



## March 2010

- Feature Business:  
Natural Escapes Inc.
- Lexington Chamber Banquet
- ABLE Update
- Lexington Downtown
- Monsanto Tour
- Dawson County Career Fair
- Container Planting Class
- Homebuyer Education Class
- 2010 Job Fair
- Business and Industry  
Appreciation Day

## Natural Escapes Inc. --Cozad, Nebraska *Come Experience Nature!*

Spring has almost sprung and Natural Escapes Inc. Landscape and Nursery Services is gearing up for another successful planting season!

Natural Escapes Inc. is owned and operated by Jeremy and Bailey Koch in Cozad, Nebraska. Jeremy and Bailey began this venture upon the completion of Jeremy's Bachelors Degree in Studio Art with an emphasis in Landscape Design from Concordia University in Seward, Nebraska. Natural Escapes became an official corporation in July of 2006 and in January of 2007 the business found its home at 708 Maple Street in Cozad, specializing in landscape design, installation and maintenance, and retail sales including such items as annuals, perennials, vegetables, herbs, trees, shrubs, pond plants, pond installation kits, mulch, rock, pottery and other outdoor decor. Natural Escapes is focused on creating a place for people to come and Experience Nature! There are two greenhouses, soon to be filled with colorful blossoms as well as several outdoor spaces designed to provide customers with a realistic vision for their landscaping needs. Some examples of Natural Escapes' work

*"Our goal at Natural Escapes is to create a destination garden center where customers can 'Experience Nature.'"*

*--Jeremy Koch*

can be found throughout the Dawson County area. They manage KRVN's landscape and are constantly updating the property to keep it looking great year-round. They also manage the Cozad Community Hospital, Physical Therapy and Clinic properties as well as Eustis Body Shop landscape in Cozad and Eustis. Natural Escapes just finished installing 70 trees last fall in Cozad at Veterans Memorial Park as part of a state grant project. They have done a number of water features for customers in Cozad and Gothenburg. Spring is a busy time of year for the folks at Natural Escapes. Not only are they busy getting plants ready in the greenhouses, they are also coordinating numerous events to be held throughout the spring months. A Container Planting Class is scheduled for March 20th-28th in which participants are given the opportunity to plant a container of their choice and leave it at the greenhouse until May. Poof...an instant container full of color! Participants will also be presented with information about what to consider when planting their containers/hanging baskets. They will be turned loose in both greenhouses with over 50,000 plants to choose from. Talk about fun and easy! Natural Escapes is also planning a new program called Bloom 'Makers which will begin in April. This program is designed for the local youth to participate in a gardening activity once a month through October. Other scheduled events include: the In and Out Expo, Saturday, May 1st; Natural Escapes Open House, Saturday, May 8th; tree seminars covering proper planning and care in the Fall; and a Winter Container Class in December. The winter months are also a busy time of year for Natural Escapes as they are hard at work designing landscapes for customers with their computer generated program. They also sell poinsettias and winter containers and offer snow removal. During the winter months numerous education seminars are attended throughout the Midwest, providing Natural Escapes with the opportunity to develop great idea-sharing relationships with other landscape and nursery businesses. For all your nature needs, year-round, don't hesitate to Experience Nature with Natural Escapes. Check out their website at [www.naturalescapesinc.com](http://www.naturalescapesinc.com) or contact them at 308-784-4748 or email [naturalescapesinc@yahoo.com](mailto:naturalescapesinc@yahoo.com).



## Lexington Chamber of Commerce Banquet

### *DAD Presents Annual Awards*



DAD Executive Director Jen Wolf presented Gary Schultz (middle), owner of Platte Valley Auto, with the 2009 Partner in Progress Award. Schultz has continually assisted DAD whenever a need arises and has also become committed to giving back to the Lexington community. Also accepting the award were Todd Booth, Platte Valley Auto, and Gary Mroczek, Pony Express Chevrolet.



ABLE Coordinator, Mary Gohl, awarded Gary Reiber the 2009 ABLE Leadership Award at the annual Lexington Chamber of Commerce Banquet. Reiber, who serves as Dawson County Sheriff, is an active participant in ABLE activities, including the Dawson County Career Fair.



