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APRIL 2008

CHAMBERvision

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THISissue:

High School Sports Important to Lincoln
 Lincoln Senators Address Forum
 International Quilt Study Center Now Open
 City Planning Department Discusses West Haymarket Arena Development
 Tourism Shareholders receive update on CSL Study
 Governor Stresses Priorities for Lincoln
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Notes from the President

HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS IMPORTANT TO LINCOLN



Wendy Birdsall

The Lincoln Chamber of Commerce and Lincoln Convention and Visitors Bureau work diligently to maintain Lincoln as the center for Nebraska High School athletics.

Many of you may have seen a beautiful new facility near Haymarket Park and wondered what it was. The Chamber and CVB worked with several entities involved in Nebraska high school sports to secure a this new facility which will be the main offices of Nebraska School Activities Association(NSAA), the Nebraska Coaches Association and the Nebraska High School Athletic Hall of Fame.

Thank you to these three entities for their continued commitment to Lincoln and for adding an impressive piece to Lincoln's Sports Triangle.

The NSAA and state tournaments are an important part of this community. The economic impact is important to our area businesses and the City of Lincoln. It is estimated



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CHAMBER events:

APRIL, 2008

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April 2

8:00 a.m.

Chamber Coffee

Chamber of Commerce,
 Lincoln Room
 Sponsored by Aquila

April 2

Noon - 1:00 p.m.

Ambassadors

Chamber of Commerce,
 Lincoln Room

April 8

7:30 - 8:30 a.m.

Young Professionals Group: Membership Orientation

Chamber of Commerce

April 9

12:00 Noon

Face the Chamber with Athletic Director Dr. Tom Osborne

Country Club of Lincoln

that the major championships (football, basketball and volleyball), each bring 100,000 people to Lincoln and each generate an economic impact of \$2-\$4 million annually, as a result of visitor spending at local retailers, restaurants and hotels.

It was great news in February when we learned that the NSAA had chosen Lincoln to again host the 2008 and 2009 state volleyball tournaments. The Lincoln Chamber and CVB will continue to pursue events that bring a positive impact on the community and the volleyball bid is another example of that commitment.

The increased traffic you saw at our popular shopping spots and restaurants the first two weekends in March was the result of the annual pilgrimage by high school sports enthusiasts from around the state to the state basketball tournament. Hopefully you had the opportunity to see at least one of these exciting matches.

However, while we celebrate and look forward to our continued relationship with Nebraska's high school athletic programs, it is also important to recognize that the environment for hosting these, as well as countless other events is becoming increasingly competitive. Communities around the state, region and nation are building and improving facilities for the sole purpose of attracting events.

As most of you are aware, the Lincoln Chamber of Commerce is helping to promote a new arena for the community. Convention, Sports and Leisure, a national consulting firm, recently completed a viability study on a new arena and convention center for the City of Lincoln and Chamber of Commerce.

After multiple months of research, CSL has determined that the project is financially feasible and needed for Lincoln to compete in the event, convention and trade show industry. According to the report, Lincoln is missing out on numerous events and has the potential to lose future events due to aging and inadequate facilities. CSL recommended that Lincoln build a 13,000 - 16,000 seat arena and that the city should pursue a public-private partnership with a developer for a new convention center/hotel in the West Haymarket area.

We will continue to support this effort in order to assure that Lincoln not only maintains current activities, but also gains an increasing number of events, conventions and trade shows in the near term and well into the future.

**April 11**

7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.

Small Business NetworkChamber of Commerce,
Lincoln Room**April 16**

8:00 a.m.

Transportation & Public Works ForumChamber of Commerce,
Lincoln Room**April 22**

8:30 a.m. - Noon

**In Focus Seminar Series:
Public Speaking**Chamber of Commerce,
Lincoln Room**April 23**

8:00 a.m.

Public Policy ForumChamber of Commerce,
Lincoln RoomSponsored by Grubb
& Ellis/ Pacific Reality**April 23**

11:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

**Young Professionals Group:
ConverGENS**Holiday Inn Downtown
141 North 9th Street**April 24**

4:30 - 6:30 p.m.

