



GROWING OPPORTUNITIES

Working Together to
Grow a Vibrant Phelps
County Economy



Fred Diedrichsen

Diedrichsen Selected for Priceless Pick

Each year at the PCDC annual meeting, the board president chooses someone who has gone above and beyond the call of duty in economic development.

This year, President Doug Stevenson chose PCDC Board Member Fred Diedrichsen.

Fred has served on the PCDC board since 2010. He served as president from 2014-2016. He also organized and participated in the LB840 renewal campaign and served on PCDC's executive director selection committee.

2019 ANNUAL MEETING

Agriculture Provides Key to Local Growth

Holdrege native Pete McClymont, who now leads the Nebraska Cattlemen, spoke to a sold-out crowd about Phelps County's advantages and opportunities at PCDC's Annual meeting on March 14 at JB's Sports Bar & Grill.

Pete said Holdrege and Phelps County are held in high esteem by state leaders, including Sen. Deb Fisher and Congressman Adrian Smith.

"Sen. Fisher and Adrian Smith genuinely believe this is a great community and have told me how much they enjoy coming here," Pete said. "It's one of the core communities in the state that has so much going on."

Pete grew up on a Phelps County farm and has been the executive vice president of the Nebraska Cattlemen since 2013.

Pete said Phelps County's rail access and its close proximity to Interstate 80 and Kearney (with the University of Nebraska at Kearney and airport access that can take travelers anywhere in half a day) are some of its advantages.

He said production agriculture is the county's biggest asset as Phelps County ranks in the top five counties in the state for agricultural receipts.

He encouraged Phelps County leaders to leverage that agricultural advantage to grow and create opportunities. Pete said one tool that would help Phelps County open more doors to agricultural opportunities is the Livestock Friendly Designation (LFD). Phelps County is one of 44 counties in the state that does not



From left, PCDC Executive Director Ron Tillery, PCDC board president Reed McClymont and Nebraska Cattleman leader Pete McClymont.

have that designation.

He compared the LFD to Holdrege's status as a Tree City.

"Holdrege has had that Tree City designation for 25 years," Pete said. "It means as a city, it's something you do and care about and are willing to invest in. To me, the Livestock Friendly Designation is a tool to help you promote the county even more."

PCDC Executive Director Ron Tillery reiterated Pete's comments about agricultural opportunities as he introduced Pete's brother, Reed McClymont, as PCDC's new board president. Reed is a local farmer and has served on the PCDC board since 2015.

"I'm really looking forward to working with Reed on so many issues that present opportunity for us in Phelps County," Ron said. "Value-added agriculture and production ag are our sweet spots, and we want to focus on adding value to the commodities that we produce in abundance in this county. If we

can add value before they leave the county boundaries, that's more money in our pockets. I believe with Reed's leadership we have great opportunity to seize those development opportunities on the horizon."

In his introductory speech, Reed talked about a comment his barber once made about community support.

"He said each generation needs to make an investment in Holdrege or the county to do your share to move the progress forward," Reed said. "I always remember that. So, I'm honored to have the opportunity to help get some things done."

Outgoing board president Doug Stevenon talked about PCDC's work to survive, retain and grow the county just as local farmers and businesses owners do every day in their businesses.

Doug also introduced the PCDC Businesses of the Year, Lost Way Brewery and LandMark Implement.

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New PCDC President Sets Sights on Four Areas of Development

As the Phelps County Development Corporation celebrates the accomplishments of the past year at its annual meeting, it will also be a time to look ahead to new opportunities.

Reed McClymont, a Phelps County native and local farmer, began his term as president of the PCDC Board of Directors at the annual meeting on March 14. Reed has served on the board since 2015.



Reed McClymont

"It's fun being on the PCDC board," Reed said. "We've got a lot of activity. We've just got a lot of things moving right now – a lot of opportunities. It's fun being involved with a group that's getting a lot accomplished and doing some good things for the community."

