

## Bomgaars Invests in Holdrege Site, Opening April 15

Bomgaars Supply will open a new store in Holdrege this spring, filling the vacant space last occupied by Shopko.

Heather Korbe, Bomgaars Marketing Director, said a soft opening is planned for April 15 at the store at 1533 Burlington St.



Bomgaars sells farm and ranch items, DeWalt tools, workwear, shoes, sporting goods, and seasonal products, such as live plants. Bomgaars is a family-owned company headquartered in Sioux City, Iowa, and Moberly, Mo. It has 187 stores in 15 states throughout the Midwest, with 40 stores in Nebraska. The company slogan is "What You Need... When You Need It" each and every day.

"Holdrege has strong rural and agricultural ties, which makes this an ideal market for us," Korbe said. "We know we can help the residents of Holdrege and the surrounding communities get more out of their busy days by providing what they need, when they need it, always at a fair price."

Next Generation Properties of Nebraska, LLC, based in Sioux City, Iowa, purchased from Noddle

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#GONEWS  
#GROW37

## PCDC ANNUAL MEETING

# Local Doctor Recognized as President's Priceless Pick

PCDC Board President Jared Engelbert selected a local doctor who delivered his 1,000th baby this year as the President's Priceless Pick award winner at PCDC's Annual Meeting on March 23.

Dr. Jeff Berney has served patients in Holdrege and the surrounding areas as a family practice physician at Family Medical Specialties for more than 25 years. He has been involved in the community on various boards, including the original board of the YMCA of the Prairie, and has served as a mentor to many medical students.

"Dr. Berney delivering his 1,000th baby this year made me think about how many lives he's touched and the enormous contributions he's made to our community," Engelbert said. "He leads from the front lines. Phelps County has benefited greatly from Dr. Berney's outstanding talent and his relentless work ethic."

Dr. Berney delivered three of Jared's four children at Phelps Memorial Health Center. Engelbert said that when he and his wife, McKenzie, moved to Holdrege, Dr. Berney made them "feel 100 percent confident they were in the right place."

"To be a great community, you must have great doctors," Engelbert said. "Dr. Berney is a great doctor. He wants his teammates to be successful. He wants Phelps Memorial Health Center, Family Medical Specialties, and all of the Phelps County providers to be the best they can possibly be. He wants his patients to succeed. He wants Phelps County to succeed."

Dr. Berney said he was



PCDC Board President Jared Engelbert (right) selected Dr. Jeff Berney as this year's President's Priceless Pick award winner.

"humbled and honored" to receive this award.

He said he always felt it was important to give back, and practicing medicine was his way of doing so.

He thanked PCDC and Jared for the award, and his wife, Jenni, and family for supporting his work as a doctor, even when it wasn't always convenient for family life. He also thanked his colleagues and the community for trusting him with their medical care.

"It's a great community to practice medicine and to raise my family in," he said.

### Annual Meeting Stats

Also at the meeting, PCDC Executive Director Jeff

Hofaker gave an economic development 101 lesson to the 61 people in attendance and then presented facts about PCDC's accomplishments over the past year and goals for the coming year.

He emphasized that economic development is a team effort, and it takes community partnerships to encourage growth.

Hofaker cited four major economic development wins in 2025:

- Iron Horse Ag's new fertilizer plant
- Iron Horse Business & Industry Park infrastructure development
- New housing development (Northern Meadows and Crew subdivisions)

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**Phelps County Business Journal**

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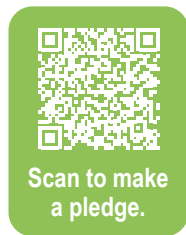
# PCDC Launches \$1.2 Million Grow37 Partnership Campaign



The Phelps County Development Corporation has officially launched a five-year fundraising effort to strengthen economic and community development across the county.

PCDC Executive Director Jeff Hofaker said the purpose of the campaign is two-fold.

“The campaign will provide financial support toward PCDC general operations,” Hofaker said. “Second, it gives campaign investors (both businesses and citizens) the opportunity to be on the Phelps County team for economic and community development.”



