Developed in partnership by:
Nebraska Department of Economic Development
Nebraska Community Improvement Program
USDA—Rural Community Development Initiative
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Introduction

Welcome to the 2009 Nebraska Project Networking Guide. This guide is a tool through which community leaders can transform their ideas into reality. Community leaders wanting to network with others to learn about other successes and challenges also will find this a useful resource. Nebraska Community Improvement Program (NCIP) participants complete more than 400 community improvement projects yearly and submit them to the Nebraska Department of Economic Development via NCIP for judging. Nebraska investor-owned utilities assist in funding judges’ expenses and provide cash awards and plaques at the annual NCIP Banquet, which is held in November.

Projects are divided into the following three categories:

- Volunteer and Leadership Development
- Community Development
- Economic Development

Within each category, topic areas have been identified by the NCIP Advisory Committee and reflect the NCIP judging categories.

Each project features a title, brief description, and contact information. The community contact will be able to provide more information on each project. Communities planning to start projects are encouraged to contact those communities involved in similar completed projects to share information and ideas. This year’s guide also includes populations of each community submitting the project to further help you see what similarly populated communities are doing. Starred projects indicate category award winners.

NCIP thanks the communities that contributed projects, the U.S. Department of Agriculture that provided a Rural Community Development Initiative Grant, and Sara Watson, NCIP Assistant, who compiled this guide.

We hope you find the 2010 Nebraska Project Networking Guide to be a useful tool for your own community projects!
Leadership Development

Volunteer and Leadership Development

North Central Youth Athletic Club, Bassett (population: 636)
The North Central Youth Athletic Club provides community children with the opportunity to participate in sport activities including soccer, volleyball, flag football and basketball. High school students and parents volunteer to coach various teams. The seasons are four to six weeks long with scheduled games once or twice a week. Start-up funds came from community donations. Monetary support continues to flow into the program from businesses and individuals who believe in the cause.
Contact: Tricia Anderson/Gary Shankland, phone: (402) 684.3749 email: graftricia@hotmail.com

Farm Exposure Day, Cozad (population: 4,200)
To further promote agriculture awareness, the Cozad Chamber Ag Committee and the ABLE program hosted Farm Exposure Day. Volunteers from ag-related businesses provided learning stations. Children and faculty were bused to the farm. Students were exposed to a wide variety of ag-related career opportunities. Funding was made available through the Chamber Ag Committee’s Annual Farmer Businessman Ag BBQ.
Contact: Judy Andres/John Bell, phone: (308) 784.3930/ (308) 784.3902

Dawson-Gosper WWII Hero Flight, Dawson County (population: 24,665)
The Dawson-Gosper WWII Hero Flight took 30 World War II veterans, escorts, other sponsors, and a nurse to Washington D.C. to tour the memorials. Volunteers from the Dawson Area Development Leadership Class worked to make the event possible. A major sponsor of the event was the local Wal-Mart in Lexington, NE. Donations were received from the community as well as a grant. A send off celebration was planned at the Heartland Military Museum to pay one last tribute to the veterans.
Contact: Deb Jensen, phone: (308) 784.3902

Deshler Easter Egg Hunt & Activities, Deshler (population: 892)
Deshler hosts an annual Easter Egg Hunt for children age one through sixth grade. Children are divided into a young and olddivision, each with their own area. Senior citizens in the local nursing home and assisted living fill 2,000 colorful plastic eggs with wrapped candy. Extra prizes were donated from Great Plains Communications. Members of the high school National Honor Society hide the eggs and purchase prizes for each age division. One member wears the “Easter Bunny” suit and interacts with the children. Following the hunt, children visited stations to hear the Easter story and gather tokens. Once tokens were collected from each station, each child received an Easter storybook. Junior high students assisted in an arts and crafts area as well.
Contact: Joy Harms, phone: (402) 365.7221 email: joyharms@gpcom.net

Leadership Training, Farnam (population: 227)
During the past year, Farnam took part in a number of leadership training activities. In November, the Farnam Economic Development Corporation (FEDC) hosted a soup buffet and pie supper to honor volunteers. A goals setting meeting was also conducted. Three FEDC members attended a Leadership Training course hosted by DED and one person from the FEDC attended a “More Than Just Money” workshop in North Platte.
Contact: Dan Widick, phone: (308) 569.2370 email: dwidick@atcjet.net

Leadership Development Challenge, Petersburg (population: 360)
Through the new NCIP Leadership Development Challenge program, Petersburg successfully completed its “capstone” project of a fun day called “Bash in the Burg” and a new electronic message center for Highway 14. The purpose of the new course is to provide a blue print for small communities that have limited paid staff capacity to lead community development efforts locally by developing other forms of leadership through volunteerism, partnering, and working with regional organizations. Petersburg piloted the program with 30 participants.
Contact: Bernie Cunningham, phone: (402) 386.5368 email: bcunning@gpcom.net

