

*Seward, Nebraska's*

*155th*

**FOURTH**

*of* **JULY**

*Celebration*

★ **2023** ★



Seward County

**SCI MT**

Independent

Milford Times

June 28, 2023

# 150<sup>TH ANNIVERSARY</sup> Cattle —BANK & TRUST—



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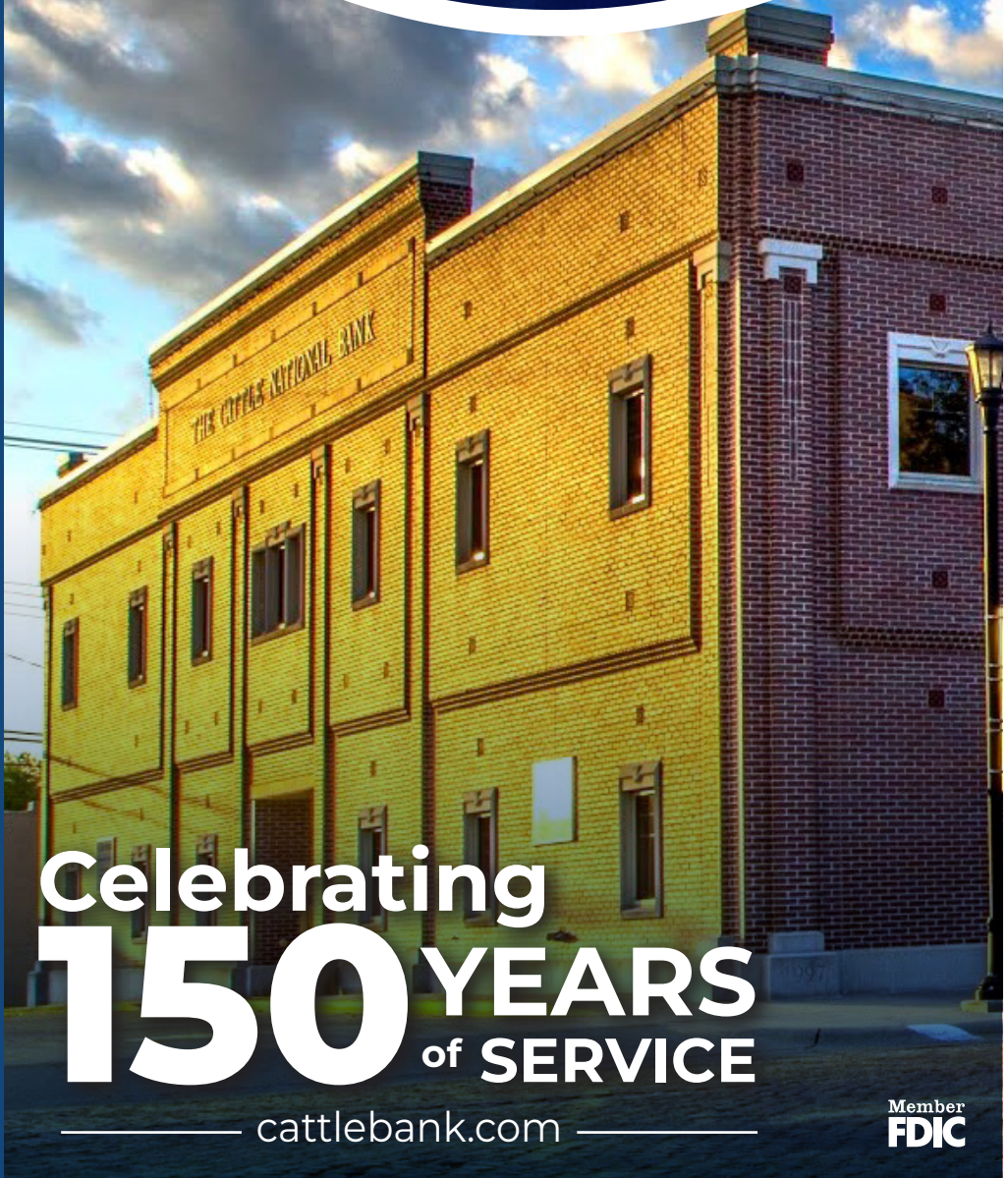
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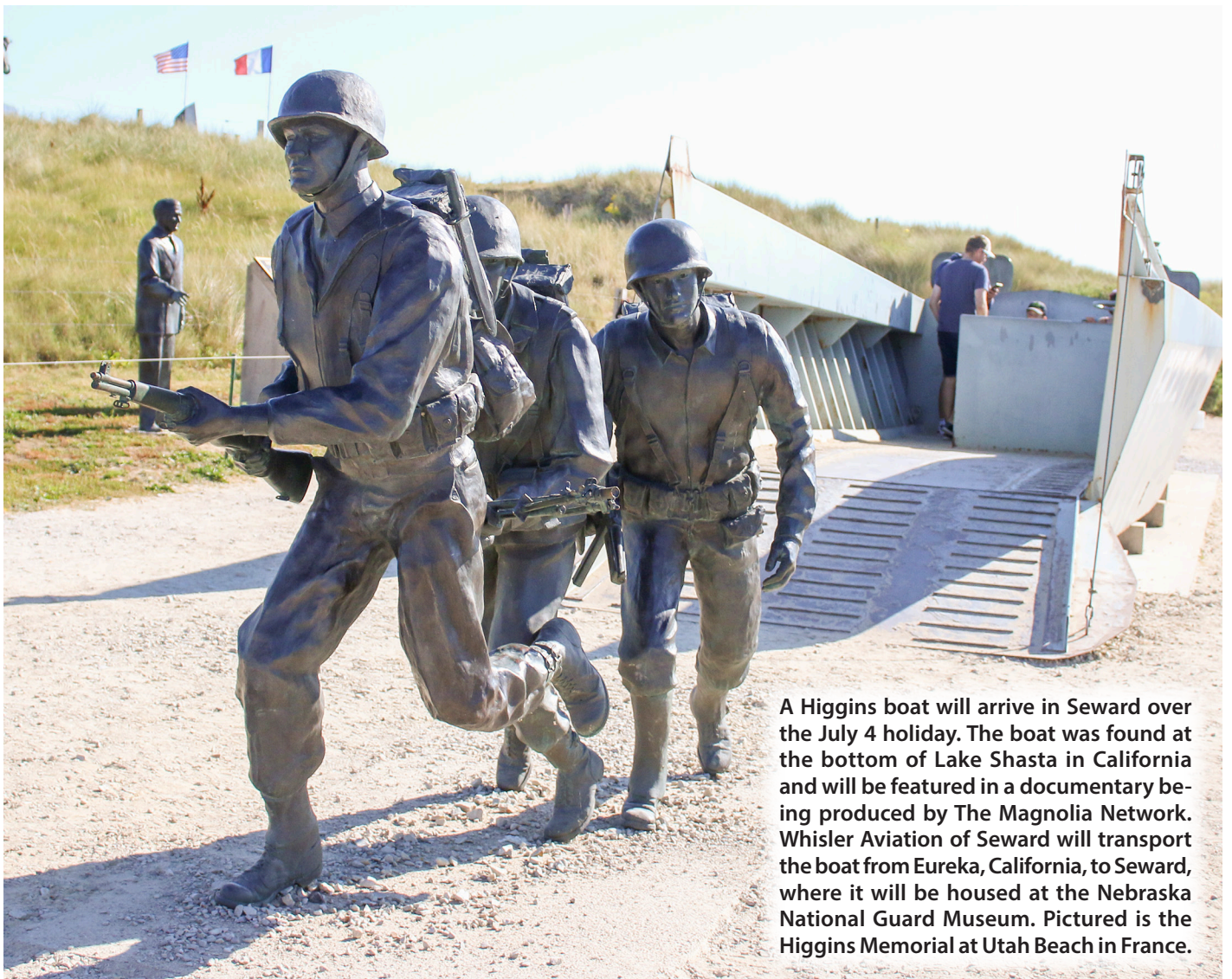
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A Higgins boat will arrive in Seward over the July 4 holiday. The boat was found at the bottom of Lake Shasta in California and will be featured in a documentary being produced by The Magnolia Network. Whisler Aviation of Seward will transport the boat from Eureka, California, to Seward, where it will be housed at the Nebraska National Guard Museum. Pictured is the Higgins Memorial at Utah Beach in France.



KEATON BURGESS/SCI/MT

After Claudius Jones opened the doors to Cattle Bank in 1873, the bank has continued to be a staple in the Seward community for 150 years. The statue out front of the building was placed in memory of John Cattle, Sr., by his wife, Virginia. Virginia recently passed away at 102 years old.

# Cattle Bank celebrates 150 years of community-oriented business

BY KEATON BURGESS

reporter@sewardindependent.com

After Claudius Jones opened the doors to Cattle Bank in 1873, the bank continues to be a staple in the Seward community for 150 years.

Cattle Bank, the second oldest bank charter in Nebraska, now has four locations, two in

Seward and two in Lincoln, and continues to be a family-run business.

After the bank changed hands a few times, John Cattle took over the bank in 1881, and it has been part of the Cattle family ever since.

John Cattle and his sons, Robert, John and Walter, were farmers in England and came to Ne-

braska in the 1870's, lured by the chance to invest in inexpensive land. The Cattle family bought the State Bank of Nebraska in 1881 but also continued to farm.

After his wife died, John decided to return to England and Walter took over the bank. John's son, Robert T. Cattle, Sr., began to work in the bank

after he finished law school in 1911 and Robert married Mercedes Brown in 1912, who was the granddaughter of founder Claudius Jones.

The State Bank of Nebraska was eventually nationalized and took the name of The Cattle National Bank of Seward

(CONTINUED ON 7)

# SEWARD'S LARGEST EVER!

This same ad appeared in 1979 and will continue to appear until the year 2025, at which time you can compare the predictions outlined herein and see if any of them have come true. Harold DAVISSON

7 blocks north, 2 east of the courthouse in Seward, NE



# Celebration

## Program for July 4, 2025

With the opening of the World's Largest Time Capsule and Pyramid

With the opening of **THE WORLD'S LARGEST TIME CAPSULE AND PYRAMID** this will no doubt be the greatest celebration ever held in Seward, Nebraska. Upwards of 50,000 people are expected to view and take part in the various festivities. Listed, not necessarily in chronological order, are just a few of the events you may expect to witness when you visit Seward, Nebraska on July 4th, 2025.

The big event, of course, will be the opening of **THE WORLD'S LARGEST TIME CAPSULE** which contains, among other things, a mile-less 1975 Chevrolet Vega; a brand new Kawasaki motorcycle; hundreds of packages from Seward merchants, contents unknown; thousands and thousands of letters addressed to children by their grandparents; much early day advertising; cases of soda pop of many kinds; wines and other liquors; murals on all walls; a flag which has flown over the Capitol in Washington D.C.; several scrolls, including one signed by each of the State Legislators in the past; records and taped recordings; a scholarship fund, which could be worth as much as \$50,000; and other things by the score, too numerous to list.

### KIWANIS CLUB EARLY RISERS BREAKFAST

Starting at 7:00 a.m. for those who are getting up too early for most of you, 11:00 a.m. for the rest of you, in the afternoon. Plan on rising just a little earlier than you would on synthetic eggs, artificial pancake syrup, and artificial coffee.

### RUNNING OF THE 45TH ANNUAL

Run from the top of the hill, to Ash Street, and return. Prizes this year include a new car, a new truck, a Rolls Royce and a trip around the world. Expenses paid and \$25,000 spent.

### HOURLY TRIPS TO SEWARD

Hourly trips to Seward, Nebraska, and you may stay in Seward, Nebraska, only, \$3,500.00, same as the regular fare.

### OLD CARS PARADE

Consisting of antique cars, motorcycles, and Hover Craft in this parade, the car of the future will be at blazing speeds two feet off the ground.

