Capitol Collections Program

Office of the Capitol Commission – November 2025-2026

Program Activity

- Provided research and information in support of the HVAC replacement project.
- Research for OCC staff in support of internal projects.
- Cleaned artwork by Evelyn Rosenberg prior to reinstallation in hearing rooms 1507 and 1510
- Scanned and processed construction era correspondence records.
- Added new catalog entries to the PastPerfect database; both new acquisitions and images or objects previously cataloged on paper but not in the database.
- Extensive back-end database cleanup and preparation for upgrading our PastPerfect database to a version that is compatible with Windows 11.
- Responded to public image and research requests.

Examples of items added to our collections this year

- Historic images of the building.
- Images and materials related to Charles Warner and Jerome Warner and their time in the Capitol.
- Large collection of research materials related to Bertram Goodhue generated by author Romy Wyllie during research for her book Bertram Goodhue: His Life and Residential Architecture.

Capitol Collections

Office of the Capitol Commission November 2025-2026

Recently donated photos taken by Omaha photographer Louis Bostwick between 1931 and 1935 are important additions to the Nebraska Capitol Collections. The photographs show construction details and place the Capitol in its physical and social context. The Office of the Capitol Commission seeks donations of historic photographs and documents which add to the ability of staff to preserve and tell the story of the Nebraska State Capitol. Once the Capitol's Archivist receives the donation, the photo images are scanned at a high resolution to allow detailed investigation of the image and it's content. The images provide a look back in time.





Photographic materials donated by a local architect, above, were first documented and inventoried by the Capitol Archivist before they become part of the permanent collection. Once in the collection the Archivist scanned the images at a very high resolution to make the images accessible for study without handling. In a photo taken from at least a block north on 15th Street, right, the photographer's use of a large format camera, the Archivist's high resolution scan, and magnification of a specific section of the image show the Capitol's main entrance on Monday, August 10, 1931. In 1931 the tower was completed, but the West Chamber was still under construction. The enlarged section shows the large bronze entrance doors were not yet installed. From the beginning the Capitol was a destination for visitors.



Building Conservation

Office of the Capitol Commission November 2025-2026

2026 Furniture Program Conservation/Restoration Activity –
Furniture Conservators, Dawn Snider and Lana Gabel

- The large, prioritized project this year and into next year in the tower blinds. Many hours of research looking for cloth tape/ladders that hold the slats. Our slats are 2 3/8 inches wide and no longer the norm. Tapes for this size slat are no longer made, and we will need to cut down and repaint the wider slats to fit the available 2 inch tapes. This work will involve over 14,000 slats in the tower blinds, and eventually all blinds in the base of the Capitol.
- All repairs and restorations of Capitol Original Furniture are documented and photographed. Physical reports are created and stored in Furniture shop files for reference and are entered into a digital PastPerfect program file for archival use.
- Ongoing computer skills training, upgrading skills to improve efficiency and productivity, and learning the history of the Capitol.
- Yearly audit of Capitol Original Furniture in the Executive Branch.
    - Continued inventory and information process training in PastPerfect Program which tracks Capitol Original Furniture (C.O.F.).
- Working to create centralized digital and physical record keeping system to allow all OCC shops to share information on current HVAC project activity, office renovations, Capitol Original Furniture inventory and scheduled activities of OCC offices and shops to provide better communication and planning of work, including samples of work products.
- HVAC Project – Removal of all construction area window blinds for tower 5th phase cleaning, restoration, and repair including rebuild, paint, and fit. Reinstall when window restoration/installation is complete. Law Library blinds completely rebuilt and reinstalled.
- Furniture repaired, conserved, restored or re-upholstered:
    48 chair repairs of various types
    1 sofa
    12 tables plus 18 hearing room tables
    4 costumer (coat tree)
    7 desks either touched up, repaired, or totally restored
    5 bookcases
    4 phone stands
    1 pedestal color and finish touch up
    Fabricate pieces and parts for furniture repairs
- Repaired 1 large set of drapes in a Supreme Court Judge's office
- Work with outside contractors on jobs too big for OCC staff.
- Color and finish touch up on/in all phone booths
- Additional work:
    - Filled requests for occupant furniture updating inventory.