Volunteers and Volunteer Leadership Development-Special Projects, Seward County (population: 16,972)
“The Seward County Young Professionals” organization was created by young adults and the Seward County Economic Development office to help retain young people in the greater Seward County area. Youth leadership classes were created in the county’s three high schools. A local visionary group called “Bridges”, a 501 (c) 3 non-profit grant writing and research data analysis group, also has been a successful contributor to the community.
Contact: Clark Kolterman, phone: (402) 643.2988
Youth Involvement and Leadership Development

Youth Group Returns to Greensburg, KS, Ainsworth (population: 1,862)
The Ainsworth United Methodist Youth Fellowship Group spent a week in Greensburg, Kan., helping to rebuild it. The town destroyed by a massive tornado two years ago. In the fall, the group was contacted and asked for additional help. In the spring, 24 high school youth, 3 college students, and 16 adults traveled back to Kansas. There, the group worked on 19 different projects. Financial aid was provided through donations.
Contact: Sherry Campbell, phone: (402) 387.2082

Youth Plan Benefit for Family in Need, Alexandria (population: 185)
After a local family lost its home and belongings in a fire just before Christmas, Meridian Public School students hosted a benefit soup supper and pancake feed for the family. Supplies for the benefits were provided through donations and the school. The school benefits raised $2,000 with funding partially matched by Homestead Chapter of Thrivent Financial.
Contact: Billie Wassom, phone: (402) 710.9482

The Youth Project, Alliance (population: 8,331)
The Youth Project is a faith-based organization of the United Methodist Church. The group hosts inspirational concerts for local Panhandle youth. To date, The Youth Project has held six concerts featuring national recording artists Casting Pearls (VOTA), Remedy Drive, Foolish Things, Phil Joel, Day of Fire and others. The Christian rock bands share messages of hope for all, testimonies, and awesome rock shows the youth can relate to. While many of the bands are formed by youth and youth-based, they also appeal to many adults and families. Three of the concerts were absolutely free due to fundraising, volunteering, and donations.
Contact: Michelle James, phone: (402) 760.3825 email: ripitup400@hotmail.com

Franklin Community/City/FFA Clean-Up Project, Franklin (population: 889)
The city council, mayor, and FFA students work to improve Franklin's appearance through a city-wide spring clean-up week. This project enables Franklin residents to clean up chemicals, yard waste, tree limbs, old appliances, metal, untreated lumber, hazardous waste, and batteries with free of charge. Students are released from school for the first morning’s clean-up, and then split into different groups to work with the employees, each taking a section of the city.
Contact: Mayor George Kleen, phone: (308) 425.9919

Badge of Honor—Eagle Scout x 4, Gothenburg (population: 3,678)
Four Gothenburg boys improved the community while working toward their Eagle Scout rank. Anthony Reinhard replaced the side walk at the Gothenburg Historical Museum. Tommy France led a project to install new playground equipment at the elementary school. Cody Larson added the “Hercules Climber” to other playground equipment at Dudley Elementary with money raised by the school’s students. Trevor Franzen reconstructed crumbling concrete barrier along Lake Helen, a recreation area in Gothenburg.
Contact: Anne Anderson, phone: (308) 537.3505 email: chamber@gothenburgdelivers.com

Students Accelerating in Leadership (SAIL) Conference, Nebraska City (population: 7,228)
To develop the resources and grow a new generation of leaders, Partners for Otoe County (P4OC) Leadership Committee worked with six area schools to host a day-long leadership skills conference for 7th graders. One hundred thirty students participated in the Student’s Accelerating in Leadership (SAIL) conference. They were divided into 12 teams and rotated through five sessions which included: team building, real colors: personalities and communication, goal setting, manners 101, and respect, responsibility & relevance.
Contact: Traci Reuter, phone: (402) 873.8937

Pawnee City Student Council/Pawnee PAC (Prevention Action Coalition), Pawnee City (population: 1,033)
The Pawnee City Student Council held a “Walk Away From Drugs and Alcohol” rally. The students targeted younger students in third through ninth grade for the rally. Parents and residents were invited to walk with the students to show that they support their choices to stay drug-and alcohol-free. A promotions committee raised funds to provide everyone with a free t-shirt, and informational brochures. Other committees focused on the t-shirts, advertisement, food and game, and the route. As a result, the Pawnee PAC was developed and hosts several healthy lifestyle activities throughout the year.
Contact: Mary Moser, phone: (402) 852.2988 email: mmoser@esu4.org

Senior Legion Baseball Installs New Scoreboard, Randolph (population: 955)
The Senior Legion baseball team raised funds for a new scoreboard. Members solicited individuals’ and businesses’ contributions to complete the project as well as donated money from previously held fundraisers. Within three weeks, the team had raised $7,400. After researching all cost effective products, the team ordered a scoreboard from Daktronics in Brookings, S.D. and the donor signs from Love Signs in Norfolk, Neb.
Contact: Tim Kint, phone: (402) 371.3880 email: timothy.kint@axa-advisors.com
Teen Spaces, Scribner (population: 971)
Teen Spaces was created to enhance the youth's public library experience. After observing much traffic by teenagers, the library personnel sectioned off an area for this demographic. Teen Spaces features brand new book cases filled with teen literature, and age-appropriate media, a new TV and Blu-ray player, and many Blu-ray movies. Funding came from a grant from the Fremont Area Foundation and The Nebraska Library Commission as well as monetary gifts from the Scribner Library Foundation, Tannenbaum Festival, Windhusen/Diedrichson Endowment Trust and Paul Zucker, a former library patron.
Contact: Scribner, phone: (402) 664.2565 email: scribnerne@yahoo.com