Deb Jensen, Community Development Coordinator, presented the Lexington Clipper Herald with a Leadership Certificate of Appreciation for their coverage of the Dawson-Gosper County Hero Flight. Terry Baker, Publisher for the Clipper Herald, accepted the award.



DAD Executive Director Jen Wolf, along with DAD Board member Dave Stenberg (left) and Lexington City Manager Joe Pepplitsch (right), accepted the Corporate Award for all their work in recruiting a Health and Human Services call center to Lexington.

# ABLE Update

It is hard to believe that Spring will soon be here, as it is snowing outside my office window. Come on sun!

The last couple weeks have been busy with meetings to help the ABLE program take the next step in educating area youth about opportunities that await them in Dawson County. After meeting with some of the area superintendents, principals, and guidance counselors, I am happy to report that everyone is on board for success! I am currently working to compile a business directory list to provide to all Dawson area teachers. This list will consist of area businesses that would be willing to come into the classroom and talk with students about their careers. The business directory will be a great resource for teachers when composing lesson plans and incorporating real world examples into their curriculum.

I have been super busy coordinating my first Dawson County Career Fair and the support I have received from the area businesses and schools has been fantastic! The fair took place March 16th at the Dawson County Fairgrounds in Lexington. Sixty area businesses and colleges were present on the 16th and about 400 students attended! It was great to see everything finally come together. A BIG "Thank You" to everyone who participated and volunteered their time. You are greatly appreciated! I will include pictures from the fair in the next newsletter.

DAD is also working with the Nebraska Workforce Development office in Lexington to coordinate an adult Job Fair on May 26th in Cozad at Chipper Hall. We have had a great response from area businesses and hope that we can get some more registered to participate soon!

I have a few other projects on the backburner, including a Vehicle Day for 1st and 2nd graders in Gothenburg. These projects have taken a backseat to the career fair but I look forward to get the ball rolling after the 16th.

As always, please do not hesitate to call or email me if you have ideas, suggestions, or comments about the ABLE program. I hope everyone has a wonderful and sun-filled March!

**Mary Gohl, ABLE Coordinator**  
**308-784-3902**  
**mgdad@cozadtel.net**



ABLE Coordinator, Mary Gohl, presented Becca Qualls, Eustis-Farnam fifth grader, with the winning trophy for the ABLE Slogan Contest. Becca's winning slogan, "ABLE...Set Your Goal," is perfect for describing what the program is about. The Eustis-Farnam fifth graders were treated with a pizza party in honor of their classmate, Becca, winning the contest.



*Happy  
St. Patrick's  
Day*

*From  
Jen, Deb & Mary*



The third ABLE house, located in Lexington at 908 Reagan, was recently tagged with graffeti. The damage estimate was around \$934.00 and should take 2-3 days to complete. Despite this setback, the rest of the house construction is going smoothly.

# Tiny Retail Spaces Part of Lexington Refresher

by Erin Doty, Lexington Clipper-Herald staff writer  
Published: Saturday, March 6, 2010, Kearney-Hub

LEXINGTON — RDG Design and Planning consultants of Omaha presented its work for the revitalization of downtown Lexington at a meeting Thursday at TierOne Bank in Lexington.

“This is a beginning,” Cory Scott of RDG said.

The final gathering boasted 15 community members, including City Manager Joe Peplitsch and Dennis Burnside, who spearheads the initiative and has coordinated the meetings and the Steering Committee/Task Force of community members engaged in the project.

“We were concerned about a plan that only addressed facades,” said Peplitsch, who thanked the team, reiterating that he was very pleased with its work.

The image includes taking advantage of public spaces to reclaim and revamp them with additional landscaping and otherwise mixed-use green space.

Burnside said he was impressed at the team members’ success in acquainting themselves with the city and downtown streets.

Several new spaces were proposed to include areas for micro-retail operations — startup businesses that might not have 1,000-plus square feet in their budget, but were looking for “incubator spaces.”

“In the future, they may graduate from here,” said Scott, “to larger spaces downtown.”

