

Nebraska Project Networking Guide

2001



Developed in Partnership by

Nebraska Department of Economic Development
Nebraska Great Plains Resource Conservation & Development



Introduction

Welcome to the 2001 Nebraska Project Networking Guide. This guide is designed to be a tool for community leaders to transform their ideas into reality. Community leaders can use this guide to network with other communities and learn from their successes and challenges.

Each year Nebraska Community Improvement Program (NCIP) participants complete approximately 400 community improvement projects. The projects are submitted to the Nebraska Department of Economic Development for judging by a team of experts from various communities and professions. Nebraska investor-owned utility companies provide cash awards and plaques at the annual NCIP Banquet, which is held in November.

The projects are divided into three general categories:

- 1) Leadership Development*
- 2) Community Development*
- 3) Economic Development*

The topic areas were determined by the NCIP Advisory Committee and reflect the NCIP judging categories.

Each project is listed by a title, followed by a brief description, and then a contact name and phone number. The contact name listed with each project was designated by the community to be the project director or community contact. Communities who are planning or starting a project can contact individuals from other communities who were involved in similar completed projects for information and ideas.

New editions of the guide are created annually as new NCIP community projects are completed.

NCIP would like to thank: the communities that contributed projects; Great Plains Resource Conservation & Development for printing the guide; and Kara Heideman, NCIP Assistant, who compiled the guide.

We hope that you find the 2001 Nebraska Project Networking Guide useful.

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Leadership Development

Volunteer and Leadership Development

Family Stars on Christmas Tree, Allen (2000) – An evergreen tree was placed in the middle of Main Street and decorated by residents, young and old. Allen families personalized their own plywood stars, which were later hung on the tree. A family fun night was held in conjunction with a tree lighting ceremony. Contact Dwight Johnson or Marcia Rastede at (402) 635-2214.

Career Empowerment, Alliance (2000) – Unemployed or underemployed residents of Alliance are given the opportunity to improve their skills through the Adult Basic Education Career Project. In 2000, more than 50 volunteers trained potential workers in the areas of job readiness, life management, technical skills, demonstration of competencies and presentation of success. Another available resource, the Career Closet, supplies professional clothing and accessories for the interview process. Contact Maurine Roller at (308) 763-2926.

Beautification of Cowboy Trail, Atkinson (2000) – The Cowboy Trail, Atkinson's Main Street and even the city's trash cans were beautified and improved thanks to the volunteer efforts of citizens, young and old. Contact Nancy Kopejtka at (402) 925-5313.

Operation of Theater/Youth Center, Aurora (2000) – Volunteers make The Cellar Youth Center, and the 12th Street Cinema popular attractions for residents of Aurora. The Youth Center use volunteers to minimize operational costs and make the center accessible to all. Cinema volunteers sell tickets and concessions, operate the projector, and clean the theater after each show. Contact Merwyn Davidson at (402) 694-2491.

Volunteer and Leadership Development, Chappell (2000) – Chappell's many volunteer and leadership development activities include participation in the South Panhandle Community Builders, and a community and economic development retreat. A Welcome to Chappell banquet helped new residents feel more at home, and allowed all residents to participate in a community improvement survey. The Chappell Improvement Council recognizes "Volunteers of the Month" and a "Volunteer of the Year." Contact Linda Walmsley at (308) 874-3260.

Recognition and Appreciation, Dundy County (2000) – The community of Benkelman hosts ribbon cutting ceremonies and presents First Dollar of Profit plaques to its new businesses. Volunteers are recognized with the annual "Good Guy Award." New residents are presented with welcome baskets. Contact Diane Larimer at (308) 423-2459.

Goals Setting, Farnam (2000) – The Farnam NCIP committee sponsored a supper to celebrate the past year's accomplishments, recognize volunteers, and set goals for the next year. Community members selected the projects they most wanted to complete during 2000, then committees were formed to accomplish the work. Contact Dan Widick at (308) 569-2333.

Melodrama/Scholarship Program, Goehner (2000) – The Goehner Centennial Players put on 28 performances of their annual melodrama. Proceeds from the event go to scholarships for local students, assistance for needy families, and community projects. More than 200 volunteers contributed to the melodrama that drew 4,863 people. Contact Lloyd Schulz at (402) 523-5025.

Remembering the Past, Gothenburg (2000) – When Gothenburg was named a Community of the Century, residents held a Community of the Century Celebration and Volunteer Appreciation Open House to highlight past accomplishments and focus on the future. Celebration and open house attendees completed interest/needs surveys. Local organizations displayed information and welcomed new members. Contact Kelly Trotter at (308) 537-3763.

Volunteers, Volunteers, Volunteers, Mason City (2000) – Volunteers raised funds and purchased Mason City's rodeo grounds ensuring continuation of the rodeo. Fundraisers included a pancake supper and letters to local alumni. Volunteers also repaired livestock chutes, sold program ads, and took tickets for the rodeo. Contact Irwin Hawkins at (308) 732-3379.

Relay for Life, Nebraska City (2000) – More than \$59,000 was raised in Nebraska City as part of the Relay for Life event. Participants organized a variety of activities leading up to the event. 614 walkers (including 50 youth) helped make the event a success. Contact Leon Schiermeyer at (402) 873-3306.

Sidney Area Leadership Tomorrow (2000) – Participants in Sidney Area Leadership Tomorrow (SALT) are enrolled in a nine-month leadership development program. They attend workshops on topics, such as economic development, health and human services, and communication and technology. Sessions focus on how the community operates, and how various entities provide resources to community residents. Contact Connie Hancock at (308) 254-4455.

Volunteer Capital of Nebraska, Stromsburg (2000) – Stromsburg residents compiled a list of all volunteer, leadership, and mentoring activities involving community members. The grand total was 39,880 volunteer hours contributed to organizations and activities, such as the library, Partners in Education and the Swedish Festival. Contact Carolyn Nordberg at (402) 764-3691.

Wallace Community Lions Club (2000) – Since its organization in 1999, the Wallace Lions Club has been active in the community. Club members sponsored a visit from a mobile hearing and vision-screening unit, helped a local citizen access Radio Talking Book services, and improved the community's park. Contact Travis McConnell and Helen McConnell at (308) 387-4317.

Volunteers Leading the Way, Wymore (2000) – Wymore, Odell, and Diller hosts a yearly banquet to recognize volunteers. The Family Unifying Network, Inc., hosts an annual Volunteer Recognition Dinner for its volunteers. Contact Julie Everson at (402) 645-3621.

Youth Involvement and Leadership Development

Long Pine Hiking Trail, Ainsworth (2000) – Ainsworth Middle School students constructed a $\frac{3}{4}$ mile nature trail within Long Pine State Park. The project gave students the chance to observe and identify microhabitats in the region; analyze diverse plant and animal life; and identify various soil formations. Two teachers, who developed the project, allowed the students to run with it. Contact Marjorie Wilkins or Dale Mundorf at (402) 387-2469 or (402) 387-2082.

Teen Clean Gang, Auburn (2000) – Auburn High School students organized weekly community cleanup activities as a part of the Teen Clean Gang. They cleaned up the Legion Park and the fairgrounds, and participated in a citywide cleanup. They also attend Chamber of Commerce meetings as a part of a Litter Cleanup Ad Hoc committee. Contact Heather Heskett at (402) 824-6575.

First Grade Long Term Care Project, Bassett (2000) – Bassett first-grade students visit residents of the Rock County Long Term Care Center once a month. They bring their adopted grandparents decorations they have made in art class. They also read to the residents and help them plant flowers. Contact Cheryl Hart and Robin Tuttle at (402) 684-3855.

Youth Involvement and Leadership Development, Chappell (2000) – Chappell youth participate in a variety of community activities. Students serve on the Improvement Council, and the Lake Improvement Committee. Members of FFA, and high school students in Art and American Government classes worked on projects benefiting the community. The work of 39 students was recognized with a Volunteer Service medal. Contact Milt Rogers at (308) 874-296.

Youth Involvement in Our Community, Coleridge (2000) – Coleridge youth of all ages are involved in their community. A group called ‘The Highlighters’ volunteers at the Nursing Home. Youth also help organize the Jimmy Collins Memorial Softball Tournament, and the Golf Best Ball Tournament. Contact Don Feelhaver at (402) 283-4247.

Family Resource Center, Dundy County (2000) – The Family Resource Center sponsors activities for Dundy County youth that include trips to the Lied Center for Performing Arts and Nebraska Unicameral in Lincoln, a New Year’s Eve party for junior and senior high school students, and a Drug- and Alcohol-Free Kid’s Club. The center received the Family Community Friendly Award for its efforts to develop strong families through community leadership and involvement. Contact Mary Parker at (308) 423-2498.

Youth In Action, Eustis (2000) – The Eustis-Farnam Student Council recently repainted cement curbing around the circle drive in front of the school. Student council members were involved in all aspects of the project, including getting price estimates, securing supplies, and scheduling work. Contact Susan Strong at (308) 486-5560.

