

Northwest Rural

Public Power District

Hay Springs, NE 69347

August 2025

Injury Leads Rural Chadron Woman to Silversmithing

A Hemingford High School Graduate followed an variety of careers after graduating from Eastern Wyoming College in 1986. Donna (Lembke) Dexter was a vet tech for 30 plus years, then a 911 Dispatcher in Alliance, then a phlebotomist in Chadron and a scrub tech at Chadron Community Hospital.

She and her husband Bryce live on her family's ranch in Dawes County by the Niobrara River. "We enjoy ranching as we raise show lambs and goats, cattle, horses, AK registered Irish Wolfhounds and Welsh Pembroke Corgis," explained Donna. "I got a back injury at work almost four years ago so have not been able to work full time. Some days I can't do anything and some days I can. That is why I started silver-smithing. My husband helps as well as he is a welder. He is very handy and can build about anything."

Donna had always loved crafting and had done a lot of different things, but always wanted to do silver work. "I do leather still but my passion is silver work. I took an eight hour class from Erin Dawson from Ogallala. That started my passion and got me started. Unfortunately, because of my back I don't get to do it full time but when I do I love it. I tend to work with silver and turquoise but also do copper and brass as well many other stones. A lot of my pieces have a western theme but have been doing more and more other pieces. I do lots of custom pieces," explained Donna.

The Dexters also do their own stones as well. "We actually have gone to Nevada to the Ottesons and dug our own White Buffalo and Royston turquoise. I also have gathered (Continued on Page 2)



Bryce and Donna Dexter of rural Chadron teamed up to launch 2T Silver Company. She does the silver-smithing while they do the stone work together from digging stones, to cutting and polishing.



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lots of other rough stones. Then we cut and polish them into cabochons (stones ready to set in jewelry) so I have 100s of stones for people to pick out and then I can design one of kind personal pieces. I can also incorporate initials and brands in these one of a kind pieces."

2T Silver Co. produces earrings, key chains, necklaces, rings, bracelets, watch band, and have several interesting projects including embellished glass frames, working on a pendant to hold loved one's ashes. "I have taken a horse tooth and inlaid turquoise and made a pendant, and taken elk ivory and made earrings, rings and pendants. So the sky is the limit!"

Donna's silversmithing has lead her to unique program that benefits young cowboys, the Justin Cowboy Crisis Fund. A traveling Charm Belt which is spear-headed by Jason Ogg and Shay Pfiefer from Black Wolf White Wolf Designs. "They came up with idea. and brought us all together as the silversmithing community. Since then they have changed it and no matter your skill level, as one big family after one mission. We all suggested different non-profit organizations to donate 100 of the proceeds to go to," explained Donna.

The charm belt will have over 300 charms on it. The charms (pendants) can be taken off and worn. "There is some amazing talent and all types of pieces," said Donna, who did the spur, the copper with longhorn with Royston turquoise, and the arrow with pink conch shell heart.

If you search Blackwolf White Wolf on TikTok you will find more information. Tickets are being sold right



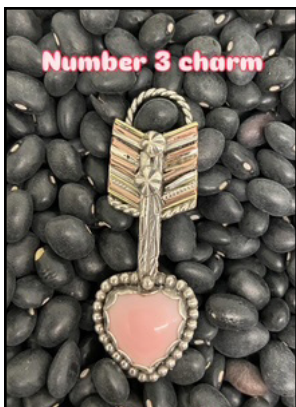
Donna's Dexter's granddaughter Tiyn Sterkel of Hemingford showing her prize winning lamb she showed at the fair in Torrington modeling T2 Silver jewelry.



Spur Charm with Turquoise



Copper Longhorn Charm



Arrow with Pink Conch Shell Heart

now at Rallyup.com. The belt will be raffled off sweepstake style after the National Final Rodeo this December. And 100 percent of the proceeds go to Justin Cowboy Crisis fund. Justin Cowboy Crisis Fund helps cowboys and their families with all aspects when a cowboy gets hurt while rodeoing. They have been around for many years helping cowboys.

