

1912-2012

CENTURY 2012



The Nebraska Chamber of Commerce and Industry celebrates
100 years of service to the state, its businesses and citizens.

THE STATE CHAMBER 

Nebraska Chamber of Commerce & Industry

NACI
report to business
 OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF NEBRASKA ASSOCIATION OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY
 MAY 1966
 Vol. 1 No. 1

CREIGH WITNESSES SBA ACT SIGNING AT WHITE HOUSE
 NACI President Thomas Creigh, Jr. was among a number of State Chamber of Commerce representatives who participated in the signing of the Small Business Administration Loan Act at the White House on May 2, 1966.

BOARD ENDORSES INCREASED AIR SERVICE
 A resolution favoring increased and improved air service was adopted April 20, by the Board of Directors of the Nebraska Association of Commerce & Industry.

EIGHTY ATTEND NEBRASKA CONGRESSIONAL RECEPTION
 An excellent reception was held at the Lincoln Hotel for the Nebraska Association of Commerce & Industry delegation.

CONSOLIDATION APPROVED
IT'S NOW THE NEBRASKA ASSOCIATION OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY
 On April 20, the membership of Associated Industries of Nebraska, and the Nebraska State Chamber of Commerce voted to join forces under a new single organization known as the Nebraska Association of Commerce & Industry.

Thomas Creigh, Jr., President of the Kansas-Nebraska Natural Gas Company, was elected President of the new organization, with Richard L. Herms, Herms Iron Works, Omaha, named Chairman of the Board.

Directors of both AIN and NACI will continue in the same capacity with the new organization.

View Presidents of NACI and AIN: Creigh, Thomas, Jr., and Herms, Richard L.

PAST PRESIDENTS
of The
Nebraska
Manufacturers
Association

C. B. TOWLE
 F. S. KNARDT
 C. C. QUIGGLE
 C. O. HAZEL
 C. L. ALLER
 H. A. LEUSOLEN
 CHARLES C. SMITH
 E. A. LEUSOLEN
 EDWARD G. SMITH
 T. E. AMBER
 J. W. HANCOCK
 J. W. HANCOCK
 J. W. HANCOCK
 J. W. HANCOCK
 J. W. HANCOCK
 J. W. HANCOCK
 J. W. HANCOCK
 J. W. HANCOCK

OFFICIAL PROGRAM
Sixteenth Annual Meeting
 Nebraska Manufacturers Association

Officers 1927-28

Officers 1927-28

THURSDAY
 DECEMBER SIXTH
 1928

The Nebraska Manufacturer
 Published Monthly at Lincoln, Nebraska, by the Nebraska Manufacturers Association
 VOL. 4
 LINCOLN, NEBRASKA, NOVEMBER 1917
 NO. 7

Summary of the Proceedings of the Annual Business Session



Lincoln, Nebraska, November 14th, 1917.

The Annual Meeting of the Nebraska Manufacturers Association, held at the Lincoln Hotel, on November 14th, 1917, was a most successful one. The meeting was held in the afternoon and evening, and was attended by a large number of manufacturers from all parts of the State.

The first order of business was the reading of the minutes of the last annual meeting, which were approved. The next order of business was the report of the President, C. L. Aller, who reported a most successful year for the Association. He stated that the Association had been successful in securing the passage of the Nebraska Manufacturers' Act, and in securing the appointment of a State Chamber of Commerce.

The President then presented a paper on the subject of "The Evolution of War," in which he discussed the various causes of war, and the effects of war on the world. He stated that war is a natural result of the struggle for existence, and that it is a necessary part of the human condition. He also discussed the effects of war on the economy, and the need for a more efficient system of production.

The meeting then adjourned until the next annual meeting, to be held in Lincoln, Nebraska, on November 14th, 1918.

EARLY NEWSLETTERS AND PROGRAMS FROM OUR PREDECESSOR ORGANIZATIONS.

FROM THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

The Association came into existence in 1912 with the founding of the Nebraska Manufacturers Association. The Manufacturers Association, 42 members strong, held its organizational meeting and first annual convention on November 14-15, 1912, at the Rome Hotel in Omaha. Similar associations had been created in neighboring states and the Omaha Manufacturers Association was just two years old. At its first meeting, the Ne-

braska Manufacturers Association selected C. B. Towle of Lincoln as its first president. Elected first vice-president was J. W. Steinhart of Nebraska City, with C. B. Dempster of Beatrice; L. A. Kinney of Hastings and F. E. Sanborn of Omaha

elected as vice-presidents. Penn. P. Fodrea of Omaha was elected secretary, with A. C. Scott of Omaha treasurer. The delegates spent two days organizing the Association, passing by-laws, setting a legislative agenda and listening to such political leaders as Governor-Elect J. H. Morehead.

The Association continued to grow for a quarter of a century until on July 15, 1937 the membership authorized a broadening of the base of the organization and a name change to the Associated Industries of Nebraska (AIN). The association celebrated its 25th anniversary with the first annual meeting of AIN at the Fontenelle Hotel in Omaha on November 30, 1937. Wilton Van Sickle of Lincoln was the first president of AIN and the organization had as its aim, "... the development of a more and more prosperous commonwealth."

In 1960 AIN helped organize the Nebraska State Chamber of Commerce with Ralph E. Misko of Holdrege as its first president. Then on April 20, 1966, the membership of the two organizations voted to join forces under the new name of the Nebraska Association of Commerce and Industry. AIN's president that year, Thomas Creigh, Jr. of Hastings, was elected the first president of NACI and the members of both organization's boards became members of the NACI's Board of Directors.

In 1982, Glenn J. McEniry who had been executive vice-president and secretary of AIN and NACI for 20 years, retired and was replaced by Jack Swartz. After a reorganization in 1983, Marvin Welstead of Fremont became NACI's first Chairman of the Board as the organization's highest elected officer. Swartz then became president and secretary of NACI.

Today NACI has over 1,500 members statewide with businesses of every size and variety as members along with over 70 of the state's local chambers of commerce and 65 state-level trade and professional associations. The NACI offices are located at 1320 Lincoln Mall just a half-block from the west entrance to the state capitol. From that location the NACI professional staff effectively works with Nebraska's legislature on issues affecting business while also developing and managing NACI's many membership programs and services. The professional staff consists of President Swartz, Ron Sedlacek, General Counsel-Vice President, and Dan Vodvarka, Staff Vice President.

THE STATE CHAMBER'S FIRST 100 YEARS...

CHANGING NAMES
GROWING AGENDA
CONSISTENT MISSION



- "To further the business and interests of the manufacturers of Nebraska—
- "To promote beneficial legislation—
- "To abate trade abuses—
- "To extend markets for Nebraska made goods—
- "To facilitate the interchange of ideas relating to all kinds of manufacturing in our state."

From the official proceedings of the Nebraska Manufacturers Association Organizational meeting on Nov. 14-15 1912.

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Through the years, the State Chamber always has enjoyed a successful working relationship with Nebraska's Washington delegation. Former members are shown here: 3rd District Congressman David Martin, U.S. Senator Carl Curtis, 2nd District Congressman Glenn Cunningham, 1st District Congressman Robert Denney, State Chamber Chairman Lew Harris and U.S. Senator Roman Hruska.

CENTURY 2012...AN INTRODUCTION

Recognizing all the advances in technology, health care and long-term planning, making it to the century point is still a noteworthy accomplishment...not only for the individual but certainly for any organization that seeks to serve society.

The year 2012 marks the 100th anniversary of the organization known today as the Nebraska Chamber of Commerce and Industry—the State Chamber, for short.

To suggest that a great deal has happened since we took our first steps in 1912 is certainly an understatement—wars, depressions, periods of national mourning, terrorist attacks and natural disasters.

We survived.

It wasn't always easy but along the way we've seen periods of extensive growth, prosperity, economic development and a standard of living that allows Nebraskans to boast proudly that we're the home of "The Good Life."

In the pages that follow, we'll look back on those years since 1912 and consider how and why the State Chamber has contributed so significantly to Nebraska's success.

The high points, the challenges, the people who made it happen, those who kept the faith and are enthusiastically leading us into the next 100 years.

This is more than a year-by-year account of where we've been; it's about how we've formed our mission, refined it as needed, overcome obstacles, collaborated with others, supported government and established an environment that makes Nebraska an attractive place to do business and provide jobs for our citizens.

It's a story that has no end, and after 100 years we'd like to think we're just beginning...

THE STATE CHAMBER 

Nebraska Chamber of Commerce & Industry

The publication of this commemorative book is being made possible by the following State Chamber members. We express sincere gratitude for their ongoing support.

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Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska



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YOUR GUYS DOWN AT THE STATEHOUSE

Looking out for Nebraska Business and its Best Interests

By Emily Sears

The Nebraska Chamber of Commerce and Industry always has defined itself to its members as “your guys down at the Statehouse,” Don Mihovk, executive director of Leadership Nebraska, said. The Chamber believes in protecting its members’ businesses and making sure that their interests are best served. Keeping the cost of doing business reasonably low is very important to the Chamber because it sees itself as “The voice of Nebraska business.” It makes sure the interests of the business community are heard, and it focuses mainly on the point of view of the manufacturers and service firms that are providing jobs across the state.

The '60s were a turbulent time because the state needed more funding for Medicaid, Medicare, education and other human service needs. The counties used to deal with funding for Medicaid, Medicare and education, but when states took over these responsibilities they needed the revenue to deal with them. Pressures on the state budget created an additional role for the Chamber. Its main focus up until 1967 was a state labor law that dealt with how much it cost to provide workers compensation, unemployment insurance and benefits. Nebraska is a right-to-work state, meaning union membership is not required.

“If you want to work, you can work; in some other states that’s not an option,” Mihovk said.

The Chamber board of directors wanted its agenda to be more far-reaching and wanted to cover more issues, so it turned to Jack Swartz in 1982. Swartz was a key leader in Kansas and possessed astounding credentials in chamber leadership. The process of

making the Chamber a stronger and larger player in the Unicameral came about after Swartz’s appointment as president. The Chamber’s offices were at 10th and O streets, and his first change was to move the Chamber offices closer to the State Capitol. Since it works very closely with the Legislature at the Capitol, the Chamber needs to be there in a minute’s notice. Swartz believed the Chamber needed to represent business on all issues affecting members, and the organization hired more lobbyists and began more proactive efforts in representing the business community. They worked on issues relating

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Nebraska’s current Capitol, our “Statehouse,” was designed by noted architect Bertram Goodhue and constructed in four phases over 10 years from 1922 to 1932. It continues to be regarded as one of the most distinctive state government buildings in the country.

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Your Guys Down at the Statehouse

to taxation, environmental regulations, economic development efforts and job training.

As technology advanced, so did the Chamber's ability to interact closer with legislators. The Lincoln Telephone Company had a service it offered using "squawk boxes." Squawk boxes enabled the State Chamber members to hear from their offices what was happening on the floor of the Legislature. This service eventually evolved to NETV broadcasting the legislative session live. Now it can be streamed live on your computer. All these advances helped the Chamber and citizens keep up to speed on what was happening moment by moment in the Legislature.

The Chamber started to look at a lot of other issues and developed many new policies. The Chamber

created councils in areas such as agricultural business, education, public affairs, taxation, small business and health care. These councils meet, discuss the issues and develop the Chamber's point of view. There usually are about 800 bills a year, and the Chamber looks at all of them individually. It monitors about 300 of them and has a position on around 200 that affect the membership in some way.

The Chamber has won and lost battles in each session, but has never lost sight of what is important to its members. The Chamber always supports bills it feels are good for state and economic growth. The Chamber wants companies to stay here, grow and hire. The State Chamber has and always will be "your guys down at the Statehouse" with an ever-broadening program of work...one that's grown considerably over the past 100 years.



Nebraska's prior State Capitol was on the same land that is now home to our current Capitol. It was considerably smaller and was demolished to make way for the new building.

OUR ONE-HOUSE LEGISLATURE IS UNIQUE IN THE U.S.

Nebraskans should thank U.S. Sen. George Norris for giving us a unicameral. In 1912, having a unicameral was just an idea, but by 1934 it was a reality. Many people thought that the idea of a unicameral would fail in theory, but Norris never gave up. He thought that the cost would be cheaper and bring the citizens closer to their government.

According to an article in Nebraska Life magazine, "In 1934, Norris met with other unicameralist leaders to form a Model Legislation Committee to draft the amendment. It was approved, but a petition was still needed and would require at least 57,600 signatures just to get on the ballot."

Norris used his own money and drove all over the state to persuade the people to sign the petition. It garnered 95,000 signatures, and the unicameral amendment was placed on the ballot. Norris worked hard to make Nebraska a unicameral state and convinced the people that it was best for our state. Nebraska is the only state in our nation that is run by a unicameral.



U. S. Senator George Norris, the father of the Unicameral Legislature, is shown with Robert Crosby, who would later become governor.

