

NEBRASKA MUNICIPAL REVIEW

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for skatepark grand opening

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Nebraska Veterans' Home in Kearney

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Blueprint Nebraska to develop
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Official Publication of the League of Nebraska Municipalities

SEPTEMBER 2018

American Veterans Park in West Point to be dedicated on Veterans Day



Photo of American Veterans Park in West Point. Photo provided courtesy of Lisa Hunke, Media Coordinator, American Veterans Park.

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Larger Cities Legislative Committee

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CALENDAR

NLC City Summit.....Nov. 7-10, 2018, Los Angeles, Calif.
Utilities/Public Works Section Annual ConferenceJan. 16-18, 2019, Embassy Suites, Lincoln

Municipal Legal Calendar

(All statute citations to Revised Statutes of Nebraska)

SEPTEMBER 2018

CITIES OF THE FIRST CLASS

Within 10 days following meeting
or before next meeting
(whichever is sooner) Clerk to have minutes available for public inspection. (84-1413)
Within 15 days of Passage..... Clerk publishes ordinances passed. (16-405)
Within 30 days of Council meeting Clerk publishes official proceedings of meeting,
including claims. (19-1102)
On or before September 1 City Council determines final allocation of levy authority
for its subdivisions (77-3443)
On or before September 20..... File adopted annual or biennial budget statement with County
Clerk and State Auditor's Office. (13-508)
File information on tradenames and interlocal agreements with
State Auditor's Office (13-513)
Within 20 days after end of month..... Treasurer files monthly financial report. (16-318)
Last Day..... End of Fiscal Year (16-701)
* * Clerk must prepare agenda prior to next Council meeting.
(84-1411)

CITIES OF THE SECOND CLASS

Within 10 days following meeting
or before next meeting
(whichever is sooner) Clerk to have minutes available for public inspection. (84-1413)
Within 15 days of Passage..... Clerk publishes ordinances passed. (17-613)
Within 30 days following
Council meeting Clerk publishes official proceedings of meeting, including
claims. (19-1102)
On or before September 1 City Council determines final allocation of levy authority for
its subdivisions (77-3443)
On or before September 20..... File adopted annual or biennial budget statement with County
Clerk and State Auditor's Office. (13-508)
File information on tradenames and interlocal agreements with
State Auditor's Office (13-513)
Within 20 days after end of month..... Treasurer files monthly financial report. (17-606)
Last Day..... End of Fiscal Year (17-701)
* * Clerk must prepare agenda prior to next Council meeting.
(84-1411)

VILLAGES

Within 10 days following meeting
or before next meeting
(whichever is sooner) Clerk to have minutes available for public inspection. (84-1413)
Within 15 days of Passage..... Clerk publishes ordinances passed. (17-613)
Within 30 days following Trustees'
meeting..... Clerk publishes official proceedings of meeting,
including claims. (19-1102)
On or before September 1 Village Board determines final allocation of levy authority for
its subdivisions (77-3443)
On or before September 20..... File adopted annual or biennial budget statement with County
Clerk and State Auditor's Office. (13-508)
File information on tradenames and interlocal agreements with
State Auditor's Office (13-513)
Within 20 days after end of month..... Treasurer files monthly financial report. (17-606)
Last Day..... End of Fiscal Year (17-701)
* * Clerk must prepare agenda prior to next Council meeting.
(84-1411)

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We pay tribute to past League Presidents Jim Van Marter and Ken Gnadt

BY L. LYNN REX, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, LNM

Tributes give us an opportunity to recall and recount special memories about special people who have inspired us over time. As Executive Director of the League of Nebraska Municipalities since 1991, I have been blessed with the opportunity to work with hundreds of exceptional men and women who are leaders in their communities and who serve on the League's Executive Board and in the role of League President, selflessly giving their time and energy to the organization. During the last year, two past League Presidents have passed away – former Holdrege Mayor Jim Van Marter and former Grand Island Mayor Ken Gnadt.

Both men exemplified what it means to be servant leaders. Former Mayor Van Marter passed away July 20, 2017, at the age of 88. Van Marter, who was League President from 1997-1998, served in the U.S. Air Force from 1946-1949, and, after completing his education, taught and coached wrestling at Beaver City, Sargent and Holdrege for a total of 38 years before retiring.

Van Marter began his service in municipal government in 1986, when he was appointed to the Holdrege City Council. He served on the council or as Mayor of Holdrege through 1998. In an interview in the *Nebraska Mu-*



*The late Ken Gnadt
Former Mayor of Grand Island
League President 2001-2002*



*The late Jim Van Marter
Former Mayor of Holdrege
League President 1997-1998*

nicipal Review in October 1997, he said he realized that he had the chance to change the lives of young people every day that he went to work as a teacher and coach. Similarly, when he was asked to take an appointment to the city council, he said it was a chance to “give something back to the place that is home to me and has done so much for me.”

Former Grand Island Mayor Ken Gnadt passed away Sept. 12, 2018, at the age of 85. He graduated with bachelor's and master's degrees in animal science and, later, earned a degree in banking. Besides his involvement in local government, Gnadt's career spanned agricultural business and international trade, which included living and working abroad. He par-

ticipated in many organizations, such as the Nebraska Nature and Visitor Center and the Husker Harvest Days Board. (*See page 15 of this Review.*)

In an interview in the *Nebraska Municipal Review* in October 2001, Gnadt said that some of the biggest challenges in public service involved learning how to work with negative people.