### AT THE FAIRGROUNDS

There will be a new type of farming equipment. Although this type of equipment, which is operated from a control tower located in the farm yard, has been used for many years, there are several new innovations which will make possible the planting of hundreds of acres in an hour, or less. Also, a new type of seed, which requires no rainfall during any part of its growing or maturing season, thus making irrigation a thing of the past. Also, this new type grain seed matures in thirty days or less, making it possible to grow at least four crops each year. Since we are feeding the world, this will be a giant step forward for the farmer. With corn selling at \$89.00 per bushel, wheat at \$165.00 and soybean at \$249.00, the farmer should make a comfortable living with yields of 500 to 800 bushel per acre.

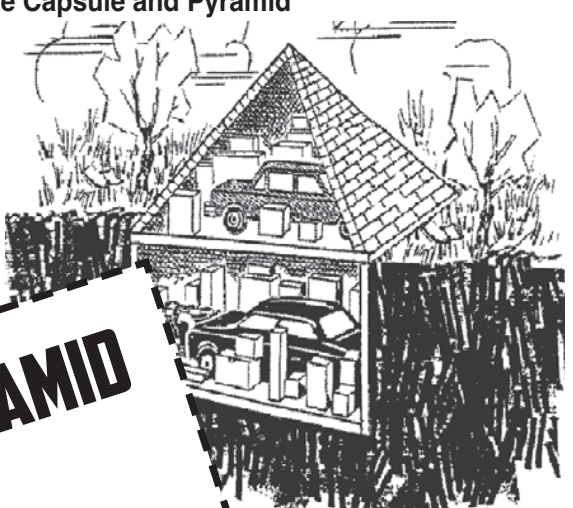
### GRANDSTAND ENTERTAINMENT

This year's evening show will be greater than ever. Topping off a full day of excitement, we will have a extraordinary feature. In cleaning out one of the city buildings, a package was found with the wording "Aerial Bomb" printed on it. It is presumed this is an ancient piece of fireworks which was used dangerously in the early days around 1979, but were since banned because of their danger. This "Aerial Bomb" will be lighted a good distance from the grandstand, for it is not known whether it will go up or go sideways. It will be interesting to see what early day celebrants found so entertaining.

### DEMOLITION ROCKET SHIP DERBY

The main feature of the evening show will be a **DEMOLITION ROCKET SHIP DERBY**. Over fifty teenagers will fly their souped-up ships in an attempt to knock each other out of the sky with new, improved laser eliminator, or by ramming each other and forcing a crash. When the show is over, the remaining ship aloft will be the winner. Contrary to early days, none of the contestants will be injured because of the perfected flotation or levitation systems on all flying aircraft these days. A far cry from the early days of aircraft, when accidents cost hundreds of lives such as the DC 10 crash in Chicago in 1979. Since the perfection of this device, not a single passenger has been injured nor a single aircraft damaged. Those early fliers, protected by only a cumbersome seat belt, were living in a dangerous age of flying. We, today, profit by the mistakes of the 1970's and the great advancement made in flying since those days. ENJOY THE SHOW!!

**OPENING THE PYRAMID 2024**  
**TIME CAPSULE TO OPEN July 4th, 2025**



...et, to the bottom of the hill, to Ash Street. First Prize will be a Gold Streak and two in the Hawaiian Islands, all

...ke 29 minutes for the 4135 mile flights and the special fare is

...e gas is no longer available, will be pulled out of the streets and paved highways as these machines will travel

## JOIN US FOR THE GREATEST FOURTH OF JULY CELEBRATION EVER, IN SEWARD, JULY 4TH, 2025!

This program paid for by **HOUSE OF DAVISSON**, Seward, Nebraska.

You may think this "Program" was printed with a tongue-in-cheek attitude...you may be right. On the other hand, with the present inflation and age of advancement it may come to pass.

# Cattle family matriarch lives on in service to Nebraska

BY EMILY HEMPHILL

emily@sewardindependent.com

At age 102, Virginia Cattle passed away just weeks before she planned to ride through the Seward Fourth of July parade as the 2023 Grand Marshal.

Virginia and the entire Cattle family will be recognized at this year's celebration as the recipients of the Nebraska's Friend Award.

The annual honor recognizes someone who has served the state of Nebraska in a meaningful way.

Clark Kolterman of the Seward Fourth of July Celebration Committee

said Virginia was the obvious choice for this year's grand marshal, representing the entire Cattle family, which founded Cattle Bank & Trust, originally the State Bank of Nebraska, in 1873.

"Cattle Bank has served our area very well, and the Lincoln area as well," Kolterman said.

Virginia's husband, John W. Cattle Sr., served as president of the Nebraska Banker's Association. Part of his role was visiting banks all over Nebraska.

"She was very involved. She traveled with

(CONTINUED ON 35)



COURTESY PHOTO

Virginia Cattle sits in the 1913 Curtiss Pusher aircraft at the Nebraska National Guard Museum in Seward before its installation in 2016. Cattle was the only person to "fly" the craft inside the museum. She is pictured with (from left) her son, the late John "Jay" Cattle, daughter Becky Vahle, son-in-law Dr. Van Vahle and Cattle Bank & Trust President Ryne Seaman.



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# Cattle Bank

(CONTINUED FROM 4)

in 1930. John W. Cattle Sr. eventually took over the bank as president and CEO for 32 years after graduating from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and serving in the armed forces.

John W. Cattle Jr. became president and CEO of the bank in 1992 and served in this role until 2006.

Today, Ryne Seaman is the president and CEO of the bank and joined the team in 2006.

“The first 10 years of my career, I mentored under John Cattle and have held several different positions within the bank,” Seaman said. “I certainly didn’t show up on John’s doorstep thinking I’d ever be in a position as the president and CEO, but life’s a lot about timing and attitude.”

Becky Vahle, Cattle Sr.’s daughter, vice president, on the board and chairman of the holding company, said one of Seaman’s first duties was starting the ATM system.

“He was an instigator in the startup of it,” she said.

On June 3, Virginia Cattle, Vahle’s mother and a big part of the bank, passed away at 102.

“She stayed witty until the very last few days,” Vahle said. “She was very involved and tried to keep up with the new people. She was a big part of all our lives.”

As most places do over time, Seaman said things

have changed at the banks.

“People want to bank electronically now,” he said. “We think that a good mix between the physical branch locations and electronic banking is best.”

Although things have changed over time, Vahle and Seaman said the relationship-driven business model they have has stayed the same.

“We keep the personal touch with the customer,” Vahle said. “Even if it’s over the phone now rather than them coming in, we keep on that. We pride ourselves on our personal interest and connections with our customers.”

“We believe our people are what differentiates us from other financial institutions,” Seaman said. “It can be difficult to build those relationships electronically, but that’s what we believe differentiates ourselves is the relationship side of things.”

Vahle and Seaman believe the family history also gives people something to connect with.

“I think if you spoke to some of our staff, that’s the reason they stay,” Seaman said. “We have tenure that the average is over 13 years. You’re part of a family and a team.”

Vahle said her father would go around the bank and check in with everyone and see how their family was doing on a regular basis.

Another thing that has been important to



KEATON BURGESS/SCI/MT

**After Claudius Jones opened the doors to Cattle Bank in 1873, the bank has continued to be a staple in the Seward community for 150 years.**

Cattle Bank over the years is the support for the Seward community. Vahle and Seaman said they try to support as much as they can.

“The stronger the community gets, the stronger we get,” Vahle said. “The community means everything to us.”

“We are truly what they call a community bank,” Seaman said. “Our success is tied to the community that we serve and we think our community often succeeds as well. It’s kind of a give and take between the two.”

Vahle said Cattle tries to be loyal to the community and support things going on.

“You see some of these little towns sort of disappear,” she said. “Seward has progressed and grown and we’ve grown with it.”

Seaman said part of the bank’s belief is giving back to the community.

“Looking at some of the community support we’ve provided, we do

anything that is community-related,” he said.

Some of the examples include financial support and serving on boards such as Seaman being the president of the Seward School Board and other things such as city council.

“That’s part of the community involvement and leadership that we hope each one of our employees are passionate about,” Seaman said.

Looking towards the future, Seaman said Cattle is continuing to expand its virtual branch.

“For the technology piece, as far as online account openings for both loan and deposits, we’re hoping to do that in a fairly short order,” he said.

“Sometimes we don’t always know what is coming, but we’re always looking and preparing for what might come so that we’re able to keep up and lead the industry,” Vahle said. “We try to be a leader and not a follower.”

# Miss Independence, Mr. Firecracker take places as Fourth of July royalty

The winners of the annual Seward Fourth of July student essay contest, sponsored by the Seward Rotary Club, were announced at the Fourth of July Celebration Kick-off May 31 at the Nebraska National Guard Museum.

This year's honorees are Miss Independence Sadie Owens, runner-up Mya Boggs, Mr. Firecracker Wilder Nix and runner-up Charles Wake.

The winners will attend the Governor's Reception, ride in the annual Grand Parade, and read their essays at the bandshell after the parade. The students each receive a crown, bag of fireworks and trophy from the Seward Rotary Club. This program has been in force since 1967.

BY WILDER NIX  
Mr. Firecracker

Seward is a great place to live because of the people, the places, and the fun events that happen around the holidays. Here are some of the reasons I like living in Seward.

One of my most favorite things about living in Seward is the Fourth of July celebration. I like sitting in my back-



Wilder Nix,  
Mr. Firecracker  
yard and watching  
the fireworks in

every direction. I love the loud booms. My family and all our neighbors light off fireworks, and it is very fun to be together.

I also like going to the parade and gathering candy and playing games and watching the people go by. I like watching pole vaulting and the fire trucks. The Fourth of July in Seward makes me  
(CONTINUED ON 9)

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# Royalty

(CONTINUED FROM 8)

Another reason I like living in Seward is all of the fun places you can go. We go to the Rivoli and get popcorn and a snack pack and watch good movies. I like my church and school, St. John, because my friends go there and I like the teachers and fun activities there. In winter I like the Concordia sledding hill because there's so much snow and you can slide down the steep hill really fast. I like meeting my friends there and sledding together. I like going to my friends' houses because we play games, play catch, and it's fun to ride scooters to each other's houses.

I like going to the swimming pool on a hot sunny day because it's cool and refreshing. Downtown I love getting ice cream, looking

at toys and books at Chapters, and going to my mom's photography studio and helping her.

Seward is a really good place to visit but a better place to live. You should be happy if you're coming here, especially on holidays. If you're my age, you could be my friend if you decide to move here. I hope you're able to come to Seward!

*Wilder finished third grade at St. John Lutheran School. His parents are Aaron and Emily Nix.*

**BY CHARLES WAKE**  
Mr. Firecracker runner-up

Seward is a great place to live!

One of the many great things about Seward is that Seward is the Fourth of July City of Nebraska. I love setting off fireworks. Seward's celebration is the



**Charles Wake, Mr. Firecracker runner-up**

best I've ever seen.

Seward also has a historic downtown. The beautiful public library has many good books to read. I also like to shop at all the nice shops here. Seward's restaurants have delicious food to eat.

I appreciate the police, firemen, and medical workers who keep us safe and healthy. The people of Seward are very friendly and nice and they take care of our

town.

Seward has a very nice pool, and I'm excited for the wellness center.

I love Seward!

*Charles finished fourth grade at St. John Lutheran School. His parents are Max and Melanie Wake.*

**BY SADIE OWENS**  
Miss Independence



**Sadie Owens, Miss Independence**

I love Seward!

I was very lucky to have been born here, and I can't think of anywhere I'd rather be! Here are just a few of the many reasons of why I love living in Seward.

Seward has very nice schools and amazing teachers that I get to work with during the school year. And when I'm not in school I can play on the schools' playgrounds with all my friends. Every year I get to learn new things and my

teachers are always there to help me do just that. I don't know where I'd be without them. My friends are also always ready to help me.

Seward is also filled with really nice people that I know I can trust and rely on. Everywhere I go I'm greeted by a smiling face! There are amazing people that all want to be your friends. I have lived here my whole life,

(CONTINUED ON 10)

*Thank you to those who protect our freedom and preserve our independence!*

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# Royalty

(CONTINUED FROM 9) and I have made way more friends than I can count.

It is also very safe in Seward. The firefighters and police work very hard to make our community a safe place. I always feel very safe when I'm riding my bike or when I'm in a public area.