OUR MISSION AND SUCCESS: THE PAST CHAIRPERSONS' VIEWS

By Emma Petrie-Smith

Nebraska's well-being is dependent on the economic strength and health of the state, and, according to Bob Harris, retired CEO of Harris Labs, the Chamber's hard work assures this strength. Harris was born and raised in Lincoln and has been active in the Chamber for more than 30 years. After spending time chairing the education council of the Chamber, he was elected chairman in 1987. He said he certainly has seen a lot of what has happened in the state over the years.

"The Chamber has been really critical in maintaining the advancement of Nebraska. The Chamber's efforts are what allow us to have taxes that support all the services the government provides, what allows us to have jobs, and what keeps the state progressing," Harris said.

Gary Warren, president of the Services Corporation of Hamilton Telecommunications in Aurora, has seen the Chamber as a way to connect people from all parts of the state. Warren served as chairman of the board in 2005 and has been active in the Chamber for close to 30 years.

"We have common concerns and particular issues that come before the Legislature. I would say the State Chamber serves as a way business people can stay connected and understand the issues, and the State Chamber has served as a way to pull businesses across the state together and support a common goal," Warren said.

Vice president and CFO of Kelley Bean Co. in Scottsbluff, Lee Glenn knows firsthand how the Chamber has served as a way to connect western Nebraska to the more-populated East. Each spring the Chamber's board meetings are held in the chairman's home community, so in 2008 when Glenn was chairman, several board members visited Scottsbluff for the first time.

"That meeting alone helped some members understand the distance issue we have in Nebraska with state government 400 miles away from the economic hub of western Nebraska," Glenn said.

With members from Scottsbluff to Omaha and Valentine to McCook, the State Chamber gives equal representation to all businesses in the state, voices that may not be heard otherwise, Glenn said.

The importance of the Chamber to the well-being of Nebraska has been proven time and time again. What

THIS RUNNING CHRONOLOGY GIVES CONTEXT TO OUR FIRST 100 YEARS

1912–1937

1912

1913

1917

Presidents of Nebraska Manufacturing Association

C.B. Towle
T.E. Adams
F.S. Knapp
K.E. Vogel
C.D. Marr
C.M. Aldrich
C.L. Aller
Ray W. Hammond
C.C. Quiggle
A.F. Bloom
L.A. Kinney
James L. Paxton
R.A. Leussler
Clyde B. Dempster
Charles C. Smith
A.J. Denman
A.R. Kinney

O.E. Engler
Edmund Simmons
George F. Lillie
W.J. Monaghan
R.A. Freeman
J.W. Steinhart
Wilton Van Sickle

Nebraska Manufacturers
Association founded
Nebraska Governor Charles H. Aldrich
William Howard Taft, U.S. President

Nebraska Governor John H. Morehead
Woodrow Wilson, U.S. President

Nebraska Governor Keith Neville
U.S. enters WWI

many people may not know is how influential the Chamber has been in its members' lives and careers.

Tom Whalen, vice president of Human Resources and Organizational Development at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska, has worked with the Chamber for 30 years as well. He was chairman of the board in 2007 and has a deep-rooted history in both Nebraska and public service. His father was a Nebraska State Trooper all of his life, and his grandfather was an elected county sheriff, for many years the longest in office in the history of the state.

“The Chamber has provided me with a wonderful experience through which I get to learn more about my state, the governing process, how the Legislature

works, how relations between businesses and government work, and so much more,” Whalen said.

He credits the deep knowledge he now has of the state to his involvement in the Chamber and sees his participation as a way to contribute to something that has given so much to him.

“I’ve been blessed. I’ve enjoyed good health, great kids and great jobs with outstanding employers, and I wanted to be able to contribute in a meaningful and constructive way. The Chamber is one of the best ways to give back to this community,” he said.

Harris said his time spent with the Chamber has been rewarding and helpful, both professionally and personally.

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Bob Harris, Lincoln



Gary Warren, Aurora



Lee Glenn, Scottsbluff



Tom Whalen, Omaha

1919

1921

1923

1925

1929



Nebraska Governor Samuel R. McKelvie

Warren G. Harding, U.S. President

Nebraska Governor Charles W. Bryan
Calvin Coolidge, U.S. President

Nebraska Governor Adam McMullen

Nebraska Governor Arthur J. Weaver
Herbert Hoover, U.S. President
Most devastating stock market crash in U.S. history (October)

A 100-YEAR COMMITMENT TO “NEBRASKA, THE GOOD LIFE”

A history of protecting our places to work in a state where hard work comes naturally

By Griffin Jelinek

Nebraska’s quality of life is affected greatly by the work of the State Chamber. The Chamber’s interest in promoting economic development and protecting the state’s businesses and their employees translates to one all-important word—jobs. The fact that Nebraska now boasts one of the nation’s lowest unemployment rates is a source of pride for all who have pursued the State Chamber’s mission for 100 years.

Former Chamber chairman Tom Whalen summarized the overall impact the Chamber has on the quality of life in Nebraska.

“So much of what the Chamber does directly and indirectly creates a better standard of living and higher quality experience for the state.”

Evidence of this is seen by the success of the Nebraska Advantage Act. Passed in 2005, this legislative bill is an incentive package for which the Chamber has

rallied and lent support. With the help of Nebraska Advantage, businesses benefit from tax incentives for finding ways to create new jobs. According to the Nebraska Department of Economic Development, in the five years after the law’s passage, more than \$5.6 billion has been invested by Nebraska companies, leading to the creation of nearly 19,000 new jobs. And jobs are critical to the quality of life we enjoy as a state.

The Nebraska Advantage Act encourages both large and small companies to expand and create jobs by offering tax breaks. Without the unified voice of the Chamber, many of the small businesses in Nebraska would not be heard. The lobbying and communicating the Chamber does for the smaller businesses allows them to compete in today’s globally competitive markets.

“This landmark package was developed to position Nebraska to compete more aggressively in the global marketplace. Five years later, Nebraska is a global contender for top businesses in a number of targeted industries,” Gov. Dave Heineman said.

As a result, in 2010 the U.S. Chamber’s Institute for Legal Reform rated Nebraska’s pro-business legal climate the third best in the nation. Nebraska businesses truly do have tremendous support in the Legislature.

1931

Nebraska Governor Charles W. Bryan

1933

Franklin D. Roosevelt, U.S. President
Nebraska Legislature creates statutes to govern Nebraska public power districts

1935

Nebraska Governor Robert Leroy Cochran

1937

Nebraska Manufacturing Association
name changed to Associated Industries of
Nebraska (AIN)
Nebraska Legislature becomes
Unicameral body

1941

Nebraska Governor Dwight Griswold
U.S. enters WWII after Pearl Harbor



The Chamber's commitment to the state covers a broad range of issues surrounding business. The topics it has touched include creating jobs, attracting high-quality employers, supporting environmental issues and the health and safety of the workforce and their families. Chamber efforts also have influenced the work of local Nebraska chambers. In 2011, the Norfolk Area Chamber of Commerce began a community initiative to attract skilled employers to the city. Working closely with the Nebraska Department of Economic Development, the Norfolk Chamber developed housing for college students coming to Norfolk to work internships.

"This campaign is aimed at attracting interns to Norfolk with the hopes of them returning to fill jobs in Norfolk," Dennis Houston, president of the Norfolk Area Chamber of Commerce, said.

The Nebraska Chamber's allegiance to state businesses has influenced tremendously the statewide standard of living. With the Nebraska Legislature, the Chamber strives to create jobs and rewards the employees of Nebraska businesses. It is no surprise that *Business Facilities* magazine considers Nebraska to have the fourth best overall quality of life of any state.

Tom Whalen described what he considers the Chamber's two greatest services to state businesses.

"The Chamber really does two things, communicating and lobbying so businesses don't have to, and so the Chamber can discover the feelings and concerns of Nebraska business."

Photo courtesy of the Nebraska Department of Economic Development.



Nebraska's good life can include a pleasant autumn walk through the Missouri River Basin Lewis and Clark Interpretive Trail in Nebraska City.

1943

President of AIN: W.B. Morton

1944

President of AIN: Earl T. Luff,
Lincoln Steel

1945

Harry S. Truman, U.S. President

1946

President of AIN: J.C. Kerrigan,
Fremont Foundry & Machine Works

1947

Nebraska Governor Val Peterson
President of AIN: O.J. Shaw,
McGraw Electric Railway

1948

President of AIN: Hal Lainson,
Dutton-Lainson Co.

JOINING THE NEBRASKA WORKFORCE

Students are encouraged to have big dreams and plans to reach them under the “Dream It, Do It” campaign sponsored by the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM).

In 2006, NAM introduced the “Dream It, Do It” campaign, a program developed to attract students with appropriate skill sets to good-paying careers. Currently in 21 states, the campaign features young adults with successful careers; their messages are spread through radio, schools and career centers.

Tony Raimondo, chairman of Behlen Manufacturing Co. in Columbus, Neb., has been involved with NAM since 1997 and also served as chairman of the organization’s Small and Medium Manufacturers division in 2005. Raimondo also was chairman of the State Chamber in 1990.

The United States continues to be the international leader in manufacturing output, an achievement NAM looks to prolong with the help of initiatives such as the “Dream It, Do It” campaign, Raimondo said.

The National Association of Manufacturers provides its members with many of the services that assist the State Chamber. Both organizations exist to protect jobs and to interact with congressional and state leaders on legislative bills relating to business.



Tony Raimondo, far left, has been involved with “Dream It, Do It” since its inception. To his right are Cornhusker football’s Jim Rose, Cory Larson from Smeal Fire Apparatus and 2011 State Chamber Chairman Jeff Scherer, far right.

1951

President of AIN: Merle G. Jones,
Storekraft Manufacturing Co.

1953

Nebraska Governor Robert B. Crosby
President of AIN: Harlan G. Coy,
Fremont Cornhusker Hybrid Co.
Dwight D. Eisenhower, U.S. President

1955

Nebraska Governor Victor E. Anderson
President of AIN: Fred P. Curtis,
Lyman-Richey Sand & Gravel

1957

President of AIN: Earl T. Luff,
Lincoln Steel Corp.

1959

Nebraska Governor Ralph G. Brooks
President of AIN: R.S. Dickinson,
Nebraska Consolidated Mills

1960

Nebraska Governor Dwight W. Burney
Associated Industries of Nebraska
helps to form Nebraska State
Chamber of Commerce (NSCC)
President of NSCC: Ralph E. Misko,
First Security Bank

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Our Mission and Success: The Past Chairpersons' Views

“The Chamber attracts some awfully talented volunteers. It’s been great fun to be around those people, and it’s always quite motivating to be around people who are committed and focused on something that’s way beyond their own personal interests,” he said.

Being a part of a group that has shown so much integrity in all sorts of situations has been something Warren cherishes from his time in the Chamber.

“There’s been a great attentiveness by both the staff and board to maintain an honest and straightforward position. You can go to the Legislature and ask them what they think about the Chamber and its lobbyists, and they will tell you they are helpful, dependent, and you can count on them,” he said.

The reputation of the Chamber is not one all organizations can claim to have, Warren said, and he credits the Chamber for helping him grow as a businessman and for helping him broaden his perspective.

“You just feel like you get more out of it than you give to it,” he said.

These men are only a few of many leaders in the Chamber’s history who have made major contributions and received benefits of participation. One wish for the future, Whalen said, is for younger people in Nebraska communities to get involved and give their time and attention to address the concerns that are here today and will be here tomorrow. The next generation of Chamber members and supporters will be in control soon. They will have quite a legacy to live up to, thanks to the dedicated members the Chamber has been fortunate to have over the past 100 years.

1961

President of NSCC: W.D. Newberry,
W.D. Newberry Agency
Nebraska Governor Frank B. Morrison
President of AIN: George W. Mechling,
J.F. Garvey Co.
John F. Kennedy, U.S. President

1962

President of NSCC: Richard E. Spelts,
Spelts of Nebraska

1963

President of AIN: Harry B. Lilly,
Gooch Milling & Elevator
President of NSCC: Earl T. Luff,
Lincoln Steel Corp.
Lyndon B. Johnson becomes
U.S. President after the assassination
of JFK in Dallas.



THE STATE AND LOCAL CHAMBERS ACROSS NEBRASKA...

Historically it's all about collaboration and mutual support. The roles are similar, the success greatly enhanced by ongoing cooperation.

By Emily Sears

The Chamber has played a fundamental role as a partner and mentor to city chambers across the state. Leadership of the State Chamber has realized the importance of helping local city chambers, and without the State Chamber's ongoing partnership, mutual success in their missions would not be achieved as easily. Karen Anderson, executive director of the Scottsbluff/Gering United Chamber of Commerce, said that "Barry Kennedy (State Chamber president) is very active in the chamber world. He is involved with many chambers and is a great leader." Without a strong state chamber, smaller cities might find it difficult to run a successful local chamber.

From Anderson's perspective, the best thing the State Chamber does is lobby and monitor business legislation. When a county wants to know about a bill it can call the State Chamber, and the Chamber will

let it know when the bill is coming up or give advice on it. City chambers look to the State Chamber as an expert on legislation.

