

St. Patrick's Day in America

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Norris takes on Bennington at state

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Friday, March 13, 2026

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## Firefighters battle grass fires

Large one jumps U.S. 77, closes highway

ROB SCHLOTTERBECK  
Daily Sun editor

Firefighters from multiple agencies battled high winds as well as grass fires north and south of Beatrice Thursday afternoon.

Fire districts were busy in other counties, too, as the dry conditions made it easy for any blaze that started to spread quickly.

The largest fire in Gage County started near U.S. 77 and Hickory Road shortly after 1 p.m. It eventually jumped the highway, leading to evacuations of nearby homes and a truck stop. As the fire continued north, homes along Elm Road east of the highway were also evacuated.

Several area agencies came to help Beatrice Rural Fire with this blaze,

including Beatrice Fire & Rescue, Blue Springs, Clatonia, Cortland, DeWitt, Diller, Filley, Homestead and Plymouth. Firefighters summoned road graders and discers to help contain the fires, and tank trucks from Farmers Cooperative brought in fresh supplies of water.

Northbound U.S. 77 was shut down north of the Walmart at about 2:30 p.m. Southbound traffic was being diverted at Pickrell Road by 3:15.

Around 3:30, the incident commander said that fire was contained, freeing up resources to send to a fire near U.S. 77 and Oak Road that was reported at 3:10.

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LOOK: To see more photos from Thursday's fires, point your smartphone camera at the QR code, then tap the link. NEWSVU



ROB SCHLOTTERBECK, DAILY SUN EDITOR

Firefighters fight a grass fire on Hickory Road west of U.S. 77 on Thursday.

### COMMUNITY

## ANNIVERSARY EXHIBIT



CHRISTINA LYONS, DAILY SUN

Executive director of Gage County Historical Society and Museum talks about the Venetian Nights fundraiser and the history of the parades on the Big Blue River from 1913 to 1927.

## America 250 celebrations planned in addition to display of Civil War era flag

CHRISTINA LYONS  
Daily Sun staff writer

The Gage County Historical Society and Museum is benefiting through some grant funding that is allowing it to offer some new programming and exhibits.

Executive director Cassandra Dean spoke to the Beatrice Noon Kiwanis on Wednesday. She reported that the museum recently received an \$1,500 grant from the Nebraska State Historical Society to purchase 40 to 50 archival safe boxes.

She passed around photos of cardboard boxes stacked in the museum.

"Each of these boxes may contain 500 documents," she said. "We have a volunteer that comes in and inventories each box and puts the items in a spreadsheet with a catalog number and a description with the subject matter."

The museum has archives of the Mennonite Hospital, Store Kraft, and Steel Tank and Tote Systems, just to name a few. There are also

archives from clubs, organizations and families from throughout Gage County.

"Each month a committee goes through items in a box and determines whether it's worthy to keep in the collection or whether or not we send them to other museums. Right now, we have around 750 items that still need archived into our collection and to receive a catalog number," she said.

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## Iran's new leader vows to keep up attacks

JON GAMBRELL, GHAYA BEN MBAREK, SARAH EL-DEEB AND JULIE WATSON  
Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — Iran's secretive new leader issued his first public statements Thursday, resolving to keep fighting, promising more pain for Gulf Arab states and threatening to open "other fronts" in a war that already disrupted world energy supplies, the global economy and international travel.

Supreme Leader Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei is close to Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard and is widely seen as even less compromising than his father, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. His location is unknown, and he is likely a prime target for the U.S. and Israel.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu denounced Khamenei as a "puppet of the Revolutionary Guards."

"It is in your hands," Netanyahu said at a news conference, addressing the Iranian people. "We are creating the optimal conditions for the fall of the regime."

And in western Iraq, rescue efforts were underway after an American military refueling plane went down. U.S. Central Command, which oversees the Middle East, said the mishap involved two aircraft, including one that landed safely, and the cause was not caused by hostile or friendly fire.

A U.S. official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the KC-135 aircraft that crashed had at least five crew members aboard. It was not immediately clear if there were casualties.

US military refueling plane goes down in Iraq; rescue is underway

Since the start of the war, U.S. and Israeli strikes targeted security checkpoints in Iran to undermine the government's ability to suppress dissent, according to Armed Conflict Location and Event Data, the U.S.-based independent monitoring group known as ACLED.

Khamenei said in a statement read by a state TV news anchor that he keeps a "file of revenge." He did not appear on camera and has not been seen since his father and wife were killed Feb. 28 in the war's opening salvo, which also wounded him, according to an Iranian ambassador.

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