

Washington Meetings Set for May 9-11

The annual State Chamber Congressional visit to Washington will be on May 9-11, 2005. As in past years, we will hold a luncheon at the Hart Senate Office Building on Tuesday, May 10, where members of the Nebraska Congressional delegation and their chief staff members will join us. On May 9, we will attend an Issues Briefing at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce headquarters in the afternoon. On Tuesday morning, we will have an Issues Briefing at the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), followed by the Congressional Luncheon. Attendees may attend the Nebraska Breakfast at 8:00 a.m. on Wednesday, May 11, in the Dirksen Office Building cafeteria.

This year, we have made arrangements with the Holiday Inn On The Hill for lodging. The Holiday Inn is two blocks from the U.S. Capitol and Union Station, and the Metro. We have a block of rooms with rates of \$205 per night. Please contact Vice President—Public Affairs Don Mihovk at the State Chamber to make your room reservations. The cut-off date will be April 18.

President Bush is promoting a number of issues of concern to business, including making tax cuts permanent, class-action reform, asbestos litigation, energy, trade, and transportation. The Senate make-up is slightly more conservative, and there may be more opportunities for legislation to be passed as opposed to being bottled up as in past sessions. Our representatives need to hear your concerns and the Washington visit is an excellent opportunity for face-to-face meetings.

Register on the enclosed flyer. For more information, please contact Don Mihovk at the State Chamber office at (402) 474-4422. ■

2005 Annual Meeting Highlights

The State Chamber's Annual Meeting and Legislative Caucus was held on February 3 at the Cornhusker Hotel and Conference Center in Lincoln. Governor Dave Heineman addressed the luncheon, which honors the local chambers of commerce across Nebraska and kicked off "Nebraska Chamber of Commerce Month." Governor Heineman outlined his priorities for holding the line on spending and his priorities for this session.

The afternoon sessions featured the traditional Legislative Panel to bring members up to date on key business issues before the 2005 Unicameral. Four legislative chairmen gave members their perspective on the Session. Members also attended two excellent afternoon programs dealing with "Surviving and Growing in the New World Economy — A Business Perspective" presented by Todd Johnson, Executive Director, Global Initiatives, the Gallup Organization. The other program "The Next Generation of Economic Development Tools" featured Revenue Committee Chairman Senator David Landis and Economic Development Director Richard Baier.

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Top: 2005 State Chamber Chairman Gary Warren (left) presents a plaque of appreciation to 2004 Chairman G. Richard Russell. Center: Governor Dave Heineman addresses luncheon gathering. Bottom: K.C. Belitz, incoming Nebraska Chamber of Commerce Executives President, Megan Lucas, NCCE President accepts the Chamber of Commerce Month proclamation from Governor Heineman.





State Chamber Views...

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

"It Is Now Reality"

Whether or not you support or oppose term limits is irrelevant — it is a political reality for Nebraska legislators.

There are several legislative resolutions being debated this session that would give the voting public an opportunity to revisit the issue. The proposals range from total repeal of term limits to extending the length of service to three four-year terms and also providing for a recall process. Under any of these proposals, the earliest scenario would be to vote on a plan in 2006.

A more pressing issue is the recruitment of good candidates to run in 2006. Currently, 20 State Senators will not be allowed to stand for re-election. Losing that much institutional knowledge in one fell swoop is indeed going to be a tremendous adjustment to the legislative process. Then in 2008, Nebraska will lose at least another 17 "veterans" of legislative service, meaning that at least 37 of the 49 current State Senators will not face the electorate for legislative office.

The issue of our time is, "**Who will step forward and run for the Legislature in 2006?**"

Enclosed with this *Executive* is a copy of legislative districts that will be open seat districts in 2006 and the names of those State Senators that will not be allowed to run again.

People who live or work in these districts need to seriously think about running themselves or encouraging a viable candidate they know and trust to run.

Fifteen of the 20 who cannot run carry a career cumulative support record of 85.6% on the State Chamber's annual voting record,

meaning they voted with business about 7 out of 8 times. This level of support does not happen by accident, but only when constituents stay in close touch with their elected officials, making sure they understand how legislative issues affect a firm's ability to stay in business and prosper.

Please take a close look at the list of "open seat districts." The State Chamber, and many other business associations, want to start meeting immediately with people who you think deserve support from the business community. We cannot simply sit back and hope that good candidates will surface.

Now, more than ever before, we must be tremendously pro-active in seeking out and encouraging qualified people and obtain the resources to run an effective campaign.

If we can be of any assistance in your efforts to help find and orientate candidates who understand the importance of a strong business climate, please do not hesitate to contact your State Chamber office.

Council Meeting Set

The **Small Business Council**, in cooperation with the Nebraska Federation of Independent Businesses (NFIB), will co-host a Small Business Day at the Unicameral on March 30. Participants will meet at the State Capitol at 9:00 a.m. The program will include updates from members of the Legislature and other state leaders. Mailings to members of the Council will go out later this month to detail locations.

State Chamber Continues Grassroots Initiative With VoterVOICE.net

VoterVOICE.net will continue to provide the State Chamber with the tools that will ensure that your voices are heard at the Capitol. Using cutting-edge technology, the VoterVOICE system enables State Chamber members to immediately take action on issues affecting business in Nebraska. This system has been beneficial during the past legislative sessions. Action Alerts will direct members to our website, match the member to their elected officials, and guide the member through the process of sending a message. Also, the State Chamber is able to focus grassroots pressure on those elected officials who are swing votes or who are members of the committees critical to our issues.