There are many fun things to do in Seward, too! First of all, there's the trail. I love riding my bike on it with my family. And there are little paths in the woods! I like to stop and hike around on the paths when I ride on the trail.

Secondly, there's the pool! I love going to the pool with my family and friends. My favorite thing at the pool is the high dive! I used to be afraid to go off it, but now it's my favorite part. A dip in the pool always cools me off.

Lastly, there's

the movie theater. It's lots of fun to go watch a movie there. I like to pick out my candy and find a good spot to sit, but of course my favorite part of going to the movie theater is watching the movie.

I also love that Seward is Nebraska's Fourth of July City. First, I like to look at the cool old cars. Another one of my favorite things to do is watching the dancers in the bandshell while eating a funnel cake. Then I enjoy watching the exciting parade downtown before heading home. After a long day, I like setting off fireworks with my family before watching Seward's firework show.

To me, Seward is just the right size. It's big enough for it to have fun things to do, schools, parks or playgrounds, and a variety of stores. Yet, the fact that

Seward is small, is also really nice. Since it's so small, I know a lot of people that live here, and I can ride my bike to a lot of places around town.

Seward is an amazing place to live. It is full of history! I think that Seward is awesome in every way possible.

*Sadie has finished fourth grade at St. Vincent de Paul. Her parents are John and Julie Owens.*

**BY MYA BOGGS**

Miss Independence runner-up

Seward, Nebraska, is a wonderful place to stay or visit! I have lived in Seward my whole life and I can guarantee you it is such a great place. I'm going to take you on a quick tour around Seward, so buckle up and get excited!

On our first stop, let's visit some of the fun activities



**Mya Boggs, Miss Independence runner-up**

for kids and adults to do. You can play sports at the Plum Creek Sports Complex, watch movies at the Rivoli, listen to music at the Seward Bandshell, go bowling at Sparetime, enjoy swimming at the Seward Pool, attend programs at the Seward Memorial Library, and many more.

We have a huge Fourth of July celebration including a parade, fireworks, food trucks, and crafts around the

square. Another yearly event is the Christmas festival along with a parade and our annual play at the Olde Glory Theater.

Next on our trip, let's drop by some of the local businesses and restaurants, such as Chapters Books and Gifts, Cafe On the Square, and my family's shaved ice business, B's Sweet Freeze.

Some generous organizations that you'll come across on our tour today include Seward Crossmakers, Blue Valley Community Action and Meals on Wheels.

A few unique attractions you will discover in Seward are the Nebraska National Guard Museum, the Bartels Rock Museum at Concordia University and the world's largest time capsule.

Seward is also home to many ter-  
(CONTINUED ON 28)

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# Do you know what a folly hunt is?

BY AMY HAUSMAN  
amy@friendsentinel.com

Tom Steenhoven, of Seward, will lead a lecture entitled "Seward's Great Folly Hunt" on July 4 at noon at the Seward Civic Center in the AV Room.

But what is a folly?

Seward resident Pat Coldiron, who is passionate about the landscape of Seward County, thought it would be nice if more people jumped in their cars and explored.

"There are such wonderful vistas and natural wetlands in Seward County that most years

get thousands of migratory birds," Coldiron said. "I get so frustrated that people do not realize it and wish more people would spend time enjoying the county."

Coldiron shared her feelings with neighbors, Tom and Deb Steenhoven, and joked if there was a little creature or symbol they could put out in the tall prairie grasses to spark some interest.

Shortly after, the Steenhovens returned with a folly they created.

"It is a bird and he has ears," Coldiron said. "We made the

(CONTINUED ON 23)



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# On your marks, get set, dash!

FILE PHOTO

Got kids? Bring them for the Duck Dash, sponsored this year by the Seward Cross Makers. Located in the intersection at Seventh and Seward streets at 3:45 p.m. July 4, the Duck Dash will be after the car show but before the Grand Parade. Race to collect one (or a few) of 500 rubber ducks. Find one of 10 specially marked ducks and exchange it for a prize. Non-winning participants get to keep all the ducks they collect. Age divisions are 6 and under and 7-12. No registration required.



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# SPEND THE 4<sup>TH</sup> IN SEWARD *and come back anytime!*

Come enjoy all the special activities and family friendly events scheduled for the annual July 4th Celebration in Seward.

Hats off to our 4th of July Committee, their volunteers, the Seward County Chamber and Development Partnership, business community and our own City of Seward employees for all they do to make the holiday special for you!

In addition to the celebration, the City of Seward invites you to come back and enjoy...

## TRAILS

Walking ★ Jogging  
 Biking ★ Campground



## POOL

Cool off for the summer!



## GOLF

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## PARKS & REC

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 Sand Volleyball





LUXE DANCE ACADEMY.

Members of the LUXE Dance Academy have been clogging in the Seward Fourth of July celebration since 1989.

## LUXE Dance Academy to clog at Seward for 33rd time

BY HANNA CHRISTENSEN  
 sreporter@sewardindependent.com

LUXE Dance Academy, formerly known as Capital City Cloggers, has been clogging in the Seward Fourth of July celebration since 1989 and has no plans of stopping.

Kiley Conway, a direc-

tor at LUXE, said the dancers' favorite part about performing for Seward on Fourth of July is the atmosphere.

"Our dancers love that environment," she said. "It's always so positive, and there's so many people. It's definitely a hot show, but we just love

being out there in the sun and dancing."

Competitive and recreational level teams will perform this year. They will showcase a variety of clogging styles including modern and traditional with music ranging from American to country.

Conway said the show

will also feature some hip hop.

Ten different teams will perform, and the dancers will range from three year olds to adults.

"It can be your first year dancing or your 50th

(CONTINUED ON 14)

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4  
of JULY

### JULY 1-4 HOURS

July 1 | Open 10 am-6 pm

July 2 | Open noon-4 pm  
 • Art Open House feat. Pam Apley 2-4 pm.

July 3 | Closed

July 4 | Open 9 am-4 pm  
 • Art Shows feat. Pam Apley, Mike Fluent, Jeanette Johnson.  
 • Art Show: Emily Loux, chalk artist & member artist of Red Path Gallery. Watch Emily create a unique chalk mural in front of Red Path. 9 am-3 pm.  
 • Cigar Box Guitar Artist: Stan Luebbe. 10 am-1 pm in front of Red Path Gallery.

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# LUXE

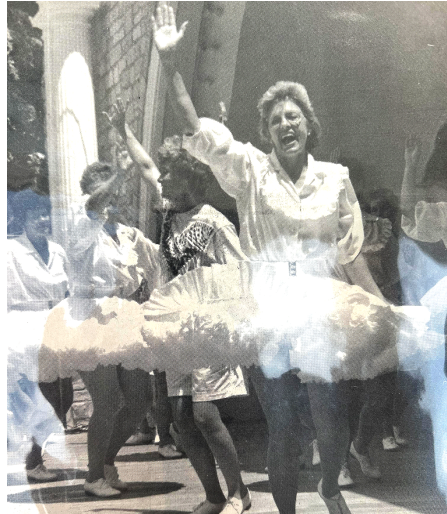
(CONTINUED FROM 13)

year, and we still get up on the stage and show off different styles and different skill levels,” Conway said.

LUXE specializes in clogging but also has some hip hop, baton and pom classes and teaches at recreational and competitive levels.

“We’re the only clogging studio in Lincoln,” Conway said. “So, it’s pretty awesome that we get to bring that to Seward and really feature our cloggers because it’s something that’s rare in the Midwest.”

According to Conway, a highlight of the show is always performing with festive songs and outfits and inviting audience members on stage to share clogging with them. The studio has performed at the Fourth of July every year since



LUXE DANCE ACADEMY.

The Capitol City Cloggers kick up their heels as they perform in the bandshell, from left, Glennis Becker, Geri Lorenzen, Karen Joyce and Mary Borer.

1989, with the exception of 2020 due to COVID.

“Our dancers aren’t dancing in

an auditorium or on a stage with big flashing lights. They’re more so just dancing for fun,” Conway said. “That’s really when they get to be themselves and they get to just have fun with their teammates. They perform not only for their family but some other friends come out, and it’s just a fun environment.”

Karen Joyce, who has been dancing at the Seward Fourth of July celebration since 1989, started clogging when she was 40 years old. Now 75, she continues to enjoy the fun and friendships it brings to her life. She said one of her favorite parts of the show in Seward is the energy from the audience.

“There’s nothing about clogging that I don’t like,” she said. “I’ve always said, ‘To get me to stop clogging, you’ll have to carry me off the stage feet first.’”

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# Business owner honored with award

He came to the rescue of the Milford School District one day at lunch, and for that and other instances of service, Roger Wittrock, owner of Pizza Kitchen in Milford, was given the 2023 Community Service Award.

“It was a total surprise,” Wittrock said.

As a businessman in Milford, Wittrock works with the Chamber of Commerce, Kiwanis, the school district and churches on events in town.

“We try and give back as much as we can,” he said.

Wittrock grew up on a farm near Falls City and has been in Milford for 37 years as of June 15.

“I like serving people. I try to treat them how I’d like them to treat me,” he said.



STEPHANIE CROSTON/SCI/MT

Roger Wittrock of Milford, left, owner of Pizza Kitchen in Milford, was named the 2023 Community Service Award winner May 31 during the Fourth of July kickoff. He is pictured with Seward Mayor Josh Eickmeier and Jessica Kolterman of the Fourth of July Committee.

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**LIVE MUSIC!**  
 Sunday, July 2  
**Open Regular Hours**

**Monday, July 3**  
**Homegrown Band • 9 p.m. – 1 a.m.**

**Tuesday, July 4**  
 Open at 10 a.m. **OPEN**

**Wednesday, July 5**  
**CLOSED TO REST**

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# NEBRASKA NATIONAL GUARD MUSEUM



## Schedule of Events

### Sunday, July 2

7:00 p.m. – Big Band Swing Concert - Seward High School Auditorium (Doors open at 6pm).

Seward Municipal Band and others will provide the entertainment.

World War II era music to celebrate the arrival of PA31-17 "Higgins Boat" and the contributions of Andrew Jackson Higgins to victory during the war.

Sponsored by Van and Becky Vahle, the late Virginia Cattle, Cattle Bank and Trust

### Monday, July 3

PA31-17 "Higgins Boat" staged in front of NENG Museum. Filming all day with boat (Eric Hollenbeck star of the "Craftsman")

Afternoon – Meet & Greet with Higgins Biographer – Jerry Strahan

Afternoon – Meet & Greet with James Dunsdon – man who recovered PA31-17

6:00 p.m. – Meet the Higgins Biographer – Jerry Strahan

7:00 p.m. – Concert – Kevin and Heidi Cheng (piano/violin) on main floor of museum. Check out the 1917 Baby Grand Piano and the wonderful music of the Cheng's.

Sponsored by Chuck and Jan Matzke of Seward

### Tuesday, July 4

7:30 a.m. – Reveille (75mm pack howitzer) out front by flag-pole

8:00 a.m. – Encampments around the property – 1776/Civil War/WWII soldiers and actors. World War II display – PA31-17 "Higgins Boat" in front of Museum.

9:00 a.m. – Dedication of PA31-17 "Higgins Boat" in front of Museum.

10:00 a.m. – Author Talk – Jerry Strahan – Higgins Biographer (Jones Theater)

8:00-5:30 p.m. – OPEN HOUSE at the Museum

ALL DAY – Filming at Museum & during Parade

4:00 p.m. – GRAND PARADE: PA31-17 will be towed in the parade.