The Grow 37 Partnership campaign seeks to raise \$1.2 million in commitments to cover five years (2027-2031), to provide about \$240,000 annually. This campaign will fund PCDC general operating expenses, ensuring that the maximum

amount of LB840 funding is leveraged toward economic development and grant programs rather than administrative expenses.

PCDC is the authorized organization to manage the local economic development plan (LB840) supported by a half-cent sales tax that Holdrege voters approved in 2015. LB840 is a term that refers to a state law passed by the Nebraska legislature in 1991 that allows Nebraska cities to appropriate local tax dollars, (in Holdrege’s case, a sales tax for economic development) if approved by voters. PCDC’s plan delegates 40 percent to business retention, 40 percent for infrastructure, and 20 percent for community growth, recreation and tourism projects.

In 2021, PCDC investors pledged \$1 million over five years in the Grow 37 Partnership campaign to support administrative costs. Previous campaigns have also raised between \$1 million and \$1.3 million.

Unlike previous years, a campaign consultant will not be hired. Board members and Hofaker will lead the fundraising effort, reaching out directly to current investors and potential new supporters. Since arriving in Phelps County in October, Hofaker has been meeting with business owners, managers and community members to introduce himself, answer questions and discuss ideas for future growth.

Hofaker said he hopes PCDC can reach its fundraising goal by September, allowing businesses to plan their commitments for their coming budget year. However, investors can continue make commitments through 2026.

Private investor support is vital for PCDC, Hofaker said.

“We rely on our investors to ensure that PCDC can continue to perform development activities that ensure the support of our businesses and communities through programs, projects, and planning for the long-term growth of Phelps County,” he said.

PCDC staff and board express their gratitude to businesses and citizens who have invested in previous campaigns.

## Annual Meeting ....

continued from page 1

- Workforce recruitment through the GO! HOME program.

PCDC continues to work with DG Fuels on the proposed \$9 billion project in Phelps County. Hofaker said phase one would involve building a multi-million dollar corn stover pelletization plant to support synthetic aviation fuel production at its first plant in Louisiana. The second phase would be the \$9 billion SAF plant in Phelps County.

Looking forward to 2026, Hofaker said PCDC will continue to recruit new industry while supporting existing businesses and entrepreneurs. In the first three months of 2026,

many entrepreneurs have already inquired with PCDC about launching new businesses.

PCDC will also increase its efforts to help local businesses with workforce recruitment by attending strategic career fairs and promoting jobs and programs like the GO! Home downpayment assistance program.

Hofaker said his goals also include engaging youth and giving them a voice in the community and connecting them to jobs through apprenticeship programs.

“I would love for every student who graduates from Phelps County to know that they can leave, but that their home is here, and they are welcomed back home,” he said.



## THRIVING WHERE THEY STARTED SERIES

# Detour Home Brings Fulfillment for Schulzes

Lane and Allie Schulz welcomed their daughter, Reese, in November 2025, and they are grateful to be raising her in the same community where they grew up.

Although neither originally expected to return to Holdrege, Lane's career pivot led him to a profession he loves in his hometown, and the couple now values the safety and strong sense of community it provides.

to Hastings. She worked as a resident director at the college and then worked at the Hastings Chamber of Commerce.

Lane graduated from HHS in 2008 and headed to the big city. He attended Colorado Christian University in the suburbs of Denver, where he played college soccer and studied biology and chemistry. He initially planned to pursue a career in the medical field, but after spending a few years in medical school, he realized that path wasn't the right fit.

"I transitioned out of medical school and didn't know where else to go, so I came back home to get my feet back under me," Lane said.

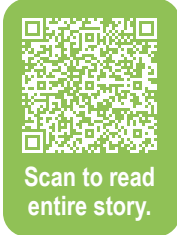
He found his new path in his hometown after a family friend introduced him to financial planning. Lane now works as a financial advisor with Nebraska Farm Bureau (Phil Hinrichs office). He is now a certified financial planner (CFP®) and Chartered Financial Consultant (ChFC®). Lane's client base continues to grow across the region, and he finds great satisfaction in helping individuals and families build strong financial futures.



Lane, Reese and Allie Schulz

Lane and Allie married in 2023 and enjoy living back in their hometown.

