

# THE EXECUTIVE

## THE STATE CHAMBER

Nebraska Chamber of Commerce & Industry

December 2007

### New State Chamber Board Members Elected

Beginning Jan. 1, 2008, **G. Lee Glenn**, Vice President and CFO, Kelley Bean Co., Scottsbluff, will begin his duties as the State Chamber's Chairman of the Board. Glenn will succeed **Tom L. Whalen**, Vice President Human Resources, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Nebraska, Omaha, as the State Chamber's top elected officer when he receives the gavel Jan. 24 at the State Chamber's Annual Meeting and Legislative Caucus in Lincoln. (See related story.) Whalen will continue to serve on the Executive Council as Immediate Past Chairman.

Glenn was elected Chairman at the Dec. 7 Board of Directors' meeting in Lincoln. Glenn began his career in the bean business with the Chester B. Brown Co., a pioneer in the industry, after graduating from the University of Nebraska in 1972 with a degree in accounting. He also serves as a director of Platte Valley Financial Services Companies, Inc., a multi-state bank holding company, and Platte Valley Bank-Scottsbluff.

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## Season's Greetings!

### 2008 Annual Meeting & Legislative Caucus Set For January 24

One of the most prominent events for the Nebraska business community is approaching quickly.

On Thursday, Jan. 24, the State Chamber will hold its Annual Meeting and Legislative Caucus at The Cornhusker Marriott in Lincoln. This is the State Chamber's largest event of the year. A full program will provide an opportunity to learn about key legislative issues affecting the business community. Attendees will also get the chance to meet with Nebraska lawmakers, state officials and congressional staff, as well as pay tribute to some of the state's most recognized business leaders.

The Board of Directors meeting will begin at 10 a.m. Governor Dave Heineman will address the group at lunch.

The afternoon will commence with the annual business meeting, followed by panel discussions about the 2008 agenda on Capitol Hill; Nebraska's economic forecast and changing demographics; and the upcoming session at the Nebraska Legislature.

The evening will include a 6 p.m. reception and the annual banquet at 7 p.m. The traditional passing of the gavel will feature 2007 Chairman Tom Whalen and 2008 Chairman Lee Glenn. The Business Hall of Fame induction ceremony will begin at 8 p.m., with closing comments by Chairman Glenn.

A registration form for the Annual Meeting and Legislative Caucus is enclosed with this issue of *The Executive*. ■

### Annual Meeting Brings Sponsorship Opportunities

The State Chamber is offering sponsorship opportunities to get your business recognized before a large target audience at the Chamber's Annual Meeting on Jan. 24, 2008. Businesses or organizations interested in sponsoring this important meeting of business and community leaders should contact the State Chamber as soon as possible. For details or to reserve your sponsorship, contact James Berringer at 402-474-4422 or [jberringer@nechamber.com](mailto:jberringer@nechamber.com). ■



**State Chamber Views...**  
**Guest Editorial by Adrian Sanchez**  
**Columbus Telegraph**  
**2007 Leadership Nebraska Class Member & Graduate**

## "Leadership Nebraska Meets Its Goals"

**T**hroughout the past year, I have spent many weeks discovering and dissecting what makes Nebraska the great state it is – as well as the tremendous obstacles it faces – as part of the inaugural class of Leadership Nebraska.

Although the commencement ceremony last month marked the conclusion of the class, the knowledge and relationships gained will continue.

Formed by the State Chamber, the purpose of Leadership Nebraska is to enhance leadership skills and deepen knowledge of the challenges and opportunities facing the state.

The program is “dedicated to the development of informed leaders who understand issues, define problems, develop solutions and achieve positions of higher responsibility in Nebraska.”

Comprised of 27 current and emerging leaders throughout Nebraska, the consistency of the class contained a wide range of participants, volunteers, business leaders, philanthropic workers, educators and agricultural entrepreneurs, with each providing their own unique personal and professional

opinions and perspectives on numerous topics, such as economic development, education, agriculture, health care, public policy and how to mature and develop as a leader.

Throughout the six sessions, I was privileged to travel the state, from Omaha to Scottsbluff, and observe the inner workings of some of the state’s greatest achievements: Omaha’s growth as a leader in global and national industry, statewide agricultural industry growth, the Liberty Center in Norfolk and development of various public-private partnerships in fields such as manufacturing and health care. We heard honest dialogue about some of Nebraska’s biggest problems – “brain drain,” an aging work force, high tax rates and water issues – along with open dialogue about the cause and brainstorming of potential band aids and/or solutions.

As the youngest, not only in professional experience but age as well, I felt honored to be involved in such a high caliber, motivated and active group. Upon reflection, the passion of my fellow graduates, as well

as the program’s coordinators and presenters, has fanned my desire to advance not only as a professional, but as a volunteer and civil servant.

To my fellow graduates, whom I consider mentors and friends, who may read this, I hope you have as much pride and optimism for Leadership Nebraska as I. And for everyone else, I would encourage applying and participating in this valuable, worthwhile program that has enhanced my vision of Nebraska – the state it is, the state it can be – and the inspiration to help make the change.