Once the charm belt is put together Justin Cowboy Crisis fund will start their advertising. There will be a photo book with each charm and who made it with info. "It is amazing all the different talent coming in. Raffle tickets are cheap as well and there is all sorts of different options."

Donna is still working on their personal website. She sells mainly on her Facebook page 2T Silver Co. "Dannijodesigns out of Chadron also has my jewelry and I have several other plans to get more in other places. Also have a TikTok and Instagram pages to showcase my work."

The couple have a blended family with five adult children, Taya Sterkel (Thomas), Tanner Lembke, Kassidee, Kaissee and Alex with a total of 13 grandchildren. The ranch has been in the family since 1899 and was homesteaded by our family. Their ranch is 28 miles south of Chadron right on the river half way between Alliance and Chadron.

Tonya Wasserburger moved here- from Juneau Alaska and is finding the transition quite welcoming.



Caprese Pasta Salad

- 1 (16 ounce) package fusilli pasta
- 1 cup fresh basil leaves
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan or Romano cheese
- ¼ cup pine nuts, toasted (Optional)
- 2 cloves garlic
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 1 pint cherry tomatoes, halved
- 3 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
- 4 ounces fresh mozzarella cheese, cut into strips
- salt and pepper to taste

Fill a large pot with lightly salted water and bring to a rolling boil over high heat. Once the water is boiling, stir in the fusilli, and return to a boil. Cook the pasta uncovered, stirring occasionally, until the pasta has cooked through, but is still firm to the bite, about 12 minutes. Drain.

Place basil, 1/4 cup Parmesan cheese, pine nuts, and garlic into a blender or food processor; cover and chop to a coarse paste. Add the olive oil in a slow, steady stream. Continue processing until a soft paste has formed. Set pesto aside.

Combine the cooked pasta, tomatoes, 3 tablespoons Parmesan, mozzarella, and pesto in a large bowl. Season with salt and pepper. Cover bowl, refrigerate to chill for 45 minutes, and serve.

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Kielbasa with Peppers and Potatoes

- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 1 (16 ounce) package smoked kielbasa sausage, diced
- 6 medium red potatoes, diced
- 1 red bell pepper, sliced
- 1 yellow bell pepper, sliced

Heat oil in a pan over medium heat. Place kielbasa and potatoes in the pan. Cover and cook, stirring occasionally, until potatoes are tender, about 25 minutes.

Mix bell peppers into the pan, and continue cooking until peppers are just tender, 5 minutes.

Serve and enjoy!

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Frozen Summer Slush

- 2 cups white sugar
- 7 cups water
- 4 tea bags
- 2 cups boiling water
- 1 (12 fluid ounce) can frozen lemonade concentrate
- 1 (12 fluid ounce) can frozen orange juice concentrate
- 2 cups gin

Put 7 cups water in large saucepan, and heat on high until boiling. Add sugar and stir until dissolved; set aside to cool. Place tea bags in 2 cups boiling water, and let steep until desired strength is acquired.

In a large bowl, mix together sugar water, tea, lemonade concentrate and orange juice concentrate. Stir in gin. Place in freezer container and freeze overnight.

To serve, Place several scoops into a tall glass, and fill with any clear carbonated beverage.

Northwest Rural Welcomes New Customer Service Representative

In mid-June Northwest Rural PPD welcome their new Customer Service Representative, Tonya Wasserburger. She moved back to the area she was raised after living in Juneau, Alaska where she worked at Alaska Seaplanes. Prior to that she resided in Gillette, Wyo. for 17 years where she worked at RMS. She is a 1992 Alliance High School graduate and later earned her Associates in Business Administration/Accounting at Western Nebraska Community College. She was born in St. Joseph, Mo. and was raised in many parts of Nebraska and Iowa since her father was a lineman.