"The family and friends and the groups that we are involved in have determined this is home," Lane said. "Looking back, we cherish the safety of growing up in Holdrege. It's a positive place for us to stay and raise our family."



Scan to read entire story.

### Different paths, same hometown

After graduating from Holdrege High School in 2014, Allie attended Hastings College, where she studied sports and recreational management and played softball. Following college, she spent time on a mission trip in Australia before returning

# Reed Rooted for Success in Phelps County

Strong schools, good mentors and financial support can all play a part in bringing youth back to Phelps County.

Josh Reed, a 2021 Holdrege High School graduate, returned to Phelps County after earning an associate's degree in agronomy and recently put his roots down even further by purchasing his first home in Holdrege. His journey back to Holdrege is proof that when a community invests in its young people, they notice.



Josh Reed

Nelson (South Platte Crop Consulting) scout two days a week and that really got me hooked into agriculture," Reed said. "After that summer, I knew I wanted to pursue agronomy."

He worked for South Platte all through high school and college.

After high school, Reed earned an associate's degree in agronomy and precision agriculture at Southeast Community College in Beatrice.

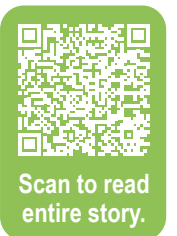
PCDC High-Demand Jobs Scholarships helped Reed pursue his post high-school education.

"That definitely made an impact on coming back to build a career in Holdrege where I know people are wanting me to succeed," he said.

He returned to Holdrege in 2023 with a full-time job at South Platte Crop Consulting.

Reed also participated in the GO! HOME grant program, which provides matching funds to employers to help with a home downpayment for their employees. In 2025, Reed was able to purchase his first home in Holdrege.

"I am very grateful I was able to receive this from both Dave and PCDC in helping me pay for my down payment in buying my first home in Holdrege," he said.



Scan to read entire story.

Growing up in Phelps County, Reed learned early that success comes from hard work and strong relationships. He said his father, Mark Reed, owner of Reed Disposal, was one of his biggest influences. He saw his dad rise early each day to serve customers in the waste disposal business.

His dad also gave him some good advice about building relationships.

"My dad has always said, 'It's not what you know, it's who you know,'" Reed said. "You can always learn new things from someone that is

really good at their job."

That advice paid off early.

Reed's interest in agriculture took root during his freshman and sophomore years in FFA. Then came a pivotal summer in 2018 when a local businessman gave Reed a chance to discover his career path.

"After my freshman year, I started helping Dave

# HACC Graduates First LeadWell Class

The Holdrege Area Chamber of Commerce is investing in the future of local leadership through a new program designed to help individuals lead with intention and grow with purpose.

“LeadWell is a mindset leadership program designed to help individuals lead with intention and grow with purpose both in their workplace and in our community,” HACC CEO Larson said. “It goes beyond theory and actually changes how people think, communicate and lead.”

Developed in partnership with BetterCulture’s nationally recognized Mindset Leadership Program, LeadWell combines self-paced learning with in-person, discussion-based sessions. The result is an interactive, cohort experience that emphasizes real-world application over lectures.

Larson said the program addresses a common gap in today’s workforce.

“We saw a gap between technical expertise and effective leadership,” she said. “Many professionals are promoted into leadership roles without ever being taught how to lead people, navigate conflict or build a healthy culture.”

LeadWell is open to individuals at all stages of leadership, from emerging professionals to experienced managers looking to refine their approach. A key strength of the program is its diversity of participants, bringing together professionals from different industries and backgrounds.

The pilot cohort included 10 participants representing organizations across Holdrege, including Lincoln Federal Bank, Inkton Solutions, Nebraskaland Aviation, embecta, Phelps County Development Corporation, Holdrege Memorial Homes, Bruce Furniture & Flooring, The 308 Boutique, and Farm Bureau Financial Services. Among them was PCDC Executive Director Jeff



**LeadWell class graduates front from left: Erin Sandy, Cindy Huyser, Rebecca Anderson. Back from left: Lane Schulz, Jessica Purcella, Jeff Hofaker, Kimberly Hines, Adam Hernandez, Parker Hamling and Cassie Ehrenberg.**

Hofaker.

