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Regional Housing Summit Scheduled for May 6

The Central Community College Cottonwood Room in the Campus Center is the site for the South Central Regional Housing Summit slated for May 6th. The summit is one of a series of regional events held this Spring that will explore the significant role that affordable housing plays in economic development.

The Nebraska Housing Developers Association is the state host for the summit series. Local hosts for the Northeast event include City of Grand Island, Community Action Partnership of Mid-Nebraska, Housing Development Corporation and South Central Economic Development District.

The summit, scheduled from 9:30am-2pm, will feature a presentation, *Rural Nebraska Housing Trends and Issues* by Jason Henderson, Branch Executive with the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City – Omaha Branch. A roundtable discussion, *Community Housing Needs & Strategies – Rental & Homeownership*, will offer opportunities for participants to discuss challenges and share best practices in local affordable housing development.

After a luncheon hosted by the Federal Reserve Bank, the Nebraska Housing Developers Association will present recognition awards to local communities investing in affordable housing development.

Registration is required as space is limited. There is no fee to attend. To learn more or to register, contact Mary at 402-435-0315 ext. 3, e-mail mary@housingdevelopers.org

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: "Ensuring access to affordable housing is a critical component in our
: economic development efforts in communities across Nebraska. I
: appreciate the efforts of all those working to address this issue for the
: benefit of Nebraska families" ---Governor Dave Heineman
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SCEDD Welcomes Kim Herrick

Kim Herrick has joined the staff of the South Central Economic Development District as the Community Economic Development Consultant. Kim is nearing graduation in Organizational Communications at the University of Nebraska – Kearney and lives in Kearney with her son.



Prior to attending UNK, Kim spent time operating her family's businesses. Kim feels her experience managing business activities and the education she has received at UNK will be an asset to the South Central Economic Development District. "Having been raised in rural Nebraska, I know how vital it is to help keep our communities thriving and I am thrilled to be a part of the SCEDD organization that helps communities to do just that." When Kim isn't attending her son's school and sporting activities she enjoys golfing, camping and gardening.

SCEDD is pleased to have Kim on board and is looks forward to having her assist the communities with their projects.

Finding A Buyer For Your Business

Ever wondered where to look to find someone to buy your business? On March 24th, about three dozen people attended a workshop on just that subject at the Red River Lounge in Minden. Attendees heard the Central Valley Irrigation story of the successful business transfer to an employee in Holdrege. Owner Terry Gerdes selected his experienced Parts Manager, Monty Vonasek, to become his successor. With years of planning and preparation, Terry officially sold the business to Monty in January of 2007.

Business broker, Frank Haverkamp, of Sunbelt Brokers in Omaha, and Business Coach, Mark Scott, of Outfight Solutions of Omaha, provided valuable information on the professional services they offer owners interested in selling their business. They shared that they can help to actually find right buyer for a business. Frank explained the difference between someone who *wants* to buy a business and someone who is *able* to purchase a business, and mentioned several mistakes business owners make when trying to sell. Mark added that businesses which transition to a family member only have a 25% chance of succeeding in the first four years. They also stressed how important it is to handle communication appropriately and not let the public and current vendors get the wrong idea when an entrepreneur is preparing for a business transition.

Jean Issler from the Nebraska Workforce Development offered ways current business owners can recruit key employees that could possibly become business owner successors. Current business owners, Deb & Gary Barile shared their story of the purchase a restaurant in Oxford. The evening ended with an informative question and answer session. The workshop was provided in part by the SCEDD, in conjunction with the PK Partnership and its many sponsors in Phelps & Kearney Counties. To host workshops such as this in your area, please contact SCEDD.

**Imagining Juniata's Future:
Setting Priorities for Community Improvement**

Like many communities, Juniata is interested in the future success of its community. Leaders in Juniata decided to take action to develop a shared vision. Wednesday, February 13, 2008, Linda Black of the Nebraska Department of Economic Development (DED), and Randy Gunn of the South Central Resource, Conservation and Development (RC&D) Council, and Sharon Hueftle of SCEDD facilitated the Appreciative Inquiry process during a Town Hall meeting in Juniata.

Appreciative Inquiry encourages patrons to look at past successes in the community and use the lessons learned from these successes to propel the community into the future. The process leads participants through developing priorities, implementing plans, building consensus and collaboration and increasing visibility of community projects. Juniata residents spent time reviewing the community's success stories and thinking about what they wanted to see in 20-25 years. Patrons also helped establish three priority goals: housing, parks and recreation and cleanup.

This meeting was sponsored by the South Central Economic Development District, Inc. and the Village of Juniata. Supper was provided by the Adams County Bank and the Village of Juniata.

Linda Black (standing) discusses Juniata's future with participants



The South Central Economic Development District exists to develop and promote a positive economic climate, which supports regional growth.

