



News Release

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NEBRASKA'S MAIN STREET AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Lincoln, NE (July 14, 2023) – The Nebraska Main Street Network recently announced their 2023 Inspiring Excellence Award winners, recognizing outstanding businesses, individuals, projects and activities that contribute to the economic and social vibrancy of downtown business districts in communities throughout the state.

“The hard work and steadfast dedication to downtown revitalization shown by Nebraska’s Main Street and Network Member communities are the reason why we celebrate. The work that has been done had not only a positive impact on each community, but on the state. Often, these projects are overshadowed by larger projects but are equally as impactful on the community,” said Jeff Ray, President of the Nebraska Main Street Network Board of Directors. “The local Main Street program volunteers and staff are not only supporting small businesses, but they are helping property owners re-utilize historic buildings for new uses while building strong downtown management organizations, and promoting what their districts have to offer. They have a lot to work with!”

The Nebraska Main Street Network provides opportunities and exclusive programming to support its member communities statewide. Participating communities in the Network have made a commitment to revitalization and downtown management using a comprehensive economic development strategy that has been used nationwide for more than 40-years. “It’s not about a big-time developer coming to town to rehab a building or a city initiative being led from the top down to improve a streetscape or build a plaza. Main Street is very much a community directed, community driven approach” said Elizabeth Chase, Executive Director of the Network. “Successful downtown revitalization is not easy work nor is the success achieved overnight, so we feel very strongly that the leaders in these communities be recognized for their efforts. They are some of the hardest working and dedicated people I know and very deserving of this pat-on-the-back.”

In addition to the community awards, the Nebraska Main Street Network recognizes Michael Sothan of Steele City, NE for 10-years of leadership directing Main Street Beatrice, and the office of Senator Myron Dorn, recipient of the 2023 Nebraska Main Street Network President’s Award for his dedication to finding legislative solutions to help all Nebraska communities strengthen their downtown revitalization efforts.

The 2023 award recipients are:

Adaptive Reuse Project: BCB, Tekamah, NE

Interior Improvement Residential: 711 Court Street, Beatrice, NE

Innovative Leadership: Leading Through Advocacy, Main Street Beatrice

Special Event/Festival: Party on the Rocks, Weeping Water, NE

Public Partner Award: City of Weeping Water, Weeping Water, NE

Streetscape/Public Improvement Project: Elam's Landing, Weeping Water, NE

Volunteer of the Year:

Dr. Jacob May, Main Street Beatrice, Beatrice, NE

Trent Leichter, Tekamah Chamber of Commerce, Tekamah, NE

Carolyn Albrecht, Main Street Wayne, Wayne, NE

Don Jewell, Revitalization Association of Weeping Water, Weeping Water, NE

Business of the Year:

Clean Slate Soap, Beatrice, NE (Main Street Beatrice)

Big Red Treats, Grand Island, NE (Railside BID)

Ronnie's, Tekamah, NE (Tekamah Chamber of Commerce)

Serenity School of Massage, Wayne, NE (Main Street Wayne)

The Shop/Vault, Weeping Water, NE (Revitalization Association of Weeping Water)

In addition to the Inspiring Excellence Awards, Honorable Mentions were awarded to Suzy Swede Communications (Weeping Water) in the category for best Communication or Marketing Project; the Beatrice Beer, Wine and Spirits Festival (Beatrice), the Canteen Crawl Christmas Edition (North Platte), and the Weeping Water Calendar Project (Weeping Water) in the category of best Fundraising Project; and the Annual Lighted Holiday Parade (Beatrice) in the category of best Special Event/Festival.

Awards will be presented throughout the summer and early fall in each award-winning community.

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The Nebraska Main Street Network is a Main Street America™ Coordinating Program responsible for helping Nebraska communities create vibrant and successful downtown business districts through historic preservation, community and economic development.

ACCREDITED MAIN STREET AMERICA™ COMMUNITIES INCLUDE: BEATRICE, FALLS CITY, FREMONT, GRAND ISLAND & WAYNE.

NETWORK MEMBER COMMUNITIES INCLUDE: HASTINGS, LEXINGTON, NELIGH, NORTH PLATTE, PAPILLION, RED CLOUD, SCHUYLER, SIDNEY, TEKAMAH, AND WEEPING WATER.