

***"Live Better in Nebraska"***



**RURAL PROSPERITY NEBRASKA**

**1st Quarter 2024**



## **Chautauqua Re-envisions Leadership**

**Local Leaders Revolutionize Leadership Development**

Rural Prosperity Nebraska successfully organized a groundbreaking Leadership Chautauqua in Kearney, bringing together approximately 120 community leaders from Nebraska and Iowa for a day of transformative discussions. The think-tank-style discussions aimed to reshape community leadership development (CLD) in Nebraska, focusing on innovative strategies and collaborative approaches.



How many second-hand stores operate in Nebraska?



Second-hand stores are a staple in many Nebraska communities—not only for reducing waste, but for providing valuable goods for a low cost. Above, Rural Fellows Kaylee Burnside and Clare Umutoni helped Ord's Second Hand Rose Thrift Store open its doors in 2021. **Click on the orange button above** to answer the question for this quarter's newsletter:

**How many second-hand stores are currently operating in Nebraska?**

- A. 81
- B. 93
- C. 105
- D. 154
- E. 213





## What is the Farm Bill?

Most rural Nebraskans report being unfamiliar with the Farm Bill and federal ag policy, **according to the 2023 Nebraska Rural Poll.** Federal ag policy, encompasses all things related to ag and food, something many Nebraskans are involved in on a daily basis.

## Community Well-being

RPN Extension Educator Marilyn Schlake shares findings from an international study that looks at the **connection between rural communities and ag producers**, how they contribute to and help each other, and where the disconnect lies in making the most out of those relationships.



## A Child Care



## Solution

Cooperative businesses can address child care challenges in Nebraska communities. Hear from the Nebraska Cooperative Development Center about common cooperative structures and reasons **this model has been successful** in the Cornhusker State.

## Indigenous Food Program

On an early autumn morning, **dozens of Native American middle and high school students** gather to harvest and prepare their garden for winter. But these children aren't farmers. They're part of the university's Indigenous Youth Food Sovereignty Program.



## Community Involvement

As towns and organizations gear up for holiday activities, a common refrain is heard: "**We**

**need new people!"** Yet transitioning to new leadership and volunteers is easier said than done. How do communities break through







some of these roadblocks?

## Financial Literacy

Jon Alvarado describes his online financial literacy courses with one word: **empowerment**. “The course is an understanding of finances. But it’s also an understanding of your behavior around finances ... the psychology about how you behave around money.”



## RPN Goes Global

RPN Extension educators recently traveled to Darwin, Australia, to attend the World Community Development Conference and share their expertise on the successes Nebraska has seen recently in community and economic development.

# FEATURED PROGRAMS

## Leadership Development



Our Leadership Development team has the know-how to harness the potential in your community to make your it thrive. By working with local leaders, we help you envision, develop and implement plans that kickstart self-sustaining growth and establish economic development programs that lead to greater prosperity. We're the drop in the bucket—your community is the ripple expanding ever outward. Each community grows at the pace of its leaders. But leaders can't simply be swapped in and out like batteries. Effective leaders are unique in their ability to embrace a community's cultural heritage while welcoming the future. Communities benefit from our programs by not only discovering what it takes to thrive in this fast-paced world, but also by helping its citizens become the leaders who will bring their community's cultural uniqueness into the future with them.



## People & Place



As the newly-formed People & Place team of Rural Prosperity Nebraska, we help you position your community to recruit and retain newcomers. We tailor our programs and resources to fit your aspirations and opportunities—from strengthening a community’s welcoming culture, to training for a service-centered community retailers and tourist locations, to enhancing community web presence. Your community is unique, and we want to help you showcase it. Every community is as unique as the individuals who live there. However, sometimes those unique assets are overlooked simply because of familiarity. Communities benefit from our programs by discovering what new residents look for as they relocate, bringing to light their positive qualities, and creating action plans to improve amenities and create a welcoming spirit that attracts potential newcomers.

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# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

(Click on the date for more details)

## Local Foods & Healthy Farms Conference

Rural Prosperity Nebraska's Regional Food Systems team is collaborating with the Nebraska Sustainable Agriculture Society to host this annual conference in Columbus, Neb.

January 26-27

January 29

## Brown Bag Lunch—Exploring the Rural Poll

Join us for a presentation on the Rural Poll (the longest-running poll about rural life in the country), a discussion about its past and present, and a Q&A about its future.

## Rural Rendezvous

Join us to discuss what's going on in Rural Nebraska. Speakers cover topics from entrepreneurship and leadership, as well as community health and well being.

February 14

March 13

## Rural Rendezvous

Join us to discuss what's going on in Rural Nebraska. Speakers cover topics from entrepreneurship and leadership, as well as community health and well being.

## Save the Date

Mark your calendars for the **Connecting Entrepreneurial Communities Conference**, held in Sydney, Neb., to learn about economic development and see it first hand in Sydney's locally-owned businesses.

May 1-2



# FEATURED PHOTO



Rural Prosperity  
Nebraska Extension





Educator Shawn Kaskie presents on the challenges and opportunities facing local leaders in rural Nebraska communities at the Leadership Chautauqua event held in Kearney in November, and how to capitalize on past successes to project a successful future.

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