



# EXECUTIVE

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## 2001 Annual Meeting Highlights

### Luncheon Set For Washington Trip

The annual State Chamber congressional visit to Washington will be on April 30 and May 1, 2001. As in past trips, we will host a luncheon on Tuesday, May 1, in the Russell Senate Office Building for Nebraska's congressional delegation and their chief staff members. On Monday, April 30, we will attend an Issue Briefing at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Headquarters. In addition, members can also attend the traditional "Nebraska Breakfast" at 8:00 a.m. on Tuesday, May 1, at the Dirksen Office Building cafeteria. There is a \$6.25 charge; reservations should be made through the State Chamber office at (402) 474-4422, or FAX at (402) 474-5681.

Members are encouraged to make their own flight arrangements; there are a number of flights out of Omaha and Lincoln.

Again, we have made arrangements with the University Club for lodging. The University Club is convenient to downtown, and rates are \$130 per person per night. Contact the University Club at 302-862-8800. The group number is 1980. ■

Despite a major winter storm, the State Chamber's Annual Meeting and Legislative Caucus was held on Thursday, February 8, at the Cornhusker Hotel and Conference Center in Lincoln. Governor Mike Johanns addressed the luncheon, which honors the local chambers of commerce across Nebraska and kicked off "Nebraska Chamber of Commerce Month." This year, the Chamber of Commerce Month theme is "Bringing All the Pieces Together." Governor Johanns outlined his priorities for economic development and holding the line on spending.

The afternoon sessions featured a presentation on "The State of Nebraska's Economy," featuring Federal Reserve Bank Vice President George A. Kahn. Department of Economic Development Director Al Wenstrand presented a timely program on the ongoing "Targeted Industry/Economic Development Efforts."

The traditional Legislative Leaders Panel brought members up to date on key

business issues before the 2001 Unicameral. Moderated by State Chamber Chairman Dick Campbell, the panel consisted of: Speaker Doug Kristensen of Minden; Judiciary Committee Chairman Senator Kermit Brashear of Omaha; and Education Chairman Senator Ron Raikes of Lincoln.

Nearly 40 Senators joined the 325 members for the Annual Banquet and Business Hall of Fame induction ceremony. This year's inductees into the Business Hall of Fame were: Mr. Charles W. Durham, Durham Resources, Omaha; Mr. Paul C. Mohr, Ideal Linen Supply, Scottsbluff; Mrs. Margaret Robinson, Norfolk Iron & Metal Company, Norfolk; and the late Mr. Joe R. Seacrest, Lincoln Journal, Lincoln.

Three scholarships were presented. The Nebraska Business Hall of Fame Scholarship went to Emily Pratt of Creighton University; the Virgil Eihusen Scholarship was awarded to Tammy Lynn Foote, Wayne State College; and the Jack Swartz Scholarship went to Kelli R. Wilson of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. ■

Sen. Kermit Brashear (l) made a presentation to the Board of Directors and also spoke to members in the afternoon with Speaker Doug Kristensen (c) and Education Committee Chairman Sen. Ron Raikes (r). NCCPE President Allan Hale and Gov. Mike Johanns (bottom r) exchange the Chamber of Commerce Month Proclamation after the Governor spoke to members.



## State Chamber Views...

by Barry Kennedy  
State Chamber President

# "Lobbying 101"

The next 90 days may turn out to be the most important legislative time period to the business community that we have seen in many years.

There are a number of legislative bills that create a myriad of possibilities on taxes, regulations and economic development before the Unicameral. It will be extremely important for business people to stay informed on what is transpiring and to stay in touch with their elected representatives on how the proposals affect them and their ability to grow their businesses in Nebraska.

To start with, there is a wide range of proposals that would create some form of tax increase that affects either businesses or individuals. In addition, there are bills that would interfere with the business-employee relationship. On the pro-active side, economic development legislation has been introduced to help keep Nebraska's economy vibrant.

With this column I am going to share some lobbying 101 advice that I hope you each will use frequently in the next three months as you communicate with your State Senator on important legislation.

\* Always tell the truth. Giving false or misleading information will cost you, and the business community in general, credibility. State Senators are very open to input and will always listen to people they know are being honest with them.

\* Know who is on your side. Most issues affect more than just you or your business. Find out who else might be affected by the proposal you're discussing and share that information with your State Senator.

\* Know the opposition. Most issues have two sides. Research the opposition and provide answers and rebuttals for opposing arguments.

\* Don't be afraid to admit you don't know something. This relates back to telling the truth and is sometimes very difficult to admit. If you are stumped by a question, simply admit that and then make every effort to find the answer and report back with the information.