The program was facilitated by Larson, with local leader Jason Sidel, plant manager at embecta, contributing to key sessions focused on communication and conflict resolution.

“Strong leaders encourage open discussion and handle conflict effectively,” Larson said. “Those were core principles throughout the program.”

Feedback from participants has been overwhelmingly positive, with many noting immediate impact in their workplaces.

Hofaker said the program helps leaders “innovate and elevate their business through understanding change and conflict communication,” highlighting its value for both individuals and organizations.

Larson said the benefits extend beyond

individual participants to the broader business community.

“When employees grow as leaders, businesses see stronger communication, better decision-making and healthier workplace cultures,” she said. “The result is stronger teams, better retention and a more resilient local workforce.”

She emphasized that leadership development is essential for communities like Holdrege.

“When we invest in leadership, we’re strengthening the entire community,” Larson said. “Strong leaders build strong teams, and strong teams build strong organizations.”

Looking ahead, the Chamber plans to expand LeadWell and offer it regularly, while also developing a “Rising Star” program for emerging professionals.

## Bomgaars Opening at Former Shopko Site .....

continued from page 1

Companies the entire property that includes Hy-Vee, Verizon, Gourmet House, and La Hacienda. Bomgaars will fill the space on the north side of the property. The former Sail Inn Lounge space remains available for lease. The transaction took place on February 27, 2026.

The Bomgaars space is being remodeled before opening, including new flooring, LED lighting, fresh paint and updated ceilings.

“People will be pleasantly surprised by the revamped interior when they stop in to shop after we open,” Korbe said.

The local Bomgaars store manager is Dee Scott. The store is expected to employ 15-18 people and most of those positions have been filled. A few openings remain, and anyone interested may submit an application online or stop by the store to inquire once it’s opened.

After the soft opening in mid-April, Bomgaars is planning a Grand Opening Celebration April 24-26. This includes a cash donation lunch on April 25 with all proceeds benefitting the Lone Star 4-H Club.

“It’s a great time to meet the team, shop great sales, and register to win prizes,” Korbe said.

Korbe said Bomgaars is proud to have locations in towns all across the Midwest, and the company gives back to the community through its fall Ladies’ Night shopping event, where 20 percent of proceeds go to cancer centers, hospitals, or women’s shelters.

Bomgaars also supports county and state fairs and rodeos and provides discounts to all 4-H and FFA members for their project-related supplies when they shop at Bomgaars.

“We believe that our youth are the future of agriculture, and we want to support, encourage and recognize them where we can,” Korbe said.

## New Realtor Join NAS Realty Team

Jordan Lindstrom has joined NAS Realty in Holdrege.

Lindstrom has been a Realtor for nearly six years and previously worked at ReMax Executives, Inc., in Kearney.

Lindstrom grew up in Kearney, but later moved and graduated from Axtell Community High School.



**Jordan Lindstrom**

Lindstrom said her dad had some influence on her decision to become a Realtor.

“He has a drywall business, and I started ‘helping’ him at a young age,” Jordan said. “I’ve always been intrigued by different home layouts and am drawn to helping people. Being a part of such a big chapter of people’s lives, whether it’s first-time home buyers or families dealing with an estate, I want to be there to help and guide, as stress-free as possible.”

Jordan is involved in the Phelps County Ambassadors, Rotary, Greater Mid-Nebraska Forms Committee, Greater Mid-Nebraska MLS Committee,

and the Greater Mid-Nebraska Membership Recognition and Events Committee. She also enjoys helping with Bible study and events at First Presbyterian Church of Holdrege.

When she’s not working, Jordan enjoys spending time with family and friends, traveling, and being with her two dogs.

Jordan lives in Holdrege with her husband, Parker, who is a Loomis native.

## Anderson Hired as YMCA Associate Director

Rebecca Anderson is the new Associate Director at the Don Sjogren Community YMCA. She began her new position in mid-February.

Rebecca, who grew up in the northwest suburbs of Chicago in Carol Stream, graduated from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in May 2022 with a Major in Hospitality, Restaurant, and Tourism Management and minors in Leadership and Communication and Technical Theatre with an emphasis in Lighting Design and Stage Management.



