

City Happenings

An eNewsletter from the City of Lexington, Nebraska



Lexington gets \$225,000 for theater project

MAY 30, 2013 (LINCOLN, NEB.)—The Nebraska Department of Economic Development (DED) has awarded the City of Lexington with \$225,000 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding in the Tourism Development category to renovate the Majestic Theater.

In turn, the City will award the funding to the Dawson County School District, which owns the nearly 100-year-old building that closed in 2009.

A unique, collaborative effort was sparked by a group of visionary eighth graders in 2011 that proposed the “Save the Majestic Theater” project to the Lexington School Board. The project included a well-developed strategy and fundraiser for transforming the old building into a community theater and student learning center. Buy-in to the project was strong and immediate from students and staff from all Lexington public schools.

Impressed with their initiative, the School District purchased the building and the eighth graders began selling t-shirts and promoting the project via a video, posters and presentations to Lexington businesses and organizations. In a year, the students had raised \$25,000, further secured by a \$75,000 contribution of 2012 Key fundraising proceeds through the Lexington Community Foundation. The Foundation also has committed an additional one-third of its 2013 Key fundraiser to the project, estimated at \$80,000. Other partners in the project include the Lexington Chamber of Commerce, and many business and citizen contributors.

To date, students have removed all old seating, the aging concession stand, and many other pieces of the theater. When it was learned the building contained asbestos, students contracted with a licensed removal company that donated its services when hearing more about the project. Other renovations will include modifications to bring the building into



Artist's concept of a possible renovation look for the Majestic Theater

compliance with the American With Disabilities Act, new plumbing and electrical wiring, installation of new seating and a new lobby, among other work.

Potential impacts are many: movies for audiences of all ages; art shows; historical traveling exhibits (including quilt exhibits); local playhouse production; traveling humanities productions; musical programs; site for local festivities surrounding annual celebrations; learning and practice center for students (music, art, drama); historical productions about Lexington and the area; and cultural events and productions.

With the building's century anniversary approaching in 2015, students hope to plan a grand reopening in time for current sophomores to mark and celebrate their senior years.

Federal funds are made available to DED from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's CDBG program to assist with the development of businesses and communities throughout the state. Funding requests for the program are administered by DED and available to local governments with populations less than 50,000 and counties in Nebraska.



N. Jackson St. road work



Jackson Street from 8th to 13th Street will be completely reconstructed this construction

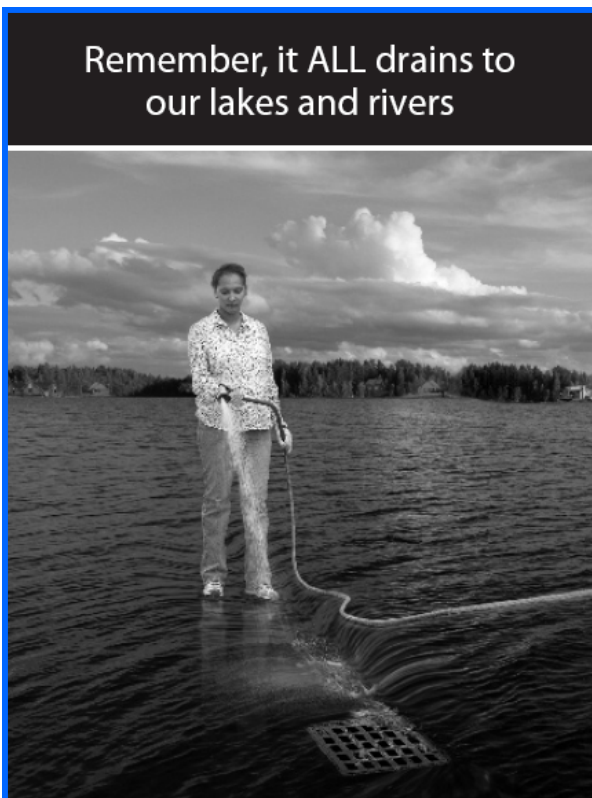
season. Anticipated to start June 17 (weather permitting) and lasting about three months, the road will be widened to a consistent 40-foot width. It currently tapers from 40 feet wide in the south to 32 feet wide in the north. The project includes upgrading water and storm sewer lines, street lights, and handicap ramps at intersections. The majority of the cost for the project will be supported with federal highway funds.



Citizens are invited to learn more by attending an informational Open House meeting June 4 from 5:30 - 6:30 p.m. at City Hall. City officials and engineering staff will be on hand to explain the plans and answer questions. Information from the meeting will later be posted at the City's website, with occasional updates posted during the construction.



