

2006 Annual Meeting and Legislative Caucus February 2

Less than a month remains before the State Chamber's Annual Meeting and Legislative Caucus, set for Thursday, February 2, 2006, at The Cornhusker Marriott in Lincoln. A full program will provide Nebraska business people an opportunity to meet with members of the Nebraska Legislature and state policymakers, to salute the achievements of four of Nebraska's business leaders, and to get a first-hand briefing on important legislative issues of concern to the business community.

Late registration will begin in the Atrium of The Cornhusker Marriott at 9:00 a.m., followed by the Board of Directors meeting, scheduled from

10:00-11:45 a.m. The traditional Chamber of Commerce Month kickoff luncheon follows at noon.

The afternoon sessions will feature the traditional Legislative Panel to bring members up to date on key business issues before the 2006 Unicameral. In addition, we are looking at programs dealing with workers' compensation reform and a health care plan update on legislation and current programs. The evening banquet will begin at 7:00 p.m., following the social hour in The Cornhusker Marriott Atrium.

The banquet will feature the traditional passing of the gavel from 2005 Chairman Gary Warren to 2006

Chairman Rich Bailey. This year, the Nebraska Business Hall of Fame will induct four members: **Elizabeth Jane Robb Douglas, Crete, Douglas Manufacturing Corp. (Posthumously); Robert "Bobby" Gottsch, Hastings, Gottsch Enterprises; Bill Kubly, Lincoln, Landscapes Unlimited; and Bruce Lauritzen, Omaha, First National Bank of Nebraska.** The Business Hall of Fame induction ceremony will begin at 8:00 p.m., and the banquet will conclude with closing comments by Chairman Bailey.

The registration form is enclosed with this issue of the *Executive*. ■

Four To Be Inducted Into Business Hall of Fame

Elizabeth Jane Robb Douglas, Crete, Douglas Manufacturing Corp. (Posthumously) –

The inventor of the collapsible voting booth, Mrs. Douglas founded the company in 1910, and Douglas Manufacturing Corporation is the nation's oldest manufacturer of election equipment. She had actually pledged a sum of money to a missionary when she had a dream about a folding ballot box.

She began designing ballot boxes, and her first order came from Los Angeles County, which was impressed

with the collapsible voting booth. Considering women were not allowed to vote for another 7 years, her inspiration for a voting booth was eerily appropriate.

Mrs. Douglas had a flair for innovation and designed a number of items that were actually ahead of their time. The firm still has patent applications that were never applied for, such as retractable Pullman car steps, a gasoline pump shut-off valve, and a mail cart for postmen.

Now owned by the fourth generation, the firm is considered a major supplier of auxiliary supplies to makers of voting systems. The company began making metal storage containers in 1970 when former IBM employees sought a company to make boxes for their data storage business. The

firm has been in the same location in Crete and has survived three fires and a flood. Douglas sells nationally and internationally through a dealer network as well as end users. Roger and Gayle-ann Douglas are president and executive vice president of the company today.



Elizabeth Jane Robb Douglas

Robert "Bobby" Gottsch, Hastings, Gottsch Enterprises –

Following his father's footsteps in the agricultural business, Bobby Gottsch has developed his family's

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State Chamber Views...

Editorial by Barry Kennedy
President,
Nebraska Chamber of Commerce & Industry

"What Legislative District Are You In???"

March 1, 2006, is the filing deadline for candidates seeking elective public office in Nebraska. The slate of candidates continues to grow for the primary elections to be held May 9, 2006.

Although this procedure is no different than what has happened every two years in the past with legislative races, there will be a substantial difference this year. Due to term limits, there are 20 open seats where incumbents are not allowed to run for re-election.

It is complicated further by the fact that 10 of the 20 open seats are held by State Senators that have a leadership position with the Unicameral. Nine are committee chairs and the Speaker of the Legislature. The need to elect well-qualified, informed representatives is greater than ever. I feel safe in saying that we have never experienced the number of open seats that we are dealing with this election cycle.

Enclosed with this *Executive* are maps of the legislative districts illustrating the boundaries used for the 2006 elections and, for at least, the next two election cycles. I encourage you to study the maps closely so that you know what district you reside in and the district of your place of business. You may also want to determine the districts in which most of your employees reside.

The State Chamber is again working with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce to activate and energize business and employees for the elections. It's called VoteForBusiness.com, a web-based employee education program designed to engage you in the 2006 elections. VoteForBusiness.com

enables you to easily register to vote, get absentee ballots, and to educate yourself on state and federal candidates—all from a single website. No more having to search multiple websites to get the information you need.