**Rebecca Anderson**

At the YMCA, Rebecca oversees the welcome center, including the front desk and housekeeping teams, and manages human resources. She also focuses on individual, family, and corporate member retention and engagement. She will also assist Youth and Family Programs Director Micki Fisher with events.

“I am looking forward to meeting community members of all ages, serving throughout our events, and bringing joy to Holdrege,” Rebecca said.

For the past two years, Anderson served as the customer relationship manager at Lincoln Federal Savings Bank, Member FDIC, in Holdrege.

Rebecca is currently the president of the Iron Horse Arts District Board of Directors and is the treasurer of the Holdrege Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors. She also works on the tech team for The Tassel Performing Arts Center and is on the New Life Church Holdrege Leadership Team.

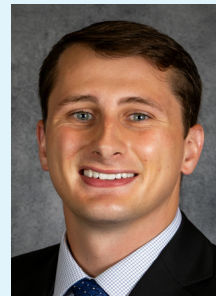
During her free time, Rebecca enjoys reading a book by the lake while her dogs play, cooking or baking, and traveling with family and friends.

She is married to Holdrege native Josh Anderson.

## Erickson Joins Dier, Osborn & Cox

Holdrege native Caden Erickson began his externship at Dier, Osborn, and Cox law firm in January and plans to work full-time at the firm this fall.

Caden graduated from Holdrege High School in 2019 and earned a bachelor’s degree in anthropology with a minor in business (summa cum laude) from Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas. He plans to graduate from the University of Nebraska College of Law in May with a Juris Doctor. After passing the bar exam, he will return to Dier, Osborn and Cox as an associate in September.



**Caden Erickson**

“What I am most looking forward to about returning to Phelps County is the opportunity to be on the other side of the ledger,” Caden said. “Growing up, this community provided the foundation and the support that eventually led me to law school. Now, for the first time, I’m in a position to offer my support back to the community. I hope to help Phelps County continue to grow as an attractive place for both businesses and families to call home.”

During law school, Caden gained experience at the law firm of Keating O’Gara in Lincoln. In Holdrege, he is enjoying the personal side of law, working alongside Rod Osborn, Jeff Cox, and Andrew Olson.

“Beyond their quality reputation, Jeff, Rod, and Andrew are providing me with an opportunity for early-career experience that is hard to find at larger firms in Lincoln or Omaha,” Caden said. “At larger firms, new associates often spend years focused on behind-the-scenes research and drafting before they ever sit down with a client. My experience in the Estate Planning Clinic at the College of Law really highlighted how much I enjoy the personal side of the law, actually talking with people and building plans that work for them. The chance to meet with clients from the moment I am admitted to the Bar, while having a wealth of local knowledge to support me, was an opportunity I couldn’t pass up.”

In Lincoln, Caden was involved with the Christian Legal Society and served as the Competition Chair for the Transaction Law and Finance Club. He is also an active member of CityLight Church in Lincoln and a Bible study group.

“Once I am back in Phelps County full-time, I look forward to reconnecting with the community and finding ways to get involved,” he said. “I’m eager to see where I can best contribute my time and background once I’m settled.”

When he’s not working, Caden enjoys reading books on history, global politics, faith, and personal growth, and sometimes fiction. He also enjoys staying active and is training for the Lincoln Marathon. During the summer, he enjoys spending time outside at the lake or going camping.

Caden is the son of Chris and Caroline Erickson. His grandmothers, Gloria Erickson and Ivalene Simmons, also live in Holdrege.

## Healthy Horizons Counseling Opens in Johnson Building

Healthy Horizons Counseling, LLC, has opened in a new location on the second floor of the Johnson Building (701 4th Ave., Ste. 11A).

Heather Hunt is a provisional licensed mental health practitioner with a bachelor's degree in family sciences and a minor in art from the University of Nebraska at Kearney and a master's degree in clinical mental health counseling. She also has earned an NCC (National Clinical Counselor certification). She has been seeing clients since September 2024.

Hunt, a Hastings native, had previously worked in Holdrege with a truancy program and got to know area professionals and residents.

"I saw that there is a great community of established practitioners to collaborate with, but also that there was a continued need, specifically for the population I specialize in," she said.