It's not too soon to announce that Lexington's **Farmers Market** will relocate to the south parking lot this summer. The market starts June 30 and runs Saturday mornings from 8-11 and Tuesday evenings from 4-7.



Remember, it ALL drains to our lakes and rivers

Help keep pollution out of storm drains

Only rain in the drain!

That's because storm drains and roadside ditches lead directly to our lakes and rivers. So, any oil, pet waste, leaves, trash, or dirty water from washing your car that enters a storm drain gets into our lakes and rivers. With thousands of people living in and around Lexington, we all need to be aware of what goes into our storm drains.

So what can you do? Simple:

- Sweep fertilizer off of driveways and sidewalks, back onto your lawn.
- Keep leaves, grass clippings, trash, and fertilizers out of storm drains.
- Do not dump motor oil, anti-freeze, chemicals, pet waste, dirty soapy water, or anything else down the storm drains.
- Volunteer to label the storm drains in your neighborhood to inform your neighbors that storm drains flow directly to our lakes and rivers (contact Keep Lexington Beautiful, (308) 324-7986, or keeplexbeautiful@yahoo.com).

KEEP OUR WATER CLEAN!



Support provided by NDEQ



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Teachers, students help fund plants downtown

In late April 2013 teachers in the Lexington Education Association started a "Pennies for Planters" campaign to help fund flowers and shrubs for the newly installed planters in downtown Lexington. The planters, both free-standing in in-ground, were funded by a Downtown Revitalization Community Development Block Grant. Students and teachers raised \$868.25 during the penny drive! On May 8 the teachers presented a check to Assistant City Manager Dennis Burnside (far bottom photo). On May 10 a group of Bryan Elementary School students hiked downtown to show their support with Lexington Mayor John Fagot (top photo). "Both these kids and plants represent the future of Lexington," said Fagot. "May we take care of them and help them grow." The school that raised the most money was Morton Elementary. As a reward, the LEA had a linden tree planted on their playground on May 23 (middle photo). Burnside was also at that ceremony.



Fireworks Fund Challenge

The City of Lexington volunteer Employee Committee has donated \$100 toward the Lexington Fireworks Fund, and challenges other employers and organizations to make contributions too. On May 8, Employee Committee members gathered at City Hall to present the \$100 check to Susan Bennett, Executive Director of the Lexington Area Chamber of Commerce, which oversees the Fund.

"Our employees hit on the idea to give the Fireworks Fund a boost over that of the mostly small individual donations the Chamber collects," said Assistant City Manager Dennis Burnside, who is an ex officio member of both organizations. "We hope we can serve as an example and a catalyst to get other groups motivated to contribute as well as jump-start this year's individual giving."

Donations can be made to the Chamber office, 1501 Plum Creek Parkway, Suite 2A, PO Box 97, or at one of the many donation cans they place around the community. "I don't know anyone who thinks you can have too spectacular a community fireworks show," said Burnside. "Let's give it up for a fun Fourth of July!"



COMP PLAN:

There will be an open house public meeting to show the final draft of the City's new Comprehensive Development Plan. The Open House will be Wednesday, June 26, 5:30 - 7:00 p.m. at City Hall.



Arbor Day a hit in Lexington

Pershing School's **Diego Orellana** (photo, right) created this year's winning Arbor Day Poster contest, sponsored by Lexington's Tree Board. Diego was honored on Arbor Day (April 26), with the planting of a London Planetree (Sycamore) on the grounds of Pershing School, and the presentation of his poster framed for posterity. The whole school turned out to honor Diego, whose creativity cemented Pershing's winning streak of three years in a row. The Tree Board judged 151 poster entries from Lexington elementary school pupils.

Below: Standing, left to right: Tree Board member Gordon Sellin, Poster Contest winner Diego Orellana & his mom, Tree Board member Dave Stenberg, Diego's art teacher Mrs. Birdwell, Tree Board member Marty Smith, and, far right, 2011 Poster Contest winner Jessica Francisco, also from Pershing School.

Bottom: Diego's winning 2013 Arbor Day Poster



Dave Stenberg (center), of Lexington's Tree Board, accepts the Tree City USA Award from honorary ReTree Nebraska chair First Lady Sally Ganem, Governor Dave Heineman; Nebraska State Forester Dr. Scott Josiah and Nebraska Community Forestry Council chair Lyle Minshull during the annual Nebraska Community Tree Conference. The April 2 ceremony was held at the Holiday Inn in Lincoln. The Nebraska Forest Service honored 107 Nebraska communities, seven colleges & universities and four utilities for developing and maintaining a community forestry program. Lexington was honored for its commitment to the management and enhancement of the community tree resource.