“I think we ended up doing it well, mainly by thanking them for their input. Part of the joy of living in this country is the freedom of speech. We have to recognize that and continue to remember it.”

It was an honor to work with both men and the League is a better organization because of their service. ■

Connecting Nebraskans to great job opportunities

BY GOV. PETE RICKETTS



Nebraska is the best place in the world because of our people. Our people are hard-working, loyal, and family-oriented and are constantly striving to make Nebraska the best place in the world to live, work and raise a family. Our work ethic is reflected in national rankings: Nebraska has one of the highest labor force participation rates. Since 2014, our state has ranked third best out of all states for wage growth. And, we consistently have tens of thousands of job openings in any given month along with one of the lowest unemployment rates in the nation.

This week, Labor Day is a celebration of the unparalleled work ethic and unique Nebraska grit that lies at the foundation of the Good Life. Throughout the year, my team works to connect Nebraskans to great job opportunities. At the Nebraska Department of Labor, we have transformed the state's unemployment program into a first-in-the-nation reemployment program. Nebraska now requires all individuals seeking unemployment benefits to create a searchable, online resume, meet with a job coach and apply for jobs multiple times a week. With the help of the Legislature, people will no longer be able to quit their jobs to go on unemployment benefits.

These reforms are producing great results for Nebraskans. The number of individuals exhausting their unemployment benefits is down nearly 37 percent. The number of weeks claimed for unemployment benefits is down 23 percent. We have been able to reduce the unemployment insurance tax rate by over 25 percent, saving Nebraska's job creators nearly \$20 million in 2017. All of this has led to winning national and industry awards, while putting Nebraskans back to work more quickly.

Because this program has been so successful, we are now using it in partnership with the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to help families on food stamps find better job opportunities. The program started with a pilot in Grand Island and expanded to Hastings, Columbus, Norfolk and Scottsbluff over the last year. The program has helped participants achieve greater stability, a higher income and less reliance on government assistance for those who participate and successfully complete it. We have helped 36 percent of participants find new jobs and those families have increased their pay by about \$10,000. Each of those families has reduced or eliminated its need for food stamps.

For young Nebraskans, we have

launched a program to help connect middle schoolers to great opportunities in the fields of manufacturing and information technology. In 2015, I worked with the Legislature to create the Developing Youth Talent Initiative (DYTI). As more jobs become available in these fields, we need to do more to make the next generation aware of these great opportunities and share the technical skills and knowledge they require. By establishing partnerships between businesses and school districts, DYTI provides career exploration and hands-on learning opportunities geared toward seventh and eighth graders. Right now, we have programs running in Broken Bow, Hastings, Hebron, Kearney, Omaha, Scottsbluff and York. This year, we announced new partnerships with schools in Norfolk and Deshler.

DYTI is making a difference. Research shows that students involved in similar programs show increased interest and are more likely to pursue careers in STEM fields. Over the past few years, DYTI has resulted in higher student enrollment in science and technical courses among incoming high school freshmen, as well as greater interest in pursuing technical careers after graduation. ■



Time attending wellness benefit fairs: Work time?

BY JERRY L. PIGSLEY, WOODS & AITKEN LLP,
LONM LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT LAW COUNSEL

On Aug. 28, 2018, the U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division (WHD) issued an opinion letter answering the following question:

"[W]hether the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) requires compensation for the time an employee spends voluntarily participating in certain wellness activities, biometric screenings, and benefits fairs."

BACKGROUND

The employer sought an opinion for WHD on compensability of time it allowed its employees to voluntarily participate in "biometric screening" both during and outside of regular work hours. The screening tests, among other things, an employee's cholesterol levels, blood pressure, and nicotine usage. An employee's participation in the screening could decrease his or her health insurance deductibles. The employer did not require the screening and the screening was not related to the employee's job. It was purely the employee's choice whether to participate.

An employee also may participate in the following "wellness activities" to potentially decrease his or her monthly insurance premiums:

1. Attending an in-person health education class and lecture (e.g.,

Because the activities described in the employer's letter request predominantly benefit the employee, they do not constitute compensable work time under the FLSA, according to the WHD.

- nutrition or diabetes management);
2. Taking an employer-facilitated gym class or using the employer provided gym;
3. Participating in telephonic health coaching and online health education classes through an outside vendor facilitated by the employer;
4. Participating in Weight Watchers; and
5. Voluntarily engaging in a fitness activity (e.g., going to personal gym, exercising outdoors, participating in a Fitbit challenge).

Similar to the biometric screening, these wellness activities were not mandatory and did not directly relate to the employee's job. Finally, an employee also may choose to attend a benefits fair to learn about topics, such as financial planning, employer provided benefits, or college attendance opportunities. These fairs were not

part of the new employee orientation, were open to all employees, were not related to the employees' job duties, and were entirely optional.

The employer received no direct financial benefit as a result of employee participation at any of the above described activities.

