

# THE CAPITOL SOWER



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CAPITOL COMMISSION | VOLUME NINE | NUMBER TWO | JUNE 2017

## Fountain Project Update

The four 2600-pound-bronze courtyard fountains arrived at the Capitol on a clear sunny day in March. Each was shipped in two pieces, the collar ring and the bowl. They were unloaded and moved into place in each courtyard. Unfortunately the warm March weather did not last and the fountains were set in place as the clouds rolled in and the weather changed. Contractors and Office of the Capitol Commission staff were able to install the fountains prior to the rain, which subsequently slowed the setting of the granite curbing and sidewalk pavers. The Office of the Capitol Commission is hoping for a July completion date for the project, but as with all outdoor projects during Nebraska's spring season, the weather will dictate the schedule.



Above: With one of the fountains in place, Capitol staff got a glimpse of how the finished courtyard might appear. Below: The granite curbing is being put in place, bringing the project one step closer to completion.



Above: A bronze bowl is unloaded and moved toward the building. Below: Once inside the bowls were placed in the courtyards and carefully set in place.



### Nebraska Capitol Commission Membership

Pete Ricketts  
Governor  
Chairman

Jim Scheer  
Speaker of the Legislature  
Vice-Chairman

Michael Heavican  
Chief Justice Supreme Court  
Vice-Chairman

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Dean, UNL  
College of Architecture

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Nebraska State Historical Society

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Congressional District 1

Thomas Sanderson  
Congressional District 2

Jim Cudaback  
Congressional District 3

Robert C. Ripley  
Administrator,  
Office of the Capitol Commission  
Secretary





# The People of the OCC Office of the Capitol Commission

## ADMINISTRATION

Bob Ripley, Administrator  
Matt Hansen, Architect  
Vacant, Architect  
Mark Tonjes, Capitol Manager  
Tammy Honnor, Facilities  
Construction Coordinator  
Vacant, Administrative Assistant

## ARCHIVE

Karen Wagner, Archivist

## CARPENTRY

Brett Daugherty, Shop Supervisor  
Mike Marshall, Cabinet Maker  
Lana Gabel,  
Furniture Conservator  
Dawn Hickmon,  
Furniture Conservator  
Dan Kratky, Mason  
John MacKichan,  
Hardware Conservator

## CUSTODIAL

Perry Shuman,  
Capitol Conservation Supervisor  
Richard Mallam, Custodial Leader  
Rich Naber, Custodial Leader

## GROUNDS

Heather Dinslage,  
Groundskeeper Leader  
Don Pracheil, Mechanic

## MAINTENANCE

Michael Jordan, Shop Supervisor  
Kent Bonebright,  
Sheet Metal Fabricator  
Tahir Karimi, Electrician  
Jeff Gillett, Plumber  
John Steele, Maintenance Technician

## TOURS

Roxanne Smith,  
Tourism Supervisor/  
Special Events Coordinator/  
Public Information Officer  
Ted Haubrich, Tourism Aide  
Matt Hier, Tourism Aide

Two members of the Office of the Capitol Commission's staff will be recognized in 2017 for their years of service to Nebraska. Capitol Archivist Karen Wagner served an internship in the Capitol Archives before being hired as full time archivist in 1997. Kent Bonebright worked in private HVAC business before joining the Office of the Capitol Commission in 2007.



KAREN WAGNER  
ARCHIVIST 20 YEARS



KENT BONEBRIGHT  
SHEET METAL FABRICATOR 10 YEARS

Matt Hier was hired as a Tourism Aide by the Office of the Capitol Commission in January of 2017. During his first months he has proven himself a valuable member of the tour office team, and we look forward to the years ahead and his service to Nebraskans. Dan Kratky brings years of experience in the construction trades to the mason shop, including contract work on several Capitol renovation projects.



MATT HIER  
TOURISM AIDE



DAN KRATKY  
MASON

The Office of the Capitol Commission lost a dear friend and valuable team member. Thomas Kaspar, AIA, passed away this spring. For over 40 years Tom was dedicated to the preservation of the Nebraska State Capitol. He was involved in every major restoration project during that time, either as project lead architect or providing valuable assistance in research, design and documentation. Tom was instrumental in the creation of the Nebraska Capitol Collections which house the Capitol Original Furniture Collection and the Capitol Archive. Tom's work preserving the Nebraska State Capitol will benefit many generations of Nebraskans into the future.



# CONSERVATION PROJECTS

## Resetting Reused Pavers

When building the third Capitol, the architects reused the red Colorado Sandstone sidewalk and the black and white marble tile flooring from the second Capitol to pave the sidewalks in the four courtyards. The fountain project contractors removed all the pavers necessary to accomplish their excavation work. The pavers were placed on pallets and stored in the courtyards until the excavation and concrete work was done.