Another thing the Chamber helps city chambers with is taking a delegation to Washington, D.C., helping guide them and to keep in touch with key national issues. These annual trips include meetings with congressional delegations, executives of the U.S. Chamber, the National Association of Manufacturers and other D.C.-based organizations. It's a service that local chambers highly value and eagerly pursue. The State Chamber sets up everything for taking the group to Washington, D.C.; the city chambers just have to bring their selected members.

During the legislative session, local chambers will communicate with the State Chamber on a weekly basis, if not more often. When the Legislature isn't in session, local chambers will communicate with the State Chamber only as needed through the year.



Karen Anderson,
2011 Chairperson, Nebraska
Chamber of Commerce Executives

1964

U.S. involvement in
Vietnam War escalates

1965

President of AIN: Thomas Creigh Jr.,
Kansas-Nebraska Gas Co.
President of NSCC: Richard L. Herman,
Herman Bros., Inc.

1966

Associated Industries of Nebraska and
Nebraska State Chamber of Commerce
merge to form the Nebraska Association
of Commerce and Industry (NACI)
President of NACI: Thomas Creigh Jr.,
Kansas-Nebraska Gas Co.
President of NACI: Bennett S. Martin,
Lincoln Terminal Co.

1967

Nebraska Governor Norbert T. Tiemann
Nebraska celebrates centennial
State sales tax begins in Nebraska
President of NACI: Robert B. Daugherty,
Valmont Industries, Inc.

1968

President of NACI: Charles E. Blair,
J.M. McDonald Co.

“A great thing about the Chamber is that it’s just a phone call away,” Anderson said.

The State Chamber helps create new leaders, and it does a great job mentoring people into expanding their roles. The State Chamber really engages with and has a relationship with each chamber across the state. If the State Chamber didn’t help mentor city chambers, they wouldn’t reach their full potential.

“Barry listens to other chambers and shows that he cares about their needs and delegations. He demonstrates the importance of monitoring legislation,” Anderson said.

The original chambers in the state were:

Beatrice
Fremont
Kearney
Lincoln
Norfolk
Omaha

Today, local chambers in Nebraska number 122.

They currently include:

Ainsworth City Chamber of Commerce
Albion City Chamber of Commerce
Alliance City Chamber of Commerce
Alma City Chamber of Commerce
Arapahoe City Chamber of Commerce
Arnold City Chamber of Commerce

Arthur City Chamber of Commerce
Ashland City Chamber of Commerce
Atkinson City Chamber of Commerce
Auburn City Chamber of Commerce
Aurora City Chamber of Commerce
Bassett City Chamber of Commerce
Beatrice City Chamber of Commerce
Bellevue City Chamber of Commerce
Benkelman City Chamber of Commerce
Bertrand City Chamber of Commerce
Big Springs City Chamber of Commerce
Blair City Chamber of Commerce
Bloomfield City Chamber of Commerce
Broken Bow City Chamber of Commerce
Burwell City Chamber of Commerce
Callaway City Chamber of Commerce
Cambridge City Chamber of Commerce
Cedar Rapids City Chamber of Commerce
Central City City Chamber of Commerce
Chadron City Chamber of Commerce
Chappell City Chamber of Commerce
Columbus City Chamber of Commerce
Cozad City Chamber of Commerce
Crawford City Chamber of Commerce
Creighton City Chamber of Commerce
Crete City Chamber of Commerce
Crofton City Chamber of Commerce
Curtis City Chamber of Commerce
David City City Chamber of Commerce
Elm Creek City Chamber of Commerce

1969

President of NACI: Dr. Lewis E. Harris,
Harris Laboratories, Inc.
Richard Nixon, U.S. President
University of Nebraska celebrates centennial



1970

President of NACI: Marvin G. Schmid,
Schmid, Ford, Mooney,
Frederick & Caporale

1971

Nebraska Governor J. James Exon
President of NACI:
Jim Owen, Jayhawk Boxes, Inc.

*Elwood City Chamber of Commerce
 Eustis City Chamber of Commerce
 Exeter City Chamber of Commerce
 Fairbury City Chamber of Commerce
 Fairmont City Chamber of Commerce
 Falls City City Chamber of Commerce
 Fremont City Chamber of Commerce
 Friend City Chamber of Commerce
 Geneva City Chamber of Commerce
 Genoa City Chamber of Commerce
 Gering City Chamber of Commerce
 Gibbon City Chamber of Commerce
 Gordon City Chamber of Commerce*

*Gothenburg City Chamber of Commerce
 Grand Island City Chamber of Commerce
 Gretna City Chamber of Commerce
 Hartington City Chamber of Commerce
 Hastings City Chamber of Commerce
 Hebron City Chamber of Commerce
 Hemingford City Chamber of Commerce
 Hickman City Chamber of Commerce
 Holdrege City Chamber of Commerce
 Humboldt City Chamber of Commerce
 Imperial City Chamber of Commerce
 Kearney City Chamber of Commerce
 Kimball City Chamber of Commerce*



State and local Nebraska Chamber members visit the White House on a goodwill mission to Washington.



The Chamber's Gayle-Ann Douglas, left, and Dick Cambell, right, chat with U.S. Senator Ben Nelson during one of the Chamber visits to Washington.

1972

1973

1974

1975

1976

1977

President of NACI: Harry Seward,
 Bankers Life Nebraska

President of NACI: Stanley A. Michael,
 Kirham, Michael & Associates

President of NACI: Carl C. Spelts,
 Spelts Lumber Co.
 Gerald Ford, U.S. President

President of NACI: Walter E. Nolte,
 First National Lincoln

President of NACI: Virgil R. Eihusen,
 Chief Industries, Inc.

President of NACI: C.O. Emrich,
 C.O. Emrich Enterprises, Inc.
 Jimmy Carter, U.S. President

La Vista City Chamber of Commerce
Lexington City Chamber of Commerce
Lincoln City Chamber of Commerce
Loup City City Chamber of Commerce
Madison City Chamber of Commerce
McCook City Chamber of Commerce
Milford City Chamber of Commerce
Minden City Chamber of Commerce
Mitchell City Chamber of Commerce
Nebraska City Chamber of Commerce
Neligh City Chamber of Commerce
Niobrara City Chamber of Commerce
Norfolk City Chamber of Commerce
North Bend City Chamber of Commerce
North Platte City Chamber of Commerce
O'Neill City Chamber of Commerce
Oakland City Chamber of Commerce
Ogallala City Chamber of Commerce
Omaha City Chamber of Commerce
Ord City Chamber of Commerce
Orleans City Chamber of Commerce
Osceola City Chamber of Commerce
Oshkosh City Chamber of Commerce
Oxford City Chamber of Commerce
Papillion City Chamber of Commerce
Pawnee City City Chamber of Commerce
Peru City Chamber of Commerce
Plainview City Chamber of Commerce
Plattsmouth City Chamber of Commerce
Ponca City Chamber of Commerce

Ralston City Chamber of Commerce
Ravenna City Chamber of Commerce
Red Cloud City Chamber of Commerce
Saint Paul City Chamber of Commerce
Sargent City Chamber of Commerce
Schuyler City Chamber of Commerce
Scottsbluff City Chamber of Commerce
Scribner City Chamber of Commerce
Seward City Chamber of Commerce
Shelby City Chamber of Commerce
Shickley City Chamber of Commerce
Sidney City Chamber of Commerce
South Sioux City City Chamber of Commerce
Superior City Chamber of Commerce
Sutherland City Chamber of Commerce
Syracuse City Chamber of Commerce
Tecumseh City Chamber of Commerce
Tekamah City Chamber of Commerce
Valentine City Chamber of Commerce
Verdigre City Chamber of Commerce
Wahoo City Chamber of Commerce
Waterloo City Chamber of Commerce
Waverly City Chamber of Commerce
Wayne City Chamber of Commerce
West Point City Chamber of Commerce
Wilber City Chamber of Commerce
Wisner City Chamber of Commerce
Wymore City Chamber of Commerce
York City Chamber of Commerce
Yutan City Chamber of Commerce

1978

President of NACI: Roy A. Smith,
 H.P. Smith Motors, Inc.

1979

Nebraska Governor Charles Thone
 President of NACI: James T. Hansen,
 Hansen Building Specialties, Inc.

1980

President of NACI: Glenn Bonacker,
 Minnegasco Gas Co.

1981

President of NACI: George Russell,
 Millard Lumber, Inc.
 Ronald Reagan, U.S. President

1982

President of NACI: Marvin G. Welstead,
 Equitable Federal Savings & Loan Assn.

HAL LAINSON...AN EARLY CHAMBER PIONEER, BORN THE YEAR OF OUR FOUNDING

By Griffin Jelinek

In 1920, when Harry Ackley (Hal) Lainson Jr. was 8 years old, his father, H.A. Lainson Sr., presented a new idea for a wholesale hardware business to the W.M. Dutton and Sons Co., a horse collar and harness manufacturer in Hastings, Neb. The idea was approved, and Lainson soon became manager of the company's Wholesale Hardware Division.

Hal Lainson Jr. began working for W.M. Dutton and Sons Co. when he was just a junior at Hastings High School. His first job was to deliver invoices to the company's local customers. Lainson's father instructed him personally to hand-deliver each invoice to the owner of other businesses so he could become familiar with the town's business leaders.

After attending college at Iowa State University and Northwestern University, Lainson finally moved back to be closer to home and graduated from Hastings College in 1934. Upon graduation, Lainson went to work as the advertising manager for W.M. Dutton and

Sons Co.; three years later he was promoted to general manager. He married Gretchen Hollman from Minden, Neb., in 1938; they later would have two daughters, Margaret and Mary.

Before the late 1930s, George Dutton, son of W.M. Dutton, represented the company regularly at meetings for the Associated Industries of Nebraska (AIN), the preceding organization to the State Chamber. George Dutton was involved actively with AIN, but by the late 1930s had moved on to Chicago. With Dutton gone, Lainson remembered, his father asking him to attend a meeting for AIN on behalf of the W.M. Dutton and Sons Co.

"There was no one designated in the company at that time to go to these meetings and do these things. So my father asked me to go to a meeting of the Associated Industries at the Cornhusker Hotel in Lincoln. I think the year was 1938."

By 1939, there were no more Dutton family members involved with the company, and the name was changed to Dutton-Lainson Co.

Lainson's first meeting with AIN was certainly an experience that would impact him for the rest of his life. Ten years later, in 1948, Lainson would become president of AIN. He also would go on to serve as the

1983

Nebraska Governor J. Robert Kerrey

1984

Chairman of NACI: William W. Cook Jr.,
Beatrice National Bank and Trust Co.

1985

Chairman of NACI: Martin G. Colladay,
ConAgra, Inc.

1986

Chairman of NACI: Donald D. Stull,
Guardian State Bank & Trust Co.

1987

Nebraska Governor Kay A. Orr
Chairman of NACI: Robert B. Harris,
Harris Laboratories, Inc.
LB775, offering income tax credits, sales
tax refunds and property tax exemptions
to qualifying businesses, is passed

1988

Chairman of NACI:
Edwin J. Loutzenheiser Jr.,
Phoenix Industries
Name changed to the Nebraska
Chamber of Commerce and Industry
(State Chamber)

director of the National Association of Manufacturers for nearly 20 years.

During World War II, Dutton-Lainson was awarded a defense contract to produce munitions. The company was one of three manufacturers in Nebraska to produce shells for the military; Omaha Steel received the first contract, and Cushman Motors in Lincoln received the second shell contract. Dutton-Lainson was awarded the Army-Navy "E" Award for excellence three times for its production of munitions during the Second World War. According to Lainson, there were "only five percent of manufacturers in the whole nation with a defense contract that were awarded the Army-Navy E."



Hal Lainson at his desk in 1942.

In 1950, Lainson became president of the Dutton-Lainson Co. He later would give the title of president to his son-in-law Charles R. Hermes in 1978. Lainson's other son-in-law, Jorn Olsen, serves as vice president of information technology for Dutton-Lainson. John J. Lainson, Lainson's brother, held the position of corporate secretary until his death in 1998.

Despite numerous requests to relocate to a larger city more suitable for an international manufacturer, Dutton-Lainson has remained a strong family business in Hastings, Neb., for almost a century. Today, the company is one of the nation's leading manufacturers of marine, industrial, agricultural and automotive products, and one of the largest distributors around the world.

Lainson lived almost his entire life in Hastings. He loved his hometown and was very involved in the community. On Nov. 19, 2010, at age 98, Lainson passed away in his home, where he had lived for 70 years.

After 98 years of life, it was not the important decisions and legislative bills that Hal Lainson remembered most, but rather the personal relationships he developed with the Nebraska businessmen he worked with. According to Lainson, there was great "camaraderie among the manufacturers' owners and managers."

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1989

Chairman of State Chamber:
Duane W. Acklie, Crete Carrier Corp.
George H. W. Bush, U.S. President

1990

Chairman of State Chamber:
A.F. "TR" Raimondo, Behlen Mfg., Co.