Events/logistics sponsored by Van and Becky Vahle, the late Virginia Cattle, Cattle Bank and Trust, Berry Law Firm, Chuck and Jan Matzke

### Wednesday, July 5

Morning – Move PA31-17 to Columbus for filming and photo op

Afternoon – Move PA31-17 to Restoration Bay at NENG Museum

[www.nengm.org](http://www.nengm.org)

Check us out on Facebook



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*"Without the boats that Higgins is manufacturing the Combined Operations Command could not exist."*  
—LORD MOUNTBATTEN

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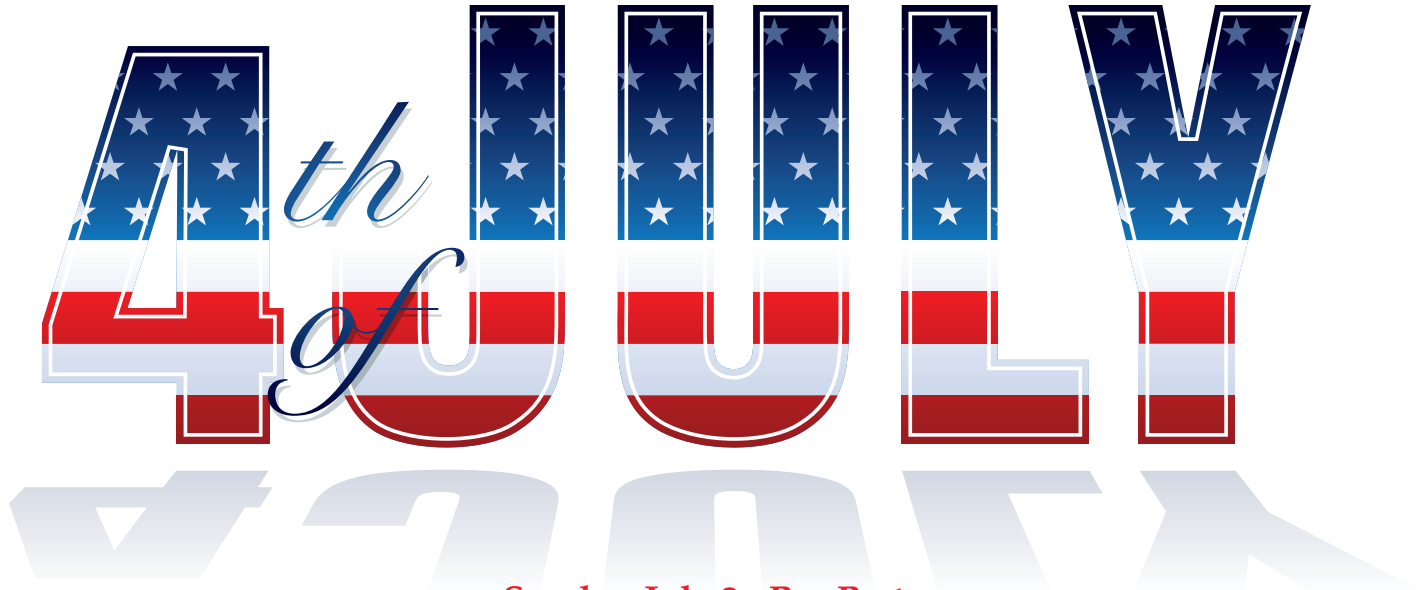
402.309.8763

HOURS OF OPERATION: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. weekdays

Saturday: 10 am - 2 pm from May to September

Closed on Sunday, federal and state holidays





## Sunday, July 2 - Pre-Party

- Attend the church of your choice – See ad in the Seward County Independent for details.
- 7a ★ **Self-guided volkswalk:** "Step to the Beat" – starts at Fast Mart, 215 N. 6th St., 5K (3.1 miles) or 10K (6.2 miles). See [www.julyfourthseward.com](http://www.julyfourthseward.com) for details.
- 12p ★ **Red Path Art Gallery and Tasting Room** – artist open house featuring Pam Apley, only from 2–4 p.m.
- 1:30p ★ **Seward County Historical Society Museum** – 1:30–5 p.m. See the 1868 US Flag made for the first Seward 4th of July celebration and "Images of Independence," historic photo documentary exhibit in Seward, July 4, 1981.
- ★ **Cowgirl Tea** – Seward Civic Center basement. Featuring "Annie Oakley" (Charlotte Endorf) at 1:30 p.m. and Joan Wells, nationally acclaimed trick roper, at 2:30 p.m. Free. Refreshments available. Silent auction. Hosted by GFWC SWC. Sponsored by GFWC SWC and Humanities Nebraska.

- 2p ★ **Children's Pre-Fourth Parade** – Line up at Ridgewood East Parking lot at 1:30 p.m. March begins at 2 p.m. Informal July 4th salute for the Seward seniors. No pre-registration needed. Visits area senior living residences. For details, contact Molly Marroquin, Youth Parade Chair, at [tina\\_marroquin@yahoo.com](mailto:tina_marroquin@yahoo.com) or Julia Metschke at [Julia.Metschke@sewardschools.org](mailto:Julia.Metschke@sewardschools.org). Sponsored by Seward High School Key Club.
- 5:30p ★ **Food Truck** – Bottle Rocket Brewing Co. 5:30–8 p.m.
- 7p ★ **World War II Musical Review: Swing Show** – Seward High auditorium. Honoring Andrew Higgins. Featuring Seward Municipal Band and additional music and live talent/entertainment. Free. NENG Historical Society.

## Monday, July 3 - Pre-Party

- 7a ★ **Self-guided Volkswalk:** "Step to the Beat" – starts at Fast Mart, 215 N. 6th St., 5K (3.1 miles) or 10K (6.2 miles). See [www.julyfourthseward.com](http://www.julyfourthseward.com) for details.
- 8a ★ **Nebraska National Guard Museum** opens – new exhibits
- 9a ★ **Antique Market** opens – Liberty House Bed & Breakfast.
- 1p ★ **Red Path Art Gallery and Tasting Room Open House** – featuring art of Pam Apley, Tonya Grosshans, and Lois Smith.
- ★ **Book Signing:** "The Unstoppable Bridget Bloom" by Allison Bitz of Lincoln, 1–2 p.m., Chapters Books & Gifts. Ask her anything. Target audience: 12 through 28.
- 5:30p ★ **Food Truck** – Bottle Rocket Brewing Co. 5:30–8 p.m.

- 6p ★ **Author Meet & Greet, Book Signing:** "Andrew Jackson Higgins" by Jerry Strahan, Higgins biographer. – NENG Museum.
- 6:30p ★ **Cornhole Singles Tourney** – Register at Bottle Rocket Brewing Co. Call 402-646-5847 for details. <https://playpass.com/bottlerocketbrewing>.
- 7p ★ **Concert:** Featuring Heidi & Kevin Cheng. Songs of World War II, grand piano & violin. Free. NENG Museum main floor.
- 7:30p ★ **Wissmann Family Singers** and the Benson Family Singers of Seward County and Faribault, Minnesota – Bandshell. Musical presentation. \*\*In case of bad weather, at Seward Civic Center auditorium.\*\*
- 9p ★ **Homegrown Band** – Sparetime Lounge. 9 p.m.–1 a.m.

## Tuesday, July 4 - Rain or Shine

- 7a ★ **Register** in the guest book – Information Booth on northeast corner of Courthouse Square by Cattle Bank & Trust. Also in Civic Center.
- ★ **VFW Auxiliary Community Buffet Breakfast** – VFW Club. Serving 7–11 a.m.
- ★ **St. John Community Breakfast** – Civic Center basement. Serving 6–8 a.m. French toast and sausage. Sponsored by St. John Lutheran Church Music Ministry.
- ★ **2 Mile & 10K Freedom Runs** – Plum Creek Ball Fields east side. New location, new route. See website. Entry fee. Forms at [www.julyfourthseward.com](http://www.julyfourthseward.com). Seward Optimist Club.
- ★ **Car Show Registration** – between Seward, 6th, & 8th Sts. 7–10 a.m. Entry fee. Contact CJ Novak, 402-646-5214, or Larry Ray, 402-523-4020. See [www.julyfourthseward.com](http://www.julyfourthseward.com) for more details.
- ★ **Lincoln's Great Plains Cycling Club's "Firecracker 50"** – 1200 West Hillcrest. Bicycle to Brainard/Dwight and back or a shorter route. Registration at Living Word Lutheran Church. Visit [www.julyfourthseward.com](http://www.julyfourthseward.com) for more details. Approved bike helmets required. Open to all & free.
- 7:30a ★ **Anvil Firing** – Zabka Park behind Bandshell, before and after prayer service. Colonial custom. Seward Volunteer Fire Department.
- ★ **Reveille** (75mm howitzer cannon fire) and Flag Raising – NENG Museum.
- ★ **Flag Raising** – Bandshell. Boy Scout USA Troop 256.
- ★ **Community Prayer Service** – Bandshell. Music featuring United Methodist Praise Band. Seward Ministerial Association.
- ★ **Self-guided Volkswalk:** "Step to the Beat" – Starts at Fast Mart, 215 N. 6th St., 5K (3.1 miles) or 10K (6.2 miles). See [www.julyfourthseward.com](http://www.julyfourthseward.com) for details.

- 8a ★ **Exhibits Open** – Various. 8 a.m.–3 p.m. Open to the public. Free.
- ★ **Camp Creek Threshers and SYA Antique Tractors & Farm Machinery** – Seward & 4th Sts.
- ★ **Various art** – Bottle Rocket Brewing Co.
- ★ **"We are Family" Art Show** – Civic Center Langworthy Gallery. Vote for People's Choice award. Sponsored by Lincoln Art Guild.
- ★ **Nebraska National Guard Museum Exhibits** – NENG Museum. 8 a.m.–5:30 p.m. Free. Displays: 1776 Soldiers Encampment, First Nebraska Civil War Encampment, and World War II soldiers and vehicles.
- ★ **Chimes Concert** – Courthouse Tower. 8 a.m., 10 a.m., 2 p.m., and 4 p.m.
- 8:30a ★ **Shuttle/Trolley Rides** – See map on [www.julyfourthseward.com](http://www.julyfourthseward.com) or pick up a map at the Info Center on the Square. Free. 8:30 a.m.–3:15 p.m. & 5–7 p.m.
- ★ **Best Decorated Bike/Trike Contest** – Bandshell. Decorate your bike/trike. Ride your bike in the Grand Parade! Awards/prizes. All ages welcome. Free. Sponsored by Seward High School FCCLA.
- 9a ★ **Post Office Pictorial Cancellation** – Themed pictorial cancellation for Seward's July 4th celebration and free postcards.
- ★ **Antique Market** opens – Liberty House Bed & Breakfast.
- ★ **PA31-17 Higgins Boat Dedication** – Front of NENG Museum. Honoring and thanking the Cattle & Vahle families for their support of the project.
- ★ **Pop-Up History Museum** – 5th & Seward Sts. Cattle Bank & Trust upstairs. 9 a.m.–noon. Memorabilia and history of the Cattle Bank and Trust's 150 years in Seward. Free. Elevator available.