GOVERNING LAW

The federal law, FLSA, as a general matter, requires employers to compensate employees for their work. The FLSA defines "employ" as including "to suffer or permit to work," but does not explicitly define what constitutes compensable work. The U.S. Supreme Court has determined that the compensability of an employee's time depends on [w]hether [it] is spent predominantly for the employer's benefit or for the employee's." *Armor & Co. v. Wantock*, 32 U.S. 126, 133 (1944).

Regulations separately provide that an employee is not entitled to com-

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pensation for “off-duty” time – that is, “[p]eriods during which an employee is completely relieved from duty and which are long enough to enable him to use the time effectively for his own purposes.” 29 C.F.R. § 785.16.

OPINION

WHD determined based on the facts provided by the employer that the activities did not constitute compensable work under the FLSA. The employee’s voluntary participation in biometric screenings, wellness activities and benefits fairs predominately benefits the employee. The activities provide direct financial benefit to only the employee and they also help the employee make more informed decisions about matters unrelated to his or her job. Participation is wholly optional for the employee; the employer never requires it. The employer likewise does not require the employee to perform any job-related duties while he or she participates in the activities. Because the activities described in the employer’s letter request predominantly benefit the employee, they do not constitute compensable work time under the FLSA according to the WHD.

WHD further found the activities described also constitute noncompensable “off duty” time under 29 C.F.R. § 785.16. When the employer allows an employee to voluntarily participate in the above described activities, the employer is relieving the employee of all job duties. WHD did not find the employer restricted the amount of time an employee may participate in such activities; and assumed that the time allowed was long enough for the employee to use it effectively for his or her own purposes. According to

WHD, under these circumstances, the time participating in such activities is noncompensable “off-duty” time under 29 C.F.R. § 785.16.

The WHD concluded the FLSA does not require compensation for the time employees choose to spend engaged in the activities described in the employer’s letter. Its conclusion would be the same regardless of whether activities occurred on site or during regular work hours. WHD did note that work breaks up to 20 minutes in length are ordinarily compensable, regardless of how an employee chooses to spend his or her time during the break. Thus, for example, if the employer provides all employees with a 20-minute break each day, the employer must still compensate an employee for that break if he or she chooses to spend it participating in the wellness activities, biometric screenings and benefit fairs described in the employer’s letter.

SUMMARY

Municipalities can rely upon this WHD opinion letter interpreting the FLSA as an official ruling of the WHD. The opinion letter provides a potential good faith reliance defense for actions that may otherwise constitute a violation of the FLSA. ■

Editor’s Note: This article is not intended to provide legal advice to our readers. Rather, this article is intended to alert our readers to new and developing issues and to provide some common sense answers to complex legal questions. Readers are urged to consult their own legal counsel or the author of this article if the reader wishes to obtain a specific legal opinion regarding how these legal standards may apply to their particular circumstances. The author of this article, Jerry L. Pigsley, can be

contacted at (402) 437-8500, jpigsley@woodsaitken.com, or at Woods & Aitken LLP, 301 S. 13th Street, Suite 500, Lincoln, NE 68508-2578.

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Former State Senator leads Blueprint Nebraska to develop long-range plan for economic growth

■ **BY LYNN MARIENAU**
COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR
LNM ■

Former State Sen. Jim Smith of Papillion resigned from the Legislature in July to assume the role of Executive Director of Blueprint Nebraska, a statewide economic development coalition of leaders from a wide variety of businesses, ranging from agriculture and energy to technology and innovation. Blueprint Nebraska is working on a long-range plan for economic growth, competitiveness and prosperity in the state.

Keynote speaker

Smith was the keynote speaker at the Past Presidents Luncheon during the League of Nebraska Municipalities Annual Conference in Kearney.

"I want to do anything I can to help our communities grow ... and not only bring new businesses to Nebraska, but also make this a better environment to grow the businesses that are already here," Smith said during an interview. He added that the question becomes, "How do we make communities more attractive for people to want to locate to and remain in?"



Smith, 59, was first elected to the Legislature in 2010. While serving in the Legislature, he chaired the Revenue Committee and the Transportation and Telecommunications Committee. He said that one of the reasons he took the position with Blueprint Nebraska was that the organization's goal was consistent with his approach toward policy in the Legislature.

In an interview, Smith, who was term-limited and had less than six months remaining in his last term, said he resigned early to avoid any appearance of bias. To achieve the goal of statewide economic prosperity, he said, the coalition will avoid favoring one side of the state over another, one business sector over another and one political view over another.

As Executive Director for Blueprint Nebraska, Smith said his primary responsibility is keeping these business leaders at the table, talking and working with what the organization calls "industry councils" to arrive at solutions based on the opinions of this diverse group.

Industry councils created

Sixteen industry councils, varying from community vitality to leadership, diversity and inclusion, have been created to examine specific challenges and opportunities in their respective fields. The councils are comprised of business leaders and subject matter experts who will provide recommendations to a steering committee. The co-chairs of the steering committee are Lance Fritz, Chairman, President and CEO of Union Pacific Corporation in Omaha, and Owen Palm, President and CEO of 21st Century Holdings in Scottsbluff. Steering committee members vary from former



*Blueprint Nebraska Executive Director
Jim Smith*

State Sen. Mike Flood, owner and CEO of News Channel Nebraska in Norfolk, to Tanya Storer, owner of Rocking J Ranch in Whitman. The organization has an advisory council that is made up of several heads of chambers of commerce, Gov. Pete Ricketts and Hank Bounds, President of the University of Nebraska system.