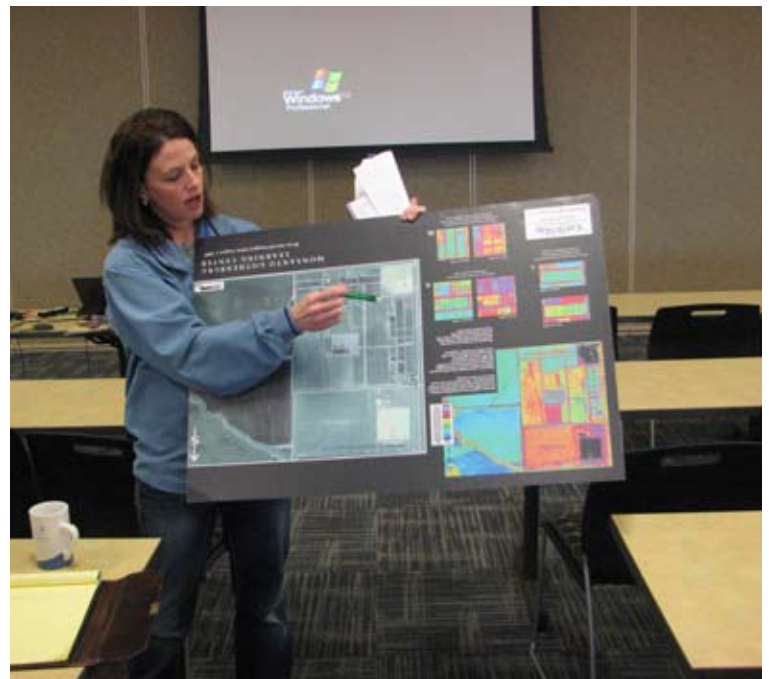
One of these targeted spaces is the old Coffee Cottage space which burned and then was demolished a few months ago. Scott and RDG proposed retail “mini-bays” instead of using the area for green space so that the city would benefit from tax revenues in the prime location at Fifth and Washington streets. The focus groups showed demand across the board for the return of a movie theater space, adding parking spaces and the addition of public child-friendly space which could be used for cultural events, play and visual appeal.

One visual element employed was the use of colored cement squares to visually tie together areas of downtown.

The team focused not only on unifying areas of downtown through visual design elements, but also to link the traffic strip between downtown and the interstate as well as Highway 30.



DAD board member Scott Fagot checks out a planter used at the Monsanto Water Utilization Learning Center located in Gothenburg. DAD toured the center, along with Nebraska Public Power employees in late February.



Amber Burge shows tour participants aerial earth maps of the Learning Center in Gothenburg. The center focuses on water utilization and allows farmers and other stakeholders the opportunity to learn about water-use efficiency technologies in agriculture.

# Dawson County Career Fair

- Universities
- Entrepreneurs
- Community Colleges
- Business Managers
- Tech/Trade Schools
- Human Resource Managers
- Community Leaders
- Job Seekers
- Parents
- Students
- Professionals



**When:** Tuesday, March 16, 2010 10:30am-1:00pm

**Where:** Dawson County Fairgrounds-Lexington, NE  
--refreshments and lunch will be provided

Dawson Area Development and the ABLE Program invite you to participate in the Annual Career Fair/Expo for high school students from Lexington, Cozad, Gothenburg, Elwood, SEM, Eustis-Farnam, Overton, and other area schools. We hope to introduce a variety of careers to the students by allowing them to participate in HANDS-ON activities such as, exploration of equipment, operating computers, and interviewing area employees and employers. Exhibitors are asked to explain skills, training (high school and beyond), wage range, and job satisfaction in their chosen careers. This is an opportunity for area businesses to promote your programs, visit with students about your business and career opportunities, and share about your career responsibilities with the students.

Please contact Mary Gohl at 308.784.3902 or [mgdad@cozadtel.net](mailto:mgdad@cozadtel.net) for details. We look forward to developing a great event for our area students and businesses.

# Container Planting Class!

Who is ready for spring?

**Natural Escapes** is...and we are inviting you to Experience Nature with us!

Join us **Saturday, March 20th thru Sunday, March 28th** for our 4th annual **Container Planting Class!**

Plant up your containers and then leave them with us to grow until May! What more could you ask for?

