable products.
- Value the essential role of agriculture in maintaining a strong economy.
- Acknowledge and consider career opportunities in the agriculture, food and fiber industry.

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Find Something to Celebrate in March

- March 1:** National Sunkist Citrus Day, Peanut Butter Lover's Day, Minnesota Day, Speech & Debate Education Day.
- March 2:** National Banana Cream Pie Day, Old Stuff Day.
- March 3:** National Soup It Forward Day, Mulled Wine Day, Cold Cuts Day, National Anthem Day, World Wildlife Day.
- March 4:** National Sons Day, Marching Music Day, Hug a G.I. Day, Pound Cake Day, World Obesity Day.
- March 5:** National Cheese Doodle Day, National Multiple Personality Day.
- March 6:** National Dress Day, Oreo Cookie Day, White Chocolate Cheesecake Day, Frozen Food Day.
- March 7:** National Flapjack Day, Hospitalist Day, Cereal Day, National Be Heard Day.
- March 8:** Oregon Day, Proofreading Day, Peanut Cluster Day.
- March 9:** National Get Over It Day, Meatball Day, National Crab Meat Day, Barbie Day, Daylight Saving Time.
- March 10:** National Pack Your Lunch Day, Blueberry Popover Day, Mario Day.
- March 11:** Funeral Director & Mortician Recognition Day, Oatmeal Nut Waffles Day, Worship of Tools Day.
- March 12:** Working Moms Day, Baked Scallops Day, Plant a Flower Day, Girl Scout Day.

- March 13:** National Jewel Day, K9 Veterans Day, Coconut Torte Day, Good Samaritan Day, Earmuff Day.
- March 14:** National Write Down Your Story Day, Equal Pay Day, Children's Craft Day, National PI Day.
- March 15:** National Shoe the World Day, Consumer Rights Day, Curl Crush Day, Corn Dog Day.
- March 16:** National Artichoke Hearts Day, Everything You Do is Right Day, Freedom of Information Day.
- March 17:** St. Patrick's Day, National Quilting Day, Corned Beef & Cabbage Day.
- March 18:** National Biodiesel Day, Sloppy Joe Day, Lacy Oatmeal Cookie Day, Awkward Moments Day.
- March 19:** National Backyard Day, Spring Begins, National Ag Day, Certified Nurses Day, Chocolate Caramel Day.
- March 20:** National Proposal Day, Ravioli Day, World Oral Health Day, World Storytelling Day, World Flour Day.
- March 21:** National Memory Day, Countdown Day, Farm Rescuer Day, French Bread Day, Single Parent Day.
- March 22:** West Virginia Day, Bavarian Crepes Day, Goof Off Day, International Day of the Seal, World Water Day.
- March 23:** National Tamale Day, Melba Toast Day, Near Miss Day, Chip and Dip Day, National Puppy Day.
- March 24:** National Cocktail Day, Cheesesteak Day, Chocolate Covered Raisin Day, Earth Hour.
- March 25:** National Medal of Honor Day, Lobster Newburg Day, Waffle Day (Sweden).
- March 26:** Epilepsy Awareness Day, Nougat Day, Spinach Day, American Diabetes Assoc. Alert Day.
- March 27:** National Scribble Day, World Theatre Day, Joe Day, Spanish Paella Day, Whisk(e)y Day.
- March 28:** Black Forest Cake Day, Something on a Stick Day, Weed Appreciation Day.
- March 29:** National Pita Day, Nevada Day, Vietnam War Veterans Day, Lemon Chiffon Cake Day.
- March 30:** World Piano Day, Virtual Vacation Day, Bipolar Day, Doctors Day, Pencil Day, Turkey Neck Soup Day.
- March 31:** National Crayon Day, Prom Day, Easter, Clams on the Half Shell Day, Tater Day, Bunsen Burner Day.

CULTIVATING RELATIONSHIPS

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NRPPD ENTERTAINMENT

Things I'm Super Good At...

- Forgetting someone's name 10 seconds after they tell me.
- Buying produce... and throwing it away two weeks later.
- Digging through the trash for the food box I just tossed, because I already forgot the directions.
- Making plans. And then immediately regretting making plans.
- Leaving laundry in the dryer until it wrinkles. Then turning on the dryer to dewrinkle. Then forgetting again.
- Calculating how much sleep I'll get if I can just "fall asleep right now."

* * * * *

Ag Quotes

- The farmer has to be an optimist or he wouldn't still be a farmer.
- Old farmers never die, they just go to seed.
- If you have a tractor, you're a farmer. If you don't you're a gardener.
- A farmer is only as good as his tools.
- Farming looks might easy when your plow is a pencil and you're a thousand miles from the corn field. ---Dwight D. Eisenhower
- No farmer ever plowed a field by turning it over in his mind. ---George E. Woodberry
- A bad day in the field is better than a good day in the office.
- A farmer's day never ends, it just starts over.
- Don't just a farmer by the size of his tractor.
- A farmer's life isn't all sunshine, but it's a beautiful life.
- Farming isn't a job, it's an adventure.
- A farmer's life is a life of hard work, but it's also a life of joy.
- A farmer's hands are his tools, but his heart is his compass.



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