In addition to statewide representation, the organization is emphasizing engagement with – and seeking information from – diverse groups.

"We're trying to solicit information from people across Nebraska," Smith said.

Legislative forums

During the interview, Smith said he was driving to South Sioux City to join the Nebraska Chamber of Commerce and Industry and attend its legislative forums this fall, but he added that he is going beyond those meetings to reach audiences throughout the state.

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As part of engagement efforts, Blueprint Nebraska recently launched a newly designed website that includes a community survey, which can be found at www.blueprint-nebraska.org.

"We are trying to better understand what the expectations are out there," Smith said.

Comparison states

He said the organization also is comparing Nebraska against 13-14 states, the majority of which are Mid-western states. Others in the list of comparison states include Texas, Utah and North Carolina, he said, adding that Nebraska finds itself competing against these states in vying to attract businesses here.

Since it's a long-range plan, the organization isn't looking for a short-term legislative solution in the 2019 session.

"We're also looking for big and bold ... solutions as opposed to shallow and broad approaches," Smith said.

Chairs putting teams together

The chairs of the councils are in place and are putting their teams together, he said, and they are looking at between eight-12 people per team working over the next four-six months to help formulate a plan for each of the industry councils.

Smith said there inevitably would be some "cross-pollination" among councils. There will be a final report

issued in the second quarter of 2019 and the expectation is that the report will include "actionable" items, he said.

Website

On Blueprint Nebraska's website is the statement that the comprehensive report will "recommend five or six areas that it believes Nebraskans must focus on in order to achieve the ultimate goal of long-lasting economic prosperity for everyone."

"We do not want this to be an academic exercise," Smith said. "We want to do a better job of competing, so we have better outcomes. This is a blueprint and a blueprint is a plan for the future." ■

Local sales tax rate information

Effective Jan. 1, 2019, Pender will terminate its city sales and use tax rate, while Randolph and Wahoo will each increase their city sales and use tax rate to 2 percent. Also, Dakota City will start a city sales and use tax at .5 percent.

Since Dakota City is within Dakota County, which imposes a .5 percent county sales and use tax rate, the Dakota County sales and use tax rate will no longer be effective for taxable deliveries made within the Dakota City boundaries as of Jan. 1, 2019. A county sales and use tax is only imposed on taxable sales within the county, but outside the city boundaries of any city that imposes a city sales tax. ■

Source – Nebraska Revenue Department

League President Wendall Gaston visits Broadwater

In his capacity as League President, Wendall Gaston, Sidney Council Member, is visiting officials in cities and village across the state.

League President Wendall Gaston, Sidney Council Member, was on the road to the Village of Broadwater. Pictured here is Village Clerk/Treasurer Marlene Yeager.





Photo of American Veterans Park in West Point. Photo provided courtesy of Lisa Hunke, Media Coordinator, American Veterans Park.

American Veterans Park in West Point to be dedicated on Veterans Day

■ **BY BRADY JONES, LYMAN-RICHEY**
COMMUNICATIONS ■

Reprinted by permission.

The three granite spires reach up like arms outstretched in veneration.

An American flag rises in the middle, watching over the American Veterans Park paved with that familiar, monumental gray concrete. A massive cross spreads across the whole foundation.

New plants are beginning to stretch their roots behind the smaller flags that line the back and sides of this place of reverence.

Fit well at National Mall

Even though the scene would fit in well at the National Mall, this military monument isn't in Washington, D.C. It's in West Point.

Not the famed military academy in New York, either, but a Nebraska town of around 3,300 people almost 60 miles northwest of Omaha.

"We wanted our park to be very different – unique to any of the other veterans parks," said Lisa Hunke, a member

of the park's 13-person planning committee and the one who came up with the design concept.

The group's mission is straightforward: "To honor God, country, veterans and their families."

But unlike other memorials and parks, West Point's American Veterans Park is meant for the whole military, including their families and the role faith has played in many of their lives.

Recognize all who have served

"We wanted to recognize all American veterans," Hunke said. "We didn't want to focus just on a particular conflict or particular war or divide it up like that. We wanted to recognize everyone that had served, whether in full-time military or guard or reserves. We also wanted to recognize those who had served both during wartime and peacetime because everybody has made a sacrifice."

Committee co-chairman Ken Hanel highlighted that broader significance.

"I wanted it to honor sacrifice because, in my opinion, sacrifice without remembrance is meaningless. And this park is going to bring meaning to sacrifice."

Continued on page 11

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Phil Burns can look out his window at the F&M Bank and see the Stars and Stripes flying high over those granite pillars.

A couple of years ago, a large, run-down rental house sat in that lot, which the bank had purchased.

"I kept thinking there's got to be a better use for it," Burns said.

He's always had a soft spot in his heart for these kinds of things and has visited several memorials throughout the state. And while there are many decent parks and places out there, he said he thought maybe that dilapidated lot could be turned into something really special.