- Conservation work on wardrobes, doors, and door casings as needed with continued furniture moves amongst the building tenants, over 20 furniture moves this year
- Repaired/ in-painted/finished non-project area doors needing attention due to normal wear and tear and graffiti

- Ordered and installed replacement glass for desks and table tops as needed.
- Touched up finish in tower elevators, total restoration of veneer in one elevator
- Water mark, stain removal and replace missing upholstery tacks on page chairs in Legislature, clean coffee spills under table glass, adjusted, then cleaned and conditioned leather on Senators chairs, touched up Senators desks.
- Responded to and resolved furniture work orders for Capitol occupants.
- Organize furniture storage located in HVAC project area, remove and cleaned and return furniture as needed.
- Clean original furniture in construction zones after the contractors are finished.
- Help others in our department as needed to keep our building beautiful, safe, and functioning at its best.
- Clean and wax bust for the Hall of Fame reorganization project.
- Cushions on the benches in the West chamber and Rotunda received new inserts and leather repair
- Law Library swing gate repair of cracked and split wood.
- Several tours on shop, including local high school wood working class.

Shop staff daily work-

- Responded to over 200 work orders in all specialties.
- Helped with snow removal.
- Reinstalled damaged original exterior bronze streetlamp.

Machinist, John MacKichan

- ongoing key and lock maintenance program
- window hardware repair and replacement for window project
- made specialty tools for contractors of the HVAC project
- ongoing door closer maintenance program
- rebuilt/repaired door pivots
- rebuilt/repaired doorknobs
- made new window blind brackets
- installed pigeon deterrent
- Capitol original asset protection
- original light fixture repair
- NPM Camera mounts
- Re-installed revolving doors, replaced weatherstripping in doors

- Replicated original light fixture chain link
- Replicated original brass light fixture globe brackets
- Repaired tower window hardware
- Adjusted olive knuckle hinges
- Repaired and lubricated Legislative Chamber chairs
- Finished Hall of Fame plaque
- Removed and repaired observation deck safety screens

Cabinetry, Hunter VonHolt

- Daily work orders for occupants of building
- Work with furniture shop on restoration of capitol furniture.
- Work with the contractors on phase 5 of HVAC project
- Rehung Phase 4 doors, returned furnishings to offices.
- Removed, stripped, stained and refinished tower book lift doors
- Removed and refinished assorted doors.

Mason, Dan Kratky

- Attend Construction Meetings, Punchlist, and Walk-throughs
- Help all shops and contractors as needed
- Worked on all aspects of Great Hall Bust Blocks. Remove busts, remove old bust blocks, clean niches, grind, sand and mount hardware to new bust blocks, set new bust blocks
- Built pedestal for Tom Osborne bust and plaque
- Installed camera bracket mounts and speaker brackets in hearing rooms
- Helped reinstall east and west revolving doors
- Painted stripes on top and bottom steps at staircases
- Inspect work of window contractors in Law Library
- Core drill for new electrical or data on floors at various locations
- Worked with custodians to repair grout and chips in 2nd floor corridors

Paint and Finish Restorer, Mike Marshall

- Worked to supervise projects in carpenter's shop and oversaw projects with construction and contractor teams in tower.
- Worked with all shop staff on shop projects and work orders from Capitol office staff
- Repaired Glass doors to court area
- Created and finished new woodwork for new Senator's offices

