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# WEST POINT NEWS



WEST POINT, NEBRASKA

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## Sister Laura Wolf steps down as president of FSCCM Sponsored Ministries



Daniel McGinty

Sister Laura Wolf, president of the Manitowoc, Wis.-based Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity Sponsored Ministries, Inc. (FSCCM), has announced that she will step down from the role she's held since 1985.

FSCCM is the organization that oversees the Franciscan Care Services, Inc. health care facilities in West Point.

Following the recommendation of the FSCCM Board of Directors, congregational leadership of the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity named Daniel McGinty as Sister Laura's successor. McGinty, the first lay president of FSCCM, will officially assume this role June 1.

Sister Laura will serve as

senior executive advisor to the president of FSCCM.

"After 31 years of leadership, it's time for me to step aside and allow room for some fresh ideas," Sister Laura said. "I've given our ministry all I have to give in this role and look forward to working with Dan through the transition."

She said McGinty has been a part of FSCCM in one way or another for a number of years.

"He understands the Franciscan Sisters, he's committed to our mission, vision and values, and he has broad experience that would be valuable to any organization. I believe he's just what we need for our first lay president," Sister Laura said.

McGinty has served on the

FSCCM Board of Directors since 2009 and is excited about becoming the first lay president of FSCCM.

"The sisters have such a rich heritage of taking care of people's needs. Whether it be health care, long-term care, or education, they demand that the services provided in their name be done with compassion and the highest level of quality," McGinty said.

"In every town where their ministries are located they are respected and trusted. I take that very seriously and will make it my mission to continue their important work in all of our communities. I look forward to being part of extending these vital ministries into the future in a way that

reflects the Franciscan Sisters' mission and values."

McGinty most recently served as executive vice president of hospital and specialty services at Allina Health, an integrated health system in the Twin Cities. Prior to Allina, he worked in various capacities at Duluth, Minn.-based Essentia Health, including having responsibility for several acute care hospitals, long-term care facilities, and physician clinics.

He also served as administrator of Essentia's St. Mary's Medical Center, a 400-bed Catholic tertiary hospital in Duluth. From 1995 to 2001, he was president and CEO



Sister Laura Wolf

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## Restless Heart, Kevin Morris booked for fair

It's still six months away, but it's never too early to talk about the Cuming County Fair, and new Fair Board president Chad Ludwig had news to share this week.

Ludwig said Restless Heart and Kevin Morris will be the headline acts for this year's fair, set for Aug. 11-14 in West Point.

Restless Heart will perform Saturday night of the fair, Aug. 13, taking the Nielsen Community Center stage at about 9:30 p.m. Opening that night's show will be "Back 40," a Northeast Nebraska band.

Back 40 will begin its performance at 8:30.

Morris will perform in the Nielsen Center Sunday night at about 8 p.m., after the Pioneer Farm Family awards have been presented.

Ludwig said no advance tickets will be needed for either the Saturday or Sunday night show.

"The regular gate admission that gets you on the fairgrounds gets you into the show," he said.

The Fair Board booked Restless Heart and Kevin Morris after meeting in Kearney in January to look at bands and other performers available.

Restless Heart is a band that should appeal to all ages, Ludwig said. The five-member country band has had more than 25 singles on the charts, with six consecutive number one hits.

Their album "Wheels" peaked to number one in 1986. Other notable hit singles have been "That Rock Won't Roll," "I'll Still Be Loving You," "Wheels," "Why Does It Have To Be Wrong Or Right," "The Bluest Eyes In Texas," and "A Tender Lie" have all climbed to number one on the country music charts.

Morris, a country music artist, has released a handful of albums

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Willis Mahannah / West Point News

Kevin Robart climbed a ladder to check out the 27 solar panels installed on one of his barns. There are 36 panels on the roof of the barn directly behind him.

## Robart foresees day when his farm's electric meter spins backward

Kevin Robart may never complain on a hot, sunny day again. The sunnier days – and the more of them – the better, he says.

That's because 63 solar panels mounted on two of his barns convert that sunshine into enough electricity to power just about everything on his farm place nine miles south of West Point.

Working at full capacity, the solar panels should produce up to 2,000 kilowatt (kW) hours per month. Robart anticipates the panels will replace 80 to 90 percent of his farm's energy needs.

"It powers everything in the house and on the farm when it's running," Robart said.

Robart had the panels installed in November. And although he's only had three months to see what they can do, they've done enough that he's considering installing more.

