



GROWING OPPORTUNITIES

Working Together to
Grow a Vibrant Phelps
County Economy

New GO! HOME Renter Incentives

PCDC has expanded its GO! Home program to include a \$1,000 grant for new renters.

The Employee Relocation Renter's Program provides an incentive to encourage commuting employees or new employees to rent homes or apartments in Phelps County.

"This is all part of our efforts to turn commuters into full-time Phelps County residents," PCDC Executive Director Ron Tillery said. "We want to give those commuters every opportunity to find a home in Phelps County."

With the new renter program, the employee must sign a one-year lease in Phelps County to qualify. The employer completes the grant application on behalf of the employee, and the grant is paid to the employer. Grants may be used for moving expenses, rent, deposits or other uses outlined by the employer.

Contact Ron or Carley at PCDC for more information.



PCDC Announces New DREAM Program

Old buildings in downtown Holdrege may have a fresh start thanks to a new PCDC program.

The Phelps County Development Corporation created the GO! DREAM program to continue downtown revitalization efforts started five years ago, to give building owners the resources they need to bring to life the dreams they have for their historic buildings, and to offer incentives to create downtown living units.

"This is what we are doing downtown because people have dreams for these buildings," said Carley Bruning, PCDC's Director of Business Services. "We want future generations to continue to enjoy these buildings."

The Downtown Revitalization Economic Assistance Mission (DREAM) offers downtown building owners an opportunity to receive major grants to update building facades and replace signs and lighting, and low-interest loans to

bring buildings up to code to create downtown living units. The DREAM program replaces the First Impression Grant program.

PCDC Executive Director Ron Tillery said Holdrege has several "vulnerable" downtown buildings that are in need of some TLC. These larger grants and loans will give building owners the resources they need to save these buildings. Design standards will be set requiring owners receiving grants and loans to make long-lasting and quality renovations instead of "putting Band-aids" on a building.

"We recognize that one of the biggest challenges with old buildings is to bring them up to standards," Tillery said. "That's the biggest obstacle that owners face in converting upper spaces to living spaces."

The GO! DREAM program offers three incentives:

1. First Impression Building Façade Grants:

- Up to \$10,000 in matching grants to improve building facades
- Up to \$2,500 in matching grants for signs and exterior lighting

2. Code Compliance Grant To Create Downtown Living Units:

- Up to \$10,000 in matching grants per new living unit created in downtown Holdrege (if five living units are created, up to \$50,000 in grants could be awarded). Work may include fire and safety, electrical, plumbing, and structural work. Grants may be combined with flex loan program

3. Flex Loan Major Renovations

- For interior or exterior major renovations costing more than \$10,000
- These low-interest loans must be paired with a bank loan and may be combined with other PCDC grant programs. PCDC loans cannot exceed 50 percent of the total financing package.

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SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT PURCHASES FIRST HOME WITH GO! HOME PROGRAM

As a teen, Nolan Breece knew he wanted to someday live and work in Holdrege.

And now, thanks to a high-demand jobs scholarship and a PCDC employer-matched grant, Nolan is putting his passion for agriculture to work in Phelps County and has purchased his first home.

Nolan closed on his home on East Avenue in Holdrege on September 1.

"It's exactly what I was looking for," Nolan said. "It was the right price. I liked the layout, and it has a nice garage."

Nolan, a 2014 graduate of Holdrege High School, earned a degree in agronomy from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in May. Nolan received PCDC high-demand jobs scholarships in 2015 and 2016. He now works as a crop scout for South Platte Crop Consulting, which is owned by Dave Nelson.

"It feels good to be home," Nolan said. "To buy a home feels even better."

PCDC began offering down-payment assistance grants in 2017. Employers who agree to give their employees up to \$2,500 for a down payment on a home can receive a \$2,500 matching grant from PCDC.

Nolan said the grant helped him put more money down on his home and will help with some improvements he has planned.

GO HOME! First Year Stats

Down Payment Asst. Grant to Employers:

- 15 approved applications that yielded 46 new residents
- Estimated total purchase price of homes: \$1.9 million

New Purchase Exterior Improvement Loan:

- 9 approved applications
- 8 located in Holdrege; 1 in Loomis

Contractor's Empty Lot Improvement Grant:

- 4 approved applications
- 1 located in Holdrege; 3 in Loomis

Contractor's Sales Tax Holiday:

- 8 approved applications
- 5 located in Holdrege; 3 in Loomis

Contractor's Exterior Improvement Grant:

- 5 approved applications
- 5 located in Holdrege

DREAM LIVES ON AS TASSEL MARKS 20TH

Tassel Inspires Youth, Attracts Visitors and Helps Recruit Professionals

This fall, the Tassel Performing Arts Center kicked off its 20th season of bringing song, dance, music and big-city cultural entertainment to Phelps County.