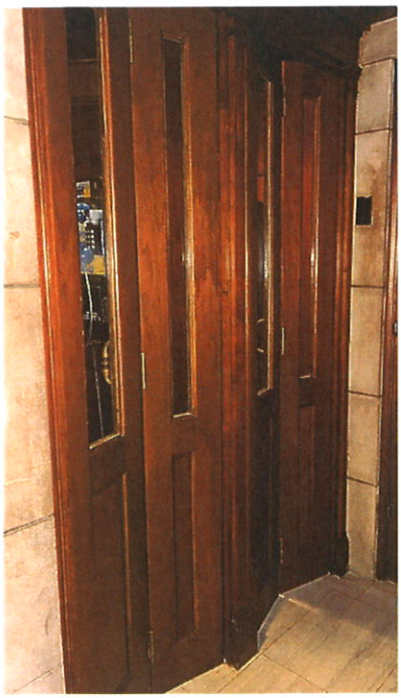
Fitting In

The installation of the new geothermal heating system in the Capitol has impacted the space and infrastructure in the Capitol. In many instances, the removal of the old system, especially the ventilation ducts has reduced the mechanical footprint in offices and corridors. The same is generally true as contractors have moved onto the tower floors. There is one exception however, to get the plumbing for the recirculating refrigerant into the tower, additional space was required near and adjacent to the elevator shafts. The Office of the Capitol Commission and the consultants were able to find additional space in the southwest corner of the rotunda in space previously reserved for phone booths. Once the area was cleared of the phone booths and the piping installed, Capitol Commission carpentry staff fabricated a wall to enclose the piping which matched the original phone booth design.

Right, Capitol Commission carpentry staff hide the pipes for the recirculating refrigerant in a space formerly occupied by a phone booth. The phones in the booths throughout the Capitol have been inactive for many years. The removal of one pair was an easy way to accommodate the HVAC system.



Below, using the original booth design on the left, staff copied the panel layout but inserted wood panels where the glass in the originals was located, right. In the center photo the added ceiling panels complete the area, provide access and match the booth detail. The Office of the Capitol Commission once again successfully incorporates old and new while maintaining the architectural integrity of the interior finishes.







Capitol Custodial

Office of the Capitol Commission November 2025-2026

David Hoelscher, Capitol Conservation Supervisor
Richard Mallam, Custodial Leader
LaShawn Williams, Custodial Leader

- Five nights/week, 52 weeks/year OCC custodial staff clean 70,000 sq. ft. of Capitol Preservation space, corridors and stairs. OCC oversees Hartland Services, our contract custodial services team, in cleaning an additional 195,000 sq. ft. of adaptive use office space daily.

- OCC cleans carpet in the Capitol and does specialty cleaning of exotic stone and wood finishes in all preservation spaces.

- OCC staff manages recycling duties in the Capitol, focusing on paper, cardboard, plastic and aluminum recycling. Approximately 10 tons of cardboard, 60 tons of office paper, 10 tons of newsprint, 2 tons of magazines, 6 tons of mixed paper and approximately half a ton each of aluminum and plastic are recycled annually.

- OCC staff, along with our State-trained contract floor crew, has all floor duties to clean, strip, refinish, and restore the unique floors and finishes in the Capitol. Staff continues the floor renovation program to strip 30 - 40 years of old finish and apply new finish to all stone floors on first and second floors. Staff has stripped and refinished the rotunda floor bringing out the natural beauty of the marble. Staff has now moved to the second floor exterior perimeter halls.

- OCC custodial staff continues to be involved with event setups.

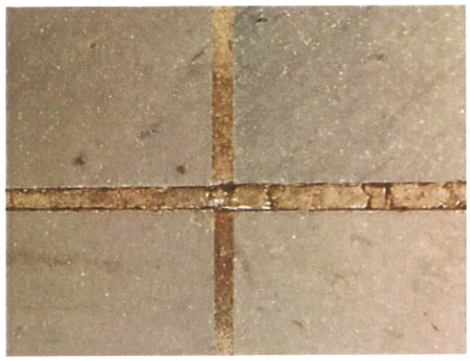
- Upon completion of contactor work in HVAC project areas, custodial staff cleans areas to ready them for occupancy.

Capitol Custodial
Office of the Capitol Commission November 2025-2026

Tag Teaming the Floors

The Office of the Capitol Commission's tag team of custodial staff and mason are working their way around the second floor perimeter halls to repair and restore the marble and slate floors that will keep the Nebraska State Capitol serving citizens and their government for hundreds of years. As the custodial staff removes the old wax protecting the floor, the joints between the individual stone tiles are opened. Sometimes the 100 year old mortar is damaged or missing. That's when the mason gets tagged in to do repairs before the new finish is laid down.