She counsels people of all ages and often works with children (5+), teens, and young adults. She has experience working with individuals and families impacted by trauma, involvement with the foster care system, the juvenile justice system, or other high-stress life circumstances.

She offers in-person or telehealth options for outpatient therapy. In the next year, she plans to begin group work for grief and also to offer community-based classes for creative therapeutic techniques.

"What sets my approach apart is the way I blend traditional evidence-based therapies with creative and experiential techniques," she said. "As both a therapist and an artist, I often incorporate art-based activities, reflective exercises, and play-informed strategies alongside talk therapy to help clients explore their experiences in ways that feel engaging and accessible."

She is available 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Thursday, with additional evening hours on Wednesdays until 7:30 p.m. She offers telehealth appointments Fridays noon-5 p.m.



Heather Hunt

## Cozy Inn Adds Wilcox Location

Holdrege's Cozy Inn Café has expanded to Wilcox.

When the Wilcox Café closed in 2025, it left the town without a restaurant.



Sheri Fecht

Sheri Fecht, owner of Holdrege's Cozy, said she was approached last year about expanding to that location.

"I think it's because my staff is so friendly, and they take care of the customers, and of course, the food is good," Fecht said. "It did take some convincing, but I finally

said I would, and here I am."

Fecht has worked at Holdrege's Cozy Inn Café

for 26 years, with the last nine years as the owner. She has continued the Cozy's tradition of a welcoming atmosphere and good food.

Fecht has left her qualified staff to manage operations in Holdrege while she establishes Wilcox. She is leasing the space that was formerly the Wilcox Café.

"I have very loyal customers that I truly appreciate in Holdrege, and I'm starting to get loyal customers here in Wilcox," Fecht said.

The Cozy is known for its daily specials, including meat loaf, fried chicken, chicken and noodles, and beef and noodles. And, of course, the Cozy Breakfast of eggs, choice of meat, hashbrowns, and toast is also a customer favorite.

The Cozy Inn Café Wilcox hours are 6:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday and Sunday 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

## Alpha Heating and Air Expands Services

Alpha Heating and Air of Holdrege has launched a new plumbing division, along with expanded light commercial refrigeration services.



Brett Buettner

"We're always looking for ways to better serve our customers," Alpha Heating and Air owner Brett Buettner said.

"Adding plumbing and light commercial refrigeration just makes sense. It allows us to be a more complete solution for families and business owners in our community."

The new plumbing division will handle residential and light-commercial needs, including leak detection and plumbing repairs, drain cleaning and inspections, water heater installation and service, fixture installation (sinks, faucets, toilets, disposals), pipe repair and replacement, and preventive maintenance.

The expanded support for local businesses with light commercial refrigeration services includes walk-in cooler and freezer service, reach-in refrigerator and freezer repair, ice machine service, refrigeration diagnostics and repairs, and preventive maintenance.

For more information, visit [www.ahaair.com](http://www.ahaair.com) or call (308) 995-2737.

## Community Gathers for Downtown CCC Opening



Central Community College welcomed the community to tour its new downtown Holdrege center at a March 24 ribbon cutting and open house. The center opened in the former Great Western Bank building (504 4th Ave.), which had set empty for several years.

PCDC Executive Director Jeff Hofaker spoke at the event, noting that education is both a skill and an art, and now the college is located in the heart of the Iron Horse Arts District.

"Thank you for providing the community with an economic and community development tool," Hofaker said.

PCDC helped fund the \$1.9 million renovation, along with Phelps Memorial Health Center and other donors. PCDC also provides partial funding for high-school CNA classes and auto tech classes offered by CCC.

The center has been open in Holdrege since 1985 at three locations. Prior to moving downtown, the center was located at the Phelps County Ag Center.



# Fritz's Meat Expands as Business Grows

Fritz's Meat began construction in January on a new modern facility that will triple its space and allow expanded product offerings to keep up with growing demand.

"Our current building is an old rundown building, so it's time for an upgrade," co-owner Matt Fritz said.

Matt owns the specialty meat store along with his brother, Jake. They are fifth-generation meat cutters who grew up in the Hildreth area. Their dad, Doug Fritz, purchased the current location in Holdrege (formerly Gleason's Meats) in 1999. The brothers took over operations in 2023. The Fritz family also owns a grocery store in Hildreth.



