

NU must fund stadium renovations and a football roster, but the two don't have to be at odds. **Sports**



Gov. Jim Pillen says his cabinet has helped to reduce spending. **Midlands, Page A3**

Omaha World-Herald

TUESDAY, APRIL 21, 2026

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Nonprofit planning store near 25th, Lake

The Heart Ministry Center would operate the North Omaha grocery store in an area considered a food desert

JULIE ANDERSON
World-Herald Staff Writer

At a time when others in the neighborhood have shuttered, the Heart Ministry Center is working on plans to build and operate a new 25,000-square-foot grocery store on a vacant parcel southwest of 25th and Lake Streets.

Damany "Dom" Rahn, CEO of the nonprofit center based at 24th and Binney Streets, said the organization continues to raise funds to secure the capital needed for construction, operations and long-term sustainability. The center grew out of a ministry established by North Omaha's Sacred Heart Church some 40 years ago.

"We want to be here long after I'm gone," he said.

The Omaha Planning Board on April 1 approved a zoning change needed to move the project forward. The store, which would be independent rather than operating under known brands, would be built on 2.75 acres. The center plans to launch a series of community listening sessions for residents next month about the store and its offerings.

Although there's no final price tag yet for the project, plans call for the center to break ground this fall, he said. Some 50,000 residents live within a 3.5-mile radius, but the store, situated not far off U.S. Highway 75 and a Metro bus line, would be open to everyone.

Not only would it fill a void in the community by expanding access to fresh, quality food in an area considered a food desert, he said, it also would create approximately 30 jobs for graduates of the center's Fresh Start job training program and for community members. As with the center's other businesses, or "social enterprises," revenues would be reinvested in the center's programming rather than going elsewhere in the community.

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The BrightSide

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Where good news lives.

AI brief

The Nebraska Supreme Court temporarily suspends an Omaha attorney who now admits he used AI. **Midlands, Page A3**

Weather

High: 86 **Low:** 58
Very warm **Details:** A10

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CHRIS MACHIAN PHOTOS, THE WORLD-HERALD

Tim Conn stands in front of his "blue wave" and "Blue Dot" signs in the front yard of his home in the Dundee neighborhood in Omaha last week. Conn said the field of Democrats running in the 2nd Congressional District is excellent.

'Blue Dot' voters weigh in on 'risk' in CD2 race

JOSH REYES
World-Herald Staff Writer

Democrats running for Nebraska's 2nd Congressional District race have increasingly drawn attention to the candidate at the top of the polls to say a vote for State Sen. John Cavanaugh is a vote that could imperil the "Blue Dot."

That message has appeared in local and national reporting and is now in television and online advertising. And in the Dundee neighborhood, part of Cavanaugh's legislative district and the birthplace of the "Blue Dot," the message clearly penetrated. For some, it struck a chord.

Speaking on their front porches, sidewalks and living rooms, residents shared pride in the "Blue Dot" moniker and said they enjoyed the national prominence it has brought to Omaha. They were also optimistic about flipping the congressional seat and commended their many options on the primary ballot.

All 15 who spoke to The World-Herald about four weeks ahead of the primary were aware of the concerns raised with Cavanaugh's potential election. But none



A "blue wave" sign is in Patty Coyle's front yard in the Dundee area.

said it would be the leading factor in how they cast their ballot.

The most important thing, many said, is electing the person they feel is best suited to win the general election and stand up to President Donald Trump.

Many residents sporting "Blue Dot" signs affirmed their plan to vote in the Democratic primary, but still a few weeks from the election, they said they had not dug into candidates' backgrounds or

platforms yet.

Claire Anderson Hubbard had her hands full with a new baby but said she's talked with her parents, who live in CD2 as well, about the importance of the election. She's familiar with the concerns about Cavanaugh other candidates have pushed, but she said that, on its own, would not deter her from voting for him.

Please see **'BLUE DOT'**, Page A2

OPS takes steps toward literacy goal

The district is using instructional feedback as part of its effort to get all students reading on grade level

LUNA STEPHENS
World-Herald Staff Writer

There were some new faces in Lisa Mahoney's seventh grade reading class at King Science & Technology Middle School on Thursday morning.

As she met with students in pairs to practice reading skills, a handful of adults overheard what Mahoney and students were saying and the tasks students were completing.

The group of middle school principals, teachers and school

and district staff was conducting instructional rounds. The practice is a central part of the Omaha Public Schools' work toward the goal of having all students reading on grade level by 2030.

King Science Principal Jane Laughlin said she was part of a cohort that visited Harvard University to learn about instructional rounds from pioneers in the practice. Based on the practice of medical rounds, instructional rounds involve having different leaders observe what is happening in the classroom, finding patterns in observations and finding opportunities for improvement.

Laughlin said school leaders started discussing implementing instructional rounds last school year and did the first rounds



CHRIS MACHIAN, THE WORLD-HERALD

Justin Thomalla, a secondary education coordinator with OPS, and social studies teacher Cory Nieland, right, observe a seventh grade reading class at King Science Middle School. They were part of a team conducting instructional rounds at the school as the district works toward its goal of improving literacy.

Please see **LITERACY**, Page A4