Library News

Lexington Public Library
907 North Washington St.
by Kathy Thomsen
Library Director

Dig into Reading, Beneath the Surface, and Groundbreaking Reads: Summer Reading 2013 is here!

The theme for children pre-school through grade 5 is **Dig into Reading**. The theme for young adults grade 6 and up is **Beneath the Surface**. Registration for these programs began on May 23. Both programs will conclude on Thursday, July 18.



The registration for adult summer reading will begin on June 1. This program will end on August 1. Adults who want

to participate in **Groundbreaking Reads** Summer Reading Program simply need to register. When you have finished reading a book, rate the book and return the book review card to the library for prize drawings, which will be held in weekly and in August.

Special programs for summer reading include:

- ◆ **Conductor Jack** on June 4 at 10:00 am. Conductor Jack, who hails from Nashville, is a lead member of the Zinghopper musical group. Combining education and music, his program is said to be "Barney meets the Black Eyed Peas."



- ◆ **Crane River Theater** from Kearney will be performing

Seussical the Musical on Monday, June 24, at 3:30 pm. A fantastical, magical, musical extravaganza that lovingly brings together all your favorite Dr. Seuss characters.



- ◆ On July 9, the **Dawson County Children's Museum** will present a special program for summer reading about rocks and rock hounds. Children will be able to make pet rocks, choose a polished rock to make a ring, and crack a geode and take a piece of it home with them.

On Thursday, June 13, Colorado's **Marci Baker** will present the program *A Little Girl's Dream to Award Winning Quilter*. From her first quilt she made for her Barbie doll at the age of 9 to making her ribbon winning quilts, Marci shares projects in various stages of completion to encourage quilters of all levels. All are invited to attend this interesting and inspirational program. This program is sponsored by the Lexington Library Memorial Fund and the Lexington Community Foundation in collaboration with the Plum Creek Quilt Guild. Refreshments will be served by the Plum Creek Quilt Guild. Marci will also host a workshop, *Oh My Stars*, on Friday June 14. If you are interested in this hands-on workshop, contact Kathy at the library 324-2151.



On Sunday, June 23, at 2:00 pm, storyteller **Pippa White** will be performing *Straight on Till Morning*. Her performance will take you to delightful kingdoms of fantasy, as well as surprising realms of non-fiction. You will hear oral histories from World War II, alongside the true story of a 10 year old girl, who saved her father's life. You will laugh, you will possibly shed a tear and you will remember how wonderful it is to be told a story.



On June 28 UNMC Medical Librarians and the National Library of Medicine will offer a free informational session on how to search for health information on the internet and how to evaluate health information sites. This session will enable citizens to make better informed decisions regarding their family's health care requirements. This opportunity is sponsored by the Library Broadband Builds Nebraska Communities grant.



Another program sponsored by the Lexington Library Memorial Fund and the Lexington Community Foundation will be held on Sunday, July 7 at 2:00 pm. **Carol Dunitz**, will be performing *Bernhart on Broadway*. Dunitz, who resides in Michigan, has performed this program in a variety of venues across the country.



Fire Department Award Recipients

The Lexington Volunteer Fire Department (LVFD) and the City of Lexington received great recognition at the 2013 Nebraska State Fire School in Grand Island in May.

The Department received the NSVFA Fire Prevention Award (communities greater than 7,000 population) for their year round fire prevention activities and the use of new and creative ideas to promote fire prevention. This award is only presented to one department in the state for each population category.

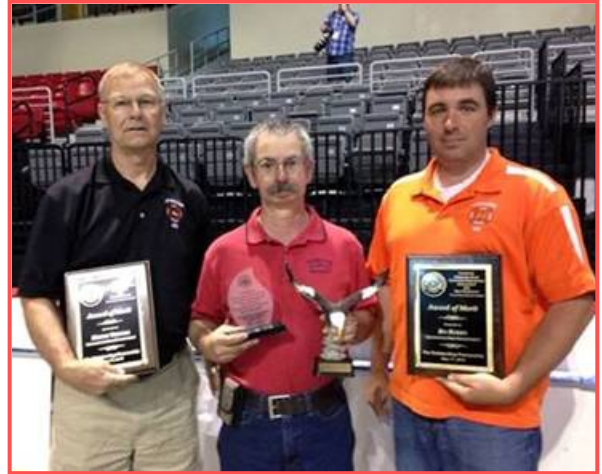
LVFD member Bob Bullis received the NSVFA Fire Prevention Outstanding Leader Award for his individual contributions to our fire prevention program this past year. This award is only presented to one individual in the state each year.

