**N E W S R E L E A S E**

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***Panhandle Safety & Wellness Conference & Awards Luncheon slated for September 20 at the Gering Civic Center***

National motivational speaker, Jeanne Sexson, will be kicking off the Panhandle Safety and Wellness Conference in Gering with an interactive, upbeat, and very practical session providing suggestions to make us more resilient and able to “go the distance.” She’ll close the day by helping us learn how the role of humor affects health, productivity, and our ability to break the power of the past to get a better grip on present challenges.

The largest safety and wellness conference in Western Nebraska is looking forward to hosting a variety of top-notch keynote and breakout sessions addressing the latest concerns and trends in the field. They’ve switched up session lengths to keep topics engaging. Some of the topics include mental well-being, stretches and brain-boosting activities for efficiency, smart snacking on the job, wellness plan legal update, addressing domestic violence in the workplace, and practical solutions for bullying and aggressive behaviors.

“It is exciting to bring such a high quality speaker line-up to the area,” said Jessica Davies, Assistant Health Director and Co-Coordinator of the conference. “Organizations from around the area use this opportunity to learn the latest strategies in keeping employees healthy and safe, key for employee retention, productivity, and morale.”

“We are also honored to recognize Chadron Community Hospital, Cirrus House Inc., Mobius/Hemingford Telephone Company, and Regional West Health Services at the awards luncheon for their exemplary wellness programs,” Davies added.

Area businesses should plan to bring their safety and wellness committees, managers, HR professionals, and any other employees for this exciting, local opportunity to learn something new. Early bird registration ends August 31 so they encourage people get registered early with special discounts provided the more employees that are registered from a company.

The conference is coordinated by the Panhandle Worksite Wellness Council and the Nebraska Safety Council with sponsor organizations:

**Gold Level** –Chadron Community Hospital, Panhandle Public Health District, Regional West Health Services, and Scotts Bluff County Health Department

**Silver Level** – Western Nebraska Community College and Panhandle Coop

For additional information about worksite wellness, visit www.pphd.org/pwwc.html or call Davies at 308-487-3600 extension 101. The Panhandle Worksite Wellness Council is proudly part of Panhandle Public Health District. The Council specializes in supporting employers in the Panhandle region. We recognize that many employers support a diverse and remote workforce and offer innovative ways to overcome the challenge of working with a virtual team. We understand that many of our employers do not have full-time wellness resources and work to provide resources and training to make running a worksite wellness program as easy as possible.

Panhandle Public Health District is working together to improve the health, safety and quality of life for all who live, learn, work and play in the Panhandle.  Our vision is that we are a healthier and safer Panhandle community.