1991

Nebraska Governor E. Benjamin Nelson
Chairman of State Chamber: John
Cochrane, Northwest Bank Nebraska

1992

Chairman of State Chamber:
Alice M. Dirtman, Cornhusker Bank

1993

Bill Clinton, U.S. President
Chairman of State Chamber:
Lance Paulsen, Paulsen Development Co.

1994

Chairman of State Chamber: Gary Parker,
Lindsay Manufacturing Company

A GROWING AGENDA FOR THE STATE CHAMBER...

The Jack Swartz years

By Emily Sears

Jack Swartz, former president of the Nebraska State Chamber, in large part crafted today's program of work. As a young adult he attended Washburn University in Topeka, Kan., where he received two degrees; a Bachelor of Business Administration and a Bachelor of Economics. He also has an associate degree from Dodge City Community College, and he attended St. Mary of the Plains College in Dodge City, Kan., for two and a half years. Later, after becoming a full-time chamber executive, he attended and graduated from the Institute of Organizational Management at the University of Colorado, which was co-sponsored by CU and the U.S. Chamber.

In his early days he was in private business and became very active as a volunteer in both the local Junior Chamber of Commerce (Jaycees) and the local chamber of commerce. Swartz eventually was elected state president of the Kansas Junior Chamber of Commerce, and by virtue of holding that office, he automatically became a member of the State Chamber board. Swartz eventually became the executive vice

president and chief lobbyist for the Kansas State Chamber and worked there for 15 years.

Even though Swartz had an excellent position with the Kansas Chamber, he still felt the desire to lead a chamber.

"I had, for a number of years, felt I would like to head up a state chamber," Swartz said. In 1982, the position of president opened in Nebraska; Swartz applied



State Chamber President Jack Swartz shown with Governor Ben Nelson and State Chamber Chairperson Alice Dittman at a proclamation signing at the Capitol.

1995

Chairman of State Chamber:
Richard L. Gady, ConAngra, Inc.

1996

Chairman of State Chamber:
C.G. "Kelly" Holthus,
First National Bank of York

1997

Chairman of State Chamber:
Gates Minnick, DuTeau Chevrolet-
GEO-Subaru Co.

1998

Chairman of State Chamber:
E.J. "Ernie" Thayer,
Grand Island Trust & Financial Services

1999

Nebraska Governor Mike Johanns
Chairman of State Chamber:
Richard N. Cabela, Cabela's Inc.

and was hired. Swartz knew a lot about association management and getting members to work together, and these qualities made Nebraska very interested in him.

“I had always had an affinity for Nebraska as my father was a UNL graduate,” Swartz said.

Swartz did many things to help strengthen the Chamber. He helped with workers compensation and unemployment compensation, which were key issues to the employers and the business community and the main area of focus for the Chamber.

“When Jack came, it was pretty obvious right away that the Nebraska State Chamber of Commerce was going to be involved in a broader scope of issues,” Barry Kennedy, president of the Nebraska State Chamber, said.

Many new things were implemented under Swartz’s time at the Chamber that still continue today. With Swartz as president, the Chamber got involved with taxation, economic development and other issues that affected employers or business people in general. Swartz started councils, such as a public affairs council, taxation council and economic development council, to help with these specific issues. These councils helped more members to get involved in the process and get more input from members.

Membership expanded, and he started the Business Hall of Fame.

“One of my fondest memories occurred shortly after I retired when the Chamber and UNL inducted me into the Nebraska Business Hall of Fame. This was one of my proudest moments,” Swartz said.

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Jack Swartz joined the Nebraska Chamber in 1982.

2000

Chairman of State Chamber:
Roy A. Smith, Old Mill Toyota

2001

Chairman of State Chamber:
Richard B. Campbell,
Campbell’s Nurseries & Garden Centers
George W. Bush, U.S. President
Terrorist attacks in U.S.



2002

Chairman of State Chamber:
Gayle-Ann Douglas,
Douglas Manufacturing Corp.

2003

Chairman of State Chamber:
Gayle E. McClure, Dutton-Lainson Co.

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A Growing Agenda for the State Chamber...

The Chamber was a co-sponsor of one of the first international trade missions, which helped the state’s economy. Swartz said that one of his fondest memories of working at the Chamber was “the seven Asian trade missions we (the Nebraska Chamber) co-sponsored with the Nebraska Department of Economic Development during the 1990s, in which then-Gov. Ben Nelson actively participated.”



Jack Swartz and other board members represent the State Chamber on an early trade mission to Asia with Governor Ben Nelson, third from right.

Swartz really focused on building coalitions.

“Jack was a masterful coalition builder. He worked at forming relationships and collaboration with local chambers of commerce and other statewide business associations. He worked hard at forming coalitions, because when you bring a lot of people together to work on a common goal, it’s always easier to do more,” Kennedy said.

Swartz not only worked hard at building coalitions but also at molding strong employees. “Jack did a good job of not just hiring but developing staff. Jack was a mentor and hired good people to begin with,” Kennedy said. Swartz added, “I held the position of president for 18 years, then decided to retire on Jan. 1, 2000, the first day of the new millennium.”

He was one of the most influential leaders of the Chamber and had a huge impact on the state.

“Working with the top business people in Nebraska is an opportunity that few people get to experience. Also working with members of the Legislature and all levels of government, both state and at the federal level, is a unique opportunity,” Swartz said.

2004

Chairman of State Chamber:
G. Richard Russell, Millard Lumber, Inc.

2005

Nebraska Governor Dave Heineman
Chairman of State Chamber:
Gary Warren,
Hamilton Telecommunications
The LB312 Nebraska Advantage Act providing additional tax incentives for companies expanding and providing additional jobs is passed.



2006

Chairman of State Chamber:
Rich Bailey, Bailey Lauerman
Chamber creates Leadership Nebraska

A 100-YEAR HISTORY BRINGS TRIUMPHS AND CHALLENGES

By Griffin Jelinek

Throughout periods of economic downturn and during times when Nebraska businesses have been quite uncertain about the future, the Nebraska Chamber of Commerce and Industry has been there to help.

Chamber president Barry Kennedy remembers one of those hard times for the state: the agricultural recession of the early 1980s.

“Despite the lasting hit taken by the state’s agricultural segment, it was all the other working components of the economy that contributed to a restored Nebraska business environment.”

The Chamber’s legislative work helped to keep other sectors of the economy moving forward, which eventually led to the recovery of the agricultural sector. When the agriculture economy was hit with heavy debt as a result of low interest rates and asset-based loans, the Chamber was there to help farmers weather the recession by pushing for legislative policies that favored Nebraska farmers.

“When one segment of the economy is frozen, others seem to be working. Never has the entirety of the Nebraska economy been frozen,” Kennedy said.

Many Nebraska businesses have had to face tightening budgets and declining profits at one time or another. In the thick of economic recessions, the Chamber has fought for the state’s business community. By lobbying for favorable legislative policies and creating opportunities for businesses to maintain productivity amid economic slowdown, the Chamber stands by the state’s citizens. It is during these moments that Nebraska businesses have been reminded that their membership in the Chamber is a valuable investment and an asset of tangible value.

When changes confront the Nebraska economy, the Chamber helps find ways to adapt to changing times; most evident of these measures are the councils the organization has created in order to stay educated. The addition of environmental, technology and health care councils has helped the Chamber keep up with events in the state and their effects on Nebraska business. Contacting college graduates and informing them of relevant opportunities within the state is very important when filling holes in the state’s workforce and creating jobs. By staying vigilant on the major and minor issues involving state businesses, the

continued on page 26

2007

Chairman of State Chamber:
Tom L. Whalen, SilverStone Group, Inc.

2008

Chairman of State Chamber:
G. Lee Glenn, Kelley Bean Co.

2009

Chairman of State Chamber:
Marc LeBaron, Lincoln Industries
Barack Obama, U.S. President
Nebraska population reaches 1.8 million

2010

Chairman of State Chamber:
Richard S. Reiser, Werner Enterprises, Inc.

2011

Chairman of State Chamber:
Jeffrey M. Scherer, Smeal Fire Apparatus Co.

2012

The Nebraska State Chamber of
Commerce and Industry
celebrates centennial year.

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A 100-year History Brings Triumphs and Challenges

Chamber has remained an effective tool in avoiding setbacks and adapting to changes in the economy.

During the Great Depression and World War II, the greatest challenge that faced the Chamber was membership. As Nebraskans struggled to make ends meet, many businesses were forced to give up their membership with the Chamber. Except during crises such as the Depression, the Chamber has been able to maintain a stable membership—1,300 members today. As Kennedy points out, the organization is vigilant in pursuing new Nebraska businesses for membership.

James Berringer, senior vice president of membership and marketing for the Chamber, does not recall a time when the Chamber's membership was not stable. He attributes the stable membership to the Chamber's strong advocacy; members are prompted to join the Chamber for the legislative work it does for all Nebraska businesses.

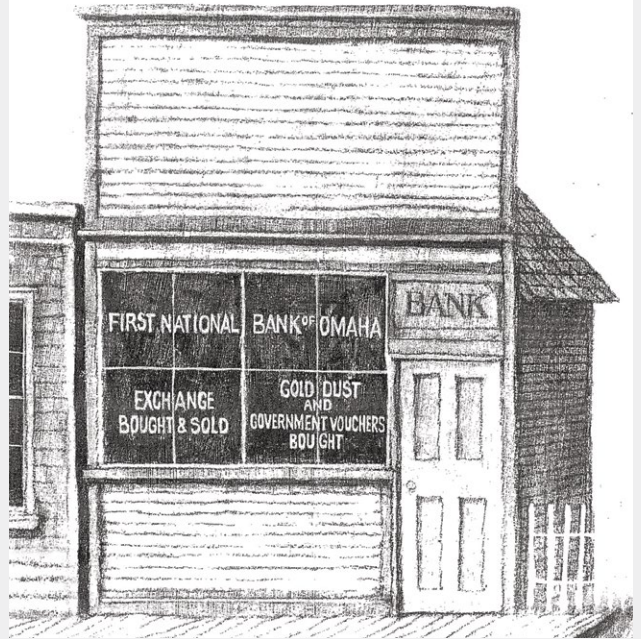
Berringer described his primary responsibility as “securing the stability and growth of the only state-wide, broad-based business organization in the state.”



Barry Kennedy has led the State Chamber as president since 2000.



James Berringer serves the State Chamber as senior vice president.



First National Bank has experienced remarkable growth since its modest beginnings. Its new Omaha headquarters is the city's tallest building, First National Center.



The Union Pacific Railroad has been “building America” for 150 years as we enter 2012. Shown here, early steam engine days in Omaha and examples of today’s efficient fleet.

SALUTE TO NEBRASKA’S 100-YEAR-OLD COMPANIES

By Griffin Jelinek

The State Chamber’s 100-year success is due to the support of new and old Nebraska businesses. It is appropriate during our centennial year to recognize the Chamber’s members who have been doing business for more than 100 years. These businesses have kept their doors open and customers content for more than a century.

Some of these companies have found their way to Nebraska through acquisition or relocation, while others have established their roots here. But despite their differing histories and expertise, one thing is certain: They have contributed positively to the Nebraska economy and bolstered the mission of the Nebraska Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

*Store Kraft Mfg. Co. – Beatrice, Neb.
Chamber member since 1938
Established in 1911 as Hested Stores Co.*

*BD Medical Surgical Systems – Columbus, Neb.
Chamber member since 1950
Established as Becton, Dickinson and Company in Franklin Lakes, New Jersey (1897). In 1949, the first BD manufacturing plant outside the state of New Jersey was constructed in Columbus, Nebraska.*

*Columbus Telegram – Columbus, Neb.
Chamber member since 1958
Established 1879.*

*First National Bank & Trust – Columbus, Neb.
Chamber member since 1949
Established in 1906 as the German National Bank.*

*First National Bank & Trust Co. – Falls City, Neb.
Chamber member since 1960
Established 1882.*

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WORKING WITH THE NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS THAT SHARE OUR GOALS

By Griffin Jelinek

The Nebraska Chamber of Commerce and Industry benefits greatly from its affiliation with two national organizations for economic development. Working alongside the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) and the United States Chamber of Commerce, the State Chamber is able to create a strong identity for Nebraska business on a national level. The close communication with national organizations ensures the voice of Nebraska business will be heard in Washington.

The growth and development of the manufacturing community has been the National Association of Manufacturers' primary concern since it was created in 1895. Shortly after its formation, the organization was a key advocate for the creation of the U.S. Department of Commerce. The National Council of Commerce was formed from the earliest efforts of NAM. This group was formed through collaboration between NAM, several similar organizations and the efforts of Oscar Straus, the U.S. Secretary of Commerce and Labor under former President Theodore Roosevelt. The National Council of Commerce would later become the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Today NAM is widely known as a strong promoter of United States-based manufacturing. From pushing the policies that further the success of manufacturing in the nation's economy, to being a valuable tool for national economic reform, NAM has had an impact for more than a century. President Ronald Reagan's 1981 Program for Economic Reform, known by many as "Reaganomics," relied on help from NAM to increase productivity in the nation's manufacturing sector. Donald Mihovk, executive director of Leadership Nebraska, said the "Nebraska Chamber

of Commerce is thankful for its relationship with NAM; it has strengthened the power of the many manufacturing companies here in Nebraska."