☆ Youth Involvement and Leadership, Seward (population: 6,247)
Seward’s youth have been involved with the Seward Fourth of July Celebration since 1968. The planning committee purposely includes a high school student Coordinator and two Senior and Junior Chairmen. Every sub-committee also has at least one high school student participating in it. Seward’s youth also are concerned about preserving the environment. Several student organizations have adopted recycling as their main theme for the year and help out at the celebration.
Contact: Andrew Sorsen, phone: (402) 643.2454

Kiwanis K-Kids Club & Priceless Preteen Leadership Program, Wahoo (population: 4,225)
After a group of 4th and 5th graders graduated from the Priceless Preteen Leadership Program, the Kiwanis K-Kids Club was formed to help the youth reach their full potential as active, service-minded members of the community. Twenty-four youth became involved in the club. Monthly meetings are held where the youth set up committees, discuss service projects, and evaluate the strengths/weaknesses of the community. Since its formulation, K-Kids has actively served the community.
Contact: Lisa Brichacek, phone: (402) 443.4162 email: lisa.brichacek@wahoonewspaper.com
Community Development

Community Services

☆ **Franklin County Memorial Hospital Outpatient Center, Franklin (population: 889)**
A new Franklin County Memorial Hospital Outpatient Center was identified as a priority need in the hospital’s five-year plan. After a donor contributed $1 million of the needed $4.1 million, county supervisors issued $3.1 million in government-backed bonds to provide the remaining funding. The project resulted in a 14,000-square-feet expansion of the building and improved services of physical therapy, occupational therapy, cardiac rehabilitation, specialty clinics, the hospital’s laboratory, and provided a location for the CT scanner.
Contact: Jerrell Gerdes, phone: (308) 425.6221 email: jfgerdes@frontiernet.net

☆ **Nebraska City Center for Children & Families, Nebraska City (population: 7,228)**
The one-stop Nebraska City Center for Children and Families was founded to minimize duplication of resources, to locate resources, and ensure the availability of needed resources. The two-phase project included: Phase 1-Determining which service agencies should be co-located in the Center to best serve the community; and Phase 2-Providing a building suitable for housing such agencies. With service agencies now located in the same building there is better coordination of services, with clients receiving more seamless, quality attention. Funds were raised through grants and foundations as well as the USDA-RD loan.
Contact: Dale Haverty, phone: (402) 874.9273 email: familycenter1@windstream.net

Technology, Infrastructure, and Planning

New Signs Spruce Up Alexandria, Alexandria (population: 185)
Alexandria put up three new signs. The community club placed a new reflective sign identifying the Alexandria Community Center, along Highway 53. The Presbyterian Church placed new blue signs at two community entrances. Finally, a Community Club member donated new red and white signs to replace the old wooden signs at the city limits north and south of Highway 53. Volunteers donated their time to the installation process.
Contact: Pauline Disney/Marge Durflinger, phone: (402) 749.3650/ (402) 749.4435 email: durfs@windstream.net

Community Welcome Sign, Farnam (population: 227)
The community needed to replace “Welcome” signs at the east and west entrances to town along Highway 23. Various businesses were contacted and the job was given to “Those Blasted Signs” of Bertrand, Neb. The project’s funding was provided through Nebraska State Income Tax Credits as well from Community Carnival proceeds. Several sign designs were produced and the town voted for its favorite. A sign based upon Farnam’s railroad history and “can-do” attitude was chosen.
Contact: Betty Hoppe-Stevens, phone: (308) 569.2324

Mainstay Communications Fiber to the Home Project, Henderson (population: 986)
Mainstay Communications cooperative was formed by the community in 1968. In 2008, Mainstay decided it was important to continue upgrading telephone, cable, and internet services by expanding the amount of bandwidth available to residents. More bandwidth speeds information delivery time. For example, increased bandwidth decreases download time for Internet files. To prepare for future technology, Mainstay installed Fiber to the Home, an optimal solution for providing broadband to new and existing communities. The company was approved for a Rural Broadband and Telecommunications Loan through the USDA Rural Utilities Services Department to use $3,962,000 to provide new and improved service to subscribers through the deployment of three new route miles of fiber cable.
Contact: Kelsey Bergen, phone: (402) 723.4228 email: hchamber@mainstaycomm.net

Saunders County Law Enforcement & Judicial Center, Wahoo (population: 4,225)
For years, there were concerns about the county jail’s size, safety and security. County court facilities were small, with no ability to seat a jury for jury trial, and the district courtroom had poor acoustics. Other county offices needed more space. Through the efforts of the board of supervisors, county officials, and citizens, a $12, 990,000 bond was passed which provided the funds for construction. Thirty high school students volunteered to test out the new facility at an overnight lock-in. Two area clubs also helped initiate the facility by holding a “jail & bail” fundraiser for the Saunders County Youth Services. In addition, the local librarian secured a $500 grant to update and expand a library for the new facility.
Contact: Patti Lindgren, phone: (402) 443.8101
Parks, Recreation, and Environmental Awareness