Wasserburger is enjoying the social aspect of her new job and the community involvement. "I love that it is a low stress environment, office is a positive workplace and it has a great work-life balance."

She is married to Jeremy Wasserburger who is employed as a diesel mechanic. The couple have two adult daughters, Cali Ehlers (Barry) who lives in Omaha. Their other daughter Faith Rohrbouck is engaged to Matthew Sorensen and they living in Idaho Springs, Colo.

She is enjoying living in Hay Springs. "It's wonderful to not have to fight traffic on my short drive to work. Everyone has been very welcoming and friendly," Wasserburger noted.

In her spare time Tonya enjoys gardening, camping, canning, baking, quilting, dog wrangling playing cards with family. She is a member of NRA and RMEF.

On the Lighter Side....

Try This:

How smart is your right foot?

This is hysterical. You have to try this.

1. While sitting in a chair, lift your right foot off the floor and make clockwise circles.
2. Now, while doing this, draw the number '6' in the air with your right hand. Your foot will change direction. I told you so! And there is absolutely nothing you can do about it! You and I both know how stupid this it, but before the day is done you are going to try it again, if you've not already done so.

Life Lessons From a 70 Year Old...

1. Don't wait to be happy.
The perfect moment will never come. Make the most of the one you're in.
2. Health is everything
You'll only realize it when it starts to fade. Cherish and protect it now.
3. **Time doesn't come back.**
Spend it with people who make our soul feel light.
4. **Call your parents.**
One day, you'll reach for the phone... and wish you could.
5. Say "I love you" more.
Don't let your ego hold back what your your heart

wants to say.

6. Memories - Money.

No one remembers the care you drove -- just the laughter you shared.

7. Let go of grudges.

You're not punishing them... you're only hurting yourself.

8. Stop waiting.

Start that dream, take that trip, hug that person. Life doesn't pause.

9. People forget words.

But they never forget how you made them feel.

10. You're never too old.

To love again. To start over. To change. To grow.

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Knowledge... is knowing a tomato is a fruit.

Wisdom... is not putting it in a fruit salad.

Philosophy... is wondering if that means ketchup is a smoothie?

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What a privilege to be tired from work you once prayed for.
What a privilege to be challenged by a life you created on purpose.

What a privilege to outgrown things you used to settle for.
What a privilege to feel overwhelmed by growth you used to dream about.

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Hard times come, but they go too! Have a great day!

September Special Days....

- **September 5** - Be Late for Something Day
- **Sept. 7** - Grandparents Day
- **Sept. 9** - When Pigs Fly Day
- **Sept. 10**- World Suicide Prevention Day
- **Sept. 11** - Patriot Day
- **Sept. 22** - First Day of Fall

September Birthstone: Sapphire, September's birthstone, is a stunning gem once reserved for royalty and believed to facilitate communication with the divine. This precious stone has been said to bring blessings from heaven to the wearer. In ancient times, one would wear a sapphire ring while visiting an oracle to increase the odds of receiving a prophecy. These rings are also connected with 5th and 45th wedding anniversaries—as well as famous, regal wedding engagements. Discover the interesting facts, folklore, and superstitions about this powerful gem.

September's Birth Flower: Aster is a genus of herbaceous perennial flowering plants that have late-season blooms. This type of plant has groups of flowers, also known as heads, that sit within a small basket of surrounding leaves. The colorful blooms vary from white and yellow to pastel pinks, blues, purples, while some varieties are vibrant and contain vivid hues.

Office Hours:
7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
Monday- Thursday
Service Calls
After Hours:

Please call
800-847-0492 if
your call is long distance or **638-4445**
for the local Hay Springs area at all times.

We have an answering service that answers these numbers on a 24-hour basis - after hours, Saturday, Sundays and holidays. Please state legal description, account number or meter number where the outage is and your phone number when you call.

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Public Power District

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web page: <http://www.nrppd.com>

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