The dream for the Tassel started deep in Holdrege's history as the small city became known for its ability to draw big-name acts like Will Rogers and Boston Pops to the former downtown opera house and the city auditorium.

"Holdrege and Phelps County area residents historically have been appreciative of the arts, both visually and the performing arts," said Bruce Hendrickson, who led efforts to raise money to build the Tassel. "A profound interest in the arts is one of the keys to a well-rounded culture and quality of life in the community."

It became a dream of many Holdrege residents to build a performing arts center with outstanding acoustics, comfortable seats and back-stage accommodations for the artists.

From 1976 to 1999, committed residents worked together to raise \$4.1 million to build the Tassel. The effort was boosted by donations from the Phelps County Community Foundation.

"Believing in the project and making it happen takes people. We had people who were committed to wanting the facility and were willing to do what they could to make it happen," Bruce said.

The Tassel opened its doors in October 1999. Over the years, the Tassel has hosted orchestras, ballets, pianists, acrobats, Branson shows, magicians and musicals.

This year's 20th anniversary season features nine shows including traditional acts like pianist Charles Richard-Hamelin and contemporary shows like The Second City comedy show.

Bruce said perhaps the biggest benefit of the performing arts center has been to youth.

"First and foremost in my mind are the advantages that the school children have — of all ages — to either perform on the stage or to be in an audience and be the recipients of observing

What Others Have to Say About the Tassel

"Over the course of my high school career, I spent quite a bit of time onstage at the Tassel. We're really lucky to have such a professional venue that brings high-quality talent to our town. Without a doubt, I'd say Holdrege has one of the nicest performing arts spaces."

— Jarod Cernousek, 2018 HHS graduate studying theater at UNO

"My husband and I knew we wanted to raise our family in a rural community and were drawn to the many amenities that Holdrege offers. We were impressed by the quality of the schools, the availability of fine arts in town at the Tassel, and of course, the people!"

— Dr. Krista Stoecker, new physician at Family Medical Specialties



and seeing talented people perform," Bruce said. "Who knows, for some, they might have a profession or vocation in the arts."

Former HHS student Jarod Cernousek is one of the students. Jarod was born just five months before the Tassel opened. He grew up a few blocks from the Tassel and remembers his first performance on the Tassel stage when he participated in a local YMCA drama class.

"We're really lucky to have such a professional venue that brings high-quality talent to our town," Jarod said. "As a student after you are in one act or choir and have to travel to other schools to perform, you really see how fortunate we are."

Jarod is now a freshman at the University of Nebraska at Omaha and is pursuing a bachelor-of-arts degree in theater with a primary focus on acting and directing. He is cast in UNO's upcoming production of "The Secret Garden."

The Tassel has also been a good tool in recruiting professionals to the community.

"It's all because of the quality of life," Bruce said. "The Tassel is one thing that fills what would otherwise be a void of good quality entertainment that's kind of taken for granted in the cities, but it would be something that people coming from city life to a smaller community would really miss."

Bruce said the Tassel also gives a tourism boost to the local economy.

"From an economic point of view, people who travel to Holdrege for a performance may need to gas, eat a meal or reserve lodging for the night," Bruce said. "I've always tried to encourage restaurants to have a concert night special."

And, of course, the Tassel has also continued to provide big-city entertainment options close to home for all area residents.

"The people of Holdrege and the entire area here benefit from the standpoint that economically, they can see good talent and not have to travel 150 miles to Lincoln or 215 miles to Omaha," he said. "It's so inexpensive to belong to The Tassel. I want to encourage people to buy season tickets to support the work of The Tassel."

Season tickets are just \$85 for adults and \$30 for students.