NCIP Playground Development, Dakota City (population: 1,876)
After raising money for a new community swimming pool, the town did not have enough funds to cover the construction and general upkeep. Interest from the $120,000 raised was instead used to provide scholarships to area youth. Last year, the local NCIP used $66,000 from the fund to purchase new playground equipment and build a shelter facility. The community then built and installed the equipment with the help of volunteers.
Contact: Robert Peters, phone: (402) 987.3448 email: bobpeters@dakotacity.net

Clean Up Days and Monthly Recycling, Davenport (population: 277)
The community works with a garbage company that provides a semi trailer with large bins to hold its recyclables. The trailer is parked at a known site and volunteers man the trailer on a monthly schedule. When the trailer is full, the garbage company picks it up and leaves an empty one in its place. The Village also sponsors “Clean Up Days” each Spring allowing citizens to remove unwanted recyclable items. A larger trailer is provided for appliances, iron, and other items that are not allowed in the landfill. Volunteers from various clubs help citizens who are unable to transport their items.
Contact: Arlene Vorce, phone: (402) 364.2292 email: davenportvillage@hotmail.com

Cumberland Mini Park, Geneva (population: 2,226)
With 13 volunteers, monetary donations, in-kind supplies and materials, and hours of work, the Cumberland Mini Park was renovated into a beautiful and safe park for Geneva to enjoy. Brightly colored play equipment was installed. New flowers and plants as well as rubber mulch and border made a major impact. Funding was made available through Wal-Mart in York, Neb., the City of Geneva Community Betterment Grant, and businesses and individuals.
Contact: Patty Roper-Epperson, phone: (402) 759.3813 email: whatsnew@cumberlandfashions.com

Butts, Drugs & Jugs, Gering/Scottsbluff (population: 14,825/7,751)
This year, the communities focused on environmental awareness regarding “Butts, Drugs, and Jugs”. Education is the key to accomplish the goals of less litter and recycling. The program concentrated on the golf course by promoting a “Before you Putt, Don’t Litter your Butt” campaign. In May, the third pharmaceutical take-back program was held allowing residents to safely dispose of expired or unused pharmaceutical “drugs” as well as needles and personal care products. Finally, the local Kiwanis organization initiated a project to install a new playground in the community made out of recycled plastic lumber by collecting #2 plastic, or “jugs”. Donations and grants allowed these projects to become a reality.
Contact: Kathy Kropuenske, phone: (308) 632.4649 email: ksgbkathy@yahoo.com

Perking up the Parks; Now it’s Time To Play!, Gothenburg (population: 3,678)
Improvements, replacement of playground equipment and beautification projects were implemented to the various park and recreation facilities in Gothenburg. Individuals and groups volunteered to adopt a garden spot. A Playground Selection Committee was established to choose new equipment that complied with the American Disabilities Act. Volunteers from Eagle Crest Academy helped install the equipment. Through the Tree City U.S.A. program, the Tree Board planted new trees.
Contact: Susan Williams, phone: (308) 537.7224 email: susankwilliams@cozadtel.net

Campbell Park-Phase I, Imperial (population: 1,982)
After relocating the main attraction, the community swimming pool, Campbell Park needed a makeover. To enhance the attractiveness, the community crafted a two-phase redevelopment plan. Phase I, completed this year, included demolition of the old pool facility, the grand opening celebration of the new swimming pool complex, reseeding the vacated site, and creation of a new playground. The projects were funded through a budgeted allowance, city sales taxes, grants, fundraisers, and donations.
Contact: Jo Leyland, phone: (308) 882.4368 email: jol@imperial-ne.com

Children At Play Art Sculpture Project, Pawnee City (population: 1,003)
After a decision city officials decided to add some life to the bike trail that ran through the city, high school art teacher Deb Kubik was contacted about designing some attractive artwork. Deb enlisted her art classes to help design the sculptures as well as the school’s shop class to cut and weld the sculptures together. Approximately 45 high school students helped with the project. Benches were also donated by local residents and businesses and placed along the trail.
Contact: Tamela Stephens/Carol Glathar, phone: (402) 852.2781 email: pcityhall@neb.rr.com

Pawnee County Fair Improvements, Pawnee County (population: 2,686)
Pawnee County began making improvements at the county fairgrounds by fixing problems with the restrooms with funding from the local health district. Damaged boards were then replaced on the rodeo bleachers. A member of the ag society board with construction experience coordinated the replacement of a destroyed roof. Another volunteer undertook scouting out and booking more fair entertainment with financial assistance from the Nebraska Humanities Council. A large tent was rented to house...
children’s games and the annual BBQ. Improvements were also made to various food booths.
Contact: Carol Sisco, phone: (402) 852.2575 email: csico@navix.net