Youth Involvement, Farnam (2000) – Farnam youth worked with the Farnam Economic Development Corporation to complete a number of activities. They planned a booth for the annual carnival, held a Pampered Chef party, and a couple youth auctioned two hours of their time with proceeds from all activities going to the Corporation. In addition, they spruced up city flowerbeds, participated in Trash-Off activities, and repainted the “Welcome to Farnam” mural. Contact Ricky Sue Wach at (308) 367-5223.

Benjamin's Story, Franklin (2000) – When Franklin third-grader Benjamin was diagnosed with cancer his classmates brainstormed ways to include him in as many classroom activities as possible. They videotaped the first day of school, e-mailed him at the hospital, and provided treats for his family and caregivers. In return, Benjamin made a video of what he was going through for his classmates and teachers. Contact Marilyn Hays, Valerie Scott, or Beth Johnson at (308) 425-6283.

Youth Involvement and Leadership Development, Gothenburg (2000) – The Gothenburg Youth Community Improvement Program (YCIP) is involved in many activities, including a community-wide garage sale, answering letters to Santa, and a paint exchange. They assist with the Meals on Wheels program, Veteran's Poppy Day, and the State and National Cornhusking Contests. YCIP also has a voting member on the Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors and a representative on the Lied Main Street Board. Contact Jan Lipska at (308) 537-7817.

Youth Leadership Activities, Hubbell (2000) – Hubbell youth are active in their community and high school. The Chester-Hubbell-Byron boys' basketball team won the state championship in their division, receiving the Sportsmanship Award. Students attended the Sophomore Pilgrimage, National Youth Leadership Forum on Law, and many other school functions. Contact Brenda Rippe at (402) 768-6045.

Community Quiz Bowl, Kimball (2000) – The Community Quiz Bowl Challenge, developed by Kimball High School students pits teams of Kimball High School students and faculty against community members. Contact Kimball Senior High School Student Council at (308) 235-4861.

Prairie Rhythms Youth Focus, Kimball (2000) – A grant from the Nebraska Community Cultural Development Partnership enabled Kimball to develop a community-wide cultural program. As part of the program, junior high school students researched one of three themes and developed displays or presentations. The themes were Hearth and Home, Birth of a Business, and History Starts Here. Contact Kathleen O'Brien at (308) 235-4861.

Youth Excellence, Mason City (2000) – Although Mason City youth attend three different schools, they are still involved in their community. They assisted with a community survey, participated in a community cleanup project, and worked with the recycling program. Contact Kathy Burns at (308) 732-3222.

Youth Meet the Challenge, Maywood (2000) – Maywood High School students designed a mural titled a "Walk Thru Time." Located in downtown Maywood, the mural depicts the history of the village. With grant funding, the students were able to hire an artist to help them with their project. Students painted an additional mural on a building that needed improving. Contact Lynne Wilson at (308) 362-4282.

Youth Community Service Scholarship, Mead (2000) – Chris Gustafson, a former Mead High School student, initiated a youth community service scholarship designed for a student who volunteers a number of community service hours or implements a new program in the community. School at the Center and the Nebraska Rural Development Commission provided assistance and financial contributions. Mead citizens donated half of the money. Contact Dalene Selko at (402) 624-2255.

Camp Catron Fundraising and Facilities Expansion, Nebraska City (2000) – Nebraska City residents were active in raising capital to build the Lorraine Kimmel Lodge at Camp Catron near Nebraska City. The Bison sports complex also was developed. Youth from a number of organizations are able to use these facilities. Contact Debbie Salansky at (402) 873-4285.

Pompon Dance Team, Neligh (2000) – The Neligh-Oakdale High School Pompon Dance Team received a number of awards at camps and competitions. One member was selected to participate in the Aloha Bowl half-time show. The team prepares routines for games, banquets and pep rallies, and organizes a mini-dance workshop for elementary and junior high school students. Contact Jane Lichtenberg at (402) 887-4447.

Youth Involvement, Pawnee County (2000) –Pawnee County youth participate in a number of volunteer projects through organizations such as FFA, FCCLA, and 4-H Clubs. The Pawnee City FFA holds a farm safety day camp; the Lewiston FCCLA conducted a canned food drive; and the Tiger Country 4-H Club participated in an adopt-a-grandparent program. Contact Teresa Spier at (402) 852-2444.

Explosive Youth Involvement in Petersburg (2000) – Youth from Petersburg are involved in many community betterment projects. They serve on a Youth Center Board that supervises the Youth Center, a vital part of the community. The whole school also participated in a community clean-up day. Contact Bernie Cunningham at (402) 386-5368.

Youth Involvement, Seward (2000) – The annual Fourth of July celebration in Seward, Nebraska’s official Fourth of July City is put on by high school students. Over 100 youth spend nearly 4,000 hours planning and carrying out the festivities. This year’s schedule had 107 events, shows and exhibits. Seward’s Fourth of July tradition has been going strong for over 30 years. Contact Clark Kolterman at (402) 643-6138.

Volunteens, Sidney (2000) – Volunteens is an opportunity for youth to interact in a multi-generational setting as they offer assistance and support to the elderly, the staff, and day care employees of the Sidney Memorial Health Center and Extended Care Facility. The program attracts about 15 junior and senior high school volunteers each year. Contact Carolin Roehr at (308) 254-4558.

Science Flair, Sidney (2000) – Fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students can participate in a non-competitive science fair. It is an opportunity for students and their parents to select, complete, and present a science project at an open house. The high school Science Club provided their expertise and the Parent Advisory Club provided funds. Contact Carolin Roehr at (308) 254-4558.

The Sophomore Career Expo, Sidney (2000) – Sophomores in Cheyenne County have the opportunity to learn about careers available to them in their community at the Sophomore Career Expo. The Cheyenne County Chamber of Commerce puts on the Career Expo. Local businesses donated their time, as well as money. Contact Karen Kollars at (308) 254-5851.

Superior FFA Chapter—“Reaching Out” (2000) – The Superior High School FFA Chapter completed a number of projects including a food, floral and field show, a pasture golf outing, and a tobacco awareness program for elementary students. In a joint erosion control project with the Jewell County Kansas Soil Conservation Service, the Chapter planted over 1000 trees along the Republican River. Contact Dave Barnard at (402) 879-3257.

Boy Scout Outdoor Classrooms Project, Syracuse (2000) – The Boy Scout Venturing Program Crew of Syracuse assisted the Nemaha Resource District in the construction of an outdoor classroom at Wirth Brothers Lake. They did research on the plants that would be the most suitable, designed and built a footbridge, and cleared the area. Contact Lynee Giddings at (402) 269-3286.

Syracuse FFA Community Development Activities (2000) – Over 1800 hours of community service were donated to the community by the Syracuse FFA Chapter. Projects included a farm safety day camp, paper recycling, and an Internet class for farmers. They also distributed holiday food baskets and gave toy tractors to needy children. Contact Tim Arkfeld at (402) 259-3395.

Community Development

Public Works, Facilities, and Services

Community Centers

Renovation of the Recreation Center Gymnasium for Special Functions, Burchard (2000) – In 1998, the Burchard Schoolhouse was converted into a recreation center with bedrooms, a game room, gymnasium, and kitchen. The kitchen was recently turned into The Hungry Buzzard Café and serves Sunday breakfast. The gymnasium was converted into banquet/party room and dance floor. Contact Anne Gardner at (402) 865-9975.

Educational Facilities and Services

Citizens for a Better Community, Ainsworth (2000) – Volunteers in Ainsworth promoted the school and city bond issue by contacting their fellow citizens through phone calls, pamphlets, and door-to-door visits. A speaker bureau committee was also set up to attend every community event and organization. Both the city and school bond election passed, which resulted in renovations at the schools and a new community building that will house the city offices and meeting facilities, as well as a gymnasium that will be shared with the school. Contact John McLane at (402) 387-2333.

Energizing Elementary Youth, Alliance (2000) – With at \$104,000 Excellence in Education Grant, small mobile computers were purchased for Emerson Elementary School students. Students whose parents attended a training session on the computers were allowed to take the computers home. The students also held a special theme day. Community members gave presentations on a number of topics and businesses donated to the event. Students put together a Nebraska history book called Nebraska A to Z. The book was published and a grant from the Alliance Public Schools Foundation allowed the students to buy the books for a reduced price. Contact the Alliance School Foundation at (308) 762-4093.

Improving Our Public Facilities, Chappell (2000) – Grant funding and donations provided funding for a number of projects in Chappell. Improvements included: new lights for the outdoor basketball court, new football scoreboard, 25 new computers, and new surface for the track. Contact Jeff West at (308) 874-2911.

Continued Learning-Distance Learning Center, Coleridge (2000) – Over \$100,000 was raised in Coleridge for the addition of a distance learning center. The center will bring classes to Coleridge High School students that are not otherwise available. The center will also be used for night classes for community members. Contact Kevin Krei at (402) 283-4340.