Business After HoursSponsored by AmericInn
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LINCOLN SENATORS ADDRESS FORUM

Chamber priority issues moving forward in the Unicameral

Bills involving roads funding, the innovation campus, the State Fair, arena financing, and business incentives are all moving forward in the Nebraska Unicameral according to the Lincoln delegation of Nebraska Senators. Five of Lincoln's seven State Senators addressed the Public Policy Forum of the Lincoln Chamber of Commerce, Wednesday March 26. Those in attendance were: Sen. DiAnna Schimek, Sen. Bill Avery, Sen. Tony Fulton, Sen. Amanda McGill and Sen. Danielle Nantkes.

All five discussed bills or efforts in which they have been active, particularly centering on those issues that the Lincoln Chamber identified as priorities.

Nearly every Senator discussed road financing.

In particular, Sen. McGill introduced a bill this session at the request of Mayor Chris Beutler and the City of Lincoln that would allow cities to reinvest growth revenues into infrastructure that would accommodate future growth. Sen. McGill told the group that she was working with the Governor's office on a few issues relating to the bill and hoped to get it through by the end of session.

Sen. Nantkes also expressed strong support for road funding stressing that Nebraska was at a crossroads in setting policy for long-term solutions to its infrastructure needs and the willingness to think of new ways to provide those solutions. She pointed to Sen. Deb Fischer's bill (LB 846) as an example of a possible alternative.

"Roads drive economic growth," Sen. Nantkes said. She also stressed the need to continue to look at business incentives for the film industry in Nebraska stressing that the state was lagging behind as many as 30 other states in offering inducements to the film industry. She introduced LB 235 to address this issue. "Hopefully as we continue to discuss our economic development incentive packages, this will be part of the conversation."

In regards to incentives, Sen. Tony Fulton was optimistic about the passage of the Nebraska Super Advantage this year. Introduced at the request of Gov. Dave Heineman, the new tier to the state's incentive program would provide additional tax advantages to companies creating jobs paying at least 150% of average state wage or 200% of county wages.

"With the budget constraints we have had to pear it down somewhat," Fulton said. "But I think we'll see something go through this session."

He also lauded the efforts of Senators to continue to push



HESSER & KOLLER AWARDED FOR VOLUNTEER WORK



Lincoln Chamber members Mark Koller and Mark Hesser earn recognition for their volunteer work.

Koller was named Public Policy Volunteer of the Year for his work as Chairman of the Chamber's Budget Task Force. Mark formerly served on the Chamber's Board of Directors. The Task Force is charged with looking at how issues could affect Lincoln and Lancaster County annual operating budgets.

Hesser earned the Chamber's Business Advocate of the Year award. As the 2007 Board of Directors Chairman, Mark donated many hours of his time to put forward a positive business message. That included taking time to testify in front of state legislators regarding the

through LB 888 which will provide tax relief for small businesses, raising the lower rate threshold from \$50,000 to \$100,000, a move he said was a long needed adjustment. The Lincoln Chamber supports this bill.

Sen. Fulton also addressed the budget from his viewpoint as a member of the Appropriations Committee, saying that in order for the budget to balance, there would have to be some changes in the state aid formula to K-12 education. He indicated that the Education Committee was completing work on this issue.

Sen. Avery brought up two key issues for Lincoln, most notably LB 912 that would provide "turn-back" financing for a new arena. He estimated that the bill could generate nearly \$1 million annually for a Lincoln arena project

"The Mayor has indicated that he won't proceed with an arena project without a vote of the people of Lincoln," Sen. Avery said. "We all need to work for that effort in this key piece of economic development for the community."

Sen. Avery also has a resolution that creates an interim study to help preserve Nebraska military assets. He identified the process as a way to be proactive in preparing for any future Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) efforts at the federal level. There are over 500 National Guard employees at the Lincoln Airport. The Lincoln Chamber created a Military Affairs Committee that works on these issues four years ago.