Robart said he had been considering adding either a wind generator or solar panels for a long time. Then he met Dale Leuck at a farm show in Omaha.

Leuck is the founder of Solarcon Renewables, LLC, an Omaha-based company that is bringing alternative energy sources to farmers and residential areas throughout the U.S., but primarily in Nebraska, Iowa, Missouri, Kansas and Colorado. Solarcon provides several energy systems for commercial and retail clients, which include solar, wind, and geothermal. Leuck said Nebraska is behind

other states in its use of solar power, but that it's becoming a more popular topic as energy costs continue to rise. He thinks

**'They (CCPPD) put on a dual meter and it runs both ways. When it's running counter clockwise it's a good thing.'**

Kevin Robart

worst time of year," Robart said of the system's operating capability. "The snow we had cut

See **USING SOLAR**, Page 3

## Two B-R school board members are the only incumbents not filing

With the deadline having come and gone for current local office holders to say whether they will seek another term in office, it's a given that the Bancroft-Rosalie Board of Education will have at least two new members.

Tevor Bonneau was the only incumbent to file to get that job back. The two other B-R board incumbents, Doug Reil and Scott Hansen, did not file prior to Tuesday's deadline.

All incumbents of the other local offices that faced Tuesday's primary election filing deadline have indicated they will seek another term in office.

The deadline for non-incumbents to file is March 1. This year's primary election is May 10.

Incumbents who filed are: West Point Public School Board: Walter Luebbert, Bob Hoffman and Steve Blocher. West Point City Council: Debra Ell, Bruce Schlecht and Tom Swenson, in wards 1, 2 and 3, respectively.

Cuming County supervisors: John Ross, District 2; Clarence Tichota, District 4, and Steve Sill, District 6.

Wisner-Pilger School Board: A. Mark Glaubius, Jackie Kalkowski and Harlan Sateren.

Wisner City Council: Gail Anderson, Ward 2, and Christopher Liermann Sr., Ward 1.

### DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS MARCH 5

The 2016 Presidential Caucuses will take place in Nebraska on Saturday, March 5. In Cuming County, the caucus will begin at 2 p.m. at the Courthouse in West Point.

Caucus participants must be registered Democrats and will have the opportunity to register as a Democrat prior to the start of the caucus.

Democrats unable to attend the caucus can fill out a form that will allow them to request an early absentee ballot form which has to be returned to the State Democratic Party by Feb. 24. An absentee form will be mailed back to the person, who must return the form to the State Democratic Party's office by March 1.

The address of the website to get the form is: [nebraskacaucus2016.org/Absentee\\_Request.pdf](http://nebraskacaucus2016.org/Absentee_Request.pdf).

## School officials, land owners at odds over proposed property tax relief bill

By Mac Wall  
Nebraska News Service

A bill that would limit educational spending to alleviate property tax burdens was heard before the Education Committee Feb. 9.

Legislative Bill 959, introduced by Sen. Kate Sullivan of Cedar Rapids on behalf of the governor, would limit spending growth of school districts at about 3 percent annually.

It would institute a \$1.05 levy limit and cap the amount of cash reserves a school district can have, as well as require districts to bring any capital improvement proposals to a public vote.

The bill is supported by some farmers and agricultural organizations that have seen their property taxes increase 176 percent in the last decade. Because education is largely funded by property taxes, they want more

spending caps placed on school districts.

As it stands, Nebraska contributes about 50 percent of its annual property taxes to education. Nationally, property taxes only represent about 32 percent of school funding on average.

"I think its incumbent upon us as leaders to come back and address those concerns of our constituents," Gov. Pete Ricketts said, "and look at the rules we do set in regard to how can

we encourage that control in spending."

LB 959 and its companion bill, LB 958, are part of his larger tax relief plan. Both bills have seen support from statewide agriculture groups that want what they consider more sustainable tax plans.

Rod Hollman is a seventh-generation farmer from Martel. He said his family has farmed the land since the 1870s and that his property taxes have increased

more than 230 percent in 10 years.

He said farm profits are predicted to decrease but taxes aren't, which will hurt retirees – a sentiment echoed by several proponents.

Retired ranchers and farmers often rent their land out. But with the constant increases in taxes, Hollman said he doesn't think there will be enough for them to live on.

Opponents of the bill agreed

that Nebraska has problems in regard to property taxes. But they said education is not the culprit.

Mike Lucas, York's superintendent of schools, said educational spending has remained steady over the years.

"School spending is not the problem," he said. "The last decade, school spending has increased by 3.5 percent annually."

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