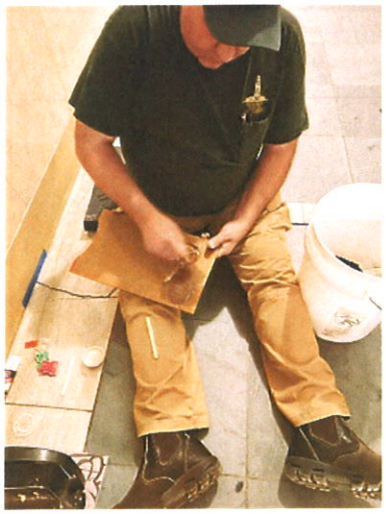






Left, Custodian Richard Mallam scrubs the old wax off the floor in the 2nd floor east corridor. Above and right, with the wax removed, broken and chipped mortar and slate is revealed. Once the floor is exposed, Mason Dan Kratky can get to work repairing the mortar. In some cases the stone is stabilized with epoxy.

Below, the mason Kratky mixes a special mortar to fill in the cracks in the stone, and replace missing mortar. Once the repairs are made, the mason tags out and custodian Mallam gets to finish the project by applying new coats of wax to protect the floor. It takes a team to keep the Capitol protected and looking good.







Grounds Maintenance

Office of the Capitol Commission November 2025-2026

Heather Dinslage, Groundskeeper Leader, Office of the Capitol Commission
Aud Koch, Groundskeeper Leader, Office of the Capitol Commission
Lexis Funk, Groundskeeper Leader, Office of the Capitol Commission

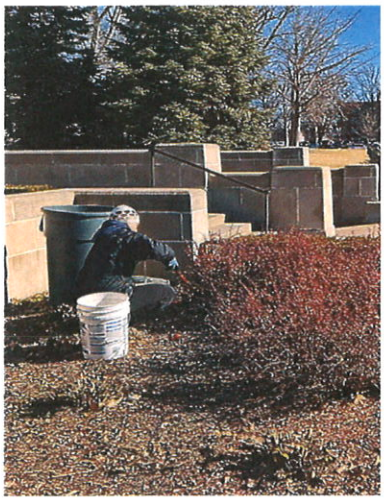
- Daily maintenance of 455,870 square feet (10.5 acres) of landscape and hardscape by the Office of the Capitol Commission including the four interior courtyards.
    - mowing, chemical application, aeration, seeding, pruning, sidewalk edging within turf lawn.
    - snow removal for the 90,000 sq. ft. of Capitol hardscape.
    - trim hedges, prune and maintain shrubs on exterior and in courtyards.
    - plant and maintain courtyard annual plants, tulips and petunias.
    - maintain trees and shrubs, prune, mulch and rake leaves.
- Support OCC Capitol special events.
- Maintain irrigation system and monitor irrigation schedule.
- Select, cut, decorate, maintain and remove Capitol Holiday tree.
- Supervise planting replacement shrubs on exterior.
- Selected and planted Arbor Day elm tree on Capitol west lawn
- Inspect and maintain courtyard plantings.
- Mulch all plantings at Capitol.
- Survey the Capitol grounds daily and pick up trash.
- Staff routinely maintains equipment for summer and winter use and oversees
  contractors who make major equipment repairs including:
    - Three vehicles (two pickups with snow blades and one dump trailer)
    - One Toro triple-deck riding mower and one 6' foot Toro riding mower with winter snow broom attachments
    - Two John Deere tractors, one with a front-end loader, snow blower, aerator, and forklift attachment and one smaller tractor
    - Two push mowers
    - Self propelled and pull type aerator
    - One riding spreader for the lawn and smaller push spreaders
    - Assorted weed whips and edgers
    - Three lawn sprayers
    - Five Snow Blowers