\* Be specific about what you seek. Senators will be direct and honest with you if you are direct with them. If you are only seeking information, tell them that. If you are asking for a specific vote on an issue, ask for it directly.

\* Follow up. Be sure to follow the action and find out if your legislator did what he or she said they would. If they did, thank them. If they did not, find out why. It is important that they know you didn't simply walk away from the conversation and forgot everything that was talked about.

\* Don't burn any bridges. Keep your dealings on good enough terms that you can always go back to legislators and discuss the next issue. They may not be with you 100% of the time, and there may be an issue that for some reason they will not be supportive on. Try hard to keep the door open because there will be other issues in the future.

\* Be courteous but don't be intimidated. Members of the Nebraska Legislature are very open and receptive to constituents input. They are, after all, responsible to you and want to serve in the best manner possible.

Generally, it is best to state your views in a letter...or better yet in person. Should you be in Lincoln, take the opportunity to visit your State Senator at his or her office. While all

Senators have e-mail, it may be best to meet the Senator in your district during a recess or weekend period, send a letter, and then utilize electronic methods.

We will do the best we can to keep you informed as to when important legislation is being debated. We hope you will answer the call by sharing your concerns or support with your State Senator. ■

## State Chamber Planning Workshops For 2001

Seven additional workshops for employers are planned for the remainder of this year. According to Charlie Volnek, State Chamber Vice President-Operations, the schedule will cover a number of subjects to aid employers. All are half-day programs to be held in the mornings. The schedule so far is:

April 19 - 8:30 a.m. to 12 Noon –  
**Building Your Team For Success**

May 17 - 8:30 a.m. to 12 Noon –  
**Hiring for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

June 20 - 8:30 a.m. to 12 Noon –  
**Leading People Through Change**

Sept. 19 - 8:30 a.m. to 12 Noon –  
**Performance Reviews That Work**

Oct. 24 - 8:30 a.m. to 12 Noon –  
**Resolving Conflict and Diffusing Anger Effectively**

Nov. 8 - 8:30 a.m. to 12 Noon –  
**New Employee Orientations**

A brochure is enclosed on the above workshops.

We are also planning a Labor Laws Workshop for September. All of the workshops will be held at Mahoney State Park, which can be reached by taking Exit 426 on I-80, Ashland exit. ■

# Annual Meeting Highlights



## Lobbyist Reporting Rules Seminar March 19

**T**he State Chamber, in cooperation with the Nebraska Department of Accountability & Disclosure, will present a second seminar on current Accountability and Disclosure requirements and procedures regarding lobbying and lobbyist reporting. New changes that took effect last year will affect lobbyists and principals, and new forms will need to be used for the first report that will be due in mid-April. With so many members actively involved in state governmental issues and legislative affairs, we encourage people who are active in government relations to learn more at this seminar on March 19 from 9:00 to 11:30 a.m. at the Cornhusker Hotel in Lincoln.

The cost for the workshop is \$40 for State Chamber members and \$65 for non-members. Frank Daley, Executive Director of the Accountability & Disclosure Commission, will conduct the seminar. A flyer for registration is enclosed in this issue of the *Executive*.

LB1021, passed last year, places a \$50 monthly aggregate cap on gifts from a lobbyist, excluding food and beverages provided for immediate consumption or the occasional provision of transportation within the state. The measure is currently being discussed by the Accountability & Disclosure Commission, and drafts of proposed rules are available. We encourage members with lobbyists and lobbyist members to be aware of the rules and procedures.

**Top, from left: Roy Smith passes the gavel to Dick Campbell at the Business Hall of Fame Banquet. "Mike" Seacrest accepts on behalf of the late Mr. Joe R. Seacrest. Beverly Mohr accepted the award for her husband Paul. Scholarship winner Emily Pratt of Creighton University.**

**Bottom, from left: Roy Smith accepts Charles Durham's award. Richard Robinson accepting on behalf of his mother, Margaret Robinson. The Jack Swartz Scholarship went to Kelli R. Wilson of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and the Virgil Eihusen Scholarship was awarded to Tammy Lynn Foote, Wayne State College.**

## 2001 Hall of Fame Nominations Requested

**M**arch 23, 2001, will be the deadline for nominations to next year's Nebraska Business Hall of Fame. Nominations of outstanding Nebraskans may be sent to the State Chamber office as soon as possible.