I would like to thank *The Columbus Telegraph* and Columbus Area Chamber of Commerce for their assistance and support of my participation.

For more information on any aspect of the State Chamber’s Leadership Nebraska program, contact Executive Director Don Mihovk at the State Chamber office or log on to [www.leadershipnebraska.com](http://www.leadershipnebraska.com).

*Editor’s Note:* Enclosed in this issue of *The Executive* is a form you may use to contribute to the Leadership Nebraska Fund or the State Chamber’s Hall of Fame Scholarship Fund. Both are fully tax-deductible. Both funds are excellent ways to help build the future of Nebraska – educating college students in Business Administration or helping further nurture Nebraska’s best and brightest for community and state leadership.

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## State Chamber Urges EPA To Keep Current Ozone Standards

**T**he State Chamber is urging U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Stephen L. Johnson to oppose more stringent ground-level ozone standards proposed by the federal agency. The proposed rule would hinder the Nebraska economy and is not backed by sound science, State Chamber President Barry L. Kennedy told Johnson in a Nov. 30 letter.

“A significant portion of eastern

Nebraska would be negatively affected by [the EPA’s] most aggressive option for the new ozone standard,” Kennedy wrote. “The proposed rule would mark the first time that Nebraska counties would be in violation of the ozone standard. This would serve as a significant obstacle to future economic growth.”

Administrator Johnson will issue his final decision by March 12, 2008. The EPA estimates the new standards

will cost between \$10 billion and \$22 billion a year to implement.

While there is no scientific evidence that stricter ozone standards would have any measurable health benefits, stricter standards would result in additional controls on Nebraska business and industry and could threaten the state’s federal transportation dollars. ■

## New Board Members Elected

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Glenn is involved with the Scottsbluff Rotary Club and serves on the board of Oregon Trail Community Foundation, while also serving on the Board of Scotts Bluff County Hospital Authority. His family consists of his wife, Deb, who has an interior design business, and daughters Hillary and Jillian.

Other board changes will also take place at the start of the new year. **Marc LeBaron**, Chairman and CEO, Lincoln Industries Co., Lincoln, will serve as the 2008 Chairman-Elect. **John E. Cederberg**, CPA, Lincoln, was re-elected Treasurer, while **Barry L. Kennedy**, CAE, IOM, Lincoln, will continue to serve as President and Corporate Secretary.

Elected to the 2008 State Chamber Executive Council as District Vice Chairmen were: **Galen F. Ullstrom**, Senior Vice President, Mutual of Omaha-United of Omaha, Omaha; **Tonn M. Ostergard**, President and CEO, Crete Carrier Corp., Lincoln; **S. Michael Jensen**, CEO, Great Plains Communications, Inc., Blair; **Julie L. Krebs**, Vice President, AIRLANCO, Falls City; **Raymond C. Ward, Ph.D.**, President and Co-owner, Ward Laboratories, Inc., Kearney; and **Joanne F. Shephard**, President and CEO, First National Bank of Valentine, Valentine.

At the State Chamber's final board meeting of 2007, seven new Directors were introduced. Those elected by mail ballots sent to State Chamber members include: **Steve Ford**, General Manager, Pepsi-Cola Bottling Company, Lincoln; **Chris C. Roth**, President, Reinke Manufacturing Company, Inc., Deshler; **Jack A. Schreiner**, President, Bruckman Rubber Company, Hastings; and **Greg Vasek**, President, Linweld, Inc., Lincoln.

New Directors who were appointed by the Chairman are: **Anna L. Castner Wightman**, Director of Government Relations, First National of Nebraska, Omaha; **Marion Kroeker**, Executive Director, Ogallala/Keith County Chamber of Commerce, Ogallala; **Galvin Parker**, President, Nebraska Junior Chamber of Commerce, North Platte; and **Steve Pella**,

Operating Vice President – Nebraska, Aquila, Inc., Lincoln.

Re-appointed to the Board were the following Directors: **Michael Baldino**, P.E., Baldino Enterprises, LLC, Omaha; **Joseph R. Bateman, Jr.**, Vice President Public Affairs, Union Pacific Railroad Company, Omaha; **Ralph Castner**, CFO, Cabela's, Inc., Sidney; **Robert Hinson**, Vice President and Deputy General Manager, Northrop Grumman, Bellevue; **Mike Lee**, Vice President and General Manager, NUCOR Steel, Division of NUCOR Corporation, Norfolk; **Dan S. Mauk**, IOM, President, Norfolk Area Chamber of Commerce, Norfolk; and **James B. Milliken**, President, University of Nebraska, Lincoln.

The State Chamber expressed its appreciation to the following Directors, who will be retiring from the Board on Dec. 31, 2007: **Anne Anderson**, Executive Director, Gothenburg Area Chamber of Commerce, Gothenburg; **Timothy D. Hart**, Senior Vice President, First National Bank, Omaha; **Mark A. Haskins**, President and CEO, MBA Poultry, Waverly; **Brian Kavanaugh**, President, Nebraska Junior Chamber of Commerce, Ralston; **W. Michael Kearney**, President/CEO, Mary Lanning Memorial Hospital, Hastings; **Robert S. Milligan**, Chairman, M I Industries, Lincoln; and **Arlene Sorensen**, President, Lincoln Wholesale Florists Company, Lincoln.