Hudson wants you to join him for our fourth annual **Container Planting Class** and come play in the dirt!  
**PLEASE RSVP.**

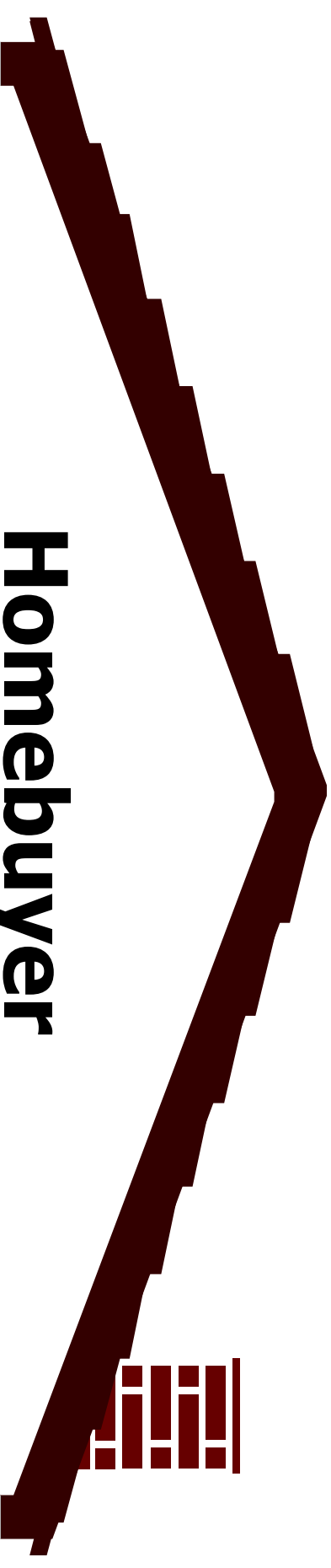


*Natural Escapes Inc.*

LANDSCAPE AND NURSERY SERVICES

**EXPERIENCE NATURE!**

708 MAPLE STREET COZAD, NE 69130 308.784.4748  
[WWW.NATURALESCAPESINC.COM](http://WWW.NATURALESCAPESINC.COM)



# Homebuyer Education Class

**Monday & Tuesday, March 29 and 30, 2010**

**Beginning at 6:00 p.m. Each evening**

**Wilson Public Library**

**910 Meridian Ave, Cozad, NE**

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## **This Class Will Assist You with All Aspects of Purchasing a Home**

- Home Inspection information
- How to Develop a Household Budget
- Mortgage information from a Lender
- Insurance/Taxes/Valuations
- Knowing & Understanding Your Credit
- What a Realtor does for you
- Insurance Do's and Don'ts
- Maintaining your home

**Pre-Registration required--Call Dawson Area Development 308-784-3902**

by Noon on Friday, March 26, 2010

**\$30 Registration Fee per household will be charged for this class**

# Dawson County

## Job Fair 2010

Presented by:

*Dawson Area Development and  
Nebraska Workforce Development*

**Wednesday, May 26th 1:00 - 6:30 pm**

**Chipper Hall -Cozad, NE**

**Meet with area employers, including:**

- Machine Operators
- Welders
- Clerical
- Telemarketing
- Truck Driving
- Labor
- Full Time
- Part Time
- Seasonal

Applicants should come prepared to be interviewed:

Proper attire, resume, work history, references-both personal and business.

*For more information or to register your business, please contact:*

*Rick Walton, Nebraska Workforce Development: 308-324-2064 or [rick.walton@nebraska.gov](mailto:rick.walton@nebraska.gov)*

*Mary Gohl, Dawson Area Development: 308-784-3902 or [mgdad@cozadtel.net](mailto:mgdad@cozadtel.net)*

# SAVE THE DATE

DAD Business and Industry Appreciation Day

Wednesday, June 9th, 2010

Cozad Country Club

1:00 p.m. - Golf

3:00 p.m. - Pitch Tournament (for non golfers)

6:00 p.m. - Steak Dinner

Please mark your calendars!

A registration form will follow in June.