Sen. Schimek discussed job-training funds. She has introduced a bill that would provide a more detailed reporting system and create a sub-account for small businesses as part of the Nebraska Advantage Training fund. The Lincoln Chamber of Commerce supports the bill, it also is a speaker priority bill.

Additionally, there was discussion by all Senators regarding Innovation Campus and the State Fair. The Senators indicated they felt the University of Nebraska-Lincoln would ultimately get access to the State Fair Park, an issue promoted by the Lincoln Chamber of Commerce. However, there was concern that political pressures might lead to the State Fair moving outside of Lincoln.

Lincoln Chamber of Commerce Executive Vice President Bruce Bohrer praised the Senators for their work in the Unicameral this year.

"We had several issues that were important to the Chamber and to Lincoln as a whole," Bohrer said. "Our delegation has done an outstanding job of working together and gaining the support of Senators from other areas to move these issues forward. I would like to express a sincere 'thank you' for all of their hard work."

Board's resolution of support for the University's Innovation Park.

spotlight on a member:

TRUDE'S DOG MOTEL



Trude's Dog Motel, a place filled with love and understanding, is celebrating its 45th anniversary.

When Trude Schomer was three years old, her father brought home a Boston Terrier pup. From that moment on, Trude was hooked on dogs. So after years of working with field trial dogs, Trude settled in Lincoln and built her dog motel.

Trude also enjoys growing roses, and in the past, has entered her roses in Rose Society shows with much success. Her interests go beyond that, as she greatly enjoys the wildlife that reside on her land.

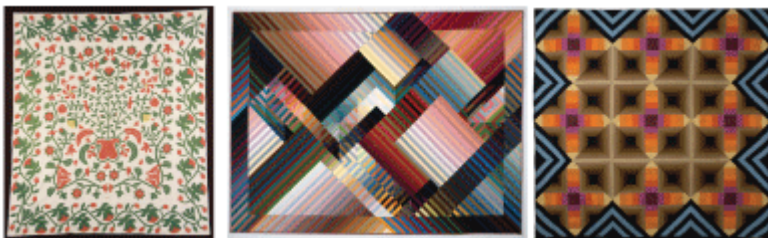
Trude's Dog Motel has been a member of the Lincoln Chamber of Commerce for over 19 years. She renews her membership every year because she feels the Chamber is tuned in to small businesses and development in Lincoln.

Trude is very proud of being an entrepreneur and creating such a great name for herself and her dog motel. She believes that Lincoln is a wonderful place to live and do business because the people are the best.

Trude loves her chosen profession, working with dogs and their owners. She feels it is highly rewarding to be doing something she enjoys. She says, "Success is the result of dedication to one's work."

Trude Schomer has definitely found her calling!

The Lincoln Chamber holds its Public Policy Forum each month on the fourth Wednesday at 8 a.m. at the Chamber office. Thank you to our sponsor Grubb Ellis Pacific Realty.



INTERNATIONAL QUILT STUDY CENTER NOW OPEN



The grand opening of the new world-class International Quilt Study Center & Museum was Sunday, March 30 at the East Campus of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

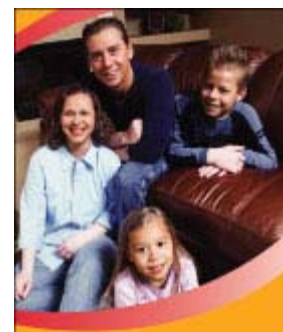
The glass and brick building, designed by the internationally renowned Robert A.M. Stern

Architects of New York, houses the world's largest collection of more than 2,300 quilts and an international study center dedicated to the research, preservation and display of important quilts from cultures around the world. The \$12 million facility is privately funded through contributions to the University of Nebraska Foundation, including a lead gift from the Robert and Ardis James Foundation of Chappaqua, New York.

The facility is located on the northwest corner of North 33rd and Holdrege streets, making a dramatic architectural statement to visitors entering East Campus at this gateway intersection. The International Quilt Study Center is part of the College of Education and Human Sciences, and is housed in the Department of Textiles, Clothing and Design.