Kerry and Bo were recognized with Firemanship Awards for community and departmental leadership. These individuals were 2 of the 10 fireman to receive the award out of 23 nomination submissions.

"Three members of the Lexington Volunteer Fire Department were recognized with special honors at the 2013 Nebraska State Fire School in Grand Island. Secretary/Treasurer Kerry Teetor and Assistant Fire Chief Bo Berry both received the Award of Merit for Firemanship which recognizes individuals that exhibit leadership within the community as well as on the fire grounds. LVFD member Bob Bullis received the Fire Prevention Outstanding Leader Award in recognition of leadership in fire prevention activities during the past year."

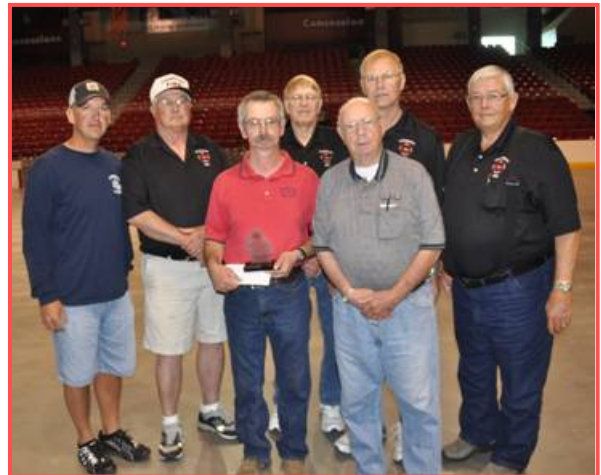
BOTTOM PHOTO

The Lexington Volunteer Fire Department was recently recognized by the Nebraska State Volunteer Firefighters Association as a leader in Fire Prevention activities within the State and their community. The LVFD received the NSVFA Fire Prevention Award for their efforts in promoting fire prevention through new and creative ideas focused on stopping fires before they start. LVFD fire prevention activities include the Junior Fire Patrol Program, in-school demonstrations during Fire Prevention Week, public service announcements regarding fire safety, fire extinguisher training as well as many additional activities. Present to receive the award were LVFD members Dahlas Holbein, Roger Reutlinger, Bob Bullis, Ed Peck, Dean Wheeler, Kerry Teetor and Dale Holbein.



TOP PHOTO

Three members of the Lexington Volunteer Fire Department were recognized with special honors at the 2013 Nebraska State Fire School in Grand Island. Secretary/Treasurer Kerry Teetor (left) and Assistant Fire Chief Bo Berry (right) both received the Award of Merit for Firemanship which recognizes individuals that exhibit leadership within the community as well as on the fire grounds. LVFD member Bob Bullis (center) received the Fire Prevention Outstanding Leader Award in recognition of leadership in fire prevention activities during the past year.



EnergyWise Tip: **Hot Water Heaters**

ENERGYWISE™
Use less. Spend less. Do more.

You may not realize it, but the water heater is the second largest user of energy in most homes in Nebraska. Only space heating and cooling systems use more. However, unlike heating and cooling equipment which are seasonal, your water heater works year round. The average home uses 65 gallons of hot water per day. If you pay an average of 12¢ per kilowatt-hour for electricity, you may be spending over \$800 per year for hot water!

If you are shopping for a new or replacement unit, there is a lot to consider. With today's technologies, there are several different types of water heaters available:

- Conventional storage water heaters offer a ready reservoir (storage tank) of hot water.
- Tankless or demand-type water heaters heat water directly without a storage tank.
- Heat pump water heaters move heat from one place to another instead of generating heat directly for providing hot water.
- Solar water heaters use the sun's heat to provide hot water.
- Tankless coil and indirect water heaters use a home's space heating system to heat water.

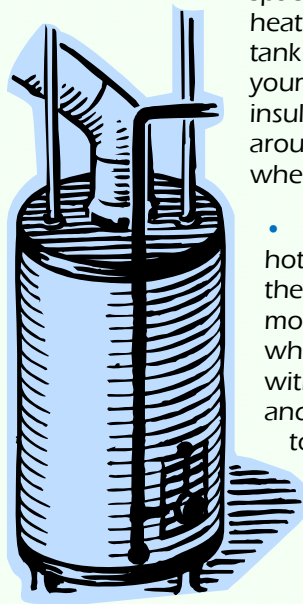
Cost varies from technology-to-technology. In general, more-efficient technologies cost more up front but provide significant savings over time, which reduces the total amount you have to pay to have hot water.