News from the District



Dr. Tom Nelsen talks to students about careers in dentistry

Career Fair Shows Students Wide Range of Hometown Jobs

Reprinted from the Holdrege Chamber Target Newsletter

Some 350 10th graders from the ESU #11 area attended the first annual South Central Nebraska Career Fair in Holdrege March 12th at the Ag Center. The Chamber Education Committee hosted the event which included 36 booths demonstrating local jobs at 30 businesses. The committee's goal in launching the event is to show local students that they do not need to leave home— that returning to rural areas after college provides a variety of career paths in a living environment they enjoy. Exhibitors were recruited with consideration toward representing all six Career Clusters in the Nebraska Career

Education Model adopted by Holdrege High School. Holdrege High School Counselor Dan Atchison brought the idea of a career fair to the newly formed Education Committee, chaired by Holdrege Superintendent of Schools Cinde Wendell. This first project for the group was a rousing success; feedback from the exhibitors was overwhelmingly positive. Students were able to visit booths of their choice and the choices were varied and interactive: assembling electronics parts; writing radio ads; guessing at closing grain prices; mixing up slime at the pharmacy booth; climbing aboard a tractor, Humvee or ambulance; learning about real estate by playing a Monopoly-style game, to name a few. And we must mention the fistulated cow—a cow with a fistula, or hole, in its side that allows students to look into and reach into the cow's stomach.

Schools attending this year's fair were Alma, Arapahoe, Cambridge, Franklin, Holdrege, Loomis, Minden, Southern Valley, and Wilcox-Hildreth.

Note: SCEDD and the Phelps County Development Corp hosted a booth encouraging students to consider entrepreneurship as a career.



Kim Fulmer of Noble Drug shares information about Pharmaceutical Careers

MarketPlace Once Again a Huge Success

By Elisha Greeley Smith, Center for Rural Affairs

Over 550 people gathered in Columbus, Nebraska on February 27th, 2008 for the Center for Rural Affairs' second annual, *Marketplace: Opening Doors to Success*. It's the only entrepreneurial conference of its kind in Nebraska and surrounding states.

Entrepreneurs, business owners, service providers, students, teachers, farmers, ranchers and many others of all ages took part. Participants came from over seven states including, California, Nevada, Colorado, Kansas, North Dakota, Iowa, and Nebraska. Over 72 counties and 129 towns were represented.

Whether interested in starting or improving a business, a farming operation, agri-tourism, or community development, MarketPlace had something for everyone. There were over 28 training opportunities in 7 tracks including; business development, technology, financing, community, marketing, agriculture and Hispanic (with sessions available in Spanish). Over 50 exhibit booths were filled with successful small businesses, service providers, and other conference sponsors. Attendees had the opportunity to meet with experts in many fields – attorneys, CPA's, web designers, etc.

Rural America is facing many challenges. The purpose of MarketPlace is to address these challenges by creating connections and sharing information that people across rural America can use to create a better future for their communities, their families and themselves.

The 3rd Annual MarketPlace Conference will be held on February 25, 2009 at the Sandhills Convention Center in North Platte, Nebraska. Those who have an interest should keep their calendars open for that day and register early as this year spots filled up fast. For information on MarketPlace or the Center for Rural Affairs visit: www.cfra.org

Regional Revitalization through Community Development: Workshop Held in Franklin

Reprinted from the Republican Valley Review

The South Central Economic Development District has been very active in our area during the past week. On Tuesday, March 25, in partnership with the Nebraska Development Network and CSI-Franklin, an economic development summit meeting was held at the Black Powder Bar & Grill and involved representatives from Franklin, Harlan and many surrounding counties.

The evening program included a presentation on the importance of first developing an appropriate and workable community vision, which the keynote speaker Claire Gustin (*pictured right*), indicated could only be done if all social segments within a community are included in the process and have their needs and ideas considered.

Gustin also spoke of the importance of true teamwork in any economic development or community improvement effort. Gustin was invited by NPPD as an expert speaker on community vision.

The program also included a presentation by Chris Anderson, City Administrator for Central City, who has been spearheading an increasingly successful housing improvement project there.

The program closed out with a panel presentation on Agri/Eco Tourism with guest speakers Karen Kollars and Tom Tabor, the state of Nebraska's Agri-Tourism experts and Jay Longacre, a former farmer who has created an extraordinarily successful Agri-Tourism business called Prairie Sands Hunting.



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More Regional Revitalization through Community Development Workshops Planned

The Franklin meeting (above) was the first of several workshops the South Central Economic Development District and the Nebraska Development Network-Central Region will be hosting. The next workshop will be in Central City on Wednesday, July 16, 2008. Topics of future workshops will be tailored to the needs of the communities in the region where the workshop will be held.



Tom Tabor discusses Eco Tourism opportunities