Coincidentally, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce was formed in the same year as the Nebraska Chamber. The U.S. Chamber, formed in 1912 when William Howard Taft was president, was composed of 700 delegates interested in keeping commercialism and trade at the heart of American interests. This



Dan Mauk of the Norfolk Chamber of Commerce presents Anne Anderson from the Gothenburg Chamber with a plaque denoting her year as 2006 president of the Nebraska Chamber of Commerce Executives.



Nebraska's Bob Milligan served as chair of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in 2009



Tony Raimondo of Behlen Manufacturing in Columbus has long been active in the State Chamber and the National Association of Manufacturers.

organization was founded on the principle of free enterprise, and over the years has existed to help the institutions and resources of the nation grow.

Today the U.S. Chamber of Commerce is composed of 3 million businesses of various backgrounds, many industry associations and state and local chambers of commerce. In recent years, one of Nebraska's own, Robert Milligan, has served as chairman of both the U.S. Chamber and its executive committee. He was elected to a one-year term as chairman of the U.S. Chamber on June 10, 2009. Milligan also serves as the chairman of the Lincoln-based meat and protein processing company M.I. Industries. His wife, Cynthia Hardin Milligan, is the dean emeritus of the University of Nebraska–Lincoln College of Business Administration.

Milligan described the importance of the State Chamber's relationship with the U.S. Chamber.

“It is important to have that relationship for Nebraska; the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and Nebraska Chamber are closely aligned. They work together

closely on legislation; the U.S. Chamber serves as an effective advocate, keeping the State Chamber advised on upcoming issues.”

Milligan's experience with the U.S. Chamber and his success as former chairman are a benefit and an honor for the state of Nebraska. The State Chamber is grateful for Milligan's service and his continued support of the organization.

Regardless of the tremendous size of the national organization, the U.S. Chamber continues to represent a number of the country's many small businesses. The U.S. Chamber assures that equal freedom for each business will be promoted all the way to the nation's Capitol.

The objectives of the U.S. Chamber and the Nebraska Chamber are quite consistent, as described in the U.S. Chamber's mission statement: “Bringing together America's small businesses—the engine of economic growth—will strengthen individual endeavors while amplifying the collective voice of business.”



Photo courtesy of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Construction began in 1922 for the beautiful U.S. Chamber of Commerce headquarters building in Washington, D.C.

THE STATE CHAMBER SALUTES THE NEBRASKA BUSINESS HALL OF FAME

By Scout Richters

Nearly 500 people gather at a gala reception and dinner in Lincoln in February each year. Their purpose: to honor and recognize outstanding business leaders in the state by inducting them into the Nebraska Business Hall of Fame. Each newly inducted member is honored with a professional video about his or her personal contributions to Nebraska business and presented with an award from the governor.

The Nebraska Chamber of Commerce and Industry, in partnership with the University of Nebraska–

Lincoln's College of Business Administration, established the Nebraska Business Hall of Fame in 1992. The purpose of the Hall of Fame is to honor individuals who have made significant contributions to the success of Nebraska business.

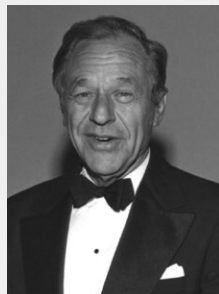
The Chamber has a special committee, typically made up of past and present chairpersons of the Chamber as well as past Hall of Fame inductees, that is responsible for reviewing nominations for the Nebraska Business Hall of Fame. Individuals are awarded membership into the Hall of Fame based on involvement and Nebraska business accomplishments over the course of their lives. Nearly 90 outstanding business leaders in the state have been honored since 1992.



Past Business Hall of Fame members gather at the Hall's permanent display within the College of Business Administration on the UNL Campus.



Earl T. Luff,
Lincoln Steel,
Lincoln, 1992



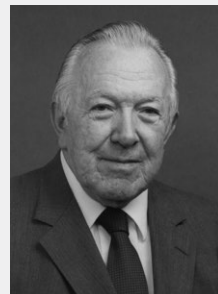
Harry P. Seward Jr.,
Bankers Life Nebraska,
Lincoln, 1992



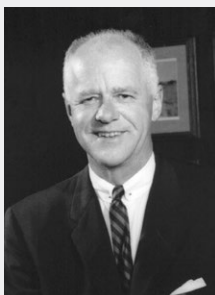
Thomas Creigh Jr.,
KN Energy, Inc.,
Hastings, 1992



Virgil R. Eihusen,
Chief Industries, Inc.,
Grand Island, 1992



Dr. Lewis E. Harris,
Harris Laboratories, Inc.,
Lincoln, 1992



Burnham Yates,
First National Bank,
Lincoln, 1992



Robert B. Daugherty,
Valmont Industries, Inc.,
Valley, 1992



Robert B. Harris,
Harris Laboratories, Inc.,
Lincoln, 1992



Charles "Mike" Harper,
ConAgra, Inc.,
Omaha, 1992



Edwin J. Loutzenheiser Jr.,
Phoenix Industries, Inc.,
Lincoln, 1992



Clifton K. Hillegass, Cliff
Notes, Inc.,
Lincoln 1993



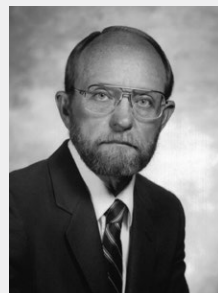
Robert L. Peterson,
IBP, Inc.,
Dakota City, 1993



Kenneth L. Wortman,
Wortman Enterprises,
Aurora, 1993



Richard N. Cabela,
Cabela's Inc.,
Sidney, 1994



James W. Cabela,
Cabela's Inc.,
Sidney, 1994



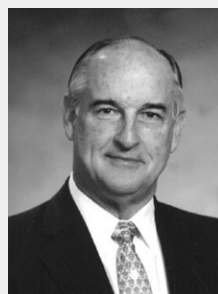
V.J. Skutt,
Mutual of Omaha
Companies,
Omaha, 1994



George P. Abel,
NEBCO, Inc.,
Lincoln, 1995



Daniel W. Gardner,
Gardner Foundation,
Wakefield, 1995



Walter Scott Jr.,
Peter Kiewit Sons, Inc.
Omaha, 1995



Harold Warp,
Harold Warp Pioneer
Village Foundation,
Minden, 1995



Warren E. Buffett,
Berkshire Hathaway, Inc.,
Omaha, 1996



Alice M. Dittman,
Cornhusker Bank,
Lincoln, 1997



Rose Blumkin,
Nebraska Furniture Mart,
Omaha, 1997



Ernst Lied,
Businessman,
Philanthropist,
Omaha, 1997



Virgil L. Froehlich,
Affiliated Foods,
Norfolk 1997



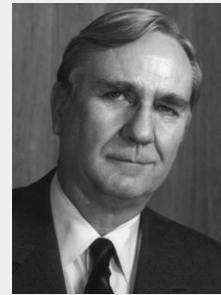
Nathan J. Gold,
Gold and Company,
Lincoln, 1998



Willis W. Stauss,
Northern Natural Gas
Company,
Omaha, 1998



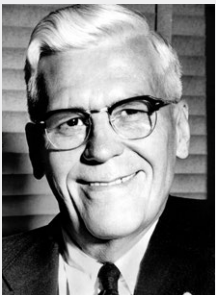
Herman Cain,
Godfather's Pizza,
Omaha, 1998



Kenneth L. Morrison,
Morrison Enterprises,
Hastings, 1998



B. Keith Heuermann,
B.K.H. Popcorn,
Phillips, 1999



Peter Kiewit,
Peter Kiewit Sons, Inc.,
Omaha, 1999



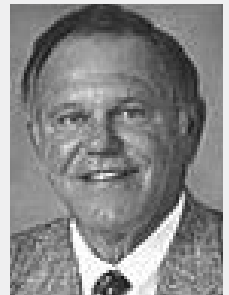
A.F. "Tony" Raimondo,
Behlen MF. Co.,
Columbus, 1999



James Stuart,
Stuart Investment Co.,
Lincoln, 1999



Harriet Petersen Fort,
American Tool Companies,
Inc., DeWitt, 2000



Fred Hawkins Sr.,
Hawkins Construction
Company,
Omaha, 2000



Dale LeBaron,
Lincoln Plating Company,
Lincoln, 2000



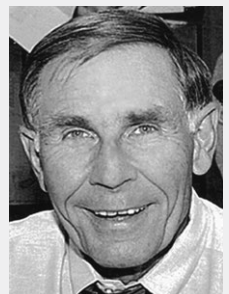
Charles "Chuck" Sand,
Sand Livestock Systems,
Inc., Columbus, 2000



Jack Swartz,
Nebraska Chamber of
Commerce & Industry,
Lincoln, 2000



Charles W. Durham,
HDR, Inc.,
Omaha, 2001



Paul C. Mohr,
Ideal Linen Supply,
Scottsbluff, 2001



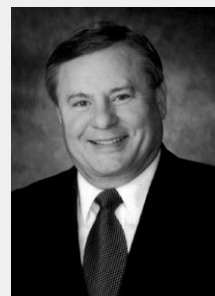
Margaret Robinson,
Norfolk Iron & Metal Co.,
Norfolk, 2001



Joe R. Seacrest,
Lincoln Journal,
Lincoln, 2001



J. Robert Duncan,
Duncan Aviation, Inc.,
Lincoln, 2002



Hugh W. Hunt,
HunTel Systems,
Blair, 2002



Richard A. Hunt,
HunTel Systems,
Blair, 2002



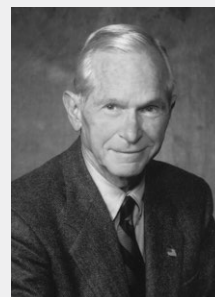
Edwin E. Perkins,
Perkins Products,
Hastings, 2002



C.L. Werner,
Werner Enterprises, Inc.,
Omaha, 2002



Roy Dinsdale,
Dinsdale Bros., Inc.,
Palmer, 2003



Roy A. Smith,
Old Mill Toyota,
Omaha, 2003



Thomas C. Woods Jr.,
Lincoln Telephone &
Telegraph Co.,
Lincoln, 2003



Walt Behlen,
Behlen Manufacturing,
Columbus, 2004



Mike Behlen,
Behlen Manufacturing,
Columbus, 2004



Gib Behlen,
Behlen Manufacturing,
Columbus, 2004



Donald O. Clifton, Ph.D.,
University of Nebraska-
Lincoln, Lincoln, 2004



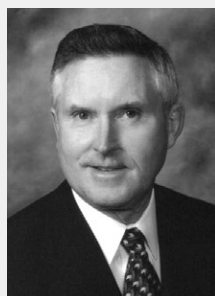
Richard K. Davidson,
Union Pacific Corporation,
Omaha, 2004



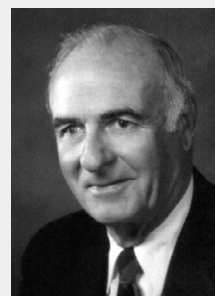
Henry H. "Hod" Kosman,
Scottsbluff National
Bank, Scottsbluff, 2004



Lawrence J. Arth,
Ameritas Acacia,
Lincoln, 2005



William A. Fitzgerald,
Commercial Federal,
Omaha, 2005



E.H. "Shoey" Shoemaker,
Milldale Ranch,
North Platte, 2005



Jan Thayer,
EXCEL Development
Group,
Grand Island, 2005



Elizabeth Jane Robb
Douglas, Douglas
Manufacturing Corp.,
Crete, 2006



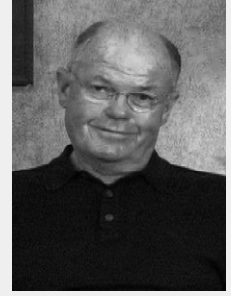
Robert "Bobby" Gottsch,
Gottsch Enterprises,
Hastings, 2006



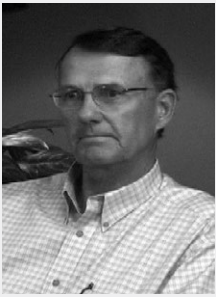
Bill Kubly,
Landscapes Unlimited,
Lincoln, 2006



Bruce Lauritzen,
First National Bank of
Nebraska, Omaha, 2006



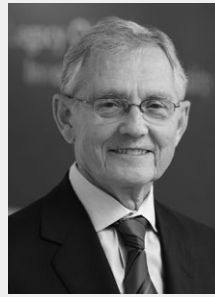
Robert Kelley,
Kelley Bean Co.,
Scottsbluff, 2007



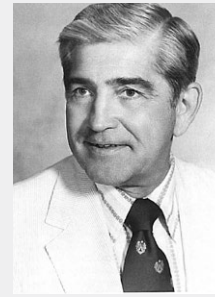
Gary Kelley,
Kelley Bean Co.,
Scottsbluff, 2007