Even if you are not going to buy a new water heater, you can save a lot of energy and money with your existing system by following a few simple suggestions:

- **Conserve Water.** Your biggest opportunity for savings is to use less hot water. In addition to saving energy (and money), cutting down on hot water use helps conserve dwindling water supplies, which in some parts of the country is a critical problem. Water-conserving shower heads and faucet aerators can cut hot water use in half. By installing these devices, a family of

four can save 14,000 gallons of water a year and the energy required to heat it.

- **Insulate Your Existing Water Heater.** If your electric water heater was installed before 2004, installing an insulating jacket is one of the most effective do-it-yourself energy-saving projects, especially if your water heater is in an unheated space. The insulating jacket will reduce standby heat loss — heat lost through the walls of the tank — by 25-40 percent, saving 4-9 percent on your water heating bills. Water heater insulation jackets are widely available for around \$10. Always follow directions carefully when installing an insulation jacket.



- **Insulate Hot Water Pipes.** Insulating your hot water pipes will reduce energy losses as the hot water is flowing to your faucet and, more importantly, it will reduce standby losses when the tap is turned off and then back on within an hour or so. A great deal of energy and water is wasted waiting for the hot water to reach the tap. Even when pipes are insulated, the water in the pipes will eventually cool, but it stays warmer much longer than it would if the pipes were not insulated.

- **Lower the Water Heater Temperature.** Keep your water heater thermostat set to the lowest temperature that provides you with sufficient hot water. For most households, 120°F water is fine (about midway between the "low" and "medium" setting). Each 10°F reduction in water temperature will generally save 3-5 percent on your water heating costs. When you are going away on vacation, you can turn the thermostat down to the lowest possible setting, or turn the water heater off altogether for additional savings. With a gas water heater, make sure you know how to relight the pilot if you're going to turn it off while away.

For more great ideas on how to make your home or business EnergyWiseSM, contact Lexington Utilities System or visit www.nppd.com.



**Lexington
Family Aquatic
Center 2013 Season**
May 25 - August 4
Hours: 1:00- 7:30 PM M-TH
1:00 - 6:00 PM Fri-Sun
10th & Monroe

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A \$30 incentive
is available to qualified customers who have their current cooling system inspected and tuned-up by an HVAC contractor.

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It PAYS to tune up your heating & cooling system
 COOLING SYSTEM TUNE-UP PROGRAM

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Vine Street
308-324-5995**

Summer Hours

**Mon. - Fri.
7:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.**

- dispose of furniture, appliances, and other large items
- pick up free wood chips or compost
- dispose of tree limbs.



Cell Phones + Distraction + RR Tracks =

TRAGEDY



**OPERATION
LIFESAVER**

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CLIP AND SAVE

TORNADO

Now that tornado season is here, Emergency Management Warning Sirens will sound to alert residents of an impending tornado in our area.

**TORNADO
NATURAL DISASTER
TECHNICAL HAZARD**

3 MINUTE STEADY SIGNAL

This signal indicates that a tornado, natural disaster, or technical hazard is pending. Persons should take cover or move to a place of safety

and listen to the local radio or TV station for information on further instructions. This siren may sound more than once if deemed necessary by Emergency Management.

Do not call the police or radio station to ask for information.

People SIGHTING a tornado or funnel in this area are urged to notify the Dawson County Emergency Center at 911.

ALL-CLEAR

An all-clear bulletin will be issued by the Local Radio and TV Stations in cooperation with the National Weather Service.

Local Emergency Management will not issue an all-clear statement.

During unusual threatening weather or emergency conditions listen to the Local Radio or TV Stations for further information.

SAFETY GUIDELINES

The following are general safety guidelines for seeking shelter:

- Move to a lower level or basement.
- If no lower level is available, move to an interior room or hallway on the lowest floor and get under a sturdy piece of furniture. Put as many walls as possible between you and the outside.
- Stay away from windows.
- Flying debris from tornadoes causes most deaths and injuries. Cover your head and make yourself the smallest target possible.
- Do not try to outrun a tornado in your car; instead, get out of the vehicle and seek safe shelter in a nearby building.
- If you are outside and there is no shelter immediately available, avoid trees and vehicles. Do not get under an overpass or bridge. You are safer in a low, flat location. Lie flat in a nearby ditch or depression and cover your head with your hands.



Emergency warning system tests of one minute in duration are conducted the first Thursday of each month at 9:00 a.m. Sirens are designed for outdoors warning only. For optimal safety, citizens are encouraged to get weather radios using the NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) and/or SAME (Specific Area Message Encoding) standards.

CLIP AND SAVE