The 2018-19 season opened with a Simon and Garfunkel Tribute and continues with musician and violinist Lindsay Deutsch and Friends on Oct. 4; Gary West For the Love of Cash, a tribute to Johnny Cash and the legends of Country Music on Oct. 26; pianist Charles Richard Hamelin on Nov. 13; The Alley Cats Doo-Wop Christmas Show on Dec. 6; The Second City comedy show on Jan. 20; International Guitar night on Feb. 16; Peacherine Ragtime Society Orchestra on March 9; Adonis Puentes and the Voice of Cuba Orchestra on April 6.

BUCKING THE TREND IN RURAL HEALTH CARE

Successful Doctor Recruiting Began With Strong Partnerships, Progressive Mindset

In a time when many rural communities struggle to recruit doctors, Phelps County is bucking the trend.

In a span of several months, six new providers have joined the quality medical providers already serving the community giving area residents a well-rounded team of experts to help with a variety of medical issues.

Joshua VanBoening, CEO of ruralMED Management Resources, said this onslaught of new doctors is unique for a rural community. Many small towns have a few doctors and then rely heavily on nurse practitioners and PAs.

With the new doctors, Phelps County will have seven physicians at Family Medical Specialties, two physicians at Phelps Medical Group, a surgeon, a podiatrist, five nurse practitioners and five physician's assistants to serve local patients and those who travel here for medical care.

The future is bright for health care in Phelps County, Josh said, because of a progressive community mindset, strong partnerships instead of competition between the hospital and medical clinics, and quality medical staff.

"It's just such a progressive and forward thinking medical community here," Josh said. "They've gotten past the old rivalry issues. I think that's something that is important for the community."

Josh said that Dr. Tom Smith and Dr. Bill Sandy played a big part in that success. They built Family Medical Specialties into a thriving medical clinic.

"They built this very large practice for a town of Holdrege's size," Josh said. At first, they traveled to Phillipsburg, Kan., and other small towns to offer satellite clinics. Now, those patients, as well as patients from Arapahoe, Broken Bow and Minden, travel to Holdrege for medical care.

Josh said Dr. Smith and Dr. Sandy have consistently operated above the 95th percentile of productivity for physicians. And yet, they are still able to provide a high level of personal care to each patient.

At the recent retirement reception for Dr. Tom Smith, the fond sentiments of his patients were evident as hundreds of well-wishers waited in a line that stretched nearly out the door to say goodbye to their beloved family doctor.

Dr. Smith officially retired on August 31 after 38 years as a physician in Holdrege. Dr. Sandy will be retiring in the next few years. Dr. Richard Reiner also recently retired.

That was part of the reason that ruralMED, Phelps Memorial Health Center and local physicians partnered to recruit doctors.

"Those physicians have huge patient loads, and we wanted to make sure there are physicians in the community to absorb all of that," Josh said.

The opportunities that exist to build a practice quickly because of retiring doctors, a cooperative (not divisive) medical community, and a strong partnership between the clinics and a state-of-the-art local hospital are part of what made that recruitment job easier.

The recruitment process started about three years ago with Family Medical Specialties, ruralMED and PMHC working together on the process. ruralMED is a management company that takes care of the business aspects of rural clinics and hospitals so that medical staff can focus on caring for patients. Locally, ruralMED is jointly owned by PMHC and Family Medical Specialties and manages the clinics at Family Medical Specialties and Phelps Medical Group.

Josh said the medical staff and hospital administrative staff met to identify the number of physicians and skill sets that would be needed to best serve the community and where gaps existed.

For example, only one local doctor (Dr. Shane Smith) was trained to perform C-section deliveries. Now, two of the new doctors (Dr. Krista Stoecker and Dr. Jacob Peterson) are also trained to perform C-sections. Staff also identified a need



Dr. Thomas Smith greets two of hundreds of well wishers who attended his retirement reception on August 31.

for a podiatrist.

They studied recruiting contracts that had been successful in landing physicians in other rural areas. Some of the incentives may include helping pay a portion of student loans, reimbursement of relocation expenses or offering a stipend during residency. Incentives were tailored to each physician's unique case.

"We were able to do that because of the partnership with the hospital," Josh said. "The hospital is helping support some of those incentives. That is very unique to this community."

Josh said the physicians they were recruiting are young with young families or plans to start families, so having a quality and safe school system was a big plus in their efforts.

Other factors that played a role in recruitment efforts included churches, activities like being able to golf or hunt and other recreational offerings like the YMCA and the Tassel.

Dr. Krista Stoecker, a new physician at Family Medical Specialties, said she and her husband knew they wanted to raise their family in a rural community.