Reed said he would like to help PCDC make progress in the following four areas in the next two years:

- 1) Continue to assist existing retailers to

improve the vitality of downtown areas.

- 2) Assist developers and contractors to increase the number of homes available for residents and potential residents in all income groups in Phelps County.

- 3) Help existing businesses find the qualified workers they need to continue to grow.

- 4) Recruit new businesses to fill the Iron Horse Business & Industry Park.

Reed said it will take some community investment in infrastructure for PCDC to move forward with solving some of the community challenges, such as the housing shortage.

"We have two different housing developers that PCDC has been working with for six months," Reed said. "We are getting relatively close to being able to connect the dots to make that happen."

And, he said infrastructure development is needed at the Iron Horse Business & Industry Park to make it more marketable. The Gustin Street paving project scheduled for 2019 should help.

"We've identified several businesses to occupy the industrial park, so we just need to put it all together," Reed said.

Kansas Native Begins Term on PCDC Board

Jared Engelbert is a recent newcomer to Phelps County, but he is already actively involved and is excited to serve on PCDC's Board of Directors.



Jared Engelbert

"It is personally important for me to serve on the board because I believe PCDC's decisions are critical to the future economic success of this area," Jared said. "I have noticed that many local citizens are very interested in the decisions made by PCDC, and I take this opportunity to serve on the board very seriously."

Jared, who is originally from Norton, Kan.,

moved to Holdrege in 2015 with his wife, McKenzie, to begin his job as vice president at First State Bank.

Upon moving to Holdrege, Jared immediately became involved in the community by volunteering with several local organizations. Jared said he was impressed by the number of Phelps County residents pushing for economic growth and development.

"In Phelps County, there are several individuals and groups who are eager to invest in the future," Jared said. "The people of Phelps County have built and maintained strong communities in a rural part of the country during a time when many rural communities are struggling economically. The success of Phelps County is a reflection of everyone's general attitude toward investing in the community and betting on the future."

LOST WAY SELECTED AS BUSINESS OF YEAR

Brewery Owners Honored for Entrepreneurial Spirit

In an era when screen time seems to be the predominant way of socializing, Lost Way Brewery is bringing back some old-fashioned face time. The brewery, which opened in November 2017 in downtown Holdrege, has become a place for old and new friends to mingle and to enjoy a taste Scotch Ale, German Pils or Corn Huskin' Red.

To honor the entrepreneurial spirit and the economic boost of this new business, PCDC has chosen Lost Way Brewery as one of its 2018 Businesses of the Year. The brewery was inducted into the Phelps County Business Hall of Fame at PCDC's Annual Meeting on March 14.

"PCDC recognizes your entrepreneurial spirit and the embrace of Holdrege, Nebraska, as your new home," the selection committee reported. "Lost Way has quickly become a familiar and integral part of the community's cultural fabric, and it represents a business model that we hope to see replicated by others."

The business began when Mark and Jessica Kraus and Jason and Kimberly Hines, found their way to Holdrege and decided it would be a good place to put down roots. Their passion for craft



From left: PCDC Outgoing Board President Doug Stevenson and Lost Way Brewery owners Jason and Kimberly Hines and Jessica and Mark Kraus.

beer then led them to buy an empty building at 614 Third Ave. to start a brewery.

Mark and Kimberly, who are siblings, and Jason grew up in Michigan, while Jessica grew up in New Mexico. The PCDC award came as a welcome surprise to the Lost Way team.

"We as a team couldn't be more honored and thrilled to be recognized by the community," Mark Kraus said. "We strive every day to help grow our community and to be recognized by the organization at the center of economic development in Phelps County is truly the greatest honor!"

LANDMARK SERVES FARMERS FOR 7 DECADES

Holdrege-based Company Chosen as Business of Year

Companies that serve the ag industry must have true grit and perseverance to survive the ups and downs of the farm economy.