The three story, 37,000 square foot museum features a bowed facade of glass panels "stitched together" to create a large-scale pattern. It contains public galleries and meeting spaces, work areas dedicated to research, and climate-controlled storage areas for the center's expanding collection.

The sequence for visitors is carefully orchestrated inside. A curved, stepped ramp runs the length of the east facade, gently leading visitors to the dramatically shaped second floor reception hall, a grand, light-filled space overlooking the landscaped plaza and the campus beyond, while providing access to the three interconnected galleries.



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CITY PLANNING DEPARTMENT DISCUSSES WEST HAYMARKET ARENA DEVELOPMENT

Kent Morgan with the City of Lincoln spoke to Lincoln Chamber members at the March Transportation & Public Works Forum. In his presentation, Kent outlined the proposed redevelopment plans for West Haymarket, including the planned road improvements.

"We looked at things for the long term that could really maximize the public investment," said Morgan.

According to Morgan, a new "backbone" road would be built to accommodate flow around the stadium. That road, coupled with a new intersection connecting the arena to the Antelope Valley improvements and a State Department of Roads funded upgrade of Sun Valley Blvd. should facilitate the movement of traffic in and out of the West Haymarket development during events.

Look for more information regarding West Haymarket Redevelopment plans as the city nears a bond vote on the project in the spring of 2009.

TOURISM SHAREHOLDERS RECEIVE UPDATE ON CSL STUDY

The Convention and Visitors Bureau held an informational meeting for its shareholders, which included hotels, attractions and event facilities on Monday, March 3rd. John Katz with CSL and Kent Morgan with the City provided an update on the West Haymarket development and the need for a new arena in Lincoln. This was a great opportunity for the group to hear why Lincoln needs a new arena. Questions were asked about the research findings, planning process and impact on Lincoln's economy in the future. These are exciting times for Lincoln residents, but also the project is being viewed as having an enormous economic impact on the community through visitor spending. The new facilities being talked about will help retain existing convention and sports events, but also to recruit new state, regional and national events.

Lori Botz is the President of Botz and Associates a personal business coach located in Lincoln, Nebraska since 2005. She is a coach who helps you grow personally and professionally. With Lori's experience she helps bridge the gaps between where you are now and where you want to go.

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GOVERNOR STRESSES PRIORITIES FOR LINCOLN

Nebraska Gov. Dave Heineman stressed the need for the state to make tough decisions about priorities and spending particularly about issues close to Lincoln.

The Governor addressed the Lincoln Chamber's Board of Directors during the board's March meeting.

In discussing issues relevant to Chamber and Lincoln issues, Gov. Heineman was very clear in stating that Nebraska had to make decisions on budget issues. The address centered on key issues for the community including education, the State Fair, Nebraska Advantage and infrastructure.

"I've talked to the citizens of this state and they are prepared to make tough decisions," Gov. Heineman said. "I've challenged elected officials to do the same"

The comments came specifically about roads and infrastructure.

"Every road project in this state is the No. 1 priority of someone," Gov. Heineman said. "If you completed all of these projects, we would be looking to raise the gas tax 15 to 20 cents at a time when diesel and fuel are priced at record levels. I don't think the gas tax can go higher so any new revenue may have to come from the general fund. That's a tough decision, but is a conversation I'm willing to have."

Concerning the budget, Gov. Heineman was concerned about the pending increases in state aid to education.

"With the projected increases in state aid, if we don't adjust the budget we are going to have serious challenges," he said. "I'm concerned about how that impacts others including the University of Nebraska. State aid is currently 23% of the budget. Next year it is projected to take 100% of our growth in revenue. Obviously there won't be any left for higher education. This would impact Lincoln more than any other community."

There have been discussions about using reserves, a plan the Governor rejects.

"We can take reserves this year, and then if we have an

association for the franchised new car and truck dealers in Nebraska and works for the betterment of trade conditions in Nebraska's automotive industry.

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economic slowdown, cut budgets in 2009-2010. That's not the way to run a railroad," Heineman said.

Finally, the Governor said he was encouraged by the status of Nebraska Super Advantage, the bill that will create a new tier to the state's incentive program for jobs that pay twice the state or county average.