"We were drawn to the many amenities that Holdrege offers," Dr. Stoecker said. "We were impressed by the quality of the schools, the availability of fine arts in town at the Tassel, and of course, the people!"

Josh is just as excited about the new doctors as they are about Holdrege.

"I couldn't say enough good things about all of the physicians we have recruited," he said. "They are such good people and a great fit for our community."

HOLDREGE WELCOMES NEW PROVIDERS



Dr. Jacob Peterson



Dr. Krista Stoecker



Dr. Kathryn Thelen



Dr. Zach Egger



Dr. Russell Carlston



Mileah Panter

Dr. Jacob Peterson, FMS

Hometown: Atkinson

Colleges: Northwestern College in Orange City, Iowa, and UNMC in Omaha

Residency: Primary Care Program at UNMC with two years each in internal medicine and family medicine

Specialties: Family medicine, internal medicine, obstetrics, sports medicine, intensive care and endoscopy

Dr. Krista Stoecker, FMS

Hometown: Papillion

Colleges: University of Nebraska-Lincoln, UNMC of Omaha

Residency: Primary Care Program at UNMC in Omaha and in Grand Island

Specialties: Family medicine with special interests in pediatrics, obstetrics, women's health and end-of-life care, cesarean births

Dr. Kathryn Thelen (DO), FMS

Hometown: Wood River

Colleges: UNL and Kansas City University of Medicine & Biosciences

Residency: Lincoln Medical Education Partnership for Family Medicine

Specialties: Family medicine, women's health, obstetrics (OB), pediatrics, geriatrics, osteopathic manipulative medicine to aid with back pain, tension headaches and musculoskeletal issues

Dr. Zachary Egger (DO), PMG

Hometown: Wood River

Colleges: Wesleyan University and Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences

Residency: Lincoln Family Medicine

Specialties: Endoscopy, vasectomy, osteopathic manipulative treatments, skin lesion removal and joint injections, family medicine, obstetrics

Dr. Russell Carlston, ruralMED

Hometown: Colorado Springs

Colleges: University of Colorado (Colorado Springs) and Barry University in Miami

Residency: Podiatric Medicine and Surgery with the added credential in Reconstructive Rearfoot/Ankle Surgery at St. Joseph Medical Center in Houston

Specialties: Forefoot, midfoot, and rearfoot surgery, trauma, wound care, diabetic foot care and reconstructive surgery

Mileah Panter (APRN), PMG

Hometown: Hildreth

Colleges: University of Nebraska Medical Center Kearney, University of Nebraska Medical Center Omaha

Specialties: Endocrinology disorders and complicated diabetes treatment, dual board certified in acute care and primary pediatric

Phelps Memorial Health Center Announces Expansion Plans

In early August, Phelps Memorial Health Center announced plans for an addition to the hospital that would create more space for a local health clinic, oncology services, minor surgeries and consultations and cardiac rehab.

Phelps Memorial Health Center CEO Mark Harrel said one reason for the expansion is the recruitment of new providers at Phelps Medical Group and Family Medical Specialties.

Plans are to build a new health clinic that would be attached to the northeast corner of the hospital to replace and expand the existing Phelps Medical Group building, which would be demolished.



The new clinic will have 17 patient exam rooms and a communication hub in the center of the rooms to create better provider-nurse-patient communication. This concept should reduce the wait time for patients.

The addition will also include expanded

spaces for oncology services. Rooms in the new oncology clinic will allow patients to choose to receive chemo in a group or private setting.

A construction start date has not been set. It is hoped that the project could be completed by January 2020.

REACHING THE WORLD FROM PHELPS COUNTY

Online Stores Help Retailers Increase Sales to Local Customers and Reach New Markets

When **THE 308 BOUTIQUE** owner Erin Sandy launched her online shopping site last year, she compared it to a pregnancy and giving birth.

"I felt like I had birthed a baby," Erin joked. "And it must have finally been a boy because it was so painful!"

It took a good nine months or more of work to launch the site and set up the process of ensuring that every piece of clothing is modeled, photographed and put on the website so that her local store can expand its reach beyond Phelps County.

The boutique already had a large base of customers outside of Phelps County who often wanted to order via Facebook messages, emails or texts. Having the e-commerce site simplified the chaos of outside order requests.