Planning for the Future, Gothenburg (2000) – An audit of the Gothenburg School District revealed that the facilities needed to be repaired or replaced. A Facility Task Force was created to examine the options for changes. Contact Gary Fritch at (308) 537-3651.

Nebraska Center for the Education of Children Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired, Nebraska City (2000) – The Nebraska Department of Education developed a new plan to deliver services to the blind or visually impaired. The new center formed partnerships with Nebraska City organizations. Local students also volunteer at the center. Contact Sally Giittinger at (402) 873-5513.

Southern Public Interactive Network, Wymore (2000) – With a \$90,900 grant from the Excellence in Education Council a virtual reality technology program was developed at Southern Public Schools. As a part of this program, teachers and students learned new technology students developed a web page for the city, researched the railroad and developed a digital panorama of the railroad depot. Contact Mary Grabowski at (402) 645-3326.

Emergency Fire and Rescue

Continuing Community Service and Safety Education, Coleridge (2000) – The Coleridge Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad hold a Fireman's Ball and Fun Night to raise funds for equipment. The Rescue Squad gives tours to schoolchildren each year. They also conduct a bicycle safety course. The fire department tracks storms by computer and also has their own website. Contact George Hefner at (402) 283-4318.

Construction of Fire Hall, Dannebrog (2000) – The Dannebrog Rural and District Fire Departments combined to serve as one taxing district. A new fire hall was built that included a meeting/training room. Contact Wayne Lauritsen at (308) 226-2268.

Eustis Fire & Rescue Expansion (2000) – The Eustis Fire Hall was expanded to house the additional equipment purchased by the Fire Department and Rescue Squad. The addition was dedicated with an open house and dance for the community and surrounding area. Contact Mari Banzhaf at (308) 486-5611.

Health and Safety, Mason City (2000) – The Firemen and EMTs in Mason City attend continuing education classes throughout the year. They also hold fundraisers to raise money for equipment. Fundraisers included a raffle and the Broken Bow Million Dollar Hole-in-One. Contact Charles Zimmer or Irwin Hawkins at (308) 732-3379.

Regional Meeting/Training and Disaster Relief Headquarters Facility, North Central RC&D Council (2000) – With a grant from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development, the North Central Nebraska RC&D Council built a regional disaster-relief headquarters in Bassett. The facility is used for meetings and training for the six county region. Funding was also provided by the North Central Nebraska RC&D, the City of Bassett, the Bassett/Rock County Chamber of Commerce and the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service. Contact Gene Lehnert at (402) 684-3346

Emergency Medical Technicians, Superior (2000) – The Superior Area Volunteer EMT Squad responds to nearly 200 ambulance calls each year. They also provide stand-by services at school and other activities. There were also participants in a Docu Drama depicting an alcohol related accident at Superior High School. Thirty hours of training is provided each year. Contact Cindy Bates at (402) 879-3281.

Government Facilities

City Hall Millennial Move, Mitchell (2000) – A building on Mitchell’s Main Street was renovated and now houses the Mitchell City Offices and Police Department. The new location is accessible to all residents and is used for a variety of community functions. Students from Mitchell High School designed the sign on the front of the building. Contact Carol Hendren at (308) 623-1523.

Libraries

Sunshine Club and Library, Mason City (2000) – The Sunshine Club of Mason City owns the building that the Mason City Library is housed in. They also pay insurance and repairs on the building. All other bills are paid by Township Funds. A summer reading program is held at the library with assistance from Sunshine Club volunteers. Contact Joan Cox at (308) 732-3269.

Library, Stromsburg (2000) – To assist in the building of a new library, the Stromsburg Library Foundation was formed. Construction began on the new library in Stromsburg with grants from the Peter Kiewit Foundation and the Nebraska Library Commission. New computers and an automation system was purchased. The Library is a part of the Greater Polk County Interlocal Library Agreement. The Polk County librarians and library boards meet quarterly to share ideas and materials to better serve the needs of all library patrons in Polk County. Contact Troy Lindsley at (402) 764-2511.

Planning

Community 2000 Strategic Plan, Aurora (2000) – A task force of 31 volunteers representing a cross-section of ages and professions from throughout Hamilton County was formed to write a strategic plan for the county. Focus groups, a public meeting, and both mail and telephone surveys were used to gather citizen input. The Aurora Development Corporation and Hamilton Telecommunications provided funding for the project. Contact Jeanette Friesen at (402) 694-6174

Focus on Franklin (2000) – Mid-Nebraska Community Action worked with the City of Franklin to develop a community survey. The survey addressed the community’s concerns regarding economic development, education, housing, business growth, medical needs, and housing opportunities. The Chamber of Commerce hosted a Focus on Franklin meeting to gather community input and to develop long-rang goals. Contact the Franklin Chamber of Commerce at (308) 425-6295.

City Improvements, Stromsburg (2000) – The City of Stromsburg adopted a new comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance. Stromsburg entered into an Interlocal Agreement with the City of Central City to assist each other in the operation of their natural gas systems. Contact Barbara Cotter at (402) 764-2561.

Miscellaneous

Citywide Ongoing Projects, Dannebrog (2000) – The Hike/Bike Trail in Dannebrog was extended and is now registered in a national trail database. Renovation continued on Columbia Hall and flag poles were added. A number of other improvement projects occurred downtown and at the park. Contact Shirley Johnson at (308) 226-2237.

Honoring Veterans; Eustis, Maxwell, North Platte (2000) – Before Memorial Day, Maxwell and North Platte Boy Scout troops place flags at the 6,500 graves at Fort McPherson National Cemetery. The day following Memorial Day, Maxwell Girl Scout troops pickup the flags. The Eustis American Legion then cleans and inspects each flag. Contact Gilbert Rieker at (302) 486-5514.

Cemetery Improvements, Mason City (2000) – A volunteer cleanup day was held to clear away debris at the Mason City Cemetery. High School youth mow the cemetery each month. The cemetery directory was updated and a sign was made to help identify it. Contact Eugene Burns at (308) 732-3222.

Relocation of Organic Landfill, Potter (2000) – After experiencing a devastating flood, the Village of Potter determined that the organic landfill needed to be relocated. The community established guidelines for relocation and selected potential sites. The Village Board and the Panhandle Area Development District worked together to secure funding for the project through the Waste Reduction & Recycling Incentive Grant Program. The abandoned landfill was cleaned up and is now part of a golf course. Contact Hal Enevoldsen at (308) 879-4315.

Public Works, Seward (2000) – With Community Development Block Grant funds, streets were repaired and storm sewers, water lines, and sanitary sewer lines were replaced in 11 blocks of Seward. New sidewalks were constructed throughout the community. Handicapped accessibility improvements were made to 29 corner approaches. Contact Daniel Berlowits at (402) 643-2928.

Y2K and LEOP, Stromsburg (2000) – As part of the Y2K Plan, new computers were purchased for the Stromsburg City Office, emergency generators were installed at the City Office, Fire Hall, water wells, and wastewater treatment plant. The Local Emergency Operations Plan (LEOP) was updated. As a result handheld radios were purchased for the Fire Hall and a computer was installed to obtain radar information from the Internet. Contact Barbara Cotter at (402) 764-2561.

Environmental Projects and Awareness

Environmental Projects and Awareness, Chappell (2000) – The Chappell High School FFA organized a cleanup day called Operation Litter Gitter. Nearly 300 volunteers helped 108 miles of highway. The FFA also started a six-pack ring recycling project and helped develop the Elementary School Recycling Center. The FCCLA started a High School Recycling Center. The City of Chappell sponsored a community clean-up day and the Lake Improvement Committee and the Lions Club held a Lake Clean-Up Day at Lake Chappell. Contact Mike Davis at (308) 874-3310.

Howells Patrons Make Recycling Program a Success (2000) – Howells has had a successful recycling program for a number of years. Recently the Village purchased a trailer that allows residents to drop off their recyclables on a daily basis. Since the purchase of the trailer, the village has seen a reduction in the amount of waste taken to the landfill. Contact Shirley Jakubowski at (402) 986-1319.

Household Hazardous Waste and Tire Pickups, Loup Basin Region (2000) – A household hazardous waste pickup was held throughout the Loup Basin Region. Local FFA Chapters assisted in the effort. Much of the collected paint and oil was recycled. Over 25 tons of tires were collected at three sites and used for riverbank stabilization. Contact Charlene Rienks at (308) 728-3393

The Western Nebraska Children's Groundwater Festival, Sidney (2000) – Fourth graders from Cheyenne, Deuel, Kimball, and Garden Counties spent a day learning about the importance of water at the 8th Annual Western Nebraska Children's Groundwater Festival. Sixteen different activities teach the youth about conservation and protecting the environment and natural resources. The South Platte Natural Resources District, the University of Nebraska-Cheyenne County Extension, the Educational Services Unit #14, and other area organizations sponsor the event. Contact Kerry Ferguson at (308) 254-2377

Community Services

Assisted Living and Senior Centers

Cottonwood Villa, Ainsworth (2000) – After a survey of Ainsworth and the surrounding area indicated the need for an assisted living facility the community went to work to secure a management firm and funding for the project. Over one-third of the total project cost was raised and financed by local investors. Contact Ann Fiala at (402) 387-1000.