During the concrete work on the fountain mechanical rooms and support structure, a substantial concrete sidewalk base was laid to combat Nebraska's winter freeze-thaw cycle and provide longer life for the pavers and sidewalks. Now that the bronze bowls of the fountains are installed and finish work has begun, the contractors will return to cleaning and relaying the original pavers.



Above: The second Capitol had a parklike setting with drives and sidewalks crisscrossing the landscape. The red Colorado sandstone public sidewalk pavers were reused to pave the modified plaza of the Lincoln Monument in addition to the courtyard sidewalks. Below: Some of the Colorado sandstone pavers have mysterious Roman numerals carved into them. What could they mean?



Left: After careful removal and storage of the existing pavers, the contractors began their demolition and excavation work. Below: The contractors reuse as much stone as possible. Replacement stone for broken or missing pieces is white marble and purple slate from Vermont—the closest match to the stone from the second Capitol and of unknown origin.



# Fountain Symbolism

Adapting many different Native American symbols to represent water, Capitol preservation architects developed different icons to fill the fountain medallions. All four fountains are decorated with these eight symbols. 



Surface or running water includes the rivers and streams. Nebraska was named after the Oto Indian word for the Platte River-Nebrathka-which means flat water.



Ground water includes the Ogalalla Aquifer, which provides Nebraskans drinking water and water for the irrigation of crops.



Rain water replenishes the Ogalalla aquifer and fills Nebraska's rivers and streams. The rain is seen as a sacred gift and blessing by Native people.



Wind is associated with the rain. A change in wind direction can bring rain and storms. The four winds have sacred meaning to Native people.



Lightning is associated with thunderstorms. Mosaic thunderbirds circle beneath the gold dome of the Capitol. Thunderbirds bring rain and cause lightning with blinking eyes.



Turtles represent a tie between the land and water-they live in water and lay their eggs on land.



Lakes provide habitat for many varied plant and animal communities.



Plants rely on water to grow. Nebraska's plant communities vary from the woodland species of the Missouri valley to the short grass prairies of the arid high plains in the west.



# BEHIND THE SCENES

## Fountains Need Water

While all eyes were above ground watching progress in the courtyards, behind the scenes plumbers were working below ground to get the plumbing and mechanical equipment installed. The success of the fountains and their longterm functionality will be dictated by the flow of water. Each fountain has its own mechanical room in the Capitol basement. The courtyard fountains will operate in

a manner similar to a swimming pool; pumps will recirculate and filter water. The fountains will operate in three different modes: bowl full of water, bowl full of water with a jet in the center, bowl full of water with jet in center and water cascading out over rim into the lower basin. The control panel for each fountain is located in the associated mechanical room. 



Left: Access to the fountain's mechanical components is via an underground vault. These two images look into the vault from the bottom of the access ladder. Below left to right: Before the fountains were installed the plumbing pipes were visible from above ground. Once the fountains were installed the plumbers immediately hooked up the pipes.



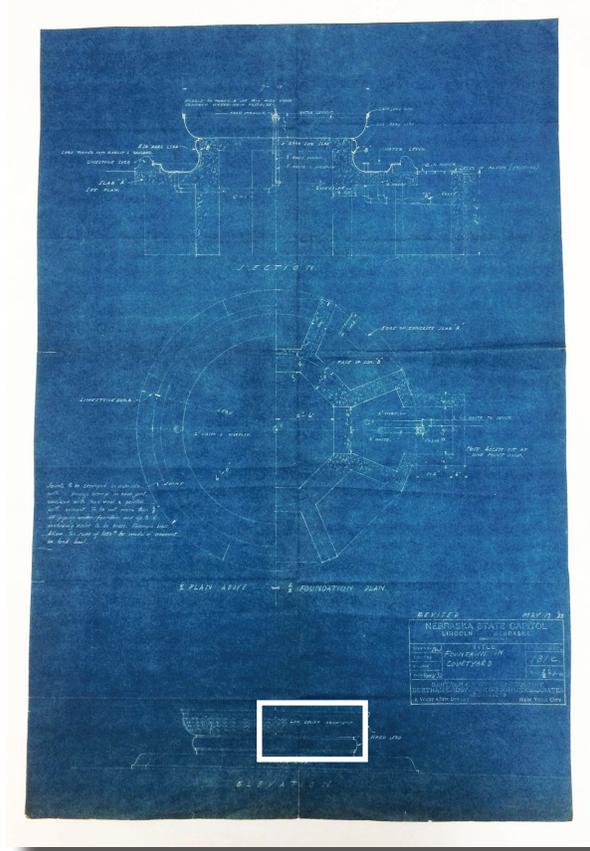
Left: Inside a mechanical room, pumps will send water to the fountains and recirculate it through filters to keep the water clean and free from debris. Below: The outflow and inflow pipes enter each courtyard via conduit passing through the basement wall. Right: State of the art control panels will be easy to program for various fountain effects.