Nominees can be either living or deceased individuals who have added to the prestige and growth of business in Nebraska. In addition, a recipient can be someone from large or small businesses and corporations, or anyone who has made a significant contribution to the private enterprise system. Please contact Charlie Volnek, Vice President-Operations, to obtain a Nomination Form. ■

# State Chamber Endorses Nebraska Legacy Challenge

Last month, the State Chamber endorsed the Nebraska Legacy Challenge, an effort to provide funding for community projects throughout the state by forming self-perpetuating endowments of at least \$200,000. The program will be administered by the Nebraska Community Foundation. The challenge grant funds would be provided by donations from local corporations, foundations, or individuals. Local donations or bequests would then be sought to match those funds.

According to the Foundation, the idea is to help small communities by tapping into the estimated \$100 billion in wealth that is expected to be transferred from generation to generation in Nebraska's rural areas over the next five decades. Getting just a small portion of that money to community foundations or endowments would mean millions for creating a better lifestyle for future generations. According to State Chamber President Barry Kennedy, "as a statewide organization, we strive to support programs that will have a positive impact on the future growth and development of all parts of Nebraska."

U.S. Senator Chuck Hagel also endorsed the Nebraska Legacy Challenge, noting that "it will provide rural communities with an opportunity to improve their quality of life without additional reliance on local taxes or state and federal aid."

For more information on the program, please contact Foundation Executive Vice-President Jeff Yost at (402) 323-7330, or online at [www.nebcommfound.org](http://www.nebcommfound.org).

## David Williams Wins A Trip!

David Williams of Drake-Williams Steel in Omaha won this year's drawing for two free tickets from Frontier Airlines. From now until next year's Annual Meeting, any referral of a non-member will be given a chance for the tickets; if the referral joins as a member, you will receive another chance at the airline tickets.

There are many businesses who have either not heard of the State Chamber or simply are not investing in the protection of our business economy. Think of competitors, manufacturing representatives, service providers, or your customers as potential members. We'd like your help in asking them to "hire" us just as you have done. Contact James Berringer at (402) 474-4422 for more information or with prospects.

**The Executive**  
**Editor: Don Mihovk**

<http://www.nechamber.com>

## State Chamber Welcomes New "Investors"

Membership in the Nebraska Chamber of Commerce & Industry is an investment in Nebraska's economic well-being. This month, the State Chamber welcomes the following new members and encourages members to consider doing business with fellow Chamber members.

### **BLAIR**

**Getzschman/Service Experts**

**Scott Getzschman**

*Sponsor: Michael Baldino, Kelly Industries, Inc.*

### **GENEVA**

**Fillmore County Development Corporation**

**Norene Fitzgerald**

### **GENOA**

**Genoa Community Hospital/LTC**

**Joyce Beck**

### **GRAND ISLAND**

**Byco**

**Byron Wheeler**

**Chief Automotive Systems, Inc.**

**Daniel E. Faltin**

*Sponsor: E.J. "Ernie" Thayer, Grand Island Trust & Financial Services, Inc.*

**Equitable Building & Loan Association**

**Richard Harbaugh**

**Nebraska Orthotic and Prosthetic Services**

**Sandi Olson**

### **KEARNEY**

**Midway Chevrolet**

**Kelvin Schearer**

*Sponsor: Brian Hamilton, Hamilton Chevrolet-Cadillac, Inc.*

### **LINCOLN**

**Biggerstaff Plumbing, Heating & Air Conditioning**

**Doug Biggerstaff**

*Sponsor: Dick Campbell, Campbell's Nurseries & Garden Centers*

**Dobson Brothers Construction Company**

**Sam P. Olson**

*Sponsor: Dick Campbell, Campbell's Nurseries & Garden Centers*

**e Frame**

**Denise Zangari**

**Lincoln Steel Co.**

**Bud Thomsen**

**Midlands Financial Benefits**

**Steve Andersen**

*Sponsor: Jerry Worth, SilverStone Group*

**PowerPick International, Inc.**

**Richard L. Froehlich**

**Ray's Lawn & Home Care**

**Ken Svoboda**

*Sponsor: Arlene Sorensen, Lincoln Wholesale Florists Co.*

**Spherion Corporation**

**Pete Spillum**

### **NORFOLK**

**Busco, Inc.**

**Steve Busskohl**

### **OMAHA**

**Alegent Health**

**Rose Carlotto**

**Brenmar Marketing**

**Marlene Hytrek**

**Chicago Lumber Company**

**Walter Cady**

**Davis Erection Co., Inc.**

**Chuck Miske**

*Sponsor: David Williams, Drake-Williams Steel, Inc.*

**First Mortgage Company, LLC**

**George Akers**

**Greater Omaha Packing Co.**

**Pennie Z. Davis**

**Nebraska Engineering Co.**

**William J. Hiltgen**

**Suburban Air Freight, Inc.**

**Anne Grieder**

### **SEWARD**

**Oetting's Detasseling, Inc.**

**Larry Oetting**