"West Point is a wonderful community. For a small town, we do some pretty spectacular things, and we do them right."

Land donated

So Burns reached out to other community members with his proposition: The bank would donate the land if the community could come up with something that West Point and Cuming County could be proud of.

"I think they're spot on with that," he said.

When the ancient Greeks and Romans built their monuments and temples, they didn't turn to wood. They used concrete and stone, and there's a reason a lot of their works are still around thousands of years later.

Concrete lasts. A long time.

"First and foremost we wanted to go maintenance free – within budget," Hanel said. "We have a very reliable concrete supplier here in town, Gerhold Concrete. I've worked with them for years, and we wanted to do business in town."

Generations also were on the minds of committee members, many with sons and daughters and other family in the military, too. They were very deliberate in wanting something that would last beyond themselves and be a place of honor – but not a burden – to the many who would come after.

"It's gonna outlive me," Hanel said. "We're hoping that future generations don't inherit a maintenance problem."

The official ribbon-cutting is planned for Veterans Day later this fall, but you wouldn't be the first person to drive by and think it was done already.

That was by design.

"I have people from Coleridge and places like that who think it's done," Hanel said. "It's like, no, this is phase

one.... We could have a ceremony here now if we wanted to, and that was the idea."

The committee wanted things done in three parts, with a finished look at the end of each part.

"You never know when you sit down to start a project," said Rick Wimer, a fellow co-chairman of the committee. "You don't want it to look like it's always under construction."

First phase

All of the big stuff was done in the first phase, including the foundation, electrical and lighting, sprinklers and drainage.

That was finished before the cold set in last winter. Then the group transitioned into the second phase, which included things that can be made indoors – like the granite

Continued on page 12



Photo of granite spires in American Veterans Park in West Point. Photo provided courtesy of Lisa Hunke, Media Coordinator, American Veterans Park.

American Veterans Park in West Point to be dedicated on Veterans Day

Continued from page 11

tables and benches – when the weather was less than wonderful.

Once those are placed, the statues – which will represent all of the aspects of their mission – and flag memorials will be installed during the last phase later this year.

Tiles displayed in park

Anyone can honor any American serviceman or servicewoman who served in any branch for any length of time, in wartime or peacetime, by purchasing memorial tiles that will be displayed around the park.

When it's all done, it will be full of symbolism both subtle and large-scale (the giant cross in the concrete foundation can be seen from planes in the air).

Of course a project like this becomes deeply personal for all involved.

Hunke's husband, Bernie, served for 22 years in the Air Force as a C-130 loadmaster. The family spent years stationed in Arkansas, North Carolina, Germany, and Japan before moving back to West Point, Bernie's hometown. Since retirement, he has remained active with the VFW and American Legion and is one of three co-chairs of the planning committee.

Interim committee hearings have begun

Interim Legislative Committee Hearings have begun. You will find the schedule for hearings listed at <http://nebraskalegislature.gov/session/interim.php>. ■



Photo of American Veterans Park in West Point. Photo provided courtesy of Lisa Hunke, Media Coordinator, American Veterans Park.

Hanel is an Army veteran who served more than two years in northern Germany working with Pershing Nuclear during the Cold War. He's been a member of the Legion for 39 years and serves on the Cuming County Veterans Service Board.

Wimer served three years of active duty in the Marines and another 10 years in reserve. Two of his sons also served in the Marines and his daughter is following in those footsteps later this year. He's been an active member with the Legion for more than three decades and has helped with 10 honor flights that take veterans to visit Washington, D.C.

But beyond their own connections, they're vessels of a much larger thing you can't really see or explain, you can only feel.

Walking along the streets of West

Point, you get a real sense of pride from the people passing by. But if you need evidence, look no further than the American Veterans Park, which was able to meet most of its funding goals while there were three other major community projects going on at the same time. And Hunke said none of those projects have suffered from the fundraising of the others.

"Within a year we were able to raise 75 percent of the funds that we needed for this park. So the community has been just amazing – amazing the way the support has come," she said. "I didn't grow up here, so it always amazes me to come to a small community like this and see how everyone binds together when there's something important going on."

And that "community" has expanded beyond West Point and Cuming County. It's expanded beyond Nebraska, actually.

Map on Facebook

In keeping with their goal that this place will honor all American veterans, the group has a map on their Facebook page tracking donations from other states. They're hoping to have all 50 states represented.

So far, there are only 15 states left.

And as the map fills in, and more details are installed, members of the American Veterans Park committee and West Point residents should swell with pride knowing they've created something special.

"When we raised the flag for the first time... it just took my breath away," said Adeline Hanel, secretary of the committee. "I can't put into words the feeling I had. I can still see it. I can still feel it. ... I can just imagine when it's completed how I'll feel." ■

West Point residents back 4 successful fundraising projects

As noted in the story on pages 10-12 about American Veterans Park, West Point Mayor Marlene Johnson emphasized that there were four separate fundraising projects going on at the same time in West Point. Besides the American Veterans Park, residents were raising funds for the Donald E. Nielsen Career and Technical Training Facility; St. Joseph's Hillside Villa, a new skilled nursing home; and, the West Point Trails and Pathways projects that would provide paved walking trails for residents.