Erin estimates the online shopping boosted her sales by about 20 percent. It allowed her store to capture new customers with a 40-percent off cyber Monday sale last Thanksgiving, and she said it has given her store more credibility and the ability to compete with boutiques in towns of any size.

The 308 Boutique is just one of several local businesses that have made the leap to online stores. And while all admit the learning curve and work involved can be challenging, they said it is worth the effort. Online shopping keeps small businesses alive in a world where many customers prefer to shop from the comfort of their own home.

SCREEN MACHINE owners Aubri and Dustin Nantkes recently started offering online ordering and fund-raising options as a way to streamline the shirt-ordering process and make it more convenient for local customers.

"Everything is going to online," Aubri said. "I think it's just more convenient for people to shop online while they are sitting at an appointment or at a game. They don't have to make an extra trip."

Online ordering also cuts down on lost order forms, makes it easy for teams or organizations to share order links via text or email and cuts down on processing time for Aubri. Plus, the online option keeps Screen Machine in the competition with non-

local t-shirt shops.

"This is a big step for us, and we are hoping it will continue to keep people more local because now we offer the same thing as anybody else online offers," Aubri said.

Stephanie Klein, owner of **STEPHANIE'S**, was one of the first local business to offer online shopping. She launched her site in October 2015. In the past few weeks, she has shipped orders to New York, Arizona, Kansas, Iowa, Omaha, Lincoln and Lexington.

In addition to reaching customers across the United States, she discovered that online shopping allowed her to extend her hours to local customers who work during normal store hours.

"I think we are all so busy anymore, there's just really no time to shop," Stephanie said. "I think if people are finding they need something, they grab their phone or sit down at their desktop."

Stephanie said the in-store pick-up option has been popular on her website because it allows local customers to shop online and then stop by the store to pick up their merchandise that is ready and waiting for them.

Before launching the website, Stephanie spent countless hours reading books and studying to learn how to launch and manage an online shopping site. Both Stephanie and Erin said it now requires at least 15-20 hours per week to manage their sites. Mostly, they manage the sites themselves, but they do sometimes rely on employees to help fill in the gaps.

Stephanie said former employee Brenna (Gnuse) Bartruff was instrumental in helping her launch her site, and she still helps remotely at times.

David and DeEtte Bailey, owners of **GIFTS & THINGS HOLDREGE**, worked for more than a year before launching their new online shopping site in September. DeEtte said employee Bailey Porter, who is a local graduate now studying marketing,



Audra Peterson creates handmade children's clothing in her business, Mulberry Jane. An online store allows her to work from her home in rural Funk and market locally and to the world.

was instrumental in helping them launch and create their new site.

"The biggest challenge is learning the program and for every product you put online, you have to have photos and descriptions, and that's a lot of work," DeEtte said, especially considering that Gifts & Things launched with more than 2,500 items on their shopping site!

Another challenge for DeEtte was to recreate online the popular displays that her customers enjoy in the store.

DeEtte said customers had been requesting online shopping for several years, and she hopes the site will help them reach a younger generation of shoppers who are used to shopping online.

Online shopping also allows business owners who don't have a brick-and-mortar store the opportunity to be competitive.

Audra Peterson of Funk opened her handmade children's clothing business **MULBERRY JANE** in late 2016. She doesn't have a storefront, so after 10 months of selling her clothing at craft fairs and pop-up stores, she decided to launch an online store. It allows her to work from her home in rural Funk and reach customers across the U.S.

"Online sales are key to the success of my business," Audra said. "I can go set up at a craft show to sell my things, but that involves a lot of upfront work building up inventory to sell, promoting that I'll be at the event, loading and unloading my displays and clothing the day of. It's pretty hard to beat online selling from the comfort of my home, especially now that I have two kiddos at home. Without online selling, it would be pretty hard to get my name out there living in such a rural community in central Nebraska."

Purchasing Cozy 'Dream Come True' For New Owner

Owning her own restaurant is dream come true for new Cozy Inn Café owner Sheri Evans.

And, her customers are happy, too.

"I am amazed at how many people have thanked me for buying it and keeping it open," Sheri said. "My goal was that hopefully customers wouldn't notice the transition. I think I have accomplished that."



Sheri Evans

Sheri grew up in Holdrege and washed dishes at the Cozy Café as a teenager and eventually started waiting tables at the restaurant. She studied hotel and restaurant management at Central Community College in Hastings and always hoped to someday own her own restaurant.