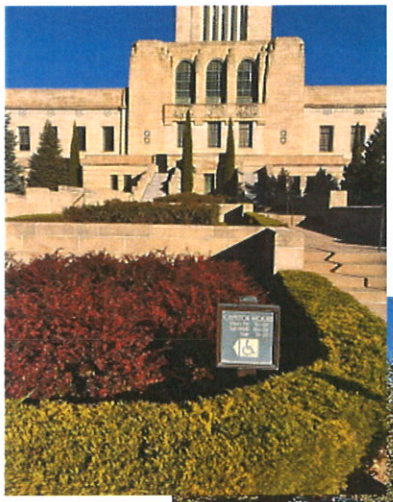
Grounds Maintenance

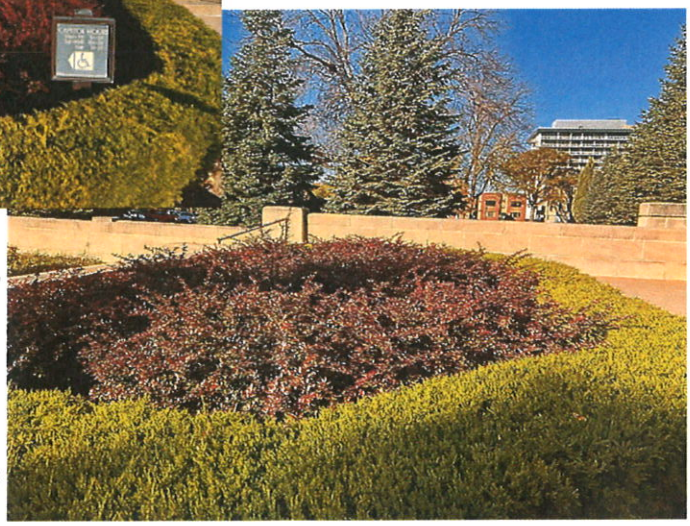
Office of the Capitol Commission November 2025-2026

Seasonal Work

Office of the Capitol Commission Grounds staff routinely monitor the health of the Capitol's grounds. Healthy turf, while a large expanse of the Capitol's grounds, is just one small part of the landscape that makes the Nebraska Capitol's grounds attractive. When not mowing, grounds staff monitor the trees and shrubs on the exterior. Grounds staff have the training and skills to recognize and treat any diseases or infestations that occur. In the courtyards in addition to hedge trimming and mowing, staff plant the flower beds twice a year, tulips in the autumn, in anticipation of spring, and petunias to bloom until frost.







The south entrance to the Capitol contains the only formal shrub beds on the exterior grounds, above right. Each shrub bed has a juniper and/or privet border. To keep the intended appearance of the beds, staff are required to prune the shrubs at least twice a year, above left. A hard pruning of the colorful barberry in winter ensures a lush first growth in the spring. Then as they overgrow their bed, right, they are pruned to maintain proper height.





Each year grounds staff plants 4400 tulip bulbs, 1100 per courtyard, and once they are done blooming they are removed and 750 petunias are planted, 250 per courtyard. Thanks to the Former Legislators, their endowment means floral color will always grace the courtyards.

HVAC/Electrical/Plumbing
Maintenance and Preventative Maintenance

Office of the Capitol Commission November 2025-2026

Chris Lahmon, Shop Supervisor
Jeff Gillett, Capitol Plumber
Bret Pinkelman, Maintenance Technician
Vacant, Capitol Electrician
Teran Kehm, Maintenance Technician

Shop staff daily work-

- 261 daily rounds to inspect HVAC equipment for proper operation.

- Hot/cold calls from Capitol occupants, lights out calls, etc.
- Sound system and electrical for Capitol events.
- Seasonal heating/cooling change, work on steam and chilled water
- system pneumatic controls.
- Monitor, support and assist HVAC contractors on project as needed.
- Prepare offices in project area for occupancy.
- Rewire Capitol chandeliers for reinstallation in HVAC project area.

