

## Archery range preparing to open

Written by hebronjournal

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A city-owned vacant lot on 4th Street between Holdrege and Park Avenue is being prepared for open range archery through enthusiastic volunteers who took an idea from Thayer Central high school students and brought it to life.

Focus groups of seniors and sophomores were asked about what Hebron could do for its youth. Their answers were compiled and the data showed Hebron youth were after more attractions. Archery was named more than once.

Michael Logsdon's children are under age 10, but they already know how to handle a bow. "Some youth archery can start around four or five," he said. They start by learning about the bow, safety and technique.

Logsdon was one of the volunteers at the range a couple of weeks ago setting up the target frames after Matt Taylor dragged them from a space near the river using a four-wheeler. Buchannan Tietjen was helping Logsdon set the frames, which are staggered for yard distance. Chris Fangmeier, the city administrator, mowed. More volunteers were expected that evening. "It started with sitting around a table and coming up with a vision. We thought about who it was going to be for and a timeline," Logsdon said. "We're finally here."

Taylor, a game warden in the state game and parks commission's southeast district, said the range is more of a community project that isn't limited to those preparing to hunt.

"It's for everyone and a really good idea to get more kids outdoors," he said. "I like to shoot. It's fun for everyone." He thinks the range is in a good location.

Its backdrop across 4th Street is an open space with the walking trail. Shooters will face east, away from 4th Street, to fire their arrows.

Grant funds from the Little Blue Natural Resources District (\$8,600 for picnic tables and river access), Rocky Mountain Elks Foundation (\$750 for targets) and National Wild Turkey Federation (\$1,000 for targets and the carport shelter). The range will feature 3D targets, and a 20 x 28 cement pad and 18 x 26 carport for spectators to sit in the shade.

Two grills were donated by Nebraska Game and Parks.

"We've received a lot of donations," Jana Tietjen said. "We've had a great supportive group of people."

The city pitched in approximately \$7,000 of sales city tax that was earmarked by the city council last year.

"We're hoping to host tournaments and bring people to town," city administrator Chris Fangmeier said. "It's a lifelong sport. You learn when you're younger and you can do it for the rest of your life."

The range falls under the city's park system.

Work on access to the river will begin soon, Tietjen said.

Businesses and Norris Public Power District also contributed to the targets, skids and tin for the tops of the targets. Volunteers put the targets together and made the bow racks.

Tietjen said 4H kids are anxious to chip in and will get their chance when it comes time to paint the non-adhesive, layered fiber board that won't damage arrows.

She said the range will be used by 4H for practices.

"We're hoping to have fun with different archery clubs in the area and host some practices," she said. "I foresee a couple of fundraising shoots for maintenance."

As for the name of the archery range, organizers are thinking of a contest.

"We put a lot of thought into it. Since they (high school students) were really the ones who

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sparked this, we thought it would be a fun contest,” Tietjen said.

Students at Thayer Central already participate in indoor archery through National Archery in the Schools, a program that introduces archery into physical education to teach life skills, such as patience and discipline. The NASP website describes archery as a sport for everyone, regardless of size or athletic ability.

“I’m interested to see how many people will use it,” Taylor said.