"This is all about the next decade and next generation of Nebraskans," Gov. Heineman said. "Our young people want to stay in state but want better jobs. This bill says that if you are willing to create those kinds of jobs, you will receive more benefit than ever before. I believe we are at the forefront in the creation of this type of program and I'm excited about the possibilities it will produce."



**Face the Chamber with
Chief of Police Tom Casady**

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good of our community's future.

LINCOLN'S YPG CONVERGENS EVENT FEATURES 'GEN Y GUY'

April 23, 2008
11:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Holiday Inn Downtown

The Lincoln's Young Professionals Group 2008 ConverGENS Event on April 23 offers top-notch speakers, breakout sessions and networking sure to give tomorrow's leaders the information they need to embrace today's workplace and community.



The event at the Holiday Inn in downtown Lincoln, starts with an 11:30 a.m. luncheon featuring keynote speaker Jason Dorsey, known as the "Gen Y Guy," and focuses on understanding the generational differences and similarities between members of the current workforce. The Young

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Professional of the Year Award and the Employer of Choice Award also will be presented at this time.

Following the luncheon, attendees can attend two breakout sessions starting at 1:30 p.m. After the breakout sessions, attendees will have an opportunity to network and speak with presenters and young professionals from 4-6 p.m., at Barry's Bar and Grill.

Cost to attend the entire event is \$85 and includes YPG membership dues for 2008/2009. Cost to attend just the luncheon is \$25.

For more information about the 2008 ConverGENS Event, visit the YPG Web site at www.lincolnypg.com or contact Stephanie Dostal at 402-436-2359, or email sdostal@lccoc.com.

Breakout topics and speakers include:

Netquirting: First Impressions 101 - Develop Your Personal Elevator Speech

Presented by Clover Frederick of Lincoln, freelance public relations specialist and marketing consultant for non-profits and small businesses

Philanthropic: How to Make the Ask

Presented by Roger Larson and Susan Rodenburg. Larson is well known for his community service, having served on boards and more than 40 organizations in Lincoln. Rodenburg started her own business, SLR Communications, in 1990 and is involved in a variety of fund development efforts.

Entrepreneurship: From Fast Food to Firespring

A local entrepreneur success story by Jay Wilkinson, who will share what he's learned from a lifetime of entrepreneurial pursuits. Wilkinson is the founder/CEO of Firespring in Lincoln and the founder/owner of Cornerstone Printing.

Education: The Talent Theory for Your Life and Career

Presented by Allison Dahl, a seminar leader and strengths consultant with Gallup. Her mission at Gallup is to provide comprehensive learning experiences and to facilitate dialogue and action planning designed to positively impact business outcomes for clients.

Political Voice: How to Run for Political Office

Presented by Kathy Campbell and Mary Johnson. Campbell completed 16 years of public service on the Lancaster County Board of Commissioners. Johnson has served as a lobbyist for Ruth Mueller Robak LLC since the firm's beginning. She also provides political consulting services to

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PARTNERSHIP PLANS SPRING MARKETING EVENTS

The Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development will participate in a number of national events during the spring to promote Lincoln as the preferred location for site selection projects.

In April, members of the Partnership staff and Aquila will attend the Industrial Assets Management Council (IAMC) conference in Phoenix. IAMC is an organization made up of industrial real estate executives and site selection specialists. While at the event, the Lincoln representatives will partner with the State, the Omaha Chamber of Commerce and utility companies to host an event in which conference goers and other Phoenix executives will be exposed to benefits of Nebraska locations.

In May, members of the Partnership staff will join State of Nebraska representatives at the CoreNet Global Summit trade show. CoreNet, the largest corporate real estate organization in the United States, holds two summits annually.

In June, Area Development magazine will host a site selection event in Austin, TX. Lincoln will co-sponsor the event as part of the Nebraska Advantage Marketing group. The group is a coalition of the State Department of Economic Development, the Omaha Chamber, the Lincoln Chamber, the Omaha Public Power District and the Nebraska Public Power District.

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