Senior Center, Aurora (2000) – Plans have been made to construct a new senior center in Aurora. A core group of senior worked on-site acquisition and funding. Focus group sessions and a town hall meeting were held for citizen input. Contact Barb Graham at (402) 694-2176.

Assisted Living Facility, Coleridge (2000) – With grant from the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services the Village of Coleridge built a 20-Unit Assisted Living Facility. The village held a contest the name the new facility. Both the assisted living facility and the nursing home are owned by the village. Contact Michael Collins at (402) 283-4224.

Oodles of German Noodles, Eustis (2000) -- Volunteers at the Senior Center make German noodles Fridays and Mondays throughout the year. The noodles are sold in one pound bags for \$3.00 a bag, resulting in a \$4000 profit for the Senior Center each year. Contact Dianne Lair at (308) 486-5560.

Kimball County Manor Assisted Living, Kimball (2000) – The Kimball County Manor received a grant from the Nebraska Health Infra-Structure Trust Fund to add an assisted living facility. Additional funds were received from the Kimball County Commissioners through a County General Obligation Bond. Contact Bev Schnell at (308) 235-4693.

Oakland Heights Assisted Living, Oakland (2000) – With a Nursing Facility Conversion Cash Fund Grant from the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services one wing of the Oakland Heights Nursing Home was converted into six assisted living units. An additional 16 units were added to the existing building. Oakland Heights staff and Nursing Home board members volunteered their time to help decorate the facility. Contact Dee Bailey at (402) 685-5683.

Senior Center and Intergenerational Friends, Petersburg (2000) – Donations totaling nearly \$7,000 were given to the Petersburg Senior Center. The Senior Center shares a building with St. John's School Students. The students and the seniors meet several times a year in a program called Intergenerational Friends. They share lunch and classroom time. Contact Jeanne Reicks at (402) 386-5629

Events

Fire and Ice New Year's Eve Celebration, Clay Center (2000) – Clay Center brought in 2000 in a spectacular way with their Fire and Ice New Year's Eve celebration. It included music, entertainment, and fireworks. To raise money for the celebration, the community club sponsored a number of unique fundraisers. Activities were coordinated with the Student Council and Super Seniors. Nearly 300 people celebrated New Year's Eve in a safe and fun way. Contact Tom Hastings at (402) 762-3593.

Holiday and Special Activities, Hubbell (2000) – Hubbell has a number of activities throughout the year to mark the holidays. These include a Halloween costume parade, an Easter egg hunt, and Memorial Day service. At Christmas, volunteers decorate the community and donate foods and gifts to Blue Valley Community Action. Contact Brenda Rippe at (402) 324-4176.

Family Services

The Mission Store, Alliance (2000) – The Mission Store, Inc. is a nonprofit corporation established to help provide inexpensive “nearly new” clothing, household appliances and furniture to persons unable to purchase new items. All proceeds help support the program and other community outreach endeavors in Alliance and neighboring communities. A volunteer Board of Governors oversees the operation of the store. Contact Susan Lore at (308) 762-2474.

People United for Families (PUFF)—After School Program, Nebraska City (1999) – Nebraska City middle school students can now socialize in a safe environment after school thanks to the efforts of Peru State College students. The People United for Families (PUFF), Excel Specialty Products, and United Way provided program funding; the city council donated space; and local businesses made additional donations. Contact Doug Kreifels or Tina Layman at (402) 873-6671.

Community Services, Seward (2000) – Seward's community services include Meals on Wheels, Crimestoppers, and the Senior Shuttle that takes senior citizens to various destinations in the community free of charge. The Seward Pantry distributes food and personal items to those in need. Assistance is also available to victims of abuse. Seward is also active in Habitat for Humanity and has built four homes in Seward. Contact Jean Kolterman at (402) 643-3803.

A.S.K.—After School Korner for All Southern Kids, Wymore (2000) – The Family Unifying Network in Wymore provides funds for an after school mentoring program at the library. Four paid mentors and a number of volunteers help Wymore youth year-round. Contact Jackie Nicholson at (402) 645-3787.

Fundraising

Developing Fund-Raising Leadership Skills, Cedar Rapids (2000) – The Cedar Rapids Volunteer Fire Department needed new equipment so a variety of fundraisers were organized to pay for a new fire truck. Over \$6000 was raised at a New Year's Eve Soup supper that included youth activities. Other fundraisers included a pancake breakfast and auction. Contact Shelley Towey at (308) 358-0806.

Fund Raisers, Hubbell (2000) – Hubbell organizations held a number of fundraisers to provide funding for projects in the community. The Lion's Club held a pancake feed, sold Halloween candy, and pickle cards. The Women's Club held a Style Show and Noon Luncheon. Contact Marsha Welch at (402) 324-4167.

Community Foundation, Hubbell (2000) – With assistance from the Nebraska Community Foundation, Hubbell set up a community foundation. The Hubbell Foundation pays for the upkeep of the Community Hall. Contact Brenda Rippe at (402) 768-6045.

Health, Medical, and Safety

Box Butte General Hospital Expansion: Bucking the Trend, Alliance (2000) – Box Butte General Hospital undertook a \$3.55 million construction project to accommodate the growth experienced over the past five years. Preliminary architectural plans were presented to a number of local organizations to get their feedback. A local businessman gave \$200,000 toward the purchase of a building for an outreach clinic. Contact Terry Padden, Dan Griess, or Jim Parks at (308) 762-4357.

The Power of Healing, Alliance (2000) – In response to community need, the Box Butte General Hospital is coordinating health and wellness programs through the Slagle Community Health Center in downtown Alliance. Programs include a number of support groups, immunization clinics, and educational programs. Contact Sue Chaulk at (308) 762-9893.

Community H.O.P.E., Franklin (2000) – The Franklin County Unit of the American Cancer Society assisted cancer patients, their families and friends in starting a support group. Community H.O.P.E., Helping Other People through Encouragement, participants have the opportunity to attend meetings that last for eight sessions. The Community H.O.P.E. subcommittee consists of a minister, nurse, and nurse practitioner, and a patient that offer assistance to participants. Contact Cathy Webber at (308) 425-6221.

Housing

Housing Rehabilitation and Surveys, Davenport (2000) – The Village of Davenport received a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and a USDA Rural Development Preservation Grant to rehabilitate homes in their community. They also joined with area communities in a regional housing improvement effort called the Oregon Trail Alliance (OTA). The OTA also received CDBG funding. With the grant funding and the efforts of volunteers, a total of 26 homes were renovated. Contact Loma Grone at (402) 364-2533.

Seward Housing Development (2000) – The Seward County Housing Corporation and the City of Seward worked together to provide low-cost housing options for Seward residents. With funds from a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) a Seward County Housing Market Study was completed. With the completed study a CDBG grant was applied for to establish a down payment assistance program for new and existing housing in Seward County. Contact Daniel Berlowits at (402) 643-2928.

Miscellaneous

NTEC, Dundy County (2000) – Dundy County worked with the Nebraska Teleliteracy and Electronic Commerce Initiative to evaluate what technology is available and to see how this technology can be used more efficiently. With information from a town hall meeting a Community Action Plan was developed. Contact Judy Owens at (308) 423-5459.

Alumni and Community Newsletter, Farnam (2000) – The Farnam Economic Development Corporation developed a newsletter explaining the projects that were underway in Farnam. Over 700 copies were sent to alumni. Contact Dr. Kent Pieper at (308) 569-2360.

Welcome Wagon/Community Calendar, Farnam (2000) – Farnam held a “Welcome to Our Community” supper to welcome new families and others. Welcome booklets containing coupons and information were distributed to the newcomers. The Farnam Economic Development Committee sponsored the Farnam Community Calendar, which lists birthdays, anniversaries, and organizational information. Contact Brenda Metzler at (308) 569-2546.

Community Service, Goehner (2000) – Residents of Goehner held a village Christmas party, updated the image brochure, and participated in a village clean-up day. A community breakfast, melodrama, and spaghetti feed raised money for projects around Goehner. Contact Sue Imig at (402) 523-4395.

Volunteers With An Appetite For Reading, South Sioux City (2000) – South Sioux City Third Graders have the opportunity to meet once a week with an adult volunteer for lunch and a reading activity. The volunteers are business people, parents and senior citizens. The activities help the students develop social skills and a positive attitude toward reading. The South Sioux City Area Chamber of Commerce, area governmental organizations, private businesses, schools, and parents collaborate on this project. Contact Marty Millard at (402) 494-1626.