One local company, LandMark Implement, has endured those winds of change for more than seven decades and has grown from a small business serving Phelps County area farmers to a company that includes 16 locations spanning two states.

And, throughout its growth, LandMark has stayed true to its roots as the 348-employee company continues to call Phelps County home.

Because of LandMark's lifelong commitment to Phelps County, its family-focused ownership structure and its success and respect among



From left: PCDC President Doug Stevenson and LandMark Leaders Troy Lorenzen, Richard McClymont and Alex McClymont

its peer organizations, the Phelps County Development Corporation is honoring the company as a 2018 Business of the Year.

"We were very honored and surprised by the award," said Alex McClymont, LandMark's

Aftermarket Manager and great-grandson of founder Clyde McClymont. "PCDC has and continues to do a lot of great projects for Phelps County."

McClymont Implement started in 1947 when Clyde McClymont and his son, Dick, purchased the local John Deere dealership. In 2006, the business became LandMark Implement, Inc., as it continued to grow and expand.

"Through these expansions, we have recognized that each location has its own unique personality just like the towns and cities in which they reside," Alex said. "We've worked hard at maintaining the local spirit of each of these locations. Farming is a very family-oriented business, and we believe families are the backbone of the farming community just as we believe families are the backbone of our business."



PHELPS COUNTY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION YEAR IN REVIEW 2018

STRATEGIC PLANNING

- Created and launched the new **GO! DREAM** tools to help business owners renovate downtown buildings and create downtown living spaces.
- Completed a **Workforce Availability Study** to provide wage and labor information to current or prospective businesses.
- Continued to refine and grant funds to improve the community through **GO! Home, GO! Business, GO! Work** and **GO! Build** programs.
- Led efforts to complete an **Event Center Study** and determined that a new center is needed. Formed a steering committee to explore locations and funding strategies.



TARGETED RECRUITMENT

- Developed and continued to nurture new relationships with **Site Selection Professionals** in Illinois and Wisconsin.
- Attended the **IPPE Trade Show in Atlanta**, the largest food processing conference in the world, to promote Phelps County.
- Launched a focused initiative to develop a more **robust retail environment** and attended RECON, the largest U.S. retail conference.
- Secured commitments/investors to build a new 45-room **Cobblestone Hotel**, a \$4.5 million investment that is expected to provide 22 jobs.
- Recruited and assisted a developer to acquire property for a **future housing subdivision** in northeast Holdrege.



COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS & QUALITY OF LIFE

- Construction was completed on the \$2.25 million, 18-unit **Washington Square Apartments**.
- Encouraged **New Residents** to move to Phelps County through rental relocation and downpayment assistant grants. Demolished three dilapidated homes to create space for new homes and provided grants to contractors for renovations, to build three new homes and for exterior home improvements to create more workforce housing.
- Made first payments from the LB840 fund to the City of Holdrege in support of the new **ballfield complex**.
- Partnered with the Chamber of Commerce to lead the **Concrete Solutions Highway Team**.



BUSINESS RETENTION & EXPANSION

- Awarded 9 **high-demand jobs scholarships** totaling \$26,000 to Phelps County students.
- Worked with **Allmand Inc./Briggs & Stratton** to pave the way for the company to select Holdrege as the best location for its expanded manufacturing. This expansion is expected to bring 60 new jobs to Phelps County.
- Secured grants from NDED (\$200,000) and NDOT (\$350,000) to pave Gustin Street in support of the Allmand Inc./Briggs & Stratton expansion. Solidified new Development Covenants for the **Iron Horse Business & Industry Park**.
- Assisted three developers to evaluate sites for an expanded or new **VA Clinic**. The VA Clinic will expand in Holdrege in 2019.
- Provided more than 40 bidding opportunities to members of the local **Builder's Bureau**.
- Provided two **Business Improvement Loans** to area businesses totaling \$335,000.