***Preventative Maintenance/ Work Orders**

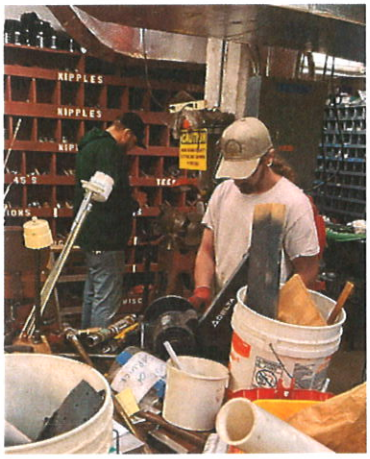
- Responded to over 400 work order calls.
- Staff performs approximately 1,050 Preventative Maintenance Work
- Orders annually.
- Check and replace air filters.
- Grease motor and fan bearings.
- Check air-handler belts.
- Service air compressors for pneumatic system.
- Inspect electrical system in Capitol.
- Repaired leaks in existing office induction units.
- Clean and inspect all roof drains semi-annually.
- Inspect exterior lighting weekly to ensure safety and security.
- Re-lamp Capitol chandeliers, install special equipment.
- Clean existing cooling coils in induction units in all Capitol offices.
- Install power and lighting in newly renovated offices.
- Monitor electric substation switch for HVAC Project.
- Track HVAC Project work.
- Replace tower pump.
- Repair old cooling units.

Capitol Maintenance

Office of the Capitol Commission November 2025-2026

Creating Access

Now that the Heating Ventilation and Air conditioning Upgrade project has moved into the tower, Office of the Capitol Commission staff will be called upon maintain the new equipment in sometimes difficult to access areas of the Nebraska State Capitol. This will require access to attic spaces and chases that run up along side elevator shafts. In some instances new access had to be created from the floor above. OCC staff has the skills and tools to fabricate what is needed for this access.

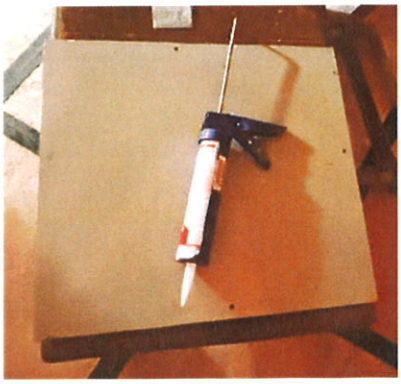


Above, working as a team, Teran Kehm and Bret Pinkelman took raw metal, right top to bottom, ground and welded the pieces together to make a custom hatch and cover, installed the frame to allow access through a hole contractors cut into the floor to gain access to an attic space below. Holes were drilled into the concrete floor and the frame anchored in place. The cover was secured, below, with caulk and screws which can be removed when access is needed to service refrigerant and water pipes in the attic space.

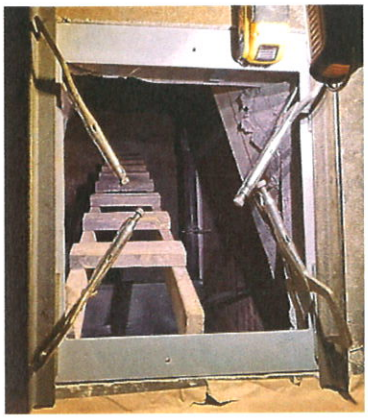












Above, from the new access hatch in the floor of a closet staff will be able to climb down a ladder into the attic space below where components of the geothermal recirculating refrigerant system move into the tower, below.



Capitol Maintenance
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HVAC Maintenance

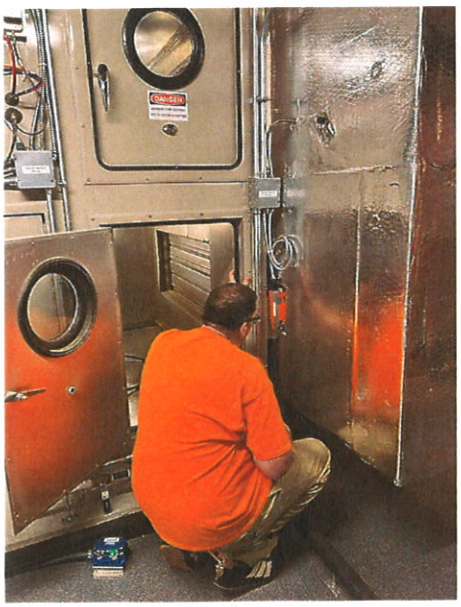
As the current Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning Project nears completions Office of the Capitol Commission staff are providing routine maintenance for the system. From changing filters to troubleshooting problems in the system, they are kept busy making sure occupants of the Nebraska State Capitol are comfortable.