- ★ **Cornhole Tourney** – Registration and tournament at Bottle Rocket Brewing Co. Call 402-646-5847 for details. [https:// playpass.com/bottlerocketbrewing](https://playpass.com/bottlerocketbrewing).
  - ★ **Friends of Seward Library Book Sale** – Seward Memorial Library Meeting Room. Use west entrance. 9 a.m.–noon.
  - ★ **Red Path Gallery Art Shows** featuring Pam Apley, Mike Fluent, and Jeanette Johnson – Red Path Gallery.
  - ★ **Chalk Art by Emily Loux** – in front of Red Path Gallery. 9 a.m.–3 p.m. Watch Emily as she creates a unique chalk mural.
  - ★ **Free Water and Lemonade** – in front of Mercy City Church, 6th & Seward St. While supplies last. Free. Sponsored by Mercy City Church.
  - ★ **Food Alley** – 5th St. between Seward & Jackson Streets.
  - ★ **Crafts on the Square Craft Show** – Courthouse Lawn.
  - ★ **Miscellaneous Market** – 5th St. between Seward & South Streets.
  - ★ **32nd Annual Street Pole Vault Competition** – 5th Street, in front of Bottle Rocket Brewing Co. Amateur competition followed by advanced/elite competition. Featuring area college vaulters and some of the best USA pole vaulters. Contact Jason Berry, 402-641-4615.
  - ★ **Horseshoe Pitching**, Herb Downing Memorial Tourney – County Fairgrounds horseshoe pits. Entry fee.
  - ★ **Magic Show** by Andrew "Mr. Magic" Malan – Civic Center auditorium. Family show.
  - ★ **Water Fight** – Jackson St. between 3rd & 4th Streets. Women and mixed teams welcome! Sponsored by Seward Volunteer Fire Department.
  - ★ **Pet Parade/Pet Contest** – Bandshell. Bring your pets. Free. Sponsored by Petsource by Scouler. Seward High School FFA.
  - ★ **Book Talk:** "Bucks and Bulls" by Dr. Joel Helmer – Bottle Rocket Brewing Co. large event room.
  - ★ **Lecture:** "The Mildred Adaline Lindsey Story: Escaped Slave Living in Seward County" by Tobin Beck – Civic Center east fireplace room. Free.
  - ★ **Walk Around the Historic Square** – with Jon Keller, author of "150 Years Around the Square." Meet at information booth at 5th & Seward Streets. One-hour presentation.
  - 9:30a ★ **"Nebraska Train Songs and Tales"** by David Seay – Civic Center auditorium. Humanities Nebraska.
  - 10a ★ **LUXE Dance Academy** of Lincoln, Dancers/Cloggers – Bandshell.
  - ★ **Hospitality Room** – Civic Center west fireplace room. 10 a.m.–3 p.m. Free. Includes children's activities, silent auction, and photo spot. Hosted by GFWC SWC.
  - ★ **Car Show** opens – Seward St. between 6th & 8th Sts. See website.
  - ★ **River City Carnival** opens – Location TBA.
  - ★ **Moolah's Giant 18 ft. Inflated Slide** – 5th & Seward Sts. Cattle Bank & Trust parking lot. 10 a.m.–2 p.m. Sponsored by Cattle Bank & Trust.
  - ★ **Quilt Talk:** "The Quilts of Valor Program" by Bonnie Smith, Blue River Quilt Guild – Civic Center AV room.
  - ★ **Author Talk:** "Andrew Jackson Higgins" by Jerry Strahan, Higgins biographer – NENG Museum.
  - ★ **See the Higgins Boat PA31-17** – NENG Museum front.
  - ★ **Lecture:** "Lutherans, Language and Loyalty in Seward County During World War I, 1917-1918" by Dr. Jerry Pfabe – Civic Center east fireplace room.
  - ★ **Mighty Fortress Lutheran Church Hot Dog Feed** – 6th & Bradford. Proceeds go to Blue Valley Community Action.
  - ★ **Art Show Exhibit:** Cigar Box Guitar artist Stan Luebbe – in front of Red Path Art Gallery. 10 a.m.–1 p.m.
  - ★ **Lecture:** "142 Seward Street: Story of a House" by Dr. Brent Royuk – Bottle Rocket Brewing Co. large event room.
  - 10:30a ★ **Martin Albright in Concert:** "Beautiful Music" – Civic Center auditorium.
  - ★ **Bubble Gum/Apple Pie Eating Contest** – Bandshell. Free. State championships! No pre-registration. Sponsored by Seward Rotary Club.
  - ★ **Book Talk:** The Story Behind the Story of "More Than a Local Wonder!" Carla Ketner's upcoming Ted Kooser bio – Chapters Books & Gifts, downtown Seward.
  - 11a ★ **City Municipal Band Concert:** "Patriotic Salute" – Bandshell. Honoring the "Greatest Generation."
  - ★ **Lecture:** "The US Constitution Lady" by Shelia Collins- Davey – Civic Center east fireplace room. On value of the US Constitution. For all ages. Free.
  - ★ **Lecture:** "The Days My Family Will Always Remember" by Cliff Lowell – Civic Center AV room.
  - ★ **Children's Big Wheel/Hot Cycle Races** – in front of Zabka-Perdue Funeral Home, Jackson Ave & 4th St. No rubber wheels please! Bring your own Big Wheel or Hot Cycle. Sponsored by Seward High School FBLA.
  - ★ **Marble Music Studio** Presents: "Music, Music" – Civic Center auditorium.
  - ★ **Pie Festival** – Civic Center basement, west room. 11 a.m.–2 p.m. Homemade pie and ice cream. Sponsored by Raymond Pie Ladies, Raymond Church.
  - ★ **Sloppy Joe/Yum Yum Feed** – Civic Center lower level. Serving 11 a.m.–1:30 p.m. Seward High School Band Boosters fundraiser.
  - 11:30a ★ **Paul Soulek's Piano** Presents: "A Bit of Patriotism" – Civic Center auditorium.
  - 12p ★ **Pause for the Pledge of Allegiance** – All over celebration grounds. National Anthem.
  - ★ **Lecture:** "Seward's Great Folly Hunt!" by Tom Van Steenhoven – Civic Center AV room.
  - ★ **Fourth of July Bingo** – Civic Center basement. Noon–3 p.m. Free. Prizes. Air-conditioned seating. Sponsored by Seward High School FCCLA and Friends.
  - ★ **LUXE Dance Academy** of Lincoln Dancers/Cloggers – Bandshell. Sponsored by Suhr & Lichty Insurance.
  - ★ **Free movie:** "An American Tail" – Rivoli Theatre. PG. People's Choice Best Family Movie. About a great family. Sponsored by Wisehart family and Seward Fourth of July Celebration Committee.
  - ★ **Blue River Men's Quartet** directed by Jonathan Jank – Civic Center auditorium.
  - ★ **A Century of Fashion: Mini Fashion Show and Talk** by Sue McLain – Civic Center, upstairs east fireplace room. Featuring clothes of 150 years. Honoring Cattle Bank & Trust's 150th anniversary. Sponsored by GFWC SWC and Humanities Nebraska.
  - 12:30p ★ **High School Summer Chamber Choir** directed by Dr. Kurt von Kampen – Civic Center auditorium.
  - 1p ★ **Lecture:** "Moving and Saving the Log Cabin" by Pat Coldiron and Company – Civic Center AV room.
  - ★ **Essence of Dance**, Milford – Seward Bandshell.
  - ★ **Concert:** Dennis Bowers and His Harmonica Show – Civic Center auditorium.
  - ★ **Demonstration:** Gold Star Martial Arts, Team Velocity – 5th & Seward Sts.
  - ★ **Book Talk:** "The Barbers of Seward County" by Jon Keller, Seward historian – Civic Center east fireplace room.
  - 1:30p ★ **Piano Concert** by Sally Jost – Civic Center auditorium.
  - 2p ★ **Wissmann Family Singers** – Civic Center auditorium.
  - ★ **Lecture:** "The Day the Cows Didn't Come Home" by Clifford Lowell – Civic Center AV room.
  - ★ **Lecture:** "The US Constitution Lady" by Shelia Collins- Davey – Civic Center east fireplace room. On value of the US Constitution. For all ages. Free.
  - ★ **Sangre Azteca**, "Proyecto Cultural," Mexican Folkloric Dancers of Lincoln – Bandshell.
  - ★ **Trivia** at the World's Largest Time Capsule Pyramid – Hillcrest & Cherry Lane. Hosted by Trish Johnson. To be opened 2025.
  - 2:30p ★ **Governor's Community Reception** – St. John Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall. Honoring July 4th dignitaries. MC: Sen. Jana Hughes. Hosted by GFWC SWC.
  - 3:45p ★ **Duck Dash** – 7th & Seward Streets.
  - 4p ★ **Grand Parade** – Theme: We Are Family - A Call for Unity. Featuring bands, floats, and units. Honoring the 150th anniversary of Cattle Bank & Trust. Nebraskan's Friend Award Grand Marshall Recipient: Virginia Cattle. Entry forms at Civic Center; contact Donna Hendrickson, SCCDP, at 402-643-4189; visit [www.julyfourthseward.com](http://www.julyfourthseward.com) or email [sewardparade@outlook.com](mailto:sewardparade@outlook.com).
  - 5p ★ **Beef Bar-B-Que Meal/Buffer** – inside Olde Glory. Advance tickets at Seward banks or buy on-site. Also serving desserts. CK Catering & Olde Glory volunteers.
  - ★ **VFW Hamburger/Hot Dog Basket Feed** – VFW Post 4755, 243 S. 9th St., 5–8 p.m.
  - 6p ★ **Mayor's Welcome** – Crowning Miss Independence & Mr. Firecracker. Seward County Community Service Award & Nebraska's Friend Award. Sponsored by Seward Rotary.
  - ★ **Tourist Family** introduced – Bandshell.
  - ★ **Concession stand** – Plum Creek Park.
  - 7p ★ **Concert:** "Macrowave" – Bandshell. 1970's to 1990's rock music.
  - 8p ★ **Concert:** Featuring Sunset Lounge – Plum Creek Park. Free. Stage by Daws Trucking. Extra seating and parking for fireworks following the concert in Seward Middle School grounds and Plum Creek soccer fields.
  - 10p ★ **Giant Fireworks Salute: A Fireworks Extravaganza** – Plum Creek Park. Music with fireworks on 104.9 MAX Country. Bring blanket and chair. Extra seating at Seward Middle School and Plum Creek soccer fields. Sponsored by Cattle Bank & Trust, Concordia University, Jones Bank of Seward and Milford, Hughes Brothers, and Petsource by Scouler. The July 4th Committee, coordinator Darin Urwin & Company.
- \*\*In case of rain: fireworks will be on July 5th at 10 p.m.\*\*  
 ★ ★ ★ NO PRIVATE FIREWORKS ALLOWED. ★ ★ ★
- Operation Silhouette – Holiday lights around the Square featuring lights on the Courthouse. Seward County Chamber and Development Partnership.
  - Home Lighting Exhibition – View local homes decorated with red, white, and blue lights. Contest sponsored by Seward Rotary Club and Seward High School FBLA.
  - Planting Exhibition – View beautiful red, white, and blue plantings throughout the community. Keep Seward Beautiful Committee.

## Wednesday, July 5

- 6a ★ Clean Up – Meet on north side of square. Citywide throughout the morning. A "Litter-Free" event. Keep Seward beautiful! City of Seward, Seward Scouts, Seward High School FFA, FBLA, Skills USA, FCCLA and Key Club, 4-H Clubs, & community volunteers.

# We pledge allegiance, but what does it mean?

Francis Bellamy wrote the original pledge of allegiance in 1892. It was modified in 1923 and 1954, adding “the Flag of the United States of America” and “under God,” respectively.

**Pledge:** (verb) to promise solemnly; to pledge one's support  
(noun) a solemn promise or agreement to do or refrain from doing something

**Allegiance:** (noun) the loyalty of a citizen to their government or of a subject to their sovereign; loyalty or devotion to some person, group, cause, or the like.

**Republic:** (noun) a state in which the supreme power rests in the body of citizens entitled to vote and is exercised by representatives chosen directly or indirectly by them.

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

**Flag:** (noun) a piece of cloth, varying in size, shape, color, and design, usually attached at one edge to a staff or cord, and used as the symbol of a nation, state, or organization, as a means of signaling, etc.; ensign; standard; banner; pennant.

**Liberty:** (noun) freedom from arbitrary or despotic government or control; freedom from external or foreign rule; independence.

**Indivisible:** (adjective) not divisible; not separable into parts; incapable of being divided

**Justice:** (noun) the quality of being just; righteousness, equitableness, or moral rightness



## Happy Independence Day! Spend the 4<sup>th</sup> in Seward!

Jones Bank is pleased to be a major sponsor of the July 4<sup>th</sup> fireworks show and a trolley sponsor. Watch for our entry in the parade!

**HAVE A SAFE & HAPPY 4<sup>TH</sup> OF JULY!**

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# Craft ready for final trip

BY GERALD D. "JERRY" MEYER  
NENG Historian

PA31-17 is ready for its close-up.

A film crew is finishing a segment on PA31-17, the Higgins boat found and recovered from Lake Shasta, California.

The segment was filmed on location at the Blue Ox Millworks and Historical Village in Eureka, California. The star of the Magnolia Network series "The Craftsman," Eric Hollenbeck is directing the stabilization and partial restoration of the World War II landing craft built by Higgins Industries in 1942 and used on the USS Monrovia (APA-31) in seven major amphibious assaults in the war.