Mayor Johnson said that \$850,000 had been raised for the veterans park; \$3 million had been raised

for the Nielsen center; \$2 million was raised for the nursing home; and, \$1.3 million was raised for the new trails.

All four projects have been successful and raised the funds that they needed, she said.

"I am so proud of the community of West Point that will support four different fundraising projects at the same time and make these things happen and they are all well done," she said. "It shows a high level of involvement and commitment on the part of local residents."

As for the American Veterans Park, she described it as beautiful.

"It's a beautiful park and memorial,"



Mayor Marlene Johnson

she said. "It's something that everyone will pass by and see." ■

League President Wendall Gaston visits Ogallala

In his capacity as League President, Wendall Gaston, Sidney Council Member, visited officials in cities and villages across the state. ■



Ogallala City Manager Bruce Smith; League President Wendall Gaston; Clerk/Treasurer Jane M. Skinner.



From left: Ogallala Mayor Buck Bassett; City Council Member Pete Peterson; League President Wendall Gaston; City Council Members Darryl Weddington, Deb Schilz and Dorrie Nolde.

Imperial holds ribbon-cutting ceremony for skatepark grand opening

The grand opening of the City of Imperial's Skatepark was held Sept. 15 at its Campbell Park location. According to the *Imperial Republican*, Imperial City Council President Charlesa Kline praised the members of Team Hot Wheels for their efforts in raising nearly \$200,000 for the skatepark. Team Hot Wheels is a group of

young children in the community who spearheaded the project, said Jo

Leyland, City of Imperial Administrator/Clerk/Treasurer. ■



The grand opening celebration for the City of Imperial's skatepark was held Sept. 15. Shown above are young skaters and the crew from Artisan Concrete that built the park. Photo provided courtesy of Jo Leyland, City of Imperial Administrator/Clerk/Treasurer.

To the left is Trevin Moreno, member of Team Hot Wheels, which promoted and raised funds for the Skate Park.

National Civic League accepting applications for 2019 All-America City Award

The National Civic League (NCL) is accepting applications for the 2019 All-America City Award, focused on celebrating examples of civic engagement practices that advance health equity in local communities. NCL officials are seeking communities that demonstrate inclusive decision-making processes to create better health for all and particularly for populations currently experiencing poorer health outcomes.

Started in 1949, the All-America City Award program has recognized 500 communities that excel in col-

laborating to address pressing problems in the community. Described by George H. Gallup as the "Nobel Prize for constructive citizenship," the award celebrates exemplary grassroots community problem-solving and honors communities that have united to achieve stunning results.

In Nebraska, 11 communities have won the All-America City Award: Gothenburg (1991); Grand Island (1955, 1967, 1981, 1982); Lexington (1973); Lincoln (1978); Norfolk (1975); Ogallala (1965); Omaha (1957); Ravenna (1978); South Sioux City (2003); and Verdigre (1972).

Cities interested in applying for the All-America City Award should submit a letter of intent to apply by Nov. 14, which saves applicants \$100 on the application fee. Please note: a letter of intent is not required to apply. The application can be downloaded at (<https://www.nationalcivicleague.org/america-city-award/how-to-apply/>) and is due March 5, 2019.

The All-America City Award (AAC) is given each year by the National Civic League (NCL) to 10 communities in recognition of their outstanding civic accomplishments. ■

Source – National Civic League

Kearney landfill accepts tires free of charge in September

The Kearney Area Solid Waste Agency Landfill will accept tires free of charge from residents of Buffalo County in September. This opportunity for free tire disposal is funded by a grant secured by the City of Kearney from the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality Scrap Tire Reduction Fund. The grant allows the landfill to accept up to 300 tons of tires. Once that tonnage has been reached, Landfill fees for tire disposal will be reinstated.

The landfill has collected 2,269.97 tons of tires, which is equivalent to about 226,997 passenger car tires, from eight previous tire collections funded by the NDEQ Scrap Tire Grant.

Tires that contain rims or tires that originate from tire retailers or businesses that have charged or collected fees to accept scrap tires are not eligible. ■

Source – City of Kearney

Share news from your city or village

Share your city's or village's news with fellow municipal officials across the state by sending information for the *Nebraska Municipal Review* to the League of Nebraska Municipalities, Attn: Lynn Marienau at 1335 L Street, Lincoln, NE 68508, 402-476-2829 by phone, 402-476-7052 by fax or lynnm@lonm.org by e-mail. ■

Past League President and former Grand Island Mayor Gnadt passes away in September

Supported trails projects, Heartland Events Center

Ken Gnadt, a former mayor of Grand Island and League President from 2001-2002 passed away Sept. 12.

Gnadt served as Mayor from 1994-2002 and, according to the *Grand Island Independent*, was known as an endless promoter of the city. During his time as mayor, he led the establishment of hike and bike trails in Grand Island and the city's support of the Heartland Events Center. The business improvement district was created during his time as Mayor along South Locust Street, as well as construction beginning on the South Locust/I-80 interchange.

In an interview in a 2001 *Nebraska Municipal Review* article, Gnadt encouraged elected officials to work with varied groups.