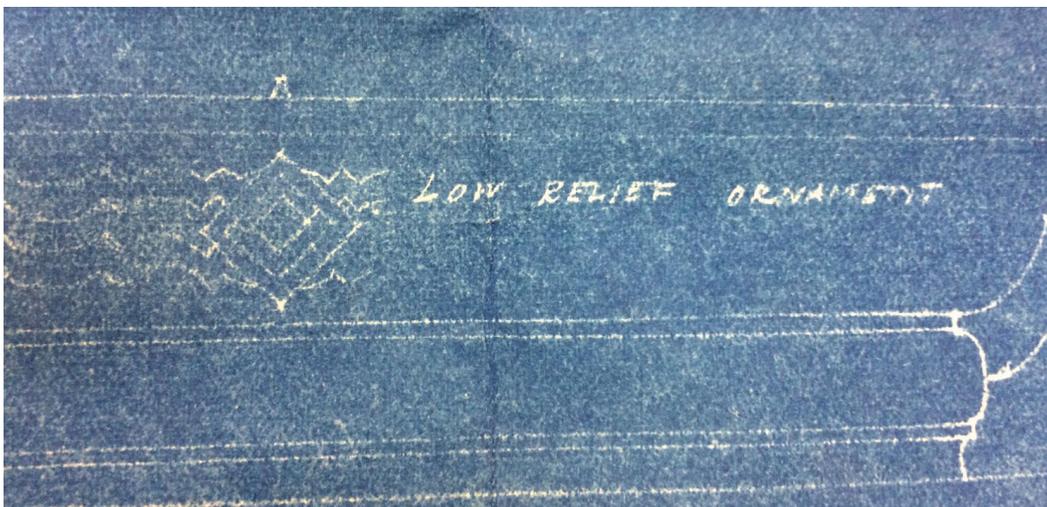
# WHAT'S OLD IS NEW

In his original design concept for the Nebraska State Capitol, architect Bertram G. Goodhue intended a fountain be installed in each of the four courtyards. After Goodhue's untimely death in 1924, the Goodhue Associates finalized the plans for the fountains. The Capitol Archive contains the architectural drawings used for construction of the Capitol, including the fountain blueprints. The blueprints indicated the size and shape of the fountain bowl and basin, and the basic plumbing layout. Capitol preservation architects used these drawings to guide the design of the fountains now being installed to commemorate the Nebraska Sesquicentennial.

While the blueprint gave guidance for the decorative pattern circling the bronze bowl, and indicated where symbolic medallions were located, it gave no indication of the ornament or symbol to be featured. Relying on Goodhue's architectural concepts and thematic consultant Hartley Burr Alexander's program for decoration of the entire building, Capitol architects chose a Native American theme for the artwork. The native themes were a natural choice. The cross within a square design of the Capitol ties the building to the four cardinal directions which hold sacred meaning for Native Americans living on the plains. Symbols associated with water are used to represent native concepts for the interior decoration of the Capitol. The thunderbird, featured just beneath the gold dome of the Capitol, represents the importance of rain to Nebraska's first and current farmers. 



At the bottom of the blueprint in the elevation view of the bowl, enlarged below, the architects called for ornamental medallions in low relief.



# CAPITOL EVENTS

## Cornhusker Girls State

June 8, 2017

The American Legion Auxiliary sponsored inauguration of Girls State leaders in the second floor rotunda at 2:00 p.m.

## Cornhusker Boys State

June 9, 2017

The American Legion sponsors Boys State visits to the Capitol and state government offices, beginning in the second floor rotunda at 1:00 p.m.

## Girl Awards Ceremony

June 10, 2017

The Girl Scouts Spirit of Nebraska Homestead Service Center sponsored awards ceremony in the second floor rotunda at 2:00 p.m.

## Rally

June 11, 2017

Nebraskans for Peace rally on the West Plaza from 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

## Stand Together Rally

June 11, 2017

Vine Congregational Church is sponsoring a rally on the North Plaza from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.

## Monarchs in Masses Display

June 19-25, 2017

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission display will be in the first floor rotunda.