★ Community Environmental Care, Petersburg (population: 360)
Petersburg puts great emphasis on environmental care. This year, the community planned a day for area tire recycling, as well as placed “Green Fiber” bins in three areas of the town. A household hazardous waste collection day was held and Petersburg was the county collection point for used oil. The community also sponsored an aluminum can cage and collection. Five business buildings were demolished and two old trailer homes were removed to beautify and clear the land. Other vacant lots were cleaned up and purchased for future housing development. Seventeen junk cars were removed and the Village hosted two family clean up days. The school also adopted three entrances to town. Petersburg joined the Great American Clean-up for three months and seven public garden areas were planted and tended.
Contact: Doug Koch, phone: (402) 386.5335 email: dkoch83@hotmail.com

Veteran’s Memorial Park Improvements, Randolph (population: 955)
The Randolph Economic Development Group provided the community with new playground equipment for Veteran’s Memorial Park. The Economic Development Director applied for and received a $5,000 Peter Kiewit Grant to put toward the project. The remaining $20,000 was raised through local support.
Contact: Denise Olsen, phone: (402) 337.0142 email: topcity@cableone.net

★ Restoration of Band Shell, Seward (population: 6,247)
The Seward Band Shell is an important entertainment structure in town. After years of wear, the band shell needed repairs. The pillars, which needed to be replaced, cost approximately $14,000 for new fiberglass pillars that would withstand the weather elements. New flooring and paint were also renovation priorities, as well as a new sound system, a fence in the back, new plantings, and benches. The city council budgeted $14,420 for repairs and further donations came from members and organizations in the community. As more and more donations filter in, the projects are being completed and the band shell is being restored to its former glory.
Contact: Melvin Bolte, phone: (402) 643.4856

Trash Pick Up, Steinauer (population: 70)
Each year, Steinauer residents walk 25 roadway miles to pick up trash. Trash is also collected in town. The money received from the State of Nebraska for cleaning the highways ($50/mile) is used to fund other town projects. Aluminum cans are collected separately and then recycled.
Contact: Erma Gyhra, phone: (402) 869.2266

Arts, Humanities, and Cultural Experiences

★ Sandhills Area Entertainment Corporation (SAEC) DBA Royal Theater, Ainsworth (population: 1,862)
When the Royal Theater owners decided to sell the theater, the community decided to form the non-profit Sandhills Area Entertainment Corporation (SAEC) run by volunteers to keep the theater in the community. The movie theater was transformed into a volunteer-run theater with seven groups of four to five members running the theater each weekend. Funding for the theater is based upon annual fundraisers as grants are limited due to lack of ownership of the building.
Contact: Hayley Williams, phone: (402) 387.8040 email: hayjwill88@yahoo.com

★ New Harmonies Smithsonian Exhibit, Alliance (population: 8,331)
The Knight Museum and Sandhills Center hosted the “New Harmonies: Celebrating American Roots Music”, a traveling exhibit from the Smithsonian Museum. The six week exhibit was split into music genres including: musical inspiration, ethnic & Native American, big band, blue grass & gospel, oldies thru the decades, and country western. Thirty-two local musicians helped to provide entertainments. The museum received grants from the Nebraska Humanities Council and the local Visitor’s Committee. The city and Museum Partners Auxiliary group covered the rest of the costs.
Contact: Becci Thomas, phone: (308) 762.2384 email: lmuseum@cityofalliance.net

★ Rock County Veterans Honor Roll, Bassett (population: 636)
Two Rock County Veterans Honor Rolls were restored and updated to preserve the historic memorials. The original hand-printed names were faded and replaced with computer generated lists making them legible again. The completed honor roll displays 1,295 names on 14 connected frames. Above the list is a title-banner. The original center frame displaying a picture of the American flag was left intact with the wooden bronze-colored eagle gracing the top-center of the structure. The Rock County Veterans Honor Roll is permanently on display at the Bassett American Legion Post.
Contact: Evelyn Armstrong, phone: (402) 684-3855 email: aearmstrong@huntel.net
Quilts Around the Block, Cozad (population: 4,200)
The Cozad Chamber of Commerce sponsors this free event that includes a large quilt show at Chipper Hall in downtown Cozad, a walking tour of quilts in 15 downtown businesses, and quilt displays and activities at the Robert Henri and 100th Meridian Museums. An evening event of wine and hor d’ouerves, as well as a program was also planned. The walking tour of quilts encouraged people to stop in different businesses that they do not normally frequent.
Contact: Judy Andres/Julie Geiger, phone: (308) 784.3930/ (308) 784.2010

Music in the Park, Scribner (population: 971)
Music in the Park is a free outdoor/indoor concert series featured throughout the summer. A variety of musical genres and artists are brought in to perform. Grant funding from the Nebraska Arts Council covered 45% of the cost for three concert groups. The fourth group offered a free concert. Other sponsorships were gained from local businesses and individuals. Great Plains Communications videotaped the performances which were then broadcast on its public access channel in four communities.
Contact: Diana Moxness, phone: (402) 941.6290 email: moxnessd@mlc.edu