*The late former Grand Island Mayor
Ken Gnadt*

"You've got to be able to put coalitions together."

In a tweet, current Grand Island Mayor Jeremy Jensen said the city had "lost one of the true pillars and ambassadors of our city." ■



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More than 500 get first look at Central Nebraska Veterans' Home at Kearney

■ **BY KIM SCHMIDT**
KEARNEY HUB STAFF WRITER ■

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KEARNEY – “It takes a team effort and represents our spirit here in Nebraska,” Gov. Pete Ricketts said Aug. 25 at the opening of the Central Nebraska Veterans’ Home in Kearney.

Ricketts praised the partnership of many local and regional groups and organizations that made the CNVH project possible.

“Great.”

“Wonderful.”

“Beautiful.”

Those words were spoken again and again Saturday during the CNVH open house.

“I’m amazed,” said World War II veteran Robert Larson, 93, of Kearney, who toured the new facility with his son, Eric.

An estimated crowd of more than 500 people turned out for the ribbon cutting and open house of the \$89 million, 330,000-square-foot, 225-bed facility at 4510 E. 56th St.

The campus will have six neighborhoods, each with three homes with 12 to 15 veterans living in private rooms. There will be a special care unit, a skilled care unit and an independent living area.

The U.S. flag that now flies over the CNVH was flown Aug. 14 at the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C., which was the anniversary of the Japanese

surrender of WWII in 1945.

Visitors gave rave reviews to the member’s individual rooms, the chapel, physical therapy room and the mural in the main Juliet building. Tours were given by some of the new staff members who will be working at the CNVH.

“Wait until you see the chapel,” one unidentified tour participant said as she passed others in the hall.

One World War II veteran’s wife was impressed with the lift system from the bed to the bathroom in members’ rooms. “That’s a good idea,” the woman was heard saying.

During the ribbon-cutting ceremony Kearney Mayor Stan Clouse called the

Continued on page 17

Ribbon-cutting ceremony Aug. 25 at Central Nebraska Veterans’ Home at Kearney. Cutting the ribbon is Gov. Pete Ricketts. From front left are Buffalo County Commissioners Jake Greder and Joe Brayton; Dick Pierce of Nebraska Veterans First Committee; Kearney Mayor Stan Clouse; U.S. Sen. Deb Fischer; Ricketts; John Hilgert, Director of the state Dept. of Veterans’ Affairs; and, Jim Varejcka, a past state commander of the military order of the Purple Heart. Photo by Lori Potter, Kearney Hub. Reprinted by permission.



Continued from page 16

event an “.. historical time to be in Central Nebraska.”

Ricketts thanked veterans and their families for their sacrifices they’ve made for freedom and liberty. He quoted President John F. Kennedy who once said, “A nation reveals itself not only by the men it produces but also by the men it honors, the men it remembers.”

“We seek to make Nebraska the most veteran and military-friendly state in the country,” Ricketts said. “And with this Central Nebraska Veterans’ Home, we are living up to that promise to remember to take care of our veterans.”

Members of the Western Nebraska Veterans’ Home in Scottsbluff and the Grand Island Veterans’ Home made the trip to Kearney for the event.

In addition to Ricketts, many dignitaries were at the event including U.S. Sen. Deb Fischer, Nebraska Depart-

ment of Veterans’ Affairs Director John Hilgert, past and present state Senators including Galen Hadley and John Lowe of Kearney and Nebraska

National Guard Brig. Gen. Richard Dahlman.

Members are expected to move in to the CNVH later this fall. ■

League magazine available on website

The League of Nebraska Municipalities is pleased to announce that the *Nebraska Municipal Review* is available on the League’s website at <http://www.lonm.org/> under the “News” and then the “Publications” tabs. As always, we encourage you to share news from your city or village with fellow municipal officials by sending information for the *Nebraska Municipal Review* to the League of Nebraska Municipalities, Attn: Lynn Marienau at 1335 L Street, Lincoln, NE 68508, 402-476-2829 by phone or lynnm@lonm.org by e-mail. ■

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League President Wendall Gaston visits Oshkosh and Sidney

In his role as League President, Wendall Gaston, Sidney City Council Member, served as the League's ambassador and visited several cities and villages this year.



From left: Oshkosh City Clerk/Treasurer LeAnn Brown and League President Wendall Gaston, Sidney City Council Member.



From left: Sidney City Manager Ed Sadler; Sidney City Clerk/Treasurer Geri Anthony and League President Wendall Gaston, Sidney City Council Member.



From left: Oshkosh Mayor Jim Levick; City Council Members David Cook; Terry Davis; Sarena Assmann and Gary DeCock.

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Papillion receives Voice of the People Award for Built Environment

National Research Center, Inc. (NRC) has announced in August that the City of Papillion will receive the Voice of the People Award for Excellence in Built Environment. This award is only given to top performing jurisdictions that best listen and act for the benefit of their communities. Based on responses from The National Citizen Survey (NCS), residents of the Papillion community reported the highest ratings for this category compared with all other participating jurisdictions.

The National Citizen Survey reports resident opinion and satisfaction with local government and services with a scientific, representative sample approach. Results are then used to inform budgeting, performance measurement and program planning.