She started working at the Cozy again 12 years ago shortly after former owners

Pat and Joyce Landrigan purchased the business. When the Landrigrans wanted to sell or close the Cozy Café earlier this year, Sheri knew she had to keep it open.

"My customers are like family," Sheri said. "I love my job. I love the people. I love what I do. I figured I was probably going to be here until I was dead anyway, so why not own it. It was a step I felt I was ready for."

On August 1, the transition became official, and Sheri became the new owner of the Cozy Café.

"It was kind of dream come true for me," Sheri said.

She doesn't have any major changes planned for the restaurant at this time. The Cozy still serves its famous fried chicken on Thursdays and Sundays and other home-style meals every day of the week. She also continues to offer the popular Sunday buffet.

The Cozy is open from Monday-Friday, 5:30 a.m.-2 p.m.; Saturday, 5:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.; and Sunday, 6:30 a.m.-10 a.m. for breakfast and 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. for the Sunday buffet.



Business Opportunities

Sheri found her dream come true at the Cozy. If your dream is to be a business owner, consider purchasing an existing business. These two great opportunities exist in Holdrege:

My Favorite Party Shoppe & Clinch Enterprises: Located near 4th and Burlington, one of the busiest intersections in Holdrege. Contact Terry or Darlene at (308) 995-4800.

Graphic Arts Shop: Located in downtown Holdrege at 308 East Ave. This business has served customers for nearly 80 years. Contact Dan Imel at (308) 995-5431.

4th Avenue Coffee Expands Bakery on 5th Anniversary

4th Avenue Coffee celebrated its fifth anniversary with the addition of an expanded bakery.

Owner Brian Steinbach said the bakery is something they have pondered for several years, and since foot traffic has slowed due to the highway construction, now was the perfect time to add more bakery space.



Two commercial ovens, expanded counter space and extra display cases give the business plenty of room to add to their bakery selection, which may include specialty breads and a larger selection and variety of cakes and rolls. The coffee shop also serves lunch in addition to its specialty coffees, teas and smoothies. The bakery offers many gluten-free and Keto-friendly items.

Hours are Mondays, 6:30 a.m.-5 p.m.; Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, 6:30 a.m.-10 p.m.; and Fridays and Saturdays, 6:30 a.m.-5 p.m.

Fertigs Open JB's Sports Bar in Holdrege

JB's Sports Bar opened in downtown Holdrege in September. Jerry and Stacia Fertig purchased the Taste of Texas restaurant from James and Robbie Arp and are hoping the new business will "bring more fun into the community and keep people in town."

Jerry said he brought back the stage that was formerly in the restaurant and plans to bring in bands, music acts and comedians. The bar now has 10 big-screen TVs for a fun game-day atmosphere and a remodeled outdoor beer garden with games.

However, Jerry said their main goal is to take care of people with good service and good food at an affordable price.

Stacia said JB's will serve prime rib on Friday and Saturday nights and have daily lunch specials. Appetizers, burgers and wings will also be staples on the menu.

Stacia teaches fifth grade in Loomis, and both she and Jerry recently worked at the East Avenue Pub. Jerry said he previously had worked at sports bars in Kearney.

"I just kind of always wanted to own my own bar, so here it is," he said.

Hours are Monday-Thursday, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. and 4:30-11 p.m., and Friday and Saturday, 11 a.m.-1 a.m.

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BOOSTING THE LOCAL ECONOMY WITH ART

Several well-known bronze sculptors hail from Holdrege, and the Citizens for Bronze Art organization is working to honor their talents and bring an economic boost to Phelps County at the same time.

Eight life-sized bronze sculptures by world-renowned artists George Lundeen and Brad Pearson already provide beauty and inspiration at public places in Holdrege. A ninth sculpture is complete and will be placed at the new baseball/softball complex. And, now the organization will seek the public's help in continuing to expand the collection by asking for donations during the Phelps County Community Foundation's upcoming give2Grow event on November 15.

And, those donations could help boost the economy.

"I'm a big proponent of public art," PCDC Executive Director Ron Tillery said. "Some communities make public art part of their tourism and economic development program. It creates an ambiance and positive vibe in the community or downtown. It adds to the cool factor of the community."

Sign up for PCDC's monthly enewsletter for a more in depth story at www.phelpscountyne.com.



Holdrege's first bronze sculpture, Promise of the Prairie by George Lundeen (1983).