Parks, Recreation and Forestry

Park Improvements

Park and Recreation Improvements, Aurora (2000) – Aurora designed and implemented improvements to several ball fields with assistance from the American Legion, the Playball Group, Optimist Club, Lion’s Club, and the Aurora Park Department. The pool shade/shelter at the swimming pool was replaced and volunteers coordinated a forestry project. Contact James Nietfeld at (402) 694-6992.

Ward Bond Park and Mini Park Improvement, Benkelman (2000) – The Southwest Area Development Corporation asked school children to submit plans for the Ward Bond City Park. The results were forwarded to a landscape architect for implementation. Grant funding was secured locally and through the Greenspace Stewardship Program. Local funds were used to add to the Mini Park. Research was conducted to identify native plants and a drip system was installed to aid in the survival of the plants. Contact the Southwest Area Development Corporation at (308) 423-5255.

Expanding Parks and Forestry, Chappell (2000) – With a matching grant from the South Platte Natural Resources District and the Tree City USA program 40 trees were distributed to Chappell residents. A grant from Buckley Trust was obtained to build a walking path at Chappell Lake. A number of volunteers and organizations participated in the Lake Cleanup Day. Contact Verlin Bruns at (308) 874-2534.

Island Oasis Landscaping Improvement, Minden (2000) – Medians in downtown Minden were landscaped with a variety of bushes and flowers. The whole project took on an “island” theme. Volunteers raised money through a number of events including a Hawaiian luau. Funds were also received through the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act and from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation. An automatic sprinkler was included in the improvements. Contact Marcia Krueger, Minden Main Street Manager at (308) 832-1811.

Kearney County Horticulture Society Garden Walk, Minden (2000) – The Kearney County Horticulture Society (KCHS) held a garden walk through eight yards in Minden. Proceeds from the walk are donated to a variety of projects. The KCHS plants and maintains the Welcome to Minden landscaping area and assists the Minden Main Street Program in plantings around the square. Contact Pat Beck at (308) 832-1861.

Centennial Park, Scottsbluff (2000) – Over \$500,000 was raised in Scottsbluff to turn a vacant lot into a park. Local volunteers, high school students, and boy scouts spent over 2,000 hours planning, planting, and weeding. The park was completed in time for Scottsbluff’s centennial celebration. Contact Cindy Dickinson at (308) 630-6249.

Parks, Recreation & Forestry, Seward (2000) -- The Seward Parks and Recreation Department offers organized youth and adult activities throughout the year. The Plum Creek Park softball fields were renovated. Four local community groups and one church have adopted neighborhood parks. Improvements are also being made to make the parks handicapped accessible. Contact Steve Ferguson at (402) 643-3803.

The Living Memorial Gardens, Sidney (2000) – The Sidney American Legion donated \$30,000 towards the construction of a gazebo at the Living Memorial Gardens. Other donations came from the Ladies Chamber of Commerce, Knights of Columbus, and various memorials and donations. The garden is maintained through the efforts of volunteers that adopt a certain area. The garden also benefits from a community workday and donations from the Sidney Greenhouse. Contact Kate Holstein at (308) 254-3357.

2000 Tulips, Stromsburg (2000) -- Seventy-two volunteers planted 2000 tulips in Stromsburg’s City Square Park. The yellow tulips were a way to celebrate Stromsburg’s Swedish heritage. All of the money for the project was donated. Contact Terri Holtzen at (402) 764-2371.

Parks and Recreation, Stromsburg (2000) – Recent improvements to Buckley Park in Stromsburg include new RV hookup, parking access and road repair, and new lights. At the Midwest Arboretum a plaque was planned for the statue located there. The historical Buckley popcorn shack at City Square Park was repaired. Contact Owen Baker at (402) 764-2088.

Dobs Goedert Park Improvement, Wallace (2000) – Funding for park improvement projects in Wallace were obtained from the March for Parks event, various Wallace organizations, and grants from School at the Center, School to Work, and the Community Enhancement Program. Projects included tree plantings, new park play equipment, drinking fountains, and a drive-up telephone. High School students and a local contractor constructed a new park shelter. Contact the Wallace Park Committee at (308) 387-4483.

Playground Equipment

Kids Dream of a New Playground, Cedar Creek (2000) -- In less than six months, over \$19,000 was raised in Cedar Creek for new playground equipment. Volunteers removed the old equipment and installed the new playground surface and equipment. Contact John Winkler at 402-234-2694.

Providing Fun for the Future, Gothenburg (2000) – Frito-Lay and KN for Kids contributed to the addition of playground equipment located near the baseball field. The Rotary Club, Gothenburg Volunteer Fire Department and the Jaycees also raised money for the project. In addition grant money from the Peter Kiewit Foundation. Volunteers assisted in the construction. Contact Jen Wolf at (308) 537-7181.

Playground Improvements, Farnam (2000) – A memorial donation provided funding for a fenced in sand box at the village park. The border around the playground equipment was replaced with a more stable one. Contact Jan Widick at (308) 569-2333.

Mothers' Club Park Equipment Fund, Superior (2000) – The Superior Mothers' Club worked to raise funds to construct handicap accessible playground equipment in the city's two parks. A number of local organizations contributed to the project, adding to the \$10,000 grant from the Peter Kiewit Foundation. Contact Melissa Hays at (402) 879-3860.

Sports and Recreation

Improvements to Baseball Fields, Bassett (2000) – The City of Bassett installed a new outfield fence on one of Bassett's baseball fields. The infield was also improved and foul poles were added thanks to KBR Rural Public Power. Contact Les Hall at (402) 684-3845.

Expanding Recreation, Chappell (2000) – Deuel County youth participated in the Deuel County Attack Club, a wrestling club. The Deuel County Trap Shooting 4-H Club built a trap shooting range at the fairgrounds. The 22 members participate in activities year round. The Chappell Lions club sponsored a kids fishing derby for youth ages two to 12. Contact Verlin Bruns at (308) 874-2534.

Aiming for a Green Future, Gothenburg (2000) – A new 18-hole golf course was built in Gothenburg. The course has received national recognition and has brought over half a million dollars to the community. The lots surrounding the course were sold for housing development. A \$40,000 grant was received to develop a youth golf program. Contact Wild Horse Golf Club Board at (308) 537-7700.

Kimball's Skateboard Park (2000) – A group of Kimball teenagers developed the idea of creating a skate park. They researched skate parks in other communities and presented their ideas to the City Council. The City of Kimball and the teenagers worked together to design the park and prepare the park site. Funding was provided by the city. Contact Ryan Deboodt, Tyler Deboodt, Andy Flores, Adam Smith, or Justin Flores at (308) 235-4108.

Minden Skate Park (2000) – Four Minden youth designed and built a skate park. Funds were obtained from a U.S. West grant and a local foundation. The City of Minden supplied the cement. Contact Derek Ehlers or Jestin Beran at (308) 832-1800.

Red Fox Run, Nebraska City (2000) – A portion of an industrial site in Nebraska City was located in a flood plain so it could not be used for building sites. The Nebraska City Economic Development Foundation made the area available for the development of a soccer field. The Nemaha Natural Resource District, the National Arbor Day Foundation, and the University of Nebraska Center for Grassland Studies worked with the community to develop part of the area for an educational model of conservation and renewable resources. Contact Nancy Hoch at (402) 873-4293, Dr. Keith Rohwer at (402) 873-6033, or Doug Friedli at (402) 873-3388.

Ball Field Improvements, Pilger (2000) -- New dugouts, a new sound system, and a new combination concession stand and equipment storage building were built at the Pilger ball field. The ball field now also sports a grass infield. Donations and volunteer hours made the improvements possible. Contact Kim Ramsay at (402) 396-3563.

Youth Ball Club, Wallace (2000) – The concession stand at the Wallace ball diamonds was expanded with help from high school students. New awnings and supports were built over the stands. The Wallace Youth Ball Club was made possible thanks to the effort of volunteer coaches and umpires. Contact Kelly Smith at (308) 387-4510 or Joan Barner at (308) 387-4627.

Trees and Forestry

Tree City USA, Bassett (2000) – The Tree Board attended tree education, training and care workshops, planted trees, removed dead trees, and cared for existing trees. They also held an Arbor Day program for first and fifth grade students and the public. As a result of their efforts Bassett qualified for Tree City USA status. Contact Ken Minnig at (402) 684-3453.

Tree Recovery Program, Bassett (2000) – Bassett conducted a survey of city street trees. Dead or dying trees were cut down. With funds from a Tree Recovery Grant, two trees were planted for each tree removed. The Tree Board also reforested one of the city's parks. Rock County High School students created a tree care web site with the Tree Board. Contact Ken Minnig at (402) 684-3453.