Seward County Children’s Choir and High School Chamber Choir!, Seward County (population: ???)
The Seward County Children’s Choir is open to children in fourth through eighth grade. The choir has participants from the parochial schools, along with Seward, Milford and Centennial in Utica. Each child pays a $50 registration, with scholarships offered to those who cannot afford the fee. The choir makes several appearances throughout the year, ending with a Mother’s Day performance. The Seward County High School Summer Chamber Choir is directed by Dr. Kurt vonKampen of Concordia University. Talented students from the area try out at the beginning of the summer and then attend practices on Tuesday mornings. The choir performs at two major concerts during the summer.
Contact: Clark Kolterman, phone: (402) 643.2988
Economic Development

Business Assistance and Development

Alexandria’s New Café—H&D’s Backyard BBQ, Alexandria (population: 185)
Alexandria had been without a café for more than a year and many residents were hoping someone would reopen it. Wishes turned into action when two men started to repair and redo the building. Volunteers from the community offered their expertise on repairs as well as their support. Alexandria now enjoys a new café, as well as a social venue for hosting parties and morning get-togethers.
Contact: Harold Hill, phone: (402) 749.4100

FFA Business Sign Project, Bassett (population: 636)
After seeing a need for new business signs at the Rock County Fair, FFA students devised a plan to promote the local businesses as well as give back to the community. FFA members visited with businesses in the community to solicit requests and funding for advertising the businesses at the fair. Signs were purchased by the businesses for the cost of supplies and then the FFA members designed and created new vibrant advertisements and installed them at the fair. Currently, the chapter has painted 15 signs advertising more than 30 local businesses.
Contact: Ann Dvorak, phone: (402) 925.8432 email: advorak@esu17.org

I2E Club—Investors, Investors & Entrepreneurs Club, Nebraska City (population: 7,228)
The Inventors Investors and Entrepreneurs (I2E) Club was developed by several regional partners as one element in a comprehensive regional economic development effort. I2E fosters an entrepreneurial culture in southeast Nebraska by providing both human and social capital capacity building. The group meets once a month for social networking, as well as an educational program. The goal of each evening is to expose participants to information and networks that help them build better ideas, business, or investment.
Contact: Dr. Connie Reimers-Hild, phone: (402) 873.3166 email: creimers2@unl.edu

Rae Valley Market Expansion, Petersburg (population: 360)
Petersburg’s grocery store was closing until a local family stepped in and purchased it. To recoup profits, the store’s owners negotiated with Affiliated Foods, a member-owned cooperative of independent grocers, to lower the 5% surcharge. It was ultimately decided that it would be in the store’s best interest to form a coop with Lindsay’s of North Bend. By forming a coop with Lindsay’s, Petersburg was able to keep its grocery store as a vital part of the business district.
Contact: Larry Temme, phone: (402) 386.5711 email: rvm@gpcom.net

Roth Industrial Park, South Sioux City (population: 11,925)
The South Sioux City Community Development Agency and City of South Sioux City recognized a need for additional quality jobs and an expanded tax base. Roth Industrial Park was established to attract a regional cluster of food-related companies. The city was then able to target advertising to attract value-added agriculture industries. The park has brought in several new companies including Beef Products Incorporated (BPI), Green Planet Farms, Peerless Energy, Omega Industries, Midco, Natural Innovative Renewable Energy (NIRE), and 21st Century Grain.
Contact: Dan McNamara, phone: (402) 412.2507 email: dmcnamara@southsiouxcity.org

Tourism Promotion and Development

Sandhills Journey Scenic Byway Interpretive/Visitor Center, Broken Bow (population: 3,400)
Community members of Broken Bow envisioned an interpretive center for the Sandhills Journey Scenic Byway (SJSB) that would invite adventurous travelers. The vision was to showcase each community and the sites and facilities along the SJSB from Grand Island to Alliance. Fourteen acres of land and a barn were donated to help bring this vision to reality. Funding was provided through matching funds with a Transportation Enhancement Grant from the Federal Highway Administration.
Contact: Denise Russell, phone: (308) 872.5691 email: deniserussel@brokenbow-ne.com

Franklin Museum’s HarvestFEST, Franklin (population: 889)
HarvestFEST is an end of harvest community celebration hosted by the Franklin County Museum in the middle part of October. It is a family-oriented “early-Halloween” celebration that emphasizes children’s entertainment. People from the area and surrounding counties are invited to dress in pioneer or Halloween costumes to enjoy a museum tour, kids’ games, hayrack rides, homemade foods, pioneer demonstrations, and a pumpkin giveaway. All monetary support was provided by the Franklin County Museum and
individual donations.
Contact: Jim Gorman, phone: (308) 470.1104 email: earthhome@gtmc.net

History Repeats Itself at the Gothenburg Historical Museum, Gothenburg (population: 3,768)
The Gothenburg Pony Express Historical Society purchased a local building to house its collection of photographs, records, and historically significant items, as well as to create a tourism draw. Improvements were made to the building and the treasures were moved in. Community members have volunteered to staff it and give tours at the museum six hours per day, Wednesday through Saturday, throughout the busy tourism season.
Contact: Jenny Daup, phone: (308) 529.3678 email: jdaup@q.com