During the legislative session, some of you will receive a call to action when we need to generate grassroots pressure. With our new targeting software, we will try to be very specific, as well as selective, in asking for your help. Since we have the ability to target specific legislators through this system, please know that if you are contacted, we need your help to persuade your legislator. We will do our best to make this as easy and as painless for you as possible. Therefore, please follow through when you receive such a notice from us. All you have to do is click the web address at the bottom of the email message we send you; or in the case of a fax message from us, you can type into your browser the web address you will find on the fax.

The first time you go to the Grassroots Action Center, you will have to register. On subsequent visits, your login will be quicker. You will also be able to view our Active Issues and send messages through our website at www.nechamber.com by clicking on our Grassroots Action Center. We hope you enjoy using our new VoterVOICE.net system. With it you can see how quick and easy it will be for you to make your investment in the State Chamber pay off even more. ■

2005 Annual Meeting Highlights

(Continued from page 1)

Nearly 40 Senators joined the 450 members for the Annual Banquet and Business Hall of Fame induction ceremony. This year's inductees into the Business Hall of Fame were:

Lawrence J. Arth, Lincoln, Ameritas Acacia; William A. Fitzgerald, Omaha, Commercial Federal; E.H. "Shoey" Shoemaker, North Platte, Milldale Ranch; and Jan Thayer, Grand Island, EXCEL Development Group.

The banquet also saw the traditional passing of the gavel from 2004 Chairman of the Board **G. Richard Russell** to 2005 Chairman **Gary Warren**.

Three \$2,000 scholarships were presented this year. The Virgil Eihusen Scholarship was awarded to Jordan Lee Klute of Creighton University. The Jack Swartz Scholarship went to Nicole Meirath of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. The Nebraska Chamber of Commerce & Industry Scholarship was awarded to Nicole R. Hanson of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. ■

Top Four Photos: Gov. Heineman and Past Chairman Rick Russell presenting crystal award to Hall of Fame awardees Bill Fitzgerald (top left), Larry Arth (top right), Jan Thayer (bottom left), and "Shoey" Shoemaker (bottom right).

Middle Photos: Legislative Leaders Panel included (left to right) Senator Don Pederson, Chairman Gary Warren, Senators Tom Baker, Patrick Bourne, and Mick Mines. Scholarship winners Nicole Meirath (left) and Nicole R. Hanson (right).

Bottom Photos: (Left) Gallup's Todd Johnson makes a point. (Center) Chairman Gary Warren's after dinner remarks. (Right) Speaker Kermit Brashear addresses State Chamber Board Meeting.



2005 Hall of Fame Nominations Requested

April 15, 2005, is 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.

Past honorees include: Earl T. Luff; Harry P. Seward, Jr.; Thomas Creigh, Jr.; the late Virgil R. Eihusen; the late Dr. Lewis E. Harris; Burnham Yates (posthumously); Robert B. Daugherty; Charles M. "Mike" Harper; Robert B. Harris; Edwin J. Loutzenheiser, Jr.; the late Clifton K. Hillegass; Robert L. Peterson; Kenneth

L. Wortman; Duane W. Acklie; Richard N. Cabela and James W. Cabela; V.J. Skutt (posthumously); the late George Abel; the late Dan Gardner; Walter Scott, Jr.; Harold Warp (posthumously); Warren E. Buffett; Alice Dittman; the late Rose Blumkin; the late Ernst Lied; Virgil Froehlich; Nathan J. Gold (posthumously); Willis A. Strauss; Herman Cain; Kenneth L. Morrison; B.K. Heuermann; Peter Kiewit (posthumously); A.F. "Tony" Raimondo; James Stuart; Harriet Petersen Fort; Fred Hawkins, Sr.; Dale LeBaron (posthumously); Charles "Chuck" Sand; Jack Swartz; Charles W. Durham; Paul Mohr; the late Margaret Robinson; Joe R. Seacrest (posthumously); J. Robert Duncan; Hugh W. Hunt and Richard A. Hunt; Edwin E. Perkins (posthumously); C.L. Werner; Roy Dinsdale; Roy A. Smith; Thomas

C. Woods, Jr. (posthumously); Walt, Mike, and Gib Behlen (posthumously); Donald O. Clifton, Ph.D. (posthumously); Richard K. Davidson; and Henry H. "Hod" Kosman.

This year's inductees were: Lawrence J. Arth, Lincoln, Ameritas Acacia ; William A. Fitzgerald, Omaha, Commercial Federal ; E.H. "Shoey" Shoemaker, North Platte, Milldale Ranch; and Jan Thayer, Grand Island, EXCEL Development Group.

A nomination form is enclosed with this month's *Executive*. ■

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.

ALLENTOWN, PA

Interspace Airport
Advertising
Jim Miller

AUBURN

Auburn State Bank
John Chaney

BELLEVUE

Cashflow Billing Solutions, Inc.
Pat Shannon

BLAIR

Sid Dillon Chevrolet
Oldsmobile Pontiac, Inc.
Blake Dillon

CHICAGO, IL

American Chamber of
Commerce Resources
Brad Apland

HASTINGS

Hastings Economic
Development Corporation
Dee Haussler

LINCOLN

Nebraska Book
Company
Mark Opegard

Nebraska State
Colleges
Stan Carpenter

Peetz & Co.

Natalie Peetz

US Foods, LLC

Rick Williams

Fred Wilson Jewelers,
Inc.

Fred Wilson

Wyeth

Kate M. Kulesher

OMAHA

Blackwell Sanders Peper
Martin LLP
James C. Creigh

Continental General
Insurance Company
Brad Wolfram

Northern Border

Partners, L.P.

Fred G. Remington

RANCHO CORDOVA, CA

WebEx Communica-
tions, Inc.
Dave Bastkowski

SIDNEY

Convert-A-Ball
Distributing Company
Robert VanVleet

WAYNE

Carhart Lumber
Company
Scott Carhart