## Dues Are Deductible

Your 2007 annual dues to the State Chamber may be deductible as an ordinary business expense. However, a portion of your dues is not deductible as a business expense because of our organization's lobbying activities at the state and federal levels. The State Chamber is a registered 501c(6) organization and dedicates a portion of dues investments to lobbying and business advocacy. Because of federal stipulations, 50 percent of your dues are deductible. ■

## Scott Lautenbaugh Replaces Mick Mines

Governor Dave Heineman has appointed Scott Lautenbaugh of Omaha to replace State Senator Mick Mines of Blair in the District 18 legislative seat. Mines resigned from the Legislature on Oct. 31. A former Douglas County election commissioner, Lautenbaugh is a 1983 graduate of Creighton University, where he also received his law degree in 1991. Lautenbaugh, 42, will serve in the Legislature during the next year and be up for election for a two-year term in 2008. District 18 includes the towns of Blair and Fort Calhoun, as well as portions of Omaha. ■

## 2008 State Chamber Schedule

Jan. 9	Legislature Convenes
Jan. 15	Public Affairs Council Meetings Begin (Every Tuesday During Legislative Session)
Jan. 24	State Chamber Annual Meeting, Business Hall of Fame Induction
Jan. 25	Nebraska Chamber of Commerce Executives (NCCE) Meeting
Mar. 14	Hall of Fame Committee Meeting, Executive Council Meeting
Apr. 4	NCCE Spring Board Meeting
Apr. 22-24	Chamber Visit to Capitol Hill, Washington, D.C.
June 6	Spring Board Meeting
July 13-18	U.S. Chamber Institute for Organizational Management
All of Sept.	State Chamber Legislative Forums
Sept. 12	Fall Board Meeting
Oct. 24	Executive Council Meeting
Dec. 2	Public Affairs Council Meeting
Dec. 5	Winter Board Meeting

# State Chamber Concludes Fall Legislative Forums

The State Chamber last month concluded its tour of 33 communities across the state, where State Chamber staff members presented the organization's annual Legislative Forums. More than 1,200 Nebraskans attended the forums held throughout October and early November. In addition, 38 state senators and Lt. Gov. Rick Sheehy also participated in the presentations, which were open to all members of the State Chamber and/or local chambers of commerce.

The state's business climate was the main focus of the Legislative Forums. Nebraska's standing in several national business rankings is expected to improve due to the 2005 Nebraska Advantage Act, the state's Right-to-Work status, and the 2007 comprehensive \$420 million tax cut. However, Nebraska still ranks poorly in several areas of taxation, including the state's corporate income tax.

Nebraskans attending this fall's State Chamber forums were surveyed on important legislative and policy issues facing the business community.

Some of the key findings from the Legislative Forums' survey include:

- ◆ More than 85 percent of respondents favored adjusting the state's corporate income tax brackets for inflation.
- ◆ More than 80 percent of respondents opposed weakening Nebraska's Right-to-Work protections.
- ◆ Nearly 65 percent of respondents listed "state taxation" or "employee

health insurance" as the top expense challenges for their Nebraska business or employer. Regulatory compliance costs, transportation/energy expenses, and liability insurance costs were also prominently mentioned.

Among participants most concerned about state taxation, 60 percent said individual and corporate income taxes were their top challenge. ■

*State Chamber Chairman Tom Whalen of Omaha and President Barry Kennedy discuss the upcoming legislative session with Schuyler State Senator Chris Langemeier at the Nov. 7 Legislative Forum in Wahoo. The Wahoo forum was the last of the State Chamber's 33 forums held throughout Nebraska in October and November.*



## Register To Get The State Chamber Legislative Report Via E-Mail

When Nebraska's Legislature reconvenes next month, the State Chamber's weekly *Legislative Report* will be delivered by e-mail instead of the U.S. Postal Service.

In addition, the bill status sheet, the bill digest and committee hearing notices will also be delivered electronically.

To ensure you do not miss a single delivery of the *Legislative Report*, please e-mail your organization's name along with the e-mail addresses of recipients who wish to receive the *Legislative Report* to [kkoch@nechamber.com](mailto:kkoch@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.

### COLUMBUS

Becher-Curry Company  
John A. Curry

Dimensions in Senior Living  
Jean Wilcox

### FREMONT

Overland Products Company  
Bill Ekeler

McGrain, Berryman & Mines LLC  
Scott C. Berryman

### LINCOLN

LaQuinta Inn  
Hemant Deesai

Simmonds Restaurant Management, Inc.  
Mike Simmonds

WaittCorp Management, LLC  
John Schuele

### OMAHA

Connectivity Solutions Manufacturing Inc.  
Al Cruz

### WEST POINT

Animal Clinic & Vet Supply, P.C.  
John & Jeanette Brodahl

Dimatic Die and Tool Co.  
Scott Drvol