Matt and Jake Fritz

Fritz's Meat is known for providing quality beef products as well as chicken, pork, and seafood. They season

their meat products (which mostly come from farms in Nebraska and Iowa) at their processing facility in Hildreth. They make specialty beef sticks, bacon, beef jerky, and potato bologna, an especially popular item at Christmastime.

The store also sells large quantities of ground beef. They grind the beef themselves and sell it fresh or frozen or in patties of various sizes. Matt said they sell about 4,000 pounds of hamburger weekly. Many out-of-town customers from McCook, Kearney, Hastings and Norton, Kan., stop in on weekends to purchase large quantities of hamburger (40 pounds or more) to stock their freezers.

"A good quality meat place that focuses mainly



Fritz's Meat started construction in January on a new modern building that will triple its space and allow for more products and a second cash register lane. The new building (rendering above) is being constructed next to the current building at 1304 4th Ave. in Holdrege.

on retail isn't common," Matt said. "If you provide good quality meat in a retail space, people will find that and appreciate it."

That is part of the reason for the expansion.

"It's hard for us to continue to add products when our space is so small now," Matt said.

The new building is being constructed right next to the old store at its prime location on the east entrance to Holdrege at 1304 4th Ave. Brown Construction is the general contractor, and it's expected to be completed by November.

The new building will enhance the east side of Holdrege with its modern design and colors. The project will also include a larger parking lot. Inside, the store will triple the amount of space

for customers and allow for larger quantities of products and a larger variety of pre-seasoned meats.

A second cash register will be added to serve customers more efficiently. A historical tribute to the past generations of Fritz family meat cutters will be included in the new space.

Once construction is complete on the new building, the old building will be torn down. Matt said there may be a week when both buildings are closed as the construction nears completion. And, there may be some parking congestion during the process. But, the finished building will be a welcome addition to Holdrege and to Fritz's Meat customers.

# CASA Moves to New Downtown Location

Phelps/Harlan County CASA has moved to a new location in downtown Holdrege at 515 West Ave.



Ashley Kreutzer

"For years, our program operated out of the courthouse, but the space limited our ability to grow and offer the level of support our children and families deserve," CASA Director Ashley Kreutzer said. "When the opportunity arose to move just across the street from the

courthouse, we knew it was the perfect fit."

CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) is a program that trains community volunteers to advocate for children in foster care who have experienced abuse or neglect.

Kreutzer said the new location allows CASA to:

- Create a family visitation area for the children and families.
- Provide a comfortable, private space for CASA volunteers to meet with their kids and families.
- Host CASA Coffee Connections and increase community engagement.
- Offer educational opportunities and informational sessions about CASA.

- Strengthen CASA's outreach, visibility, and overall capacity to serve more children.

Kreutzer said CASA has signed a long-term lease agreement for the space, and they are painting and adding fresh signage to "create a warm, functional, and inviting environment for children, families, volunteers, and community members."

"This move opens the door for growth, deeper community involvement, and a stronger support system for the youth we advocate for," Kreutzer said. "We're incredibly grateful for this opportunity and excited for what's ahead for our program and the families we serve."



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Development NEWS in  
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## PCDC Hosts DG Fuels Town Hall Meeting



**DG Fuels CEO Mike Darcy**

PCDC hosted a town hall meeting on Jan. 14 to allow DG Fuels project leaders and regional electrical supplier leaders to share information and answer questions about the \$9 billion synthetic aviation fuel plant proposed in Phelps County.

The meeting attracted nearly 400 local and statewide residents.

At the meeting, DG Fuels CEO Mike Darcy announced plans to build a corn stover pelletization plant also in Phelps County and ship the product to New Orleans for his inaugural synthetic fuel plant in St. James Parish, Louisiana.

“We are helping get Louisiana started here in Nebraska,” he said.

He estimated the pellet facility would cost \$750 million and would employ 150 people. He sees a minimum of two facilities being built in Phelps County.

A water study to better understand the project’s potential water use and local impact is currently being conducted and should be available soon.