Planting for the Future, Gothenburg (2000) – After Gothenburg's tree lined streets were hit with high winds, many of the trees were damaged or uprooted. The community pulled together to clean up the debris. With funds from the Nebraska Tree Recovery Program Gothenburg planted 125 trees. The Tree Board also has a commemorative tree program. Residents select a tree and park location and the Tree Board plants the tree and places a plaque in memory of their loved one. Contact Jeff Kennedy at (308) 325-1242.

Arts and Humanities

Art

Formation of the Otoe County Art Council, Syracuse (2000) – Youth, artists, authors, and musicians in Syracuse helped organize the Otoe County Arts Council. The Lutheran Home Insurance, Nebraska City and Syracuse Schools, Syracuse Library, and the Syracuse Foundation all assist the Arts Council in their activities. The Council's first activity was the "Barn Again" exhibit from the Nebraska Humanities Council. Contact Amy Saddle or Art Palmer at (402) 269-3327.

Arts and Humanities, Mason City (2000) – The Muddy Creek Historical Society and the Mason City Community Service Club presented a number of different cultural programs. A presentation on antique toys, a program featuring a portrayal of Abraham Lincoln, and a glass blowing demonstration were just of the few offerings. Contact Ann Bechoff or Joan Cox at (308) 732-3269.

"Honoring the Past"—A Memorial to a Fallen Officer, Wymore (2000) – In 1948 a police officer was killed in the line of duty in Wymore. The City of Wymore built a planter at the police station to remember him. The planter was dedicated in a public memorial service that many members of the community participated in. Contact Chief Bryan Davidson, Wymore Police Department at (402) 645-3315.

Events and Festivals

Home on the Range, Allen (2000) – A former Allen resident volunteered to do a living history program for the Dixon County Historical Society. The program was incorporated into a dinner theater that was a fundraiser for the Society. Contact Faith Keil at (402) 635-2380.

Harvesting Past Memories, Gothenburg (2000) -- Gothenburg hosted both the State and the National Hand Cornhusking Contest. Competitors from across the country came to Gothenburg to see who is the fastest corn picker, a tradition dating back over 80 years. Over 200 volunteers from the area's many organizations helped out with the contest. Contact the Gothenburg Chamber of Commerce at (308) 537-3505.

Museums and Historic Activities

Historical Registration of St. Anthony's Church and School, Cedar Rapids (2000) – Because of the efforts of the Historical Committee of the Cedar Valley Improvement Committee the St. Anthony's Church and School were placed on the National Register of Historic Places. St. Anthony's Parish raised over \$300,000 for necessary repairs. Contact Paul Robert Smith at (308) 358-0348.

Renovation of Historical Buildings, Hubbell (2000) – Three buildings in downtown Hubbell built in 1917 were targeted for renovation. The three buildings were given as a gift to the Hubbell Village Board. Contact Marsha Welch at (402) 324-4176.

Opera House Renovation, Minden (2000) – A \$300,000 bequest to the City of Minden began created the incentive to establish the Kearney County Community Foundation. The Foundation's first project was the renovation of the Minden Opera House. Funds of over \$2 million for the project came from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the Peter Kiewit Foundation, and the Hitchcock Foundation, as well as numerous local foundations, businesses, and individuals. Contact Rob Raun at (308) 832-2193.

Pioneer Church, Neligh (2000) – Ownership of St. Peter's Episcopal Church was transferred to Antelope County for one dollar. Volunteers cleaned woodwork and windows, painted, and made other repairs to the structure. The church will serve as an extension to the Antelope County Museum. Contact Jane Lichtenberg at (402) 887-4447.

Plans of the Pierson Wildlife Learning Center, Neligh (2000) – Neligh residents sought a suitable location to display the extensive wildlife collection of a local doctor. They formed a Pierson Project Committee to find funding. The Safari Club International is also involved in the project. Contact Jane Lichtenberg at (402) 887-4447.

Living History Day, Pawnee County (2000) – Demonstrations of antique machinery and equipment, a country schoolhouse and a vaudeville show were a part of the Living History Day in Pawnee County. Participants also had the opportunity to make candles and apple cider and play pioneer games. The Table Rock Historical Society displayed their antique collections. Contact Kim Vrtiska at (402) 335-2091.

Pawnee County Historical Society Projects (2000) – The Pawnee County Historical Society holds a number of activities, including workshops for children. Volunteers maintain the museum and its contents. Grants from L.L. Coryelle & Son and the Nebraska Humanities Council make many of the Pawnee County Historical Society projects possible. Contact Yvonne Dalluge at (402) 852-3131.

ZCJB Hall 101, Pawnee County (2000) – A new roof, windows, and wiring were installed in the ZCJB Hall, which is on the National Register of Historic Places. The building is used for a variety of events throughout the year, including a hunter's breakfast and Sadie Hawkins Day Dance. This year a celebration was held honoring 100 years of the ZCJB Hall. Contact Mary Baker at (402) 859-4562.

Saving a Historical Barn, Petersburg (2000) – A historical barn was moved from its original site to the site of the Nebraska State Antique Tractor and Horse Plowing Bee. The Rae Valley Heritage Association restored it and uses it as a museum. Contact Larry Petsche at (402) 386-5334.

Log Cabin Post Office Restoration, Superior (2000) – Community volunteers and the Superior High School FFA, moved Superior's First Post Office to the Nuckolls County Museum grounds. The Post Office, a log cabin built in 1872, was then restored to its original state. Contact Larry McCord at (402) 879-4330.

Performing Arts

Cultural Renaissance, Alliance (2000) – The Main Street Players developed a community theater, involving both children and adults. The Alliance Arts Council presents a variety of art events, including the Omaha Symphony, the Tulsa Ballet, and the Moscow Boys Choir. The Carnegie Arts Center displays a number visual art exhibits a year and presents workshops and outreach programs. Contact Wayne McLaughlin, Cindy Randall, or Joan Dockins at (308) 762-8908.

Summer Melodramas and Other Thespian Performances, Minden (2000) – The Minden Community Players perform melodramas on Thursday evenings in the summer, as well as a fall musical. On Valentine’s Day, they are hired to serenade sweethearts. Contact Glenda Jacobsen at (308) 832-1800.

The Fort Sidney Colonels, Sidney (2000) – A group of men interested in singing formed the Fort Sidney Colonels. The Colonels participate in several community events each year. In March they stage a production with “The Colonels’ Ladies.” With revenue from their ticket sales they have donated an electronic keyboard for Sidney Public Schools. Contact Bill Fankhauser at (308) 254-2351.

Economic Development

Business Assistance and Development

Business Promotion

Bassett Memory Lane Park (2000) – A vacant lot in Bassett was turned into a park. The park is used for picnics, farmers' markets, and craft sales. To raise money for the project, citizens were given the opportunity to purchase memory plaques, storefronts, and trees. Contact Tom Sawyer at (402) 684-3483.

Economic Development Practices, Chappell (2000) – The Chappell Chamber of Commerce held a Christmas Open House. Business held special customer appreciation promotions and students provided Christmas music. The Chamber of Commerce and City Council hired the economic developer from Gothenburg to hold an economic development retreat. Contact Leonard Littlejohn at (308) 874-2701.

Seward Chamber of Commerce (2000) -- The Governmental Issues Committee of the Seward Chamber of Commerce keeps up to date on legislative issues that affect independent businesses and agricultural producers. The Downtown Revitalization Committee worked to have a downtown enhancement area approved by the City Council. This will allow infrastructure improvement and replacement needs to be dealt with in a more economically efficient fashion. The Professional Development Committee offers professional and affordable educational opportunities to local businesses. Contact Pat Coldiron at (402) 643-4189.

E-Commerce for South Sioux City (2000) – Businesses in South Sioux City can receive an e-mail address and web page as a part of the E-City project. The South Sioux City Area Chamber of Commerce develops and maintains the e-mail addresses and web pages. The pages are all linked to a main South Sioux City web page. Contact Kristi Quinn at (402) 494-1626.

Area Chamber of Commerce, Wymore (2000) – The Wymore/Blue Springs Area Chamber of Commerce promotes new and existing businesses in both communities. Annual Chamber activities include Sam Wymore Days, Ag Banquet, Teacher Appreciation Banquet, and City-Wide Garage Sales. They also sponsor a yard of the week contest. Contact Connie Michaelis at (402) 645-3332.

Business Retention and Expansion

Economic Development, Ainsworth (2000) – The Ainsworth Area Chamber of Commerce held a number of ribbon cuttings for new businesses or businesses with new owners. Advantage Receivable Solutions brought 42 new jobs to the community. CNC Machining and Engineering and Cottonwood Villa also opened their doors. Contact Shana Arrowsmith or Linda O'Hare at (402) 387-2740.

Industry Spec Building, Aurora (2000) – With a \$375,000 Community Development Block Grant, the Aurora Development Corporation designed and built a spec building. Volunteers on the Aurora Development Corporation will also publicize the building to attract industry to Aurora. The building will help speed up the start time for a prospective business in Aurora. Contact Rod Schroeder at (402) 694-2106.