George F. Russell,
Millard Lumber Inc.,
Omaha, 2007



Dr. Wayne Ryan,
Streck,
Omaha, 2007



Dale C. Tintzman,
First Nebraska
Securities/IBP,
Lincoln, 2007



James P. Abel,
NEBCO,
Lincoln, 2008



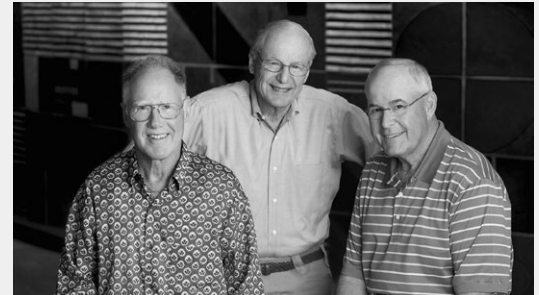
Fred Bosselman,
Bosselman Companies,
Grand Island, 2008



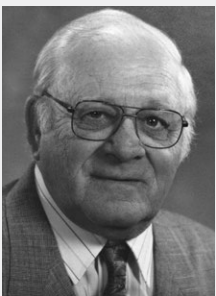
Jack Vetter,
Vetter Health Services,
Omaha, 2008



J. Gates Minnick,
DuTeau Chevrolet/Subaru,
Lincoln, 2009



Alan, Fred and Steve Simon,
Omaha Steaks,
Omaha, 2009



Donald Smeal,
Smeal Fire Apparatus
Company,
Snyder, 2009



Willard H. Waldo,
Waldo Farms, Inc.,
DeWitt, 2009



Abe Baker,
Baker's Supermarkets,
Omaha, 2010



Joe Hampton,
Hampton Enterprises,
Lincoln, 2010



C.G. "Kelly" Holthus,
Cornhusker Bank,
York, 2010



John P. Nelson,
SilverStone Group,
Omaha, 2010



Clayton Andrews,
Andrews Van Lines,
Norfolk, 2011



Leo A. Daly III,
Leo A. Daly Company,
Omaha, 2011



D. William "Bill" Smith,
Speedway Motors,
Lincoln, 2011



Harold Wimmer,
Wimmer's Meat Products,
West Point, 2011



George Wimmer,
Wimmer's Meat Products,
West Point, 2011



Hall of Famers meet for the dedication of the permanent display at the UNL College of Business Administration.

LEADERSHIP NEBRASKA

A new venture that broadens our program of work

By Emma Petrie-Smith

Gwen Hurst-Anderson was not sold completely on being part of Leadership Nebraska. But after her company received an unexpected grant that made participation in the program possible, she grudgingly applied.

The result was all positive.

“Am I ever glad that I participated in Leadership Nebraska!” Hurst-Anderson said in a letter to the Nebraska State Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Hurst-Anderson, executive director of Court-Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) in Lincoln, found her experience with LN to be deeply meaningful personally and helpful professionally. The Nebraska CASA Association benefits weekly from her investment and participation in LN.

For example, “We continue to look to Leadership Nebraska alumni for board members when openings occur,” Hurst-Anderson said. “When I have a question about a particular issue or an area in Nebraska, I check the Leadership Nebraska roster and contact classmates and alumni who are eager to help and who provide me with more than I ask for.”

The Chamber created Leadership Nebraska, known as LN, in 2005 to cultivate future leaders in the state from all walks of life. Since its inception, it has given more than 100 Nebraska leaders a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to develop leadership skills and expand their knowledge of Nebraska and the issues facing it, all while networking with fellow business people and community leaders. The goal is to develop a network of Nebraskans who will work together to help create a more prosperous state.

The program includes six sessions each year, ranging from half a day to two days, each with a different

focus. Joni Sundquist, a member of LN’s second graduating class, spoke fondly of one of the sessions she and her classmates participated in. She said that the long bus tour, which covered more than 400 miles, was a great chance for her to get to know her classmates. It included stops in Aurora, Grand Island, Gibbon, Ogallala and other Nebraska towns.

“We had the opportunity to look at different types of irrigation, visit a cattle feed yard, a turkey feeding facility, Haythorn Ranch (in Arthur) and get a firsthand look at the sugar beet and dry edible bean industry,” Sundquist said. “It was an amazing tour that I wish everyone could experience.”

Sundquist’s experience is typical of the kind of information members are exposed to throughout the program. This particular session’s focus was “Growing Agriculture in Nebraska.” Other sessions have covered topics such as “Policy-Making in Nebraska” and “Keeping Nebraska Healthy.” Whether it’s exposing members to different parts of the state or to the different health care options for Nebraskans,



Leadership Nebraska members hear a group presentation during one of the sessions of Class V.

Leadership Nebraska is focused on enlarging the minds and worlds of its members.

Members are chosen through a competitive process, and selected members are all respected figures in either the public or private sector who have sought an opportunity to further develop their skill sets. Each selected member has exemplified a passion for his or her professional career as well as civic duty and involvement. And each member exhibits a curiosity, concern and enthusiasm for the state of Nebraska and its future.

The success of the program is apparent in the number of LN alumni who have begun taking leadership roles in their respective companies and communities, said Donald Mihovk, executive director of Leadership Nebraska. Additionally, many alumni of the program have become involved in recruiting new members of the LN classes and planning the sessions these groups attend. The most evident success of the program is found in alumni who have run for and been elected to public office.

“This past election, two members retained their seats on the Central Community College Board, one ran for mayor of his hometown and won, another ran for school board and won, and a third ran for election to a city council seat he was appointed to and won,” Mihovk said.

Rod Koch, a member of the third graduating class, was elected to a city council position in South Sioux City. He credited LN with giving him the perspective and motivation needed to run successfully for office.

“I was able to determine that most communities share the same issues and concerns, but through the people in the program, I learned that there is an enthusiasm to serve and make a difference, which motivated me to run for city council—to make a difference,” Koch said.

Through its development of tomorrow’s leaders, LN has created an investment that is sure to be beneficial to Nebraska’s future. And on top of helping to resolve issues the state may face in the future, LN has helped Nebraska’s leaders to broaden their horizons today, Mihovk said.

“So much of what we want to accomplish is to broaden people’s outlook, walk a mile in someone else’s shoes and share their experiences.”



Class V learns about the process of hydroponic growing on tour of Garden Fresh Vegetables, a 24-acre greenhouse facility in O’Neill, Nebraska.

LEADERSHIP NEBRASKA

CLASS YEAR 1

Linda Aerni, Community Internet Systems, Inc., Columbus, Neb.

Cynthia Allen, Allen Farms, Ogallala, Neb.

Amy Bones, Creighton University, Omaha, Neb.

Curt Carlson, University of Nebraska–Kearney, Kearney, Neb.

Kirk K. Cisler, Great Western Bank, O'Neill, Neb.

Stan Clouse, NPPD, Kearney, Neb.

Blaine Dinwiddie, OPPD, Omaha, Neb.

Paul Dongilli Jr., Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital, Lincoln, Neb.

Rolando Flores, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Neb.

Kara Habrock, L.G., Rolloff Construction Co., Louisville, Neb.

Matt Harris, National Arbor Day Foundation, Lincoln, Neb.

Paula Hazlewood, Gateway Development Corp., Omaha, Neb.

Kiersten Hill, Community Services Fund of Nebraska, Seward, Neb.

Eric Hixson, Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation Dist., Holdrege, Neb.

Lonnie Janecek, MarketSphere Consulting, LLC, Omaha, Neb.

Tom Kell, Hamilton Communications, Aurora, Neb.

Daniel Kennelly, Mutual of Omaha, Omaha, Neb.

Richard Kiolbasa, Dial Companies/RWK P.C., Omaha, Neb.

Anita Lewandowski, Principal Financial Group, Grand Island, Neb.

Debra McWilliams, Nebraska Historical Society, Syracuse, Neb.

Kandace Miller, AIM Institute, Omaha, Neb.

Matthew Nyberg, Lincoln Industries, Lincoln, Neb.

Megan O'Dea, Scorr Marketing, Omaha, Neb.

Carla Patterson, Peru State College, Peru, Neb.

Sarah Pillen, Rembolt Ludtke, LLP, Lincoln, Neb.

Adrian Sanchez, FISERV, Lincoln, Neb.

Jeff Scherer, Smeal Fire Apparatus, Snyder, Neb.

CLASS YEAR 2

Cindy Arbaugh, Bellevue Medical Center, Bellevue, Neb.

David Bargaen, Rembolt Ludtke LLP, Lincoln, Neb.

Cid Besse, Pinnacle Bank, Seward, Neb.

Matt Boyd, University of Nebraska Foundation, Lincoln, Neb.

Derrick Eells, TenDOT Travel, Lincoln, Neb.

John Decker Jr., Smith Hayes, Lincoln, Neb.

Brad Focht, Principal Founder, Omaha, Neb.

Mike Henke, Associated Staffing, Doniphan, Neb.

Jamie Karl, State Chamber, Lincoln, Neb.

Diane Keller, Memorial Community Health, Aurora, Neb.

Celann LaGreca, Blue Shield & Blue Cross of Nebraska, Omaha, Neb.

Brad McPeak, AIM Institute, Omaha, Neb.

Tom Nussrallah, E&A Consulting Group, Inc., Omaha, Neb.

Bill Rongisch, BD Medical Surgical Systems, Columbus, Neb.

Jodi Sedivy, First National Bank of Valentine, Valentine, Neb.

Lynda Shafer, Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce, Omaha, Neb.

Deb Shoemaker, People's Health Center, Lincoln, Neb.

Dusty Stamer, Nucor Steel, Omaha, Neb.

Joni Sundquist, Nebraska Bankers Association, Lincoln, Neb.

Brian Vasa, NPPD, Ogallala, Neb.

Lori Warner, Beatrice Area Chamber of Commerce, Beatrice, Neb.

CLASS YEAR 3

Regan Anson, Director of Marketing & Comm., Peru State College, Peru, Neb.

Sarah Arnold, Partnership Services Coordinator, Grand Island Area Chamber of Commerce, Grand Island, Neb.

Mary Barry-Magsamen, Executive Director, St. Monica's, Lincoln, Neb.

Robert Caldwell, CEO, Hampton Enterprises, Inc., Lincoln, Neb.

Robert Huddleston, Asst. V.P. Business Relations Mgr., Wells Fargo Bank, Kearney, Neb.

Gwen Hurst-Anderson, Exec. Director, Nebraska CASA Assn., Lincoln, Neb.

Rod Koch, Manager, Support Services, Great West Casualty Co., South Sioux City, Neb.

Lance Koenig, Bailey Lauerman, Omaha, Neb.

Scott Kudrna, Vice President, Carson National Bank, Auburn, Neb.

Brenda Mainwaring, Director, Public Affairs IA NE, Union Pacific Railroad, Omaha, Neb.

Gary "Andy" Mixan, V.P. Loan Officer, Home State Bank, Louisville, Neb. and Omaha, Neb.

Tim Moravec, General Manager, Awards Unlimited, Seward, Neb.

Michael Nohavec, Nohavec Farms, Crete, Neb.

Don Nordell, Director, Business Operations, Black Hills Energy, Lincoln, Neb.

Dan Peters, Plant Manager, Ash Grove Cement Co., Louisville, Neb.

Michael Piernicky, Transportation Engineer, Olsson Associates, Omaha, Neb.

Sharyle Sands, Vice President, Columbus Area Chamber of Commerce, Columbus, Neb.

Jill Slupe, Director of Sales, Birddog Solutions, Omaha, Neb.

Kimberly Sucha, Director of Finance, MarketSphere Consulting, LLC, Omaha, Neb.

Craig Vincent, Account Manager, NPPD, York, Neb.

Katie Zulkoski, Attorney/Lobbyist, Ruth Mueller Robak LLC, Lincoln, Neb.

CLASS YEAR 4

Shanie Bockmann, Hall County Leadership Unlimited, Grand Island, Neb.

Kelly Christensen, Associate Dean, Central Community College, Kearney, Neb.

Brian Copsey, JBC Inc., Scottsbluff, Neb.

Jeannine Falter, V.P. Business Development, Duncan Aviation, Lincoln, Neb.

John B. Fruhwirth, CPA, Omaha, Neb.

Topher Hansen, Executive Director, CenterPointe, Lincoln, Neb.

Cindy Jeffrey, Executive Director, Health Promotion, Lincoln, Neb.

Angela Jones, V.P. of Diversity and Inclusion, ConAgra Foods, Omaha, Neb.

Joy Mace, Analyst, Ameritas, Lincoln, Neb.

Jeff McEwin, Senior Director of Sales, ConAgra Foods, Omaha, Neb.

Kristi Nohavec, Architect, Clark Enerson Partners, Lincoln, Neb.

Mary Plettner, Economic Development Consultant, NPPD, Norfolk, Neb.

Larry Raemakers, Retired Superintendent, Aurora Public Schools, Aurora, Neb.

Jan Rodehorst, Executive Director Kearney Chamber of Commerce, Kearney, Neb.