## Independence Day

July 4, 2017

The Capitol will be open for tours from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

## Pretrial, Probation, Parole Display

July 17-21, 2017

The Administrative Offices of Probation will have a display in the first floor rotunda.

## Awareness Lighting

July 30, 2017

The Capitol will be lit green for International Gastroschisis Awareness Day.

## Officer Candidate Graduation

August 6, 2017

The Nebraska National Guard will hold a graduation ceremony in the second floor rotunda at 2:00 p.m.

## Camp #58 Graduation

August 18, 2017

The Nebraska State Patrol will hold a graduation ceremony in the second floor rotunda from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.

## Labor Day

September 4, 2017

The Capitol will be open for tours from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

## Bar Induction

September 29, 2017

The Nebraska Supreme Court will hold a swearing in ceremony for newly admitted members of the Nebraska Bar Association at 2:00 p.m. in the second floor rotunda.

## Hispanic Heritage Month Display

October 1-15, 2017

The Nebraska Latino-American Commission will sponsor a display which includes photography and student essays in the first floor rotunda.

## Swearing In Ceremony

October 5, 2017

The Administrative Offices of Probation will swear in new probation officers in the second floor rotunda at 1:30 p.m.

## Hispanic Heritage Commemoration

October 6, 2017

The Nebraska Latino-American Commission will celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month in the second floor rotunda program at 3:30 p.m.

## Awareness Lighting

October 6, 2017

The Capitol will be lit purple in the evening for Pancreatic Cancer Awareness.

## Columbus Day

October 9, 2017

The Capitol will be open for tours from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

## Day of the Dead Display

October 23 - November 5, 2017

The Nebraska Latino-American Commission will sponsor a display in the first floor rotunda.

## Health Voice Vision Display

November 6-10, 2017

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln will showcase the Minority Health Disparities Initiative project in the first floor rotunda.

## Veterans Day Holiday

November 10, 2017

The Capitol will be open for tours from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The Capitol will be lit green for Veterans Day weekend.

## Commissioners Recognition Ceremony

November 13, 2017

The Department of Education will recognize Nebraska students for excellence in career education in the second floor rotunda at 2:30 p.m.

## Thanksgiving Day

November 23-24, 2017

The Capitol will be closed.

All events at the Nebraska State Capitol are free and open to the public.

The Governor will sign Proclamations at 10:00 a.m. in the Warner Chamber on June 7, July 10, August 9, September 6, October 4, November 8 and December 6. For proclamation information please contact Kathleen in the Governor's Office at 402.471.2256.

**Guided Tours** are offered Monday-Friday hourly from 9:00 am to 5:00 p.m., except at noon. Saturday and Holidays from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., except at noon and Sunday from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. Please call 402.471.0448 or visit [www.capitol.org](http://www.capitol.org) for more information.



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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CAPITOL COMMISSION

JUNE 2017

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The Capitol Sower, published by the Office of the Capitol Commission, is available on line at [www.capitol.org](http://www.capitol.org). Contact the Tourism Supervisor at <[roxanne.smith@nebraska.gov](mailto:roxanne.smith@nebraska.gov)> for more information.

Please contact us if you have any questions or comments about the content. All images property of the Office of the Capitol Commission.

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Capitol Architect  
Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue, 1869-1924

## Summer Adventures Include Capitol

This summer the Office of the Capitol Commission is a participant in two outdoor adventures. The Nebraska Tourism Commission and the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission have included the State Capitol as a stop on their summer promotion tours. Among the **Tourism Passport** program's many destinations, the Capitol is a featured site on the Nebraska 150 tour. Stamps for the passport booklets are available at the **tour office on second floor** or in the **Landmark Store on ground floor**. A guided Capitol tour provides visitors with stories about Nebraska's history and development. The Nebraska Hall of Fame includes Nebraskans who have been key in creating 'The Good Life'. No visit would be complete without a trip to the 14th floor Memorial Chamber and observation decks. Weather permitting, visitors can see for miles in all directions.

To further celebrate the Nebraska Sesquicentennial, the Game and Parks Commission is including the Capitol in their **2017 Great Parks Pursuit**. Participants travel to parks and historic sites around Nebraska and collect rubbings from kiosks at each location. The **Capitol's kiosk** is located at the intersection of **Goodhue Blvd. and H Street in the north shrub bed** of the parking lot. While at the Capitol visitors should check out the Vestibule dome and identify the native Nebraska animals in the surrounding arches.

In addition to seeing more of our beautiful state and learning about Nebraska's cultural and natural history, these adventures offer prizes based on participation and number of sites visited. For more information please go to: **[www.negpp.org](http://www.negpp.org)** and **[www.nebraskapassport.com](http://www.nebraskapassport.com)**