Retention of the Allen Grocery Store (2000) – A committee consisting of members of the Allen Development Group, Inc., the Village Board, and employees of the Security National Bank helped keep a grocery store in Allen. With a Community Development Block Grant and financial assistance from local investors the existing grocery store building was refurbished and the new owners received down payment assistance. Contact Rob Bock at (402) 635-2424.

Business Incubator, Farnam (2000) – With a Community Development Block Grant, the Farnam Economic Development Corporation turned a vacant downtown building into a business incubator. Volunteers have been active in the remodeling process. A grocery store, a craft store, and fitness center all expressed interest in starting up in the incubator. Contact Dan Widick at (308) 569-2333.

Business Development, Chappell (2000) – A number of business in Chappell expanded. The Adams Bank and Trust built a new building, the Farmers Elevator added to their storage capacity, and Miller Memorial Nursing Home raised \$1.2 million for assisted living apartments. KN Energy, the Framing Shop, and Karen's Ts all remodeled vacant buildings on Main Street. Chappell also conducted a feasibility study to determine if a motel on the interstate would be profitable. Contact Milt Rogers at (308) 874-2962.

Excel Specialty Meat Products and Building Expansion, Nebraska City (2000) – A partnership with the Nebraska Department of Economic development, the City of Nebraska City, and Cargill, Inc. assisted in the expansion of the Excel Specialty Products plant. The plant was originally constructed with LB 840 incentives. With the expansion and additional 150 new jobs were created. Contact Cheryl Goff at (402) 873-8400.

Longview Fibre Company, Seward (2000) – Seward put together a strong incentive package to attract Longview Fibre company to their area. They conducted traffic and environmental studies and provided the necessary land to the company at no cost. Seward's two major local banks and the Burlington Northern/Santa Fe Railroad also agreed to help fund construction of a rail spur when the facility expands. Seward County also paved the road adjacent to the building site. Contact Pat Coldiron at (402) 643-4189.

Economic Development, Syracuse (2000) -- A number of businesses have opened in Syracuse, especially along the Highway 2. New establishments include a motel, convenience store, and a consulting company. With a Low Income Housing Tax Credit from the Nebraska Investment Finance Authority, 36 living units were built. Other housing developments were also completed. Contact Brenda Davidson or Norma Jean Dettmer at (402) 269-2106.

Superior Business Development and Technology Center (2000) – With Community Development Block Grant and USDA Rural Development funding a Business Development and Technology Center was developed in Superior. The center will serve small, entrepreneurial businesses, encourage new business start-up, and educate business leaders and the general public on the opportunities available through technology. Contact Anita Stone at (402) 879-3050.

Downtown Revitalization

Main Street Beautification, Diller (2000) – A number of improvement projects took place in Diller. Sidewalks on Main Street were replaced, the community building was landscaped, and new welcome signs were constructed. The projects were completed thanks to the efforts of business owners, volunteers, and the youth. Contact Joyce Carpenter at (402) 223-7513.

Building on Our History, Gothenburg (2000) – As a part of the Nebraska Lied Main Street Program, committees were formed to assist in a comprehensive Main Street improvement program. Part of the program was a \$1.17 million sidewalk improvement project. Downtown businesses and city residents shared the cost of the project. A \$350,000 Community Development Block Grant and the sale of commemorative bricks will also contribute to the funds. Contact Anne Anderson at (308) 537-3399.

Old Fashioned Street Lights, Mead (2000) – With funding from the Mead Community Foundation new street lights were installed in downtown Mead. The total cost of the project was \$13,000. A new village office was also built. Contact Scott Selko at (402) 624-2255.

Downtown Revitalization Committee, Seward (2000) – The City of Seward and the Chamber of Commerce Downtown Revitalization Committee worked on a downtown improvement plan. The plan includes street renovation/reconstruction, new sidewalks, curbs and gutters, ornamental lightings, and water and sanitary sewer lines. The City and Downtown businesses will each cover a portion of the renovations. Contact Daniel Berlowits at (402) 624-2255.

Downtown Beautification Project, Sidney (2000) – The Ladies Chamber of Commerce and the City of Sidney raised money to purchase 18 trash receptacles for downtown. The Ladies Chamber and local businesses also purchased benches for the downtown area. Twenty-six light poles are decorated with a different theme each month. Community members donated materials and the high school Vocational Industrial Club of America did iron and woodworking. Contact Judy Harris or Pat Dorwart at (308) 254-2932.

Workforce Development

Building Muscles for Economic Development, Alliance (2000) – The workforce development team in Alliance brought a speaker to conduct workforce development training. Funds were provided by a Worker Training Grant from the Department of Labor and the Box Butte Development Corporation. A plan for a one-stop workforce development office was developed. Contact Ellen Lierk at (308) 762-1800.

Telework, Dundy County (2000) – Dundy County worked with the Nebraska Community Foundation and a variety of state agencies to bring telework projects to their area. Telework uses existing telecommunication resources to bring jobs from urban areas to rural areas. Contact Kathy Stahlecker at (308) 423-5980.

Business Growth in Franklin (2000) -- Because of a community need for quality extended hours child care the Tiny Tot University was established in Franklin with a micro-enterprise grant from Mid-Nebraska Community Action. The Hawk'n Robin soda fountain was opened and provides a place for youth. The Blackpowder Bar and Grill also opened. Contact Amber Baker or Chris Hawkinson at (308) 425-3798.

Changing Focus to Strengthen Economic Development, Petersburg (2000) – A number of economic development activities have been occurring in and around Petersburg. A local hardware and furniture store opened another branch and local hog producers expanded their operations with the formation of the Petersburg Area Swine Network. Contact Larry Petsche at (402) 386-5334.

Business Assistance and Development, Seward (2000) – The Professional Development Committee of the Seward Chamber of Commerce brings educational presenters and speakers to the business community of Seward. The Governmental Issues Committee keeps other members up to date on legislative issues that affect independent business people and agricultural producers. The Downtown Revitalization committee was integral in the creation of a downtown enhancement area that will assist the community in dealing with infrastructure needs in a more economically efficient fashion. Contact Pat Coldiron at (402) 643-4189.

Tourism Promotion and Development

Promotion and Marketing

Travel and Tourism, Dundy County (2000) – The Benkelman Area Chamber of Commerce distributes information packets about the area. A brochure and local post cards were developed to show prospective tourists areas of interest. Prairie Lakes, South Platte United Chamber of Commerce, Southwest Nebraska Community Builders, the Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism, and other organizations worked on developing a plan for the distribution of tourism materials. Contact Kathy Stahlecker at (308) 423-5980.

Loup Basin Tourism Committee Program (2000) – The Loup Basin tourism committee meets monthly to plan and accomplish their projects. The committee worked to have Highways 2 and 91 designated as scenic byways. Work continues on byway management plans. A grant from the Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism provided funds for ads in the Omaha World-Herald and on a Lincoln radio station to promote central Nebraska. Contact Verlon Barnes at (308) 728-3393.

Pawnee County Promotional Network Building (2000) – A restroom and storage facility was added to the Pawnee County Promotional Network Building. The building is used as a tourist information office for visitors to Pawnee County. Contact Teresa Spier at (402) 852-2444.

Innovative Economic Development Practices, Seward (2000) -- The First Impressions Committee in Seward received a grant from the Environmental Trust to plant trees and native wildflowers along Highway 34. A new Christmas tradition began with the Cradick Christmas Light Display. The over 100 individually handcrafted figures are displayed in Centennial Park. Contact Pat Coldiron at (402) 643-4189.

Swedish Heritage, Stromsburg (2000) – Stromsburg emphasizes its Swedish Heritage and the title “Swede Capital of Nebraska” in a number of ways. Signs, decorations, and retail items are used to promote the community. Stromsburg also welcomes a number of Swedish visitors each year and the Swede Festival Royalty made appearances at area parades and events. Contact Terri Holtzen at (402) 764-2371.

Development of Audio Tapes of Historic Walking and Driving Tours, Syracuse (2000) – Audio tapes were created to be used as a guided narrative of the Historic Walking and Driving Tours in Syracuse. The tapes explain the special features of the one mile Historic Walking tour and the 19 mile Historic Driving tour. The tapes and tape players can be borrowed at a number of local businesses. Contact Phyllis Witte or Amy Sadle at (402) 269-2355.

Heritage Note Cards, Wallace (2000) – The Wallace High School Art class painted murals on two buildings in the community. They also painted the school's mascot on the base of the new water tower. With assistance from School at the Center they purchased a color laser printer to reproduce their designs into notecards. Contact Donna Arnett at (308) 387-4323.

Tourism Events

30th Annual National County Music Festival, Ainsworth (2000) – Ainsworth has been the home of the National Country Music Festival for 30 years. More than 2,000 spectators and participants attended this festival. The festival is financially self-supporting through donations and hundreds of volunteer hours. Contact Joe McBride or Kathy Worrell at (402) 387-2724 or (402) 387-2844.