BRANDING, MARKETING & COMMUNITY CONSENSUS

- Received a **first-place marketing award** from the Mid America Economic Development Council for the PCDC website/GO! Marketing campaign.
- Informed community members, investors and partners of **local economic development news** and opportunities through monthly e-newsletters and the quarterly Phelps County Business Journal that is mailed to all households in the county.

CELEBRATING A CENTURY

Palmer Bros. Granite Marks 100 Years in Family-Owned Business

A Holdrege business is celebrating a monumental occasion in 2019.

Palmer Brothers Granite Company marks its 100 year of business this year, and it has been entirely owned by members of the same family.

Ben and O.C. Palmer started Palmer Brothers in early March 1919 at its current location at 215 West Ave. in downtown Holdrege. It has grown and expanded over the years and is now co-owned by the founder's great-granddaughter, Juli Kardell, and her husband, Dudley.

In their downtown location, they craft monuments and memorials for customers across south-central Nebraska and northern Kansas.

In addition to memorial headstones, Palmer Brothers also creates benches, signs and civic memorials. Recent projects have included the veteran's monuments in Alma, Franklin and Arapahoe and the firefighters memorial garden monument at the Nebraska Firefighters Museum and Education Center in Kearney.

Juli said their commitment to quality and their care for each individual job and customer have kept her family in business for 100 years

"From the very beginning, Palmer Brothers Granite dealt with only the finest of granites and is known for its quality of workmanship," Juli said. "Each memorial is important to us. We always



Juli Kardell is fourth generation of the Palmer family to own Palmer Bros. Granite. She owns and operates the Holdrege business along with her husband, Dudley.

strive to do the best job we can, and we continue to strive to improve. As new products come out and new technology, we try to embrace those. Of course, 100 years has not been without its challenges, but God has blessed our business. We are privileged to serve four-five generations of the same families in the territory we serve."

Palmer Bros. was the recent recipient of a PCDC DREAM program grant that allowed them to install six new energy-efficient windows to replace windows that were more than 70 years old. The Kardells also refreshed the interior of the business as they gear up for a year of celebrating a century of business.

DREAM Program Spurs Improvements in Downtown Buildings

The Downtown Revitalization Economic Assistance Mission (DREAM) give grants to downtown building owners to update facades and replace signs and lighting. It also offers low-interest loans to bring buildings up to code to create downtown living units.

PCDC launched the program in 2018, and so far three business have been granted funds:

- Smart Choice Home Management

(Chanse and Cristine Beinke) to renovate the building at 201 West Ave. into Iron Horse Flats, an apartment complex with more than a dozen living units.

- Justin & Carrie Trompke and Andi and Andrew Sweeney to paint, install new glass and repair a brick wall on the former Opera House building at 405 West Ave.

- Palmer Bros. Granite to replace 70-year-old windows with energy-efficient

windows.

The DREAM program grants are available to any business in Phelps County. First Impression Building Facade Grants provide up to \$10,000 in matching funds for facades and up to \$2,500 in matching grants for signs and exterior lighting.

For more information, please contact Carley Bruning at carley@phelpscountyne.com or (308) 995-4148.

SCOOTER'S COFFEE OPENS IN HOLDREGE

Fast-Growing Franchise Finds Early Success in Phelps County

Although the winter of 2019 was brutally cold and snowy, Holdrege residents found a new way to warm up with Scooter's Coffee.

The Nebraska-based franchise officially opened Jan. 12 on Fourth and Burlington, one of the busiest intersections in town.

Local Scooter's Manager Monica Boyken said area residents have been happily enjoying new coffee and specialty drinks at the drive-through coffee house.

"I think they (Scooter's owners) are pleasantly surprised with what we are doing here in Holdrege," she said.

In addition to coffee, tea, lattes and smoothies, area residents are enjoying Scooter's food items.

"We have a variety of savory and sweet," Boyken said, including muffins, bagels, specialty breads, scones, breakfast burritos and a "coffee cake to die for."

The store features drink specials each month, and Boyken said she's noticed local customers enjoy the specials and are "happy to try out something new."