The boat is being prepped to move to Seward in late June by Hollenbeck and Whisler Aviation of Seward. The film crew is expected here over the July 4 holiday to film the last segments of the documentary.

The project to bring the landing craft to Seward is being sponsored by Dr. Van and Becky Vahle, the late Virginia Cattle and the Cattle Bank and Trust. The boat was located on Gen. George Patton's flagship for the invasion of Sicily in 1943. That was the same invasion that included Major John Cattle with the 9th Infantry Division Artillery. He rode ashore in the invasion on a Higgins Boat.

The Vahles started the process of bringing the boat to Seward in December 2021 with the recovery from Lake Shasta. The boat will be one of the largest and most historically significant artifacts



COURTESY PHOTO

Eric Hollenbeck of Blue Ox Millworks and Historic Village of Eureka, California, demonstrates to the documentary film crew how the release lever on PA31-17 "Higgins Boat" worked.

in the Nebraska National Guard Museum collection.

The boat is one of 16 Higgins Boats (built by Higgins Industries in New Orleans) that are known to still exist, of the 23,000 that were built. The boat will honor Seward World War II hero Major John Cattle, Columbus native and NENG soldier Andrew Jackson Higgins (the designer and builder of the boats) and all who participated in the war (service members and civilians).

The boat will maintain its rough appearance and will not be restored to its original configuration. The "ghost boat" display can utilize technology (holographs) to show what it looked like (new) and pull away the projection to show what it looked like when recovered. The boat will be in the museum's restoration bay until a permanent exhibit area can be

acquired.

The schedule for the film crew is July 2-4 in Seward and Columbus. They will be on hand for the Big Band Swing Concert on Sunday at 7 p.m. with the Seward Municipal Band at the high school on July 2.

They will film a segment with the boat up in Columbus at the Andrew Jackson Higgins National Memorial in West Pawnee Park on Monday, July 3, in the morning. The crew and boat will return to Seward for filming in the evening for a concert by Kevin and Heidi Cheng at the museum with the boat on display in the front parking area. The dedication ceremony will be held Tuesday, July 4, at 9 a.m. in front of the museum. The finale of the day is the Grand Parade in which the boat will make one last move before going into the restoration bay on July 5.

**Background:** A Higgins boat replica stands at the entrance to Utah Beach in Pouppeville, La Madeleine, Manche, France. A statue of Andrew Jackson Higgins, a native of Columbus and designer of the boat, stands nearby.

# From service project to documentary, Meyer part of Higgins connection

BY STEPHANIE CROSTON  
scroston@sewardindependent.com

Jerry Meyer knows Andrew Jackson Higgins. Not personally, because Higgins died in 1952, but through his family, biographies and his boats.

Higgins was born in Columbus on Aug. 28, 1886. His father died when he was a child, and his mother moved him and his siblings to Omaha.

The young Higgins struggled with discipline in school and eventually ended up at Creighton Prep. He joined the Millard Rifles at age 16 and began to flourish, Meyer said. The Rifles became part of the Nebraska National Guard on Nov. 11, 1901.

“There he finds something that captures his imagination,” Meyer said.

Higgins was elected an officer of the Rifles and showed his grasp of logistics when it came to moving personnel and supplies across the Platte River.

“The Platte was the genesis of his shallow-draft boats,” Meyer said.

Higgins eventu-

ally moved to New Orleans and got into the lumber industry.

As the world drifted toward war in the 1930s, Higgins used his shallow-draft boats to remove lumber from the swamps of Louisiana.

He thought Japan would take the Philippines. He started buying as much mahogany plywood from the Philippines as he could for building his ships.

Higgins didn’t want to lay off his workers during the 1930s. He used “creative marketing,” as Meyer described it, to keep his company afloat.

First he sold boats to the rum runners. Then he sold faster boats to the Coast Guard.

When the Navy started looking for landing craft in the late 1930s and early 1940s, Higgins had a design ready. His boats were maneuverable and could run onto the shore without damaging the engine and propeller. Once a ramp was added, they were what the Navy was looking for.

The boats, with their distinctive



COURTESY PHOTO

On location in Eureka, California, for documentary filming of PA31-17 “Higgins Boat” recently are, from left, James Dunsdon (recovered the boat), Eric Hollenbeck (star of the documentary and series “The Craftsman” who is doing the work on the boat), Amber Engelmann (director) and Jerry Meyer (NENG Museum). The boat is expected in Seward in late July. Filming will continue in Seward on July 2-4.

rounded stern, were known as Higgins boats.

Higgins Industries produced more than 20,000 Higgins boats between 1942 and 1945.

Meyer learned about Higgins thanks to an article in the June 6, 2000, Omaha World Herald. At the time he was teaching in Columbus. When he learned Higgins was a native of the town, he thought reating a memorial for him would be a good project for his students.

“I thought maybe a rock and and plaque,” he said.

(CONTINUED ON 36)



COURTESY PHOTO

Lt. Andrew Jackson Higgins of the “Millard Rifles” (Nebraska National Guard) in 1904. The Columbus native went on to fame in World War II as a landing craft designer and president of Higgins Industries of New Orleans. He played a major role in helping the Allies win the war.

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# Folly

(CONTINUED FROM 11)

whole thing up with a story that he became extinct 150 years ago with pieces, the same year Seward began.”

The lecture Steenhoven will share is the story of the folly with interesting information about the county, outdoors and prairie.

What makes this folly great? Coldiron feels it might be one of the most special opportunities to come interact with shopkeepers and citizens both with an educational and enjoyable activity.

“This is a wonderful opportunity to learn about William Henry Seward, the town of Seward and the tall grass prairie,” Coldiron said. “And one was seen, spotted and so now next summer we will have a folly hunt. If you stop in our shops downtown, there will be seven clues and seven follies all over Seward County. The folly may not be real, but the adventure is.”

“As Dr. Seuss says, ‘The thing about nonsense, it wakes up the mind.’”

## Children’s parade to return



FILE PHOTO

Kids and families line up for the 2022 Pre-Fourth Children’s Parade with decorated bikes during the 2022 Fourth of July celebration. This year’s children’s pre-Fourth parade will be held on Sunday, July 2, at 2 p.m. starting at the Ridgewood east parking lot.



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# Kindergartner recites pledge of allegiance



FILE PHOTO

BY AMY HAUSMAN  
amy@friendsentinel.com

It is not uncommon in my home for my 6-year-old daughter to ask what we are going to do today.

Since beginning my career with the newspaper, our adventures have diversified from a normal Saturday afternoon at the zoo or children's museum.

Charlotte now accompanies me nearly every weekend or evening that I cover a story, within reason. Charlotte can tell you within our entire coverage

area which area high schools serve the

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

best popcorn.

One thing that we also do together is attend government meetings, which begin with the pledge of allegiance following roll call. While reciting, all the attendees stand and show their respect for the country. Naturally, Charlotte and I do the same.

In many schools, students and teachers recite the Pledge of Allegiance before classwork begins. My kindergartner has it memorized and

(CONTINUED ON 28)



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# '150 Years Around the Square' to be featured on 4th

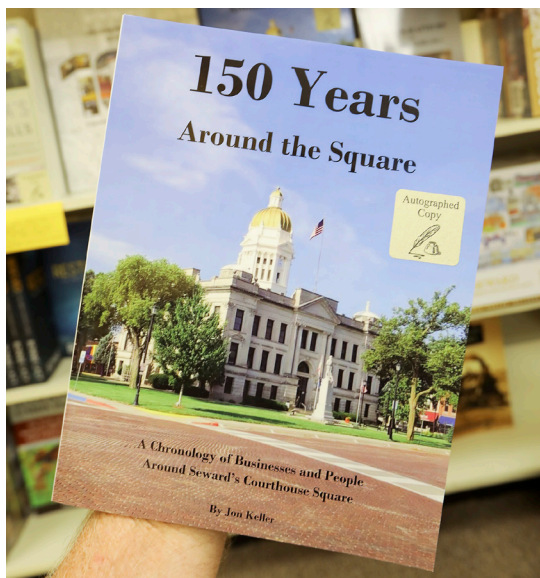
BY DOUG CARROLL  
doug@sewardindependent.com

Seward native Jon Keller, author of "150 Years Around the Square," will lead a one-hour tour around downtown Seward on July 4th.

A 1984 graduate of Seward High, Keller now lives in Huntington, Indiana, but said he tries to come back to Seward "at least twice a year."

On his tour, which he also led last year, Keller said he will pick out what he considers to be notable buildings to talk about, such as the Cattle Bank that's been there for 150 years and its expansion, as well as the Rivoli Theater building that was originally built in 1921.

He will also talk about little fun facts about various build-



DOUG CARROLL/SC/MT

Seward native Jon Keller's book "150 Years Around the Square" details the history of all the buildings around Seward's courthouse square and the businesses that have occupied them over the years.

ing, such as the old bank vault now used as an art show room in the Red Path Gallery. The gallery building used to house the Cattle National Bank, as detailed in his book.

"It's surprising how often I refer back to my '150 years...' book," he said, laughing.

Keller said more than 570 various businesses have occupied the buildings around the square over the last 150 years - some operating for just a little while before moving or closing their shutters, and others lasting a long time.

Other things he intends to cover include a tiled entryway on the north side of the square, and the white porcelain brick buildings that used to be meat

(CONTINUED ON 26)

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# Cliff Lowell, 93, marks 10th year of giving lectures at Fourth of July celebration

BY HANNA CHRISTENSEN  
scireporter@sewardindependent.com

Cliff Lowell, 93, has been giving two lectures every Fourth of July, with the exception of 2020 due to COVID, ever since he moved from Kearney to Seward in 2012.

"I came into town, and I said 'I'm not a spectator,'" he said.

Lowell said he chooses the topics of his presentations based on the theme for the Fourth of July each year. This year's theme is "We Are Family," so he is giving his lectures about childhood stories.

Even prior to coming to Seward, Lowell was no stranger to giving lectures. He said he has enjoyed being on stage since he was young, and he was a middle school teacher for a rural school in Buffalo

County and then for Minden Public Schools. After that, he worked for the Educational Service Unit in Holdrege.

"I'm an extrovert, so I love to get conversations going with people who I've never met," he said.

Lowell also served four years in the Air Force where he spent time in England, Texas and Idaho.

"I had a wonderful experience in the Air Force because I was fortunate enough to become a chaplain's assistant," he said.

Lowell enjoys volunteering in the community and plays piano for Kinship Pointe and Ridgewood Rehabilitation and Care Center. He was also part of Kiwanis for nine years, was heavily involved in working with a church camp called Camp Comeca and is a contribut-

ing writer for Lincoln 55+ Magazine.

He said some of his favorite Fourth of July lectures he has given include talks about a book he wrote about his family, the lives of famous musicians and the magic of Disney.

This year, he plans to tell two memorable stories from his childhood in the lecture "The Days My Family Will Always Remember" and two borrowed stories in the lecture "The Day the Cows Didn't Come Home."

Lowell said he is looking forward to sharing the good memories with others.

"I was reading one of the stories the other day and got teary-eyed," he said.

## 10 contests that can't be beat

✓ The "We Are Family" art show, sponsored by the Lincoln Art Guild, will be held at the Langworthy Gallery in the civic center, starting at 8 a.m. Cast your vote for the People's Choice award.

✓ The **Best Decorated Bike/Trike Contest** will begin at 8:30 a.m. at the Bandshell. All ages are welcome to decorate their bikes and trikes for awards and prizes. Participants are also invited to ride their bikes in the grand parade.

✓ Don't miss **cornhole** at Bottle Rocket Brewing Co. Registration opens at 9 a.m. July 4.

✓ The **Herb Downing Memorial Horseshoe Pitching Tournament** will begin at 9 a.m. on the Seward County Fairgrounds horseshoe pits.

✓ The **Water Fights** will begin at 9 a.m. on Jackson Avenue, between Third and Fourth streets. Watch

area firefighters compete in this "tug-of-war-esque" battle.

✓ The annual **Street Vault** competition will start at 9 a.m. in front of Bottle Rocket Brewing on Fifth Street. This is the 32nd year for the pole vault competition.