2nd Annual Cedar Creek Days (2000) – The 2nd Annual Cedar Creek Days was packed with events, including a frog jumping contest, kids parade, and dance. The event was promoted in a number of media outlets including radio, television, and newspapers. Volunteers helped make the celebration a success. Contact John Winkler or Deanne Michel at (402) 212-7771.

Fourth of July Celebration, Chambers (2000) – Eight organizations and numerous individuals are involved in the annual Chambers Fourth of July Celebration. Activities begin with a fun run and conclude with a fireworks display. A highlight is the Road Rally, which sends carloads of people in search of clues around southern Holt County. Contact Rick Doolittle at (402) 482-5734.

Old-Fashioned Danish Christmas, Dannebrog (2000) – Various organizations, businesses, and individuals planned the 9th annual Old-Fashion Danish Christmas. The Decorating Committee decorated the City Park and Gazebo, community hall, businesses, home and empty lots. Candy Cane Lane consisted of 25 acres of displays including a Victorian Doll House, decorated trees, animated displays, and costumed characters. A Holiday Music Medley and Christmas in Denmark program entertained visitors. Contact Carol Waskowiak at (308) 226-2481.

Grundlovsfest (Danish Days), Dannebrog (2000) – On Denmark's First Free Constitution Day, Dannebrog celebrates its Danish Heritage with Grundlovsfest. Events include Aebleskiever (Danish pancakes), pony rides, and parade featuring a Viking ship float. Contact Shirley Johnson at (308) 226-2237.

Wagon Train Days, Dundy County (2000) – Wagon Train Days is sponsored by the Benkelman Area Chamber of Commerce and runs in conjunction with the Dundy County Fair. Events include a trail ride and free prairie breakfast, quilt show, and pre-fair barbecue. Proceeds from the event are used for other events throughout the year such as a bull riding event. Contact Kathy Stahlecker at (308) 423-5980.

Christmas Tour of Homes, Eustis (2000) – A variety of homes, a bed and breakfast, and an art gallery were all a part of the Christmas Tour of Homes sponsored by the Eustis Chamber of Commerce. In conjunction with the tour, the West Canyonettes Extension Club held a Nativity Scene display and bake sale. The tour was advertised on area radio stations and television stations as far away as Lincoln. Fliers were posted in Eustis and towns within a 50-mile radius and letters were sent to neighboring Senior Centers and Chambers of Commerce. Contact Evelyn Bartruff or Nancy Keller at (308) 486-4181.

Demo Derby, Eustis (2000) – The Demo Derby has been a part of the Eustis Fair and Corn Show since 1990. It is a fundraiser for the Eustis Lions Club and is another way to promote the Fair and Corn Show. Posters and radio announcements promote the event. The Eustis Fire and Rescue also assists with the event. Contact Sharon Larson at (308) 486-5370.

Wurst Tag German Heritage Celebration, Eustis (2000) – For the past 21 years Eustis has celebrated its German Heritage with Wurst Tag. Events include the Volksmarch, Road Race, Kinder Dancing, Melodrama, and more. The added revenue from the event is used for community improvements around the community. Contact Mari Banzhaf at (308) 486-5611.

Founders' Day and Community Carnival, Farnam (2000) – Activities for all ages were planned for the Founders' Day celebration in Farnam. The three day event featured a teen dance, kids games, team roping, all school banquet, and sand volleyball tournament. At the Community Carnival a number of local organizations, as well as all Eustis-Farnam High School classes 7-12 had booths with a variety of games. Over \$2700 was raised to be used for various community projects. Contact Donna Hazen at (308) 569-2349.

June Jamboree, Franklin (2000) – Volunteers of all ages participated in June Jamboree in Franklin. Organizations included the Franklin Nursing Center, the FFA, 4-H, and the Chamber of Commerce. The two-day celebration was produced in part with a grant from the Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism. Contact Shelly Bower or Lisa Herrick at (308) 425-6869.

Hooter Rock, Howells (2000) – Hooter Rock is held on Father's Day weekend and is sponsored by the Howells Community Club. The two-day event kicks off with an Alumni Golf Tournament and Fire Department steak fry. Over 100 trophies were presented at the Car, Truck, and Cycle Show. The Howells High School FFA and FCCLA and the Saddle Club are also involved. Contact Carol Elbracht at (402) 986-1765.

Hay Day Celebration, Hubbell (2000) – Hubbell Hay Day is held biannually, alternating with the Hubbell Alumni Banquet. A variety of locations around the village are utilized for the day. Events include a trivia contest, street dance, horseshoe tournament, and kids games. Money raised from the events is used for the renovation and upkeep of historic buildings. Contact Marsha Welch at (402) 324-4167.

Brown County Fair and Rodeo, Johnstown (2000) – The Village of Johnstown remodeled their Community Center. It is used for wedding dances, reunions, and Brown County Fair events. The Brown County Fair, held in Johnstown, attracts big name entertainment each year. Contact Gayle Magary at (402) 722-4296.

“Great Race” Big Top Stop, Kimball (2000) – When the "Great Race" came to town, Kimball rolled out the red carpet for the vintage vehicles. The daylong festivity included over 20 booths featuring food and local retailers, local entertainment, and an antique car show. The whole event had a circus theme. Contact Stuart Tritt at (308) 235-3782.

Parade of Lights, Kimball (2000) – Kimball residents created a parade of lights at the beginning of the Christmas holiday season. Nearly 50 entrants lit up a variety of things including dogs, bicycles, fire trucks, and wreckers. Contact Rechelle Brown and Susie Abramson at (308) 235-3295.

Happy Holiday Trails Lead to Maywood (2000) – Before the Maywood Christmas Festival, volunteers decorated the village. The event begins with a soup and pie supper that is a fundraiser for Maywood’s Christmas lighting display. Also included in the festival is a Christmas Tour of Homes. Contact Nancy Evans at (308) 362-4963.

Four Seasons of Tourism, Nebraska City (2000) – Tourism is important to Nebraska City throughout the year. Two of the oldest events are the Arbor Day Celebration and the Apple Jack Festival. Other events are held to celebrate Christmas and the Fourth of July. Local businesses and volunteers get involved at planning meetings that are open to the public. Contact Brigid Cordes at (402) 873-3000.

Winterfest, Pawnee City (2000) – The Pawnee City Chamber of Commerce planned a Winterfest celebration to dedicate the new streets, sidewalks, and Victorian lights in downtown Pawnee City. The Pawnee County Promotional Network, the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, and other volunteers assisted with the event. In conjunction with Winterfest the Lutheran Church held a craft fair. Contact Yvonne Dalluge at (402) 852-3131.

Annual Trail Ride, Petersburg (2000) – Over 350 people joined the 11th Annual Petersburg Trail Ride. The event began with a Karaoke band the evening before the ride. A prime rib cook out and pancake breakfast was also a part of the festivities. Contact Chuck Reicks at (402) 386-5316.

Carnival Days, Petersburg (2000) – For the past 30 years Petersburg Carnival Days has been a fun summer event for citizens of all ages. The two-day event is sponsored by the Community Club. Events include Youth and Adult Nights, balloon drop, business feud, and carnival. Contact Ross and Shiela Knott at (402) 386-5411.

Pilger Days and Pilger Ways (2000) – Pilger Days is a community-wide effort that involves all ages. The annual celebration includes the Pilger High School Alumni Banquet, a swim party, talent show and art display. Prior to the three-day celebration a community clean up is held. Contact Ken Wiechman at (402) 396-3563.

Centennial Summer, Scottsbluff (2000) -- Scottsbluff celebrated their first 100 years with a 100-day celebration. From May to September, Scottsbluff celebrated with an ethnic festival, parade, laser show, and a citywide block party, to name a few of the events. Contact Hod Kosman at (308) 632-7004.

Smorgasbord, Stromsburg (2000) -- The year 2000 brought a return of the Smorgasbord to Stromsburg's Swedish Festival. Volunteers of all ages planned the event and cooked traditional Swedish food. The event served over 500 people and raised money for Smorgasbord improvements. As part of the Smorgasbord preparations, Swedish cooking classes were offered. Contact Sharon Noyd at (402) 764-5265.

Germanfest, Syracuse (2000) – Germanfest activities in Syracuse include a quilt show, pancake breakfast, car show, and Volkswalk. The Germanfest committee tracks the visitors each year to more carefully plan their advertising. Promotional efforts include brochures developed with assistance from the Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism. Contact Mary Anne Holland or Amy Sadle at (420) 335-3669.

Christmas Festival of Trees, Wallace (2000) – The Petal Pals Garden Club organized a Christmas Festival of Trees. Nearly 40 organizations and businesses decorated Christmas trees with a variety of themes. The School Music Department provided entertainment for the 250 visitors. Contact Linda Gohl at (308) 387-4321.

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