Sharon Schilling, President, Schillingbridge Winery, Pawnee City, Neb.

Jason Sokolewicz, Property Division, Union Pacific RR, Omaha, Neb.

Robin Stanosheck, Grant Writer, Odell, Neb.

Lisa Turner, Owner, Turner Events, Omaha, Neb.

Doris Urwin, Office Administrator, Bellevue Chamber of Commerce, Bellevue, Neb.

Annette Wiles, President, Wiles Bros., Inc., Plattsmouth, Neb.

Joseph Young, Nebraska DED Leg. Analyst, Lincoln, Neb.

CLASS YEAR 5

Eli Aguilar, AIM Director of Outreach Western Nebraska, Scottsbluff, Neb.

Michele Ehresman, Holdrege Chamber of Commerce, Holdrege, Neb.

Jennifer Epting, Nucor Steel, Norfolk, Neb.

Roger Foster, Windstream/Mayor, Crete, Neb.

Tari Hendrickson, Regional Development Director, Planned Parenthood of the Heartland, Lincoln, Neb.

Dennis Houston, President, Norfolk Area Chamber of Commerce, Norfolk, Neb.

Sarah Johnson, Greater Omaha Chamber, Omaha, Neb.

Marc Kaschke, Mayor, North Platte, Neb.

Max Kathol, Plattsmouth Chamber of Commerce, Plattsmouth, Neb.

Jeanne McClure, Government Affairs Administrator, Alegent, Lincoln, Neb.

Rick Nelsen, Economic Developer, NPPD, Columbus, Neb.

Jane Nielsen, President, Sarpy Co. Chamber, Papillion, Neb.

Justine Petsch, C & A Industries, Omaha, Neb.

Roberta Pinkerton, Economic Developer, OPPD, Beatrice, Neb.

Dave Rasmussen, Attorney, Wolfe Snowden, Lincoln, Neb.

Liz Ring Carlson, Public Affairs, State Farm, Lincoln, Neb.

George Schuler, Business Development, Boyd James Construction, Lincoln, Neb.

Tom Shoemaker, Cambridge Telephone, Cambridge, Neb.

Maria Valentin, Community Relations Mgr., ConAgra Foods, Omaha, Neb.

Andrew Williams, Central National Bank, Kearney, Neb.

THE FIRST WOMEN TO LEAD THE STATE CHAMBER

By Scout Richters

In 1849, Elizabeth Blackwell became the first female doctor in the United States.

In 1981, Sandra Day O'Connor was the first woman appointed to the United States Supreme Court.

In 1992, Alice Dittman became the first female chairperson of the Nebraska Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Although many women might have been nervous in taking on such a position in a historically male-dominated organization, Dittman proceeded with confidence.

“I never gave the gender roles a thought. If I was chosen, qualified and willing to put in the effort, I knew [my gender] wouldn't matter,” Dittman said.

Dittman, after earning her master's degree in finance and management, began working at Farmer's State Bank in Davey, Neb., owned and operated by her father, George Frampton. There she met her husband, Mark Dittman, and worked with him to open several banks in Nebraska and Missouri. After Mark died in 1975, Dittman returned to Lincoln with her three children to serve as the president and CEO of the family bank, renamed Cornhusker Bank. Dittman's efforts were instrumental in expanding the bank's assets from \$8 million in 1975 to more than \$200 million today.

“One of the main criteria that helped me in achieving success for the bank was being optimistic and willing to work hard. I learned to worry only about the things I could control,” Dittman said.

Dittman not only used her leadership skills at the bank but also got involved with a number of other business organizations in Nebraska, including the Chamber.

Whenever she became part of an organization or its board, Dittman both listened to others' ideas and offered her own ideas and suggestions.

“I tried to do my homework and have something to contribute at meetings,” Dittman said.

In 2002, Gayle-Ann Douglas followed in Dittman's footsteps and became the second female chairperson of the Chamber. Douglas is executive vice president of Douglas Manufacturing Co., a Crete business that has manufactured collapsible voting booths for more than 100 years. Today, Douglas Manufacturing Co. continues to produce and sell media storage and election equipment and places a high value on customer service and satisfaction. Douglas became involved with the State Chamber through Dittman's encouragement.

“Our company was a member for years. Alice Dittman asked me to get involved on the board, and I thought it would be something I would like to get involved in,” Douglas said.

Like Dittman, Douglas was active as a board member, which eventually led to her position as chairperson.

“I learned that you can't demand respect. You have to earn it. I learned the importance of being assertive without being abrasive,” Douglas said.



Alice Dittman, Chair,
Cornhusker Bank, Lincoln



Gayle-Ann Douglas,
Executive Vice President, Douglas
Manufacturing Co., Crete.

Both Dittman and Douglas, after serving as chairpersons, came to see just how much the Chamber accomplishes for Nebraska businesses.

“The State Chamber really links all kinds of businesses together for a common cause,” Dittman said.

Douglas added, “The Chamber is willing to make a stand for the greater good, not just for individual businesses.”

Through hard work and commitment, Dittman and Douglas established themselves as dynamic leaders and paved the way for future female leaders of the Chamber.

In 2011, there are 11 women on the State Chamber Board of Directors—all potential candidates for the top leadership position.

continued from page 21

Hal Lainson...

Each businessman knew the other businessman and his wife well. From time to time, the whole group of manufacturer owners even would meet at Lainson’s house.

One of Lainson’s closest friends was Earl T. Luff, president of AIN in 1957 and, as Lainson described, “your greatest advocate of business.” Luff worked for Lincoln Steel Company and was being called on constantly to testify at Unicameral sessions.

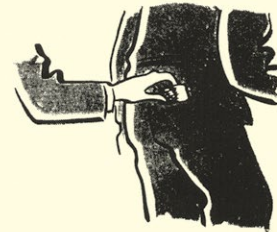
“We were very close friends, and I disagreed with him always...There was never a week for 40 years that I didn’t talk to Earl Luff, and it got so that he called me Mr. Hastings, and I called him my local representative in Lincoln.”

As well as the friendships Lainson maintained with colleagues on the state level, he also was close to local businessmen in Hastings. For virtually 30 years Lainson ate all his lunches in a private room coined

“The Boar’s Nest” at the Clark Hotel in Hastings, with a close-knit band of about 30 local business owners. They represented every aspect of the town. Lainson described the group as quite efficient, supporting the community of Hastings and addressing its concerns every day over lunch.

“If a problem came up, time and again we settled it by dessert,” he said.

Lainson greatly appreciated the relationships he forged with others through his work for the State Chamber. He was quick to praise the service of others, but never would let any recognition go to himself. For truly valuing the collaboration of everyone involved, his service and character will be remembered.



No “Pickpocket” Taxes in Nebraska

★ Pickpocket taxes are forms of extra taxation that take spendable cash out of the pockets of the worker, farmer, investor and business man. ★ 28 states levy corporation income taxes. NEBRASKA DOES NOT. ★ 30 states levy personal income taxes. NEBRASKA DOES NOT. ★ 24 states levy a general sales tax. NEBRASKA DOES NOT. ★ 43 states levy luxury, cigaret or other nuisance taxes. NEBRASKA DOES NOT. ★ 45 states levy taxes to pay interest on bonded debt. NEBRASKA DOES NOT. ★ Nebraska needs no special taxes because it has NO STATE DEBT and a relatively small city and county debt. Nebraska’s efficient government rejects extravagance and pays as it goes. The total of general property taxes within the state has been reduced one-third in ten years. ★ Industry, agriculture and labor prosper in Nebraska where government is conservative and tax dollars are spent constructively. Employers and employes cooperate; the state has excellent transportation, a great market, and power and fuel are cheap. Write for complete facts on industrial Nebraska.

Nebraska Offers:
No Income Tax
No Sales Tax
No Other Extra Taxes
No Bonded Debt
More Money for Living



America’s “White Spot”

Nebraska’s constitution prohibits state bonds. Moreover, 77 of 93 counties have no bonds. Municipal debts are low, and steadily declining.

Associated Industries of Nebraska

414 INSURANCE BLDG., LINCOLN

This ad for AIN, predecessor to the State Chamber, ran in *Time* magazine in February of 1938. It was a favorite of Hal Lainson’s.

A VIEW OF THE CHAMBER FROM THE PEOPLE WE SERVE

By Scout Richters

A Jet Ski speeds by on a hot summer day at the lake.
A passenger train roars down a track.

Jet Skis and passenger train cars, along with all-terrain vehicles (ATV) and recreational utility vehicles (RUV) are just some of the many products manufactured by Kawasaki Motors Manufacturing Corp. But the company's economic impact goes beyond simply the products it sells. More than 75 Nebraska companies supply Kawasaki with production materials, tools and other services, and that has helped Kawasaki in Lincoln establish itself as a major supporter of economic development in Nebraska.

“The general rule of thumb is that for every OEM employee (Kawasaki employee), there are seven support employees providing products and services,” said Mike Boyle, vice president and plant manager at Kawasaki, which has been manufacturing products in Lincoln since 1974.



The manufacturing assembly line at the Kawasaki plant in Lincoln.

In addition to helping build the state's economy by supporting so many jobs, Kawasaki has been involved in several foreign trade missions.

“Kawasaki has taken part in trade missions to Asia by assisting with the arrangement of meetings between Japanese companies and Nebraska representatives,” Boyle said.

Kawasaki also has helped in organizing missions to Nebraska and has opened its facilities for tours by potential foreign investors.

The Nebraska Chamber of Commerce and Industry supports Kawasaki and a multitude of other Nebraska businesses.

“The Chamber provides Kawasaki with political support for legislation that is important to business and assists with access to government officials and elected officials,” Boyle said.

Like Kawasaki, Behlen Mfg. Co., a Chamber member business based in Columbus, has made an international impact. Behlen ships large commercial grain storage projects, metal stitching presses and metal buildings throughout the world. The company has exported projects to more than 80 countries. Behlen also manufactures part of its product line in China based on technology pioneered in Nebraska.

Communication and willingness to take action are strengths of the Chamber in furthering the interests of Kawasaki, Behlen and other Nebraska businesses, according to Richard Baier, director of the Nebraska Department of Economic Development.

“The Department of Economic Development works closely with the State Chamber. The Chamber has always been fair and honest and willing to push the envelope when necessary,” Baier said.

Roger Christianson, former director of the Nebraska Department of Economic Development and current economic development manager with the Omaha Public Power District, describes the State Chamber as the voice of business in Nebraska.

“The Chamber supports initiatives that will benefit the state through the creation and retention of new jobs and new capital investment in the state. The Chamber opposes those initiatives that will have a detrimental effect on existing business and a negative impact on Nebraska’s ability to compete for new jobs and investment,” Christianson said.

Christianson described the Chamber’s success at ensuring that Gov. Kay Orr’s economic development legislation passed in 1987.

“The Chamber defended LB775 (a tax incentive program for Nebraska businesses) vigorously for nearly two decades and put their collective weight behind Gov. Heineman’s proposals, early in his term as governor, to update and improve LB775, now the Nebraska Advantage Act, to maintain and enhance Nebraska’s competitive position,” Christianson said.

The Nebraska Advantage Act provides tax breaks and other financial incentives for doing business in Nebraska. According to the Department of Economic Development, “Nebraska Advantage rewards businesses that invest in the state and hire Nebraskans.”

The annual meetings, in addition to the various day-to-day communications between the Chamber and other individuals and organizations, aid in the Chamber’s success in expanding the Nebraska economy and developing business in the state.

To Boyle, Baier and Christianson, communication and relationship building are at the heart of the Nebraska Chamber of Commerce and Industry’s success.



Two workers assemble a galvanized metal stock tank at Behlen Manufacturing in Columbus, Neb. Capacities of Behlen metal tanks range from 44 gallons to 1,117 gallons.

In August 2010, Gov. Dave Heineman organized Nebraska’s most recent foreign trade mission. The August mission brought Nebraska representatives to Taiwan and Hong Kong and involved the exchange of agricultural commodities.

This mission resulted after a 2007 mission that sparked an agreement regarding the sale of corn, wheat and soybeans.

Asian nations are some of Nebraska’s biggest trading partners, with Japan being the largest. In 2006, Nebraska’s first foreign trade office, the Nebraska Center, opened in Japan. The office helps in expanding communication between Nebraska and Japanese manufacturers and businesses.

Foreign trade missions have proven extremely valuable in growing Nebraska’s economy and in expanding the state’s opportunities for international trade and relationship-building. The Chamber eagerly looks forward to its continued role in these efforts.

A NEW ROLE FOR THE CHAMBER

Taking Nebraska's Goods to the Global Marketplace

By Emily Sears

Before the 1990s Nebraska's role with international trade was relatively nonexistent. If it weren't for the Chamber actively pursuing trade missions, Nebraska might not be as heavily involved with international trade, which is now an important component in the state's economy.

Businesses and the Chamber were trying to encourage governors to conduct international trade missions in order to establish contacts around the world with whom they could do business. International trade missions involve members of a company and the governor traveling to a foreign country to attend market briefings, participate in site visits and networking receptions and have one-on-one business matchmaking appointments with prescreened potential buyers, agents, distributors and joint venture partners (International Trade Administration, 2011).