☆ Henderson Mennonite Heritage Park’s General Store Construction Project, Henderson (population: 986)
The Henderson Mennonite Heritage Park educates visitors about the journey of immigrants from Russia to Henderson, Nebraska. This year, a replica of the original General Store was constructed. With the addition of the General Store, the park now can provide restroom access to guests, which was not available. In addition, this building has climate control to maintain the quality of various Mennonite artifacts. Continuous efforts are made to refurbish old buildings and constructing new ones throughout the park.
Contact: Kelsey Bergen, phone: (402) 723.4228 email: hchamber@mainstaycomm.net

Pawnee City Video, Pawnee City (population: 1,007)
Johnson Audio Video production company approached the Pawnee City Development Corporation (PCDC) about producing a video for the area. The two groups discussed the project, other projects that had been completed and cost. PCDC owned the rights to copy or market the video upon completion. Footage was shot, a script was written, and then changes were made. The video was shown at the Business and Volunteer Recognition Banquet and copies were distributed to Pawnee City alumni in hopes of increasing tourism in the area.
Contact: Alan Richard, phone: (402) 852.2887

Christmas Tour of Homes in Pawnee County, Pawnee County (population: 2,686)
Pawnee County Promotional Network (PCPN) asked several people throughout the county to open their homes at Christmas time for tour. Four people volunteered to showcase their decorated homes. PCPN members sold tickets, and homeowners served as tour guides. Money collected from the exhibition was then used for projects in the County.
Contact: Yvonne Dalluge, phone: (402) 852.3131 email: my.blue.heaven@windstream.net

Seward County Fall Festival, Seward (population: 6,841)
The city of Seward hosted its first Seward County Fall Festival this year. The festival was created to increase tourism in the community and area, as well as provide a safe and enjoyable experience for all involved. Activities included “Witches Night Out in Downtown”, “A History and Mystery Tour”, children’s games, a flea market, pumpkin contests, and a harvest feast.
Contact: Pat Coldiron, phone: (402) 643.4189

☆ Seward County “Ridge Road” Promotion, Seward County Tourism Promotion and Seward’s Fourth of July Celebration, Seward County (population: 16,972)
Seward County has developed a local scenic drive campaign called “Ridge Road” that promotes the drive in the hills around Garland. The Seward County Visitor’s Committee was created over 15 years ago to coordinate the use of the Seward County Lodging Tax. The committee is responsible for the promotional brochures and pamphlets, as well as other materials or advertisements for the area. Every year, Seward hosts its Fourth of July Celebration. The event involves many volunteers and activities and brings in more than 40,000 people to the town in one day.
Contact: Clark Kolterman, phone: (402) 643.2988

☆ Vintage Base Ball Team, Wahoo (population: 4,225)
Many historical societies and living history museums throughout the nation have formed vintage baseball teams. As early as 1996, the Saunders County Historical Society was invited to “field” a bunch of players, learn the rules, and play. The 1860-1870’s Wauhoo Plowboy Vintage Base Ball Club was formed and travels to other communities to play ball and promote Wahoo and the Saunders County Historical Society.
Contact: Don Proett, phone: (402) 443.3090 email: djproett@nntc.net

Workforce Development

☆ Biz Kidz Entrepreneurship Camp, Ainsworth (population: 1,862)
The North Central Development Center and BKR Extension Office work together to offer the “Biz Kidz” Entrepreneurship Camp to middle school students with an interest in starting their own businesses. The long-term goal is to teach students that they can be successful business owners in rural areas and they do not always need to “take jobs”, but can create their own opportunities by
creating their own business plans. Students learn how to finance their businesses and create marketing plans. At the end of the camp, a business fair is open to the community where students sell their products or services.
Contact: Jordyn Lechtenberg, phone: (402) 387.2306

Rosewood Estates LLC, Alliance (population: 8,133)
Nine duplexes were developed to provide affordable housing for moderate income seniors. The rent per unit is approximately $425/month for a two-bedroom and $465/month for a three-bedroom. The project was developed to provide seniors with safe, more cost effective housing, thereby freeing up more homes for younger families employed in Box Butte County thereby eliminating their need to commute from other areas.
Contact: Pamela Forester/John Olafson, phone: (402) 434.3344/ (308) 762.1800 email: pamela@exceldg.com/director@boxbuttedevelopment.com
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The following is a compilation of 2006-2009 *Project Networking Guides*.

Log on to www.neded.org/ncip to download past *Project Networking Guides*, or contact Christina Bartels for more project information at:

Nebraska Department of Economic Development
Community and Rural Development Division
301 Centennial Mall South
P.O. Box 94666
Lincoln, NE 68509-4666
402-471-3172 or 800-426-6505
Fax: 402-471-8405
christina.bartels@nebraska.gov
Note: Number in parenthesis indicates the guide year in which the project can be found.