Research done after the 2002 election showed that employees, by a 2 to 1 margin, held a NEGATIVE opinion of their employer if they received their first election-related communication late in the cycle. These employees didn't feel intruded upon, but were upset that they didn't get information sooner and thus felt powerless to participate.

On the other hand, by a 3 to 1 margin, employees had a POSITIVE opinion of their employer if they received 4-6 election-related communications throughout the cycle. That positive opinion jumped to 4 to 1 when employees received 7 or more communications. Further research showed that voter turnout increases as well with more "touches" from the employer. The hundreds of thousands of voters employed by you are looking for guidance and leadership when it comes to voting. They are seeking out exactly the type of information VoteForBusiness.com provides. This program represents, by far, the boldest effort made by the business community to reach this group of important potential voters.

VoteForBusiness.com provides all the resources needed to improve grassroots participation from your employees. From the website, your employees can register to vote, apply for absentee ballots, locate their polling place, and study the candidates running at the federal, state, and local levels.

This DOES NOT mean telling employees how to vote. It DOES mean educating them concerning the impact of the issues on the employee and where the candidates stand on those issues.

All of this information is extremely useful when you need to contact your State Senator or a candidate about an issue that affects your ability to run your business effectively and maintain an employment base in Nebraska.

If you have trouble determining which legislative district you are in, please do not hesitate to contact the State Chamber office for assistance. The Secretary of State's office and local Election Commissioners should also be able to help.

If you find that you are in a legislative district that is up for election this year (all of the even-numbered districts) you may want to take an additional step. Make yourself known to and become acquainted with the people in your district who are running or who are interested in running for the Nebraska Legislature. Invite them to visit your place of business and see, first hand, the economic impact that you are making in your community. There is no better way for a candidate to appreciate the importance of your investment and jobs that have been created than to see your facilities and employees in person.

State Senators want to know their constituents and the issues that are important to them. They also want to know that they are representing their constituents in the best possible way. The only way they can be assured that they are representing their districts well is to hear from business on an ongoing basis.

To ensure proper representation, citizens have a responsibility to be both informed and involved in the process. Please take time to study the maps and the issues, to make sure the voice of business is heard for the future economic growth of Nebraska. ■

Four To Be Inducted Into Business Hall of Fame

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interests into cattle feeding, ranching, farrow to finish pork production and farming. Growing up on his family's farm in Elkhorn, Bobby Gottsch began



Robert "Bobby" Gottsch

his entrepreneurial career at the age of 6 when he would get eggs from his uncle's farm and sell them in his neighborhood.

He began working for his father's feedyard after high school graduation. In 1982, after his father had a mild heart attack, Bobby went to oversee a feedyard the family had an interest in near Juniata. Though he packed his bags for about a month stay, he never left the Hastings area.

Gottsch Enterprises has interests in a packing company, a mail order steak business, commercial and residential real estate, Indian Creek Golf Course in Elkhorn, San Crisobal Farm, a rice farm in Argentina, and a trucking firm. Businesses are also located in Kansas, Texas, Louisiana, and Missouri. While the family's primary business is cattle, the company is actively involved in hog operations. An active member of the Hastings community, Bobby Gottsch strongly believes in helping wherever possible. He is a member of the Nebraska Environmental Quality Council and the Hastings College Board of Trustees. Gottsch also served on the Omaha Federal Reserve Bank Board of Directors from 1997-2002.

He and his wife, Cindy, have five children.

Bill Kubly, Lincoln, Landscapes Unlimited –

Bill Kubly founded Landscapes Unlimited in 1976, following his five years of work for a local golf course construction company. With

five years experience and his Landscape Architect degree from the University of Wisconsin, Kubly formed his one-man operation. With a pickup truck, a pipe wrench and a pipe cutter, he began handling small irrigation projects for local golf courses.

Forever the optimist, Kubly soon began to broaden his capabilities. He began by working with many different golf course architects, helping to take their conceptual designs and build them into striking realities. From its modest beginning in 1976, LU (Landscapes Unlimited) now employs a staff of more than 1,000 professionals during its peak season and has a project resume, which includes many of the most notable locations in golf.

Throughout the last 28 years, Kubly's philosophy and vision for LU has remained unchanged. Direct personal involvement, total commitment to quality, and a desire to be "The Best" have been the attributes that have served to chart the course for LU's success. Today, LU builds more than 35 golf courses per year, coast to coast, working with designers and architects on renovation and new development construction projects. LU is capable of completing projects ranging from \$50,000 to \$50 million. In 2000, Kubly was selected as National Entrepreneur of the Year by Ernst & Young.