✓ The **Pet Parade/Pet Contest** will start at 9 a.m. at the Bandshell. Participants are invited to show off their pets for the Fourth.

✓ Noses to the sugar! The **Bubble Gum Blowing** and **Apple Pie Eating** contests will start at 10:30 a.m. at the Bandshell.

✓ The **Children's Big Wheel/Hot Cycle Races** will take place at 11 a.m. on Jackson Avenue and Fourth Street in front of Zabka-Perdue Funeral Home.

✓ Fourth of July **bingo**, sponsored by the Seward FCCLA and Friends, will be held in the basement of the civic center, starting at noon.

## Keller

(CONTINUED FROM 25)

markets back in the day.

"Just a few things on each side of the square," he said.

Keller said he will also talk a bit about the city of Seward's first "official" murder, which occurred in 1876.

In that murder, the brother of the murdered man was convicted of his death and spent 14 years in prison, even though another man confessed on his deathbed to the murder two years after the brother's conviction.

People interested in taking part in Keller's walk should meet him at the information booth at the corner of fifth and Seward Streets at 9 a.m. on July 4th.

# Car show has become a family tradition

BY EMILY HEMPHILL

emily@sewardindependent.com

For CJ Novak, car shows have always been a family hobby.

“I used to go with my uncles and take our cars to shows around the area,” Novak said. “That’s what got me into doing different shows.”

Novak has been the volunteer in charge of the Seward Fourth of July Car, Truck and Motorcycle Show for more than 15 years and has brought his family into the effort as well.

His dad, Richard, helps secure sponsorships and park cars the morning of the event. The two spend their spring and early summer weekends attending other car shows in the area to pass out flyers advertising Seward’s show, often showing CJ’s 1982 Chevy Camaro while they’re at it.

His mom, Vickie, helps pack the goodie bags, welcomes celebrity guest judges and lends a hand during registration. Cousins and other rela-



EMILY HEMPHILL/SCI

The July 4 car show in Seward has grown over the past 15 years to cover four city blocks downtown.

tives get involved, too.

Over the years, the show has grown from about 60 cars to a record of 207 vehicles lining both sides – and sometimes the middle – of four downtown city blocks.

Entries are split into more than 30 classes, and more than 100 awards are given out each year.

The Novaks spend about six months preparing for and organizing the show, starting in late

December.

“It’s a lot of work, but it’s rewarding to see so many people come out on the Fourth to enjoy the day,” CJ said.

The car show tradition is a must for many other families on the Fourth. Fathers and daughters, mothers and sons, and all combinations of family ties can be found walking through the rows of classic and specialty cars.

“It’s something fami-

lies can do together and pass along through the generations,” CJ said.

Registration for the show runs from 7 to 10 a.m. at the corner of Seventh and Seward streets, and the show is open to the public from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Registration is available in advance online at [julyfourthseward.com](http://julyfourthseward.com) or the morning of the show.

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# Royalty

(CONTINUED FROM 10)  
rific schools and churches.

I think Seward is such a cheerful and vibrant place. If you drive by the Alps Bark Park, you can see a beautiful mural of dogs that was painted by my dad on the side of the building. You can see another one of his murals if you go through the Jimmy Johns drive-thru downtown. These murals add such a colorful touch to our town. I love it that the people of Seward support and encourage creativity and the arts!

What I love the very most about Seward is

the loving and caring community. The people of Seward are always there for each other in times of need. It is a town that values God and family. Our town is also full of friendly teachers, pastors, neighbors, doctors, nurses, firefighters, police officers, friends and family. I wouldn't want to live anywhere else but here!

I hope you enjoyed your tour around the remarkable town of Seward, Nebraska!

Mya has finished fourth grade at Seward Elementary. Her parents are Seth and Megan Boggs.

# Pledge

(CONTINUED FROM 24)  
on the evenings she accompanies me she moves out from her seat, around the adults taller than her, so she can see the flag and says the words along with them.

Truthfully "says" is not an accurate way to describe this. Imagine a megaphone attached to a 4-0" blonde girl with pigtails and giant bows who has zero concept of "inside voice." That is how Charlotte says the pledge of allegiance.

The first time, I was mortified and tried to "shhhh" her. "Sweetheart, Mommy is working," I would say through gritted teeth in the sternest whis-

per possible. After several of these instances, I have learned to embrace it and the seated members at the meeting have candidly done the same and smiled widely at her patriotism.

We are blessed to live in a country that offers us many freedoms that we often take for granted, including the freedom of speech and of the press. Her sweet, not-so-little, voice has reminded me of this and I would encourage you to also place your right hand over your heart and say the pledge loud and proud at noon on July 4 when Seward pauses to say the pledge together.

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# Local store owner writes book on local legend

BY STEPHANIE CROSTON  
scroston@sewardindependent.com

Someday has arrived for Carla Ketner.

"I've always been interested in writing," she said. "It was always someday."

Ketner's someday will be official in November when her debut book, "Ted Kooser: More Than a Local Wonder," reaches bookstore shelves.

"I want the book to do justice to him," she said.

When her parents died in 2010, Ketner realized if she was going to write, it needed to happen.

"Someday can't be too far out," she said.

Reading a diary from her late aunt in which she wrote about regretting not writing was the push Ketner needed.

"I decided to get serious," she said. "How hard can it be? I wrote a dissertation."

She and some friends created a critique group to share their works. Ketner saw hers begin to improve.

Her early attempts were young adult fiction. She decided to try a picture book to practice plotting her stories.

"I really liked the smaller format," she said.

She took classes in picture book writing and kept honing her skills. Then came the "a-ha" moment.

"It was 2016. I vividly remember it," Ketner said. "I was looking up famous Nebraskans. I wanted to write a picture



Carla Ketner

book biography of one. Joel (her son) suggested Ted Kooser. Why not?"

She immediately thought of all the reasons not to write about Kooser. She decided to ask his opinion.

"He didn't seem opposed," she said.

She spent time interviewing Kooser to learn more about his life. One challenge, Ketner said, was to make sure the book was presentable to Kooser.

Picture books usually have fewer than 1,000 words, she said.

"You have to make every word count," she said.

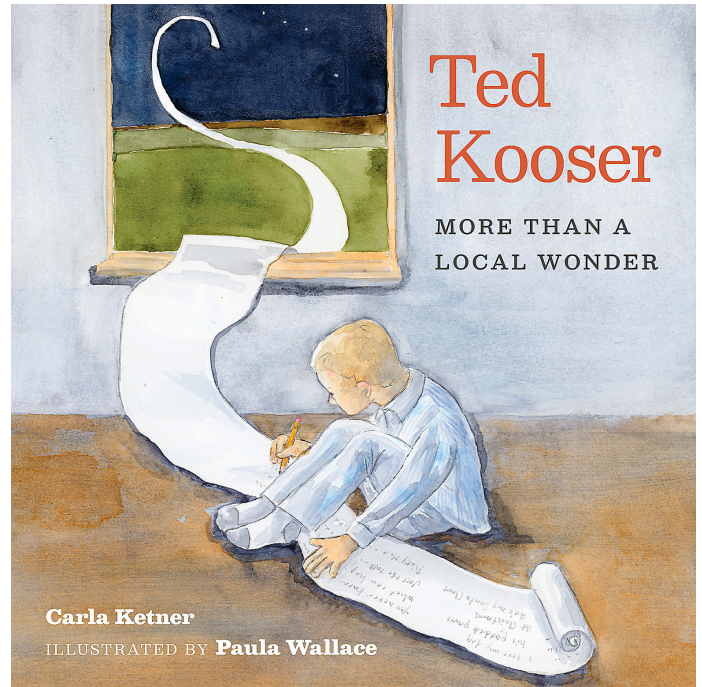
She chose to focus on Kooser's childhood and how he started writing. The book ends when Kooser was named Poet Laureate of the United States in 2004.

"As a child, he didn't feel he fit in," Ketner said. "He was able to follow his

passion and find his place. It's something everyone can relate to."

She was able to include

(CONTINUED ON 39)



Carla Ketner

ILLUSTRATED BY Paula Wallace

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# Illuminate Seward plans installation of lights on 11 more buildings by Fourth

BY EMILY HEMPHILL  
emily@sewardindependent.com

Operation: Silhouette will continue this Independence Day in Seward with a slightly more modern look.

Each Fourth of July and winter holiday season for at least the past 25 years, the white lights lining the tops of downtown buildings could be seen shining through the evening to brighten up the business district.

Over the years, those lights fell into disrepair with broken bulbs and worn wires making it un-

safe to flip the lights on.

In 2022, local business owner Gregg Nelson and the Seward County Chamber and Development Partnership began fundraising through the Illuminate Seward campaign to replace the lights with new LED bulbs to last another 25 years or more.

New lights were installed on nine buildings in 2022, and 11 more are planned to be completed before the Fourth of July.

“Don't let 'LED' put you off. The lights that have

(CONTINUED ON 33)



FILE PHOTO  
City of Seward workers install lights on the city hall building in 2022.

An advertisement for Bern's Body Shop. It features four people (two men and two women) smiling against a background of stars and stripes. The text reads: "Wishing everyone a SAFE &amp; HAPPY 4TH OF JULY!". At the bottom right, it says "BERN'S BODY SHOP" and "1221 W. Hwy 34 • Seward, NE • 402-643-2810". There are also several star graphics scattered throughout the ad.

# Race moves across town

BY STEPHANIE CROSTON  
scroston@sewardindependent.com

If you're planning to participate in the Seward Optimist Club's July 4 run/walk this year, don't go to the Seward County Fairgrounds.

The race will use a new route this year because of bridge construction on West Bluff Road.

This year's race will start at the Plum Creek Park fourplex on Karol Kay Boulevard, Tom Gee of the Seward Optimist Club said.

The route will go north from Plum Creek Park onto 266th Road. Runners will complete half their race then turn and come back to the ball fields where the start/finish line will be.

"It will be a more challenging run," Gee said.

Fruit and water will be provided at the end of the race, as usual.

New this year, in addition to the route, is photo tagging, sponsored by Cattle Bank, Gee said.

All pictures from before, during and after the race will be posted to a website.



KEATON BURGESS/SCI/MT

The 2 milers started a little after the 10k runners did at the 2022 Freedom Run on the 4th of July.

The software looks for bib numbers (each runner wears a bib with a number on it). On the website, visitors can enter a bib number and find all the pictures of that bib number.

All runners registered by Tuesday, June 20, will receive a t-shirt. Registration may be done at [www.getmeregistered.com](http://www.getmeregistered.com).

For those interested in a non-competitive walk, self-guided volkswalks are scheduled, beginning at Fast Mart. Walks may be done before the Fourth, as well.

The Lincoln Great Plains Bicycling Club will host its Family Day, a ride to

Brainard/Dwight and back or a shorter route July 4, beginning at 7 a.m. Register at Living Word Lutheran Church. Approved bike helmets are required for this free event.

More information on all these activities is available online at [www.julyfourthseward.com](http://www.julyfourthseward.com).




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# O say can you see how the song came to be

BY STEPHANIE CROSTON  
scroston@sewardindependent.com

We all know the words of “The Star Spangled Banner.” At least the first verse of it.

“O say can you see, by the dawn’s early light,

“What so proudly we hail’d at the twilight’s last gleaming,

“Whose broad stripes and bright stars through the perilous fight

“O’er the ramparts we watch’d were so gallantly streaming?”

They were written by Francis Scott Key on Sept. 14, 1814, after he watched the British attack Fort McHenry in

Maryland.

The Battle of Baltimore came after the British occupied and burned Washington, D.C., in August. The British expected Baltimore to fall as easily as Washington had. The people of Baltimore, however, had spent over a year building up its defenses.

Key had been detained on a British ship during the 25-hour bombardment.

Key’s poem was printed in Baltimore in 1814 when it was called “Defence of Fort McHenry.” Newspapers reprinted it with a note that it should be sung to the tune “To

Anacreon in Heaven.”