March specialty drinks included a Lucky Leprechaun blender featuring white chocolate and mint topped with whipped cream and Andes Mints and a Pot O' Gold Blender with a combination of real butterscotch and caramel topped with whipped cream.

The Holdrege Scooter's location celebrated its official grand opening on Friday, March 8, and Boyken said a line of vehicles formed down the alley and around the block for giveaways of gift cards, t-shirts and Scooter's Coffee tumblers at three separate times throughout the day.

"It went superbly," Boyken said of the grand opening. "We had 60 percent more sales than usual."

Boyken hired a staff of 13 people to operate the new business, including assistant manager Alyssa Nielsen of Oxford. Other baristas are from Holdrege, Alma and Loomis.

Hours for the Holdrege location are 5:30 a.m.-8 p.m. weekdays and 6 a.m.-8 p.m. on weekends.



Scooter's Coffee celebrated its Grand Opening at the corner of 4th & Burlington in Holdrege on March 8. (Photo by Esbee Photos)

More Franchise Opportunities

The new Scooter's Coffee is in negotiations with a potential franchise owner at this time, but there are other great franchise opportunities in Holdrege.

PCDC Director Ron Tillery said several franchise restaurants are interested in locating in Holdrege, including Sam & Louie's NY Pizza. A franchise provides an established product or service that may already have widespread brand recognition.

Anyone interested in franchise opportunities is encouraged to contact Ron at PCDC at ron@phelpscountyne.com or visit the PCDC website and complete the franchisee interest form.

Bertrand Native Purchases Phelps County Title Company

The Phelps County Title Company in downtown Holdrege has new owners.

Business partners Kevin Davis and Andy Romatzke of Kearney purchased the business a year ago from Todd and Bobbi Wilson.

Bobbi had stayed in the business most of 2018,

but the couple has now moved out of state.

Kevin and Andy also purchased Miller Abstract in Minden in January 2017.

Kevin, who is originally from Bertrand, has previous work experience at Vintage Title & Escrow Company in Kearney, which is also

owned by Andy Romatzke.

Kevin works mainly in the Minden office but will be working in the Holdrege office occasionally.

Four other employees also work at the Holdrege location at 311 West Ave. in downtown Holdrege.

Taylor L'Heureux Named Partner in Local Law Firm

Taylor A. L'Heureux (pronounced LaRue) has been promoted to partner in the Holdrege law firm DeWald Deaver L'Heureux. Taylor is originally from O'Neill, and she joined the law firm as an associate attorney in July 2015.



Taylor L'Heureux

Taylor's primary practice areas include business and corporate law, municipal law, real estate transactions, estate planning, estate and trust administration (or probate) and juvenile law.

Taylor received her Juris Doctorate from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Law in 2014. She earned a bachelor's degree in business administration in 2009 and a master's degree in public administration in 2011 from the University of South Dakota.

Taylor and her husband, Kip, live in Holdrege with their three young children.

Nebraska Prairie Museum Hires Kearney Native as Director

The Phelps County Historical Society has hired Micah Huyser as the executive director of the Nebraska Prairie Museum. He had been serving as the interim director since Dan Christensen retired last summer.



Micah Huyser

Micah is originally from Kearney and recently moved to Holdrege. He received his bachelor's degree in history and language from Nebraska Wesleyan University. He enjoys books and cooking and is a gun collector enthusiast.

Alma Native Joins Holdrege Family Vision

Kelly McLain, OD, has joined the staff at Holdrege Family Vision. She is originally from Alma and began seeing patients locally on March 4.



Kelly McLain, OD

Kelly graduated cum laude with a degree in biopsychology from Nebraska Wesleyan University in 2009. She then earned her doctorate in optometry from Northeastern State University Oklahoma College of Optometry in 2014. She has been working at Eye Specialists of Mid-Florida in Clermont, Fla., for the past four years.