He and his wife, Myrna, have two daughters and one granddaughter.

Bruce Lauritzen, Omaha, First National Bank of Nebraska –

Bruce Lauritzen's primary business occupation is Chairman of First National Bank of Omaha, its holding company, First National of Nebraska, and Lauritzen Corporation. He is chairman of more than a dozen other banks and bank holding companies



Bill Kubly

operating in Nebraska, Iowa, Illinois, South Dakota, Kansas, Colorado, and Texas. The combined organizations have more than \$16 billion in assets and 7,500 employees in 31 states.

His family has been actively involved in Omaha's growth and development since 1854, when Thomas Davis, one of the bank's first shareholders, helped start the bank. During



Bruce Lauritzen

most of the past century, the Davis, and later Lauritzen name, has been synonymous with the leadership and growth of First National Bank. It is their vision and courage that made First National a multi-state, multi-bank holding company, an active marketer of banking services, and a leading innovator in merchant processing and integrated data processes.

Bruce Lauritzen has been a leading proponent of Omaha's downtown redevelopment, envisioning, and then bringing to fruition, the exciting riverfront area and a bold new skyline highlighted by the 40-story First National headquarters, the state's tallest building.

Mr. Lauritzen is President of the Omaha Development Council and Foundation, Royal Danish Consulate for the State of Nebraska, member of the Chief Executives Organization, Financial Services Round Table and the STRATCOM Consultation Committee. He is Chairman of Clarkson Regional Health Services, Treasurer of The Nebraska Medical Center, and a Director of Ak-Sar-Ben, Creighton University, Joslyn Art Museum, Nebraska Game and Parks Foundation, Omaha Symphony Association, Strategic Air and Space Museum, Darden School Foundation, Charlottesville, VA and Visa U.S.A. He was inducted into the Omaha Business Hall of Fame in 2004.

He and his wife, Kimball, have two daughters and a son. ■

Cornerstone Project

The State Chamber has initiated a new membership category — the Cornerstone member. A member paying a minimum of \$5,000 in dues investment, and the company is near the recommended dues schedule would be eligible to become a Cornerstone member. The immediate Past Chairman of the State Chamber serves as Chairman of the Cornerstone members for a one-year term.

Benefits to becoming Cornerstone members include costs of seminars covered; all council or Board meeting meals complimentary; two full Annual Meeting registrations at the \$5,000 level; e-mail legislative reports and newsletters to top people within Cornerstone company; dinner with the Governor; membership directory listing; website listing.

The key to this program is the recognition of key State Chamber members, doing their fair share, and even more than their fair share (if a smaller company) to help provide additional funding for the Nebraska Chamber of Commerce & Industry to enhance and expand its services to all State Chamber members. Current Cornerstone Members are:

AAA Nebraska
AFLAC
Alltel
Altria Group
Ameritas Life Insurance Corp.
Ameritrade
Aquila
Baldwin Filters
Becton Dickinson
Behlen Mfg.
Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Nebraska
BNSF Railway
C&A Industries
Cabela's
Cargill – Blair
Cargill Meat Solutions
Chief Industries
ConAgra Foods
Connectivity Solutions Mfg.
Cornerstone Bank
Douglas Manufacturing
Farmers Mutual Insurance
Farmland Foods
First Data

First National Bank
Husqvarna Turf Care
Kellogg Company
Kinder Morgan
Lincoln Benefit Life
Lincoln Plating
MBA Poultry
MDS Pharma Services
Mutual of Omaha
Nebraska Book Company
Nebraska Cable
Nebraska Public Power District
Oriental Trading
Paypal, Inc.
Pinnacle Bank
Qwest
State Farm Insurance
TierOne Bank
Tyson/IBP Foods
Union Pacific
University of Nebraska
Vetter Health Services
Werner Enterprises

For more information on this program, please contact James Berringer, Vice President Membership & Marketing at the State Chamber.

Plan To Attend Washington Visit

The annual State Chamber congressional visit to Washington will be on May 2-4, 2006. As in past years, we will hold a luncheon at the Hart Senate Office Building on Wednesday, May 3, where members of the Nebraska congressional delegation and their chief staff members will join us. Attendees may attend the Nebraska Breakfast at 8:00 a.m. on Wednesday, May 3, in the Dirksen Office Building cafeteria. Also planned are an

Issues Briefing at the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) and a federal issues briefing at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce headquarters.

We will have further details on lodging in the next *Executive*. Please take advantage of this opportunity for face-to-face meetings with your federal delegation. For more information, contact the State Chamber at (402) 474-4422. ■