The Voice of the People (VOP) Awards stand alone as the only award given in local government based on community opinion. The perspectives of the residents themselves determine

nominees for the very best of Community Engagement, Safety, Mobility, Foundations of Livability, Recreation and Wellness, Education and Enrichment, Natural Environment, Built Environment and Economy. Of the communities that participated in The National Citizen Survey in 2017, winners and finalists for Excellence in these categories received the highest overall levels of satisfaction from residents.

Built Environment refers to the City of Papillion's planning, design standards and infrastructure. Survey questions on this topic gauged residents' opinions about subjects such as quality of new development, housing options, public places, land use and code enforcement, among others.

"The City of Papillion periodically conducts The National Citizen Survey for a better understanding of our residents' attitudes and opinions about our community and the services we provide," said Mayor David Black.



"Our primary focus is creating a high quality of life for our residents, and planning, design standards and infrastructure certainly play an important role in achieving that focus. While we were not seeking this recognition, it's good affirmation that residents notice and appreciate the results that we've been able to achieve together as a community."

Now running 10 years, the Voice of the People Awards are presented by the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) and National Research Center, Inc. Contact: Trenton Albers, Communications Manager, 402-597-2031, talbers@papillion.org. ■

Directory of Municipal Officials

Position/Information Changes

City or Village	Position/Information	Delete	Add
Grand Island	Interim Finance Director/Treasurer	William Clingman	Delete title and name
	Finance Director/Treasurer		Patrick Brown
Norfolk	Council Member	Shane Clausen	Jarad Dahlkoetter
	City Attorney	Clint Schukei	Danielle Myers-Noelle
	Planning Commission	Brian Lundy	Dan Spray
Pilger	Utility Superintendent	Kenneth Wiechman	Delete title and name
	Water/Wastewater Operator		Justin Ramsay

This column is provided, free of charge, for use and reference by Nebraska municipal officials and employees. All others pay 55 cents per word to place ads. Closing date is the first of the month of publication. Ads are subject to editing and will appear once unless otherwise requested. Classified ads also can appear on the League's website at www.lonm.org.

Positions

Economic Development Coordinator. The City of Laurel, Nebraska ("City") is seeking applicants for the Economic Development Coordinator ("EDC") position with the City. The City is seeking EDC applicants interested in either full time or part time employment. The EDC position involves performing a variety of routine and complex administrative, technical, and professional duties in the preparation and implementation of economic development plans, programs, and services for the City. A successful applicant should demonstrate strong leadership, finance, economic development, and public relations skills.

Competitive benefits. Starting salary dependent on applicant qualifications and increased after initial six (6) month probation period. Successful applicant must either live in the Laurel, Nebraska area or be willing to move to the Laurel, Nebraska area before expiration of the probation period. All offers of employment are conditional upon, and subject to, successful completion of a drug screening and background check including driving record.

Full Job Description is available at the City Offices, 101 W. 2nd Street, Laurel, Nebraska 68745. Interested applicants should submit a cover letter, resume, and two (2) work-related references to laurelca@abbnebraska.com or by mailing to PO Box 248, Laurel, NE 68745. If confidentiality is requested, please note in application

Positions

materials. Position will remain open until filled. Application review will begin Nov. 1, 2018. City of Laurel, Nebraska is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Maintenance Worker. Village of Shelton is currently accepting applications for the position of a Full-Time Maintenance Worker with the potential of advancement into the Assistant Utility Superintendent Position. Position will include the general maintenance and upkeep of all village properties, including streets, sewer and park systems. Applicant will be responsible for the operation of all village equipment and must be willing and able to obtain and maintain water certification. Supervisory experience helpful but not necessary. Please submit your letter of interest and resume and/or application to the Office of the Village Clerk, Village of Shelton, 219 C Street, PO Box 6, Shelton, Neb. 68876. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. EOE

Utility Worker. Village of Callaway is accepting applications for Utility Worker. This is a full-time position with benefits including health insurance, dental/life, vacation and sick leave. Call 308-836-2262, visit office at 157 E Kimball or villageofcallaway.com.

**See page 22 for
Professional Directory**

Positions

Director of Parks, Recreation and Leisure Services. City of Gering: Director of Parks, Recreation & Leisure Services. Active city with many city-wide parks, cemetery, golf course, and recreation program. Position requires graduation from an accredited four-year college or university with a bachelor's degree in recreation or turf management, education, or physical education including course work in organization and administration; at least five years of progressively responsible experience in parks and recreation programs; completion of various courses dealing with care of plants, trees, and turf; any equivalent combination of education and experience; and must be able to possess or obtain a Nebraska pesticide applicators incense, and Nebraska Driver's license. A full job description and application can be obtained at the City of Gering Administration offices or on the City of Gering website, www.gering.org. Return application, resume, & references in an envelope marked "Director of Parks, Recreation & Leisure Services applicant" to Human Resources, 1025 P Street, Gering, NE 69341. Applications must be received by Oct. 26, 2018 in order to be considered in the initial review process. Position will remain open until filled. EOE

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Model Ordinances

Model ordinance packets are published annually and provide an easy way to update your code with state law changes. Packets are available to any municipality regardless of whether it publishes its code through the league, in-house, or by any other method.

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