Kelly will work in the Alma office Mondays-Wednesdays and in the Holdrege office Thursdays and Fridays.

Kelly is married and has two daughters.

Local Scholarship Winner Hired at Wells Flying Service

Former High-Demand Jobs Scholarship winner Trevor Smith has been hired at Wells Flying Service.

Trevor graduated from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in December 2018 with a bachelor's degree in ag business and a minor in entrepreneurship.

Trevor said he has been hired in an "apprenticeship" role at Wells Flying Service, and his goal is to be a leader in the organization.

While in college, Trevor was involved in an ag-based fraternity (Alpha Gamma Rho). He graduated from Holdrege High School in 2015 and credited his involvement in FFA and sports with helping him become a good leader and team member.

Trevor said the people and support in Phelps County are what prompted his decision to pursue a career locally.

"We've been here since I was in 5th grade, and it seems like the quality of people is second to none," Trevor said.

PCDC's Bruning Graduates From Leadership Nebraska Program

By Carley Bruning

I'm a small-town Nebraska girl; born and raised. But I never had a deep sense of why I love my state until now.

I spent the last nine months submerged into Nebraska's economic and political challenges and opportunities thanks to the Nebraska State Chamber of Commerce and Industry's Leadership Nebraska program. I heard from top officials and experts on topics ranging from agriculture, the environment, education, economic and workforce development, health/human services, politics and government. I experienced Nebraska in a way that will impact me for the rest of my life personally and professionally.

I traveled hundreds of feet underground at the Global Operations Center at USSTRATCOM to the roof top of NPPD's Gerald Gentleman Station. I reached new heights as I toured Kingsley Dam learning the importance of Hydropower and water recreation to the global impacts of Novozymes in Blair, a Denmark-based company leading the world in biological solutions.

I stood in the room where UNMC staff cared for Ebola patients, talked with an engineer changing the medical world with his surgical robotic design, and walked a field growing the evolution of corn through the decades. I toured steel, sugar, and ammunition plants and learned about the value of downtown revitalization in rural and urban areas, what housing programs exist across the state, and the progress of vocational education without leaving our state's borders. I learned policy and procedure from our senators, participated in a congressional simulation, and walked the halls of our capital building learning about its captivating beauty.

I shared PCDC's programs with state leaders and classmates while expanding my knowledge and capturing inspiration from other community leaders. I gained a network stretching across the state while generating ideas to implement right here at home.

Each session taught me that we live in such a great state surrounded by endless opportunities and chances to make a difference. And as a 2019 graduate, I look forward to more opportunities to lead in Phelps County and Nebraska using the tools I gathered. I encourage you to step out of your comfort zone and embark in one of our state's leadership programs. You are your greatest investment. We are Nebraska's greatest asset. And we are the leaders of tomorrow.



Carley Bruning

Your **SOURCE** for
local business
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development news
in Phelps County!

GO news

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PCDC CELEBRATES 20 YEARS OF PROGRESS!

Twenty years ago, a group of Holdrege volunteers realized the need for a dedicated staff equipped with financial resources to keep Phelps County on the map.

Today, PCDC is serving that role and is a driving force behind economic development, business retention and growth in Phelps County. Thanks to PCDC's staff and dedicated volunteers, Phelps County is in the game and is poised for a prosperous future.

Without the work of PCDC over the past 20 years, the county could look vastly different. PCDC was crucial in recruiting Ag West to Holdrege, bringing more than 30 professional jobs. PCDC has provided hundreds of thousands of dollars in grants for business façade improvements; provided low-interest loans to dozens of local businesses to start-up, expand and grow; created a 134-acre business and industry park to make space for new and expanding business; and it has awarded 49 scholarships in the past five years to local youth who want to return home to work and live.

What would Phelps County look like without PCDC? Sign up to receive PCDC's monthly newsletter and read a full history at www.phelpscountyne.com/news



PCDC encouraged Ag West Commodities to move its headquarters to Holdrege.