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Adult/Senior Citizen's Art Workshop ------------------------------Grant County (2006)

Alternative Fuels Forum -----------------------------------------Loup Basin (2007)
I2E Club—Investors, Investors, & Entrepreneurs Club-------------------Nebraska City (2009)
O’Neill Community Foundation Grant Night ----------------------------O’Neill (2007)
Business Promotion in Petersburg -----------------------------------Petersburg (2007)
Seward County Economic Development-------------------------------Seward County (2007)
Thanks a Bunch -------------------------------------------------------------South Sioux City (2007)
Wahoo Airpark TIF Incentive ---------------------------------------Wahoo (2008)

Tourism Promotion and Development
Promotion and Marketing
Tourism Assessment and Planning Project--------------------------Bancroft (2007)
Brady Area Web Marketing and Tourist Rack Card Project ----------Brady (2007)
Sandhills Journey Scenic Byway Interpretive/Visitor Center -------Broken Bow (2009)
Web Portal Project ------------------------------------------------Butler County (2006)
Cozad Parking Lot--------------------------------------------------Cozad (2007)
Loup River Valley Tourism Coalition Marketing Campaign ---------Garfield County & Valley County (2008)
Gering’s Rolling Billboards----------------------------------------Gering (2007)
Pawnee City Video-----------------------------------------------Pawnee City (2009)
Brochures for Pawnee County and Pawnee City -------------------Pawnee County (2007)
Promote Tourism ---------------------------------------------------Pawnee County (2008)
I-80 Tourism Sign---------------------------------------------------Potter (2008)
Location Signage ---------------------------------------------------Ravenna (2007)
Seward County Economic Development Office ------------------------Seward County (2006)
HIYA & Tanks a Lot…30 Days of Gas on Us ------------------------York County (2006)

Landmarks, Memorials and Museums
Sallows Military Museum----------------------------------------Alliance (2007)
Neihardt Historical Site Promotion Project-------------------Bancroft (2006)
St. James Marketplace------------------------------------------Cedar County (2006)
Andrew Jackson Higgins Memorial -------------------------------Columbus (2007)
History Repeats Itself at the Gothenburg Historical Museum---------Gothenburg (2009)

Henderson Mennonite Heritage Park’s General Store

Construction Project --------------------Henderson (2009)

Missouri River Basin Lewis and Clark Interpretive

Trail and Visitor Center-----------------------------Nebraska City (2006)

The North Platte Canteen -----------------------------North Platte (2006)

Schilling Bridge Winery & Microbrewery -----------------------Pawnee County (2006)

Pilger Park Camper Pads -----------------------------Pilger (2006)

Ravenna Veterans Memorial Wall -------------------------Ravenna (2006)

Museum Improvement Project-----------------Stuart (2005)

Museum Improvement Project-Dr. Reichard/Kramer House --------Stuart (2006)

River Park Improvements -----------------------------Wisner (2008)

Tourism Events

National Day of the Cowboy-------------------Ainsworth (2007)

Good Old Fashion Fun ---------------------Ainsworth (2008)

Alexandria Fun Daze-----------------------------Alexandria (2007)


Chautauqua-------------------------------Alliance (2006)

Alliance Chamber of Commerce Heritage Days --------------Alliance (2008)

Blue Hill Fourth of July Celebration-------------------Blue Hill (2007)

Rock’ n Roll Car Show ---------------------------------Chappell (2006)

Culbertson’s Annual Events --------------------------Culbertson (2007)


BRAN Stays in Eustis ------------------------Eustis (2007)

Wurst Tag-------------------------------------Eustis (2007)

Fireworks and Fun --------------------------------Eustis (2008)

Founders’ Day -----------------------------------Farnam (2006)

Farnam Founders’ Days Improvements---------------Farnam (2008)

Bargains on Byways ---------------------------Franklin (2008)

Franklin Museum’s HarvestFEST------------------------Franklin(2009)
Festival of Memories Gothenburg (2006)
Candlelight Christmas and Lighted Vehicle Parade Hartington (2006)
Hartington Q125 — A Spectacular Success (4 day event) Hartington (2008)
Bike Ride Across Nebraska Kimball (2006)
Greater Nebraska Tour and Recreation Expo Loup Basin (2007)
Sherman County Farmers Market Loup City (2008)
June Jubilee Milligan (2008)
Shell Creek Valley Days Newman Grove (2006)
Model A Tour Pawnee County (2007)
Christmas Tour of Homes Pawnee County (2009)
Petersburg Punkin’ Chunkin’ Celebration Petersburg (2006)
Annual Sweet Corn and Hamburger Feed Pilger (2007)
Plainview Antique Farm and Tractor Show Plainview (2007)
4th of July Extravaganza Ravenna (2007)
Rock County Fair and Parade Rock County (2007)
Scribner Shenanigans Scribner (2008)
Tourism Seward (2008)
Seward County Fall Festival Seward (2009)
Seward County Tourism Promotion/July 4 Seward County (2007, 2008)
Remember When Heritage Celebration Stuart (2007)
Christmas on the Prairie Wahoo (2007)
Vintage Baseball Team Wahoo (2009)

Workforce Development
Biz Kidz Entrepreneurship Camp Ainsworth (2009)
Rosewood Estates LLC Alliance (2009)
Kimball Hospital Foundation Scholarship Kimball (2008)
Employer/Employee Banquet Scribner (2008)
21st Century Learning South Sioux City (2008)