According to the International Trade Administration, "Trade missions help U.S. companies open markets, leverage opportunities in strategic industries, and expand U.S. trade relationships with our traditional trading partners, as well as in promising emerging global markets."

This idea of growing international trade didn't gain immediate high priority, but the Chamber kept pushing the idea. Finally in 1990 when Gov. Ben Nelson was elected, the Chamber's idea was finally accepted. Gov. Nelson was willing to lead a trade mission with the Chamber and several enthusiastic business leaders, so that new doors could be opened.

The Chamber effectively leading the trade missions created many relationships. The state has trade missions and partnerships with countries such as China, Australia, Japan, Brazil and Germany. As a

result of this Chamber and state cooperative effort, many jobs have been created in the businesses that aggressively sought international markets.

Participating in trade missions has helped Nebraska thrive economically. Exports have brought in major revenue, more than doubling Nebraska's international exports from \$868 million in 1990 to more than \$2 billion in 1998. Gov. Nelson's initial trade missions resulted in at least \$47.5 million in sales and investment for Nebraska business. The number of Nebraska companies exporting increased 74 percent from 1992 to 1998. Currently Nebraska exports total \$3.1 billion each year to more than 100 foreign markets. Nearly 100,000 Nebraska jobs are related to exports.

Tony Raimondo, chairman of Behlen Mfg. Co., said it best: "If it weren't for the Chamber continually interfacing effectively with the governor, we may not have international trade missions today."



Governor Mike Johanns with First Lady Stephanie and State Chamber President Barry Kennedy on a trade mission to Hong Kong.



State Chamber President Jack Swartz and Governor Ben Nelson (2nd and 3rd from left, seated) during a trade mission to Japan in November 1994.

FORGING NEBRASKA'S FUTURE

As we celebrate our first 100 years, we look forward to the next century with the launch of a new State Chamber program to maximize the success of our state and its communities...

Ensuring a better, brighter future for all Nebraskans—this is one of the foremost missions of the Nebraska Chamber of Commerce and Industry. It is also the motivation behind our organization's newest initiative, "Forging Nebraska's Future."

Today, the Cornhusker State faces a broad spectrum of advantages and challenges. Both must be recognized and addressed as we prepare for tomorrow.

"Forging Nebraska's Future" identifies developing trends within our state. It proposes concrete, specific recommendations that can be—and should be—considered by state and local leaders.

After a thorough review of national and regional data and studies, we were able to draw some clear conclusions. For example, Nebraska still has a high quality of life, a fiscally prudent government and sound state budget, a quality workforce, a sound agricultural foundation, a steady manufacturing base and a low cost of living.

These are some of the main factors that have helped the state weather the current economic storm. According to recent economic stress studies compiled by the Associated Press, Nebraska is consistently among the top two or three economically healthiest states in America. And we are getting noticed by the rest of the country.

- A recent study by Pollina Corporate Real Estate, Inc.—one of the nation's top business consultants—ranks Nebraska the No. 6 pro-business state.
- Forbes magazine ranks the Cornhusker State as the ninth-best state for business and careers.
- The cost of doing business remains low here. Nebraska is sixth best in this category, according to Forbes, and we are consistently in the top 10 states for lowest energy costs.

But Nebraska has its share of challenges, as well. By all accounts we are still a high-tax state. Nebraska continues to rank in the bottom half of the 50 states for business tax climate. Our individual tax burden is high, especially for residents beyond entry-level positions.

Moreover, our educational system needs to be revised for a new world. Currently, Nebraska ranks 47th in Advanced Placement



Photo courtesy of the Nebraska Department of Economic Development

test scores and 33rd in terms of education performance rank in national assessment test scores. Only 29 percent of Nebraska's 2010 graduating class who took the ACT demonstrated readiness for college in English, math, reading and science.

In terms of population, 68 of Nebraska's 93 counties lost population from 2000 to 2010, continuing a decade-long trend that is slowly hollowing out the state's rural backbone and threatening Nebraska's political clout in Congress.

Nebraska can do better on several fronts.

The downturn in the national economy has left us with one clear lesson: Strong economies do not happen by accident. They occur when leaders come forward with bold, creative ideas and are willing to take the risk necessary to implement them.

Today, our state has a unique opportunity to distinguish itself—to become again a top destination for business activity, while maintaining its high quality of life. For that to happen, Nebraska's state and local leaders must recognize the current challenges and opportunities and meet them head on.

That is why the State Chamber has spearheaded this initiative. We encourage you to study it and consider your own area's challenges and advantages. Here are the subjects we believe are critical to our state's future: ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE, TAX CLIMATE, BUSINESS CLIMATE, LABOR CLIMATE & WORKFORCE, POPULATION & RURAL OUTMIGRATION, EDUCATION, GOVERNMENT, TRANSPORTATION, INNOVATION & TECHNOLOGY, MANUFACTURING, TELECOMMUNICATIONS, TOURISM and AGRI-BUSINESS.

Now is the time to make your community's plan for the 21st century, to ensure its success for generations to come.

To learn more about the specific components of "Forging Nebraska's Future," contact the State Chamber at www.nechamber.com or 402-474-4422.

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Salute to Nebraska's 100-Year Old Companies

Fremont National Bank & Trust – Fremont, Neb.

Chamber member since 1945

Established in 1871, chose the name Fremont National Bank in 1882.

Dutton Lainsou Co. – Hastings, Neb.

*Chamber member since 1937**

Established in 1886 as J.H. Haney & Co.

Flowserve Pump Division – Hastings, Neb.

*Chamber member since 1937**

Established as Western Land Roller Irrigation Co. in Hastings (1908). Acquired by Ingersoll-Rand in 1977, which was acquired by Flowserve in 2000.

ADM Milling Co. – Lincoln, Neb.

Chamber member since 1939

Established as Daniels Linseed Company in Minneapolis, Minnesota (1902).

NEBCO, Inc. – Lincoln, Neb.

*Chamber member since 1937**

Established in 1908 as Abel Construction Company.

Novartis Consumer Health, Inc. – Lincoln, Neb.

*Chamber member since 1937**

Novartis is based in Switzerland.

Pfizer Inc. – Lincoln, Neb.

Chamber member since 1945

Established as Charles Pfizer & Company in Brooklyn, New York (1849).

Wells Fargo Bank Nebraska – offices throughout the state

Chamber member since 1958

Established as Wells, Fargo & Co. in San Francisco, California (1852).

Ash Grove Cement Co. – Louisville, Neb.

*Chamber member since 1937**

Established as Ash Grove White Lime Association in Ash Grove, Missouri (1882).

The Chicago Lumber Co., – Omaha, Neb.

Chamber member since 1961

Established 1876.

Columbia Insurance Group – Omaha, Neb.

Chamber member since 1961

Established in Missouri as Home Mutual Insurance Company (1874).

J.P. Cooke Co. – Omaha, Neb.

Chamber member since 1951

Established 1887.

Drake-Williams Steel, Inc. – Omaha, Neb.

Chamber member since 1958

Established as Wilson Steam Boiler in 1882.

First National of Nebraska – Omaha and throughout the state

Chamber member since 1961

Established 1857.

Kellogg Company – Omaha, Neb.

*Chamber member since 1937**

Established 1906 in Battle Creek, Michigan.

Lincoln Financial Group – Omaha, Neb.

Chamber member since 1961

Established 1905 in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Lyman-Richey Corp. – Omaha, Neb.

Chamber member since 1946

Established as Lyman Sand Company in Lawrence, Kansas (1884). Moved to Omaha in 1892 and has been based there ever since.

Mutual of Omaha-United of Omaha – Omaha, Neb.

Chamber member since 1961

Established in 1909 as Mutual Benefit Health & Accident Association.

Omaha Box Co. – Omaha, Neb.

*Chamber member since 1937**

Established 1890.

Paxton & Vierling Steel Co. – Omaha, Neb.

Chamber member since 1960

Established 1885.

*Standard Nutrition Co. – Omaha, Neb.
Chamber member since 1945
Established in 1886 as the F.E. Sanborn Company.*

*Sunderland Brothers Co. – Omaha, Neb.
Chamber member since 1937*
Established 1883.*

*Woodmen of the World Life Insurance – Omaha, Neb.
Chamber member since 1961
Established 1890.*

*Plattsmouth State Bank – Plattsmouth, Neb.
Chamber member since 1961
Established 1904.*

*The Western Sugar Cooperative – Scottsbluff, Neb.
Chamber member since 1937*
Established in Loveland, Colorado in 1901.*

*Cornerstone Bank – York, Neb.
Chamber member since 1960
Established in 1882 as First National Bank of York*

**membership records begin in 1937*



Nebraska's giant paving and construction contractor NEBCO traces its roots to humble beginnings in Lincoln in 1911.

LOOKING BACK... AND LOOKING AHEAD

One century. One strong voice for Nebraska's business community. That is what we celebrate with this special publication.

For 100 years, the Nebraska Chamber of Commerce and Industry has been the leader of our state's private sector and the voice of its free enterprise system. For 100 years, the State Chamber has actively driven a pro-business agenda at the State Capitol and in its work with Nebraska's federal delegation. For 100 years, our organization has been at the heart of our state's economic and political history.

Today, the State Chamber is at its strongest level ever—with record member involvement, major legislative accomplishments and by providing an outstanding level of service to the business community.

We have come a long way from our humble beginnings in 1912, when the Nebraska Manufacturers Association was established. By the 1930s, we were known as the Associated Industries of Nebraska (AIN). By 1960s, the Nebraska Chamber of Commerce and AIN merged to become the Nebraska Association of Commerce and Industry. And in the late 1980s, the evolution was completed as we became recognized as the Nebraska Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

While our moniker has changed over the years, our mission and priorities have remained the same. The State Chamber's mission always has been—and always will be—to represent the interests of the business community, which includes supporting: economic development; business and job creation incentives; a more business-friendly tax climate; regulatory reform; and less burdensome labor law.

The State Chamber represents thousands of members, comprised of businesses of every variety and size. Our organization also represents more than 60 local

chambers of commerce, along with more than 75 trade and professional associations.

Our professional staff effectively works with Nebraska's Legislature, the executive branch and state agencies on issues impacting business. At the same time, the Chamber staff manages our many membership programs, services and publications.

We want to take this opportunity to congratulate you, the State Chamber member. You belong to an organization that has provided a consolidated and powerful voice on business issues. You belong to an association that is making a difference—whose actions today will have a lasting impact for decades to come.

As thousands of other State Chamber members have done over the past century, you are doing your part to improve Nebraska's business climate and ensure its continued growth.

As we celebrate the 100th anniversary and our proud history, we thank you for your dedication to the State Chamber. Your support for economic development in our State continues to be a catalyst for job creation. As we look ahead to the next 100 years and the challenges that lie ahead, know that your leadership—locally and statewide—is needed more than ever.



Jeffrey M. Scherer
2011 Chairman of the State Chamber Board



Steve Ford
2012 Chairman of the State Chamber Board

THE STATE CHAMBER

Nebraska Chamber of Commerce & Industry

Through the Chamber's 100-year history, success has depended on the efforts of its dedicated staff. These are the men and women who serve the volunteer board and members in accomplishing the organization's goals today.



BARRY L. KENNEDY, CAE, IOM
President



JAMES D. BERRINGER, IOM
Senior Vice President—
Membership & Marketing



RONALD J. SEDLACEK
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"Forging Nebraska's Future"



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The State Chamber's
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Office Manager



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File Manager



Dave Heineman
Governor

STATE OF NEBRASKA

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January 1, 2012

Dear Friends:

Congratulations to the Nebraska Chamber of Commerce and Industry for its first century of leadership. From its efforts at the State Capitol, to its work with local chambers of commerce, to its Leadership Nebraska program, the Nebraska Chamber is has been a powerful, recognized force in shaping Nebraska's business climate for the better.

While it is important to take time and celebrate past accomplishments, we must also continue to focus on the future. A lot has changed since the State Chamber's was founded a hundred years ago. Today, Nebraska's business community is navigating a new era as the global economy evolves daily. This transformation brings many challenges and with those challenges, come unprecedented opportunities.

Nebraskans have many reasons to be optimistic. From the state's earliest days, Nebraskans have always shown a unique ability to adapt and seize opportunities to improve their future. That is exactly why your organization was established.

My vision for Nebraska is one of economic growth, prosperity and vitality. These are the essential building blocks for our economy, and I know State Chamber members share this vision for our state.

As we look beyond 2012, we must continue growing high quality jobs that will help us retain our young people while attracting new residents. Every region of our state has been blessed with resources that can help Nebraskans thrive. Our people, our values and our resolve provide us with a rock solid foundation for a future that knows no limit. As Nebraskans have always done, we will meet our challenges head on and blaze new trails for our state.

I congratulate the State Chamber on a century of success and I wish your members all the best in the 21st century.

Sincerely,

Dave Heineman
Governor

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