There are numerous vents in the exterior walls of the Capitol that draw outside air into the Capitol,above photo. Photo, right, the outside air moves through a duct above staff's head, and down into the air handler system, units with port holes, where it passes through several chambers to filter and sanitize the air. The air is also warmed before it is passed into another system and out into the Capitol. When the system fails to operate at peak efficiency, staff must trouble shoot. Somewhere in the system the air was not moving efficiently. Listening to air movement in the vents, below right, the Maintenance Supervisor, Chris Lahmon, tries to discover if a filter is clogged and needs changed. Below left, checking the gauges in the system helps staff determine a filter could need changed. Checking every place a filter is located, staff determines a filter could be inside the vent with no easy access. In support of the project staff sometimes creates access.





Capitol Tours and Special Events

Office of the Capitol Commission November 2025-2026

Roxanne Smith, Public Information Officer
(Tourism Supervisor/Special Events)
Andrew Kosmicki, Tourism Aide
Susan Myers, Tourism Aide
Kirk Woita, Tourism Aide

Tours-

During the past year over 1800 tours were given.

- over 25,000 school children received tours
- over 40,000 documented visitors had contact with tour staff and many others walked through

Special Events-

- 40 Displays, First Floor Rotunda, State or Non-Profit Sponsored
- 13 Concerts, Second Floor Rotunda, Nebraska Music Education Association Concert Series
- 47 Rotunda Ceremonies and Programs
- 28 News Conferences
- 108 Weddings
- 154 Wedding and Family Photography sessions
- 27 Rallies/Events on the Capitol North Plaza/ Grounds
- 5 Capitol exterior lightings
- 3 FAA sanctioned exterior UAV flights

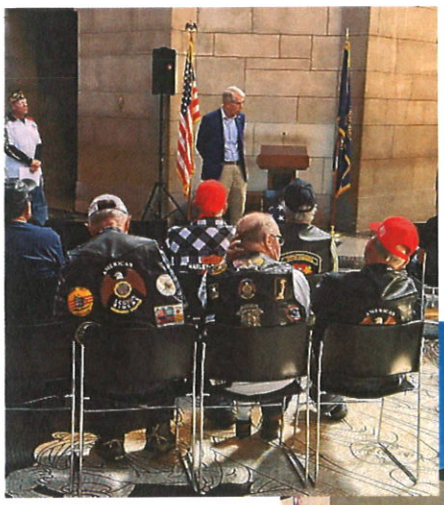
America 250 Capitol Events

The Nebraska State Capitol hosted America 250 events in celebration of the 250th anniversary of the Signing of the Declaration of Independence.





As requested by President Donald Trump, the Founder's Museum was displayed in the first floor corridors of the Capitol during school tour and tourist seasons. The display featured the Signers of the Declaration of Independence, 6 females who contributed to the revolution, and a chronology of events leading to the Signing of the Declaration and the Revolutionary War.



The American Legion Department of Nebraska sponsored a Ride for America-NE250 Flag Escort. The ride began in Scottsbluff and concluded at the Capitol on Flag Day June 14th. At a program in the 2nd floor rotunda the assembled group honored veterans and listened to Lt. Governor Joe Kelly's remarks. Then the flag that had crossed the state was raised on the flag pole on the north plaza. The flag, flown at the Capitol through Independence Day, will be on permanent display at the American Legion Headquarters in Lincoln.





The Nebraska Society of the Sons of the Revolution participated in a coordinated nationwide reading of the Declaration of Independence on July 8, the 250th anniversary of the date of the first public reading of the Declaration in 1776.