The song was from the Anacreontic Society, an amateur men’s music club in London, and first appeared around 1776. It was sung as a transition between the orchestral concert and after-dinner singing, according to the Encyclopedia Britannica.

The melody was used for a variety of songs with lyrics reflecting what was happening at the time.

When Key’s poem was published as sheet music later that year, the title was changed to “The Star-Spangled Banner.”

The song became more popular during the Civil War with its description

of the flag. Oliver Wendell Holmes added a fifth verse to Key’s original four in 1861.

President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed it the national anthem of all the United States’ armed forces in 1916. It was not made the official national anthem until March 3, 1931.

“And the rocket’s red clare, the bombs bursting in air,

“Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there,

“O say does that star-spangled banner yet wave  
O’er the land of the free and the home of the brave?”

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# Illuminate

(CONTINUED FROM 30)

been installed do not detract from the essence of our historic downtown. It does make it efficient going forward, though," said Donna Hendrickson, executive assistant and event planner with the SCCDP.

The total cost of the project was originally estimated at around \$140,000, but with rising costs, that total is now closer to \$168,000.

"The cost of the materials and installation was more than what we were expecting and went up from \$30 per linear foot to \$36.50 per linear foot since estimates were made in January of 2022," Hendrickson said.

The lights on the first round of buildings cost roughly \$13,800. It cost another \$10,000 to install them, not including the cost of controllers.

"Nine controllers were needed for the first set of lights (\$4,500), and they cost \$1144.50 to install," Hendrickson said.

An additional nine controllers will be needed for the second round of lights currently in progress.

The SCCDP and the City of Seward are working with Vinny Bittinger of the Magical Lights of Seward to get the lights installed and programmed.

Hendrickson said roughly 46 more buildings need their lights replaced after they were damaged in a

hailstorm in June 2022.

Some of the money is coming from private donors, including just over \$6,000 raised during the Seward County Gives campaign in May. Other costs are being paid by the building and business owners.

"We would love to see more downtown business owners get behind this effort to replace the lost lights," Hendrickson said. "It will only be through a community effort that this project can be completed."

In some instances, like at the post office, donations are still needed to cover the project.

"The U.S. Postal Service will not pay for lights to be installed on the post office, so funds will need to be raised for that building entirely if lights are to be installed on it," Hendrickson said.

Lights have been ordered and should be installed by July 4 on GBE, Cosmic Cow's The Udder Store, Farmers Cooperative, Rue 6, The Second Closet, the Carnegie Library building, Farm Bureau, Aspyr Professional Group (three buildings) and Pac 'N' Save.

All funds for Illuminate Seward are being funneled through Seward County Bridges to make donations tax-deductible. Donations may be sent to Seward County Bridges, 616 Bradford St. Seward, NE 68434. Donors may designate funds toward a specific building in the memo line of a check.

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# JULY 4 SPEAKERS



**July 2** – Cowgirl Tea featuring Annie Oakley (Charlotte Endorf) at 1:30 p.m. and Joan Wells, trick roper, at 2:30 p.m., Civic Center basement, Humanities Nebraska

The Mildred Adaline Lindsey Story by Tobin Beck, 9 a.m., Civic Center east fireplace room

Nebraska Train Songs and Tales by David Seay, 9:30 a.m., Civic Center auditorium, Humanities Nebraska

Lutherans, Language and Loyalty in Seward County During World War I by Dr. Jerry Pfabe, 10 a.m., Civic Center east fireplace room

142 Seward Street: Story of a House by Dr. Brent Royuk, 10 a.m., Bottle Rocket Brewing Co.

The U.S. Constitution Lady by Sheila Collins, 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., Civic Center east fireplace room

The Days My Family Will Always Remember by Cliff Lowell, 11 a.m., Civic Center AV room

Seward’s Great Folly Hunt by Tom Van Steenhoven, noon, Civic Center AV room

A Century of Fashion by Sue McLain, noon, Civic Center east fireplace room, Humanities Nebraska

Moving and Saving the Log Cabin by Pat Coldiron and company, 1 p.m., Civic Center AV room

The Day the Cows Didn’t Come Home by Cliff Lowell, 2 p.m., Civic Center AV room

## Quilt talk

The Quilts of Valor Program by Bonnie Smith, Blue River Quilt Guild, 10 a.m., Civic Center AV room

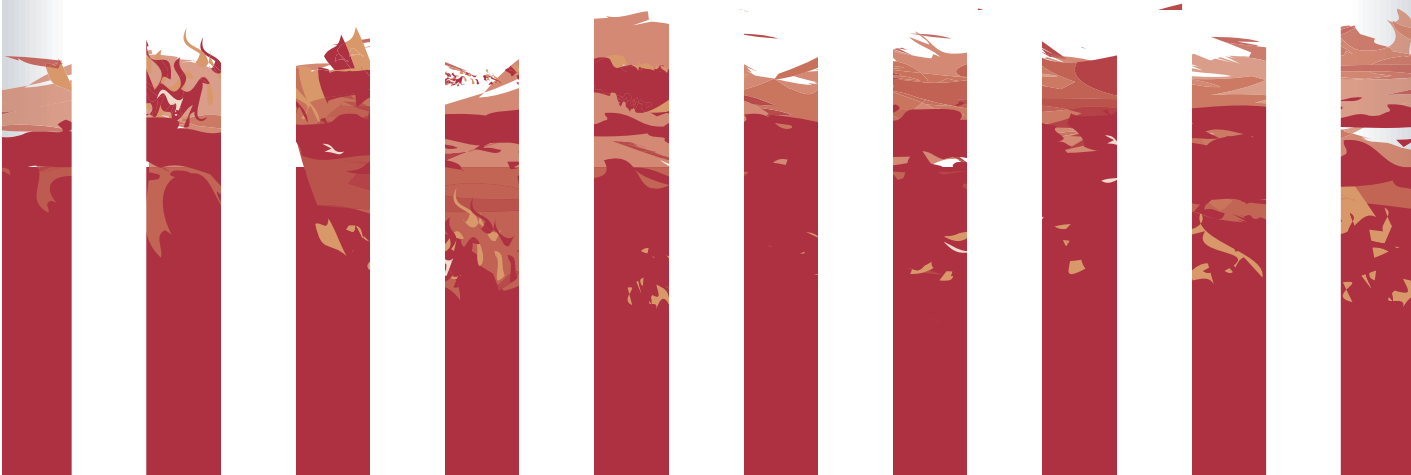
## Book talks

Nebraska’s Bucks and Bulls: The Greatest Stories of Hunting with Dr. Joel Helmer, 9 a.m., Bottle Rocket Brewing Co.

Andrew Jackson Higgins by Jerry Strahan, biographer, 10 a.m., Nebraska National Guard Museum

The Story Behind the Story of “More Than a Local Wonder” by Carla Ketner, 10:30 a.m., Chapters Books and Gifts

The Barbers of Seward County by Jon Keller, 1 p.m., Civic Center east fireplace room



# Virginia

(CONTINUED FROM 6)

him and was by his side the whole time," Kolterman said.

Virginia served on the board of directors for Cattle Bank, even chairing the board for a while.

As Seward High School's oldest alumni, Virginia was recognized at age 100 at the school's PRIDE rally two years ago.

"She was Seward's oldest citizen. She was so respected in the community, so she was the obvious choice for the Nebraska's Friend Award," Kolterman said.

In addition to her service to the banking industry, Virginia was a longtime member of the Seward United Methodist Church, helping

to create its annual Four Seasons Bazaar in 1952. Seventy-one years later, the bazaar is still an important fundraiser for the church's United Women in Faith.

"Church was important to her. Even when she could not hear well and could not see well, she still appreciated attending Sunday worship," said the Rev. Mary Kay Totty of SUMC. "Virginia had a deep-rooted sense of gratitude. She would frequently mention gratitude and appreciation for so many things.

"At Kinship Pointe, she would comment on how wonderful it was to have such facilities in Seward and how kind the staff was and how much she appreciated visits."

Kolterman said Virginia was an avid supporter of the arts and an artist herself. She promoted the love of antiques and heritage, giving time and money to preserve history in many forms.

The Cattle family is a large supporter of the Nebraska National Guard Museum in Seward, giving sums of money to support exhibit spaces in honor of the late John W. Cattle, Sr., and helping with the recent Higgins Boat preservation project.

Kolterman said the committee was able to present Virginia with an award plaque before she died, and additional plaques will go to her daughter, Becky Vahle, and Cattle Bank & Trust.

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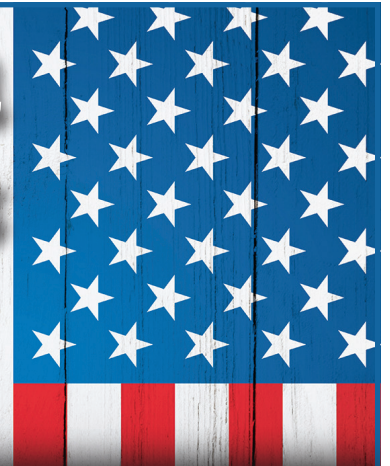
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# Higgins

(CONTINUED FROM 21)

The students ran with the idea. Today, Columbus's Pawnee Park holds a replica of a Higgins boat and a statue of Higgins.

The Higgins boat that is coming to the Nebraska National Guard Museum in Seward was found at the bottom of Lake Shasta in California. Drought conditions had lowered the lake, and the boat could be seen sitting on the lakebed.

Meyer got a call in 2021 from James Dunsdon who saw the boat as he drove past the lake. A native of southern England, Dunsdon grew up around Higgins boats, Meyer said.

Dunsdon first con-

tacted the World War II Museum in New Orleans, but they already had a Higgins boat. They told him about the museum in Seward.

When Meyer saw pictures, he recognized the boat's number – PA31-17 – as belonging to the USS Monrovia, Gen. George Patton's flagship for the invasion of Sicily.

Also part of the invasion, though not on the Monrovia, was Major John Cattle of Seward. Meyer knew the museum needed that boat.

"I asked the cost to salvage it, and he gave me the exact amount the Vahles (Van and Becky) had given," Meyer said.

Crews had one day to recover the boat before the lake started refilling, thanks to snow, he said.

Meyer said the Nebraska museum wasn't the only place Dunsdon contacted about the boat. He also found a museum in Oklahoma that was interested.

"He came out here and said the boat does belong here," Meyer said. "The boat can tell stories. We will allow her to tell them."

Whisler Aviation will transport the boat to the museum for the July 4 festivities. It will be housed in the restoration bay until a permanent exhibit space is completed.

# Biographer to speak

Jerry Strahan, author of "Andrew Jackson Higgins and the Boats That Won World War II," will be in Seward over July 4 to talk about



Jerry Strahan

Higgins and his boats. Strahan's book began as an undergraduate research paper, according to his preface. It received accolades from Parade Magazine in 1994 and the Wall Street Journal in 2011. He will speak at the Nebraska National Guard Museum July 4 at 10 a.m.

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# MUSIC, MUSIC, MUSIC

Music will fill the air over the Fourth of July in Seward.

A World War II musical review swing show will take the stage at the Seward High auditorium Sunday, July 2, at 7 p.m. The free review will feature the Seward Municipal Band and more and is sponsored by the Nebraska National Guard Museum.

Heidi and Kevin Cheng will present Songs of World War II Monday, July 3, at 7 p.m. at the Nebraska National Guard Museum. The concert is free.

The Wissmann Family Singers and Friends will perform a free concert Monday, July 3, at 7:30 p.m. at the bandshell.

On July 4, concerts start at 10:30 a.m.

- ✓ Martin Albright in Concert, 10:30 a.m., Civic Center Auditorium
- ✓ Seward Municipal Band, "Patriotic Salute," 11 a.m., bandshell
- ✓ Marble Music Studio, "Music, Music," 11 a.m., Civic Center Auditorium
- ✓ Paul Soulek's Piano Presents "A Bit of Patriotism," 11:30 a.m., Civic Center Auditorium
- ✓ Blue River Men's Quartet directed by Jonathan Jank, noon, Civic Center Auditorium
- ✓ High School Summer Chamber Choir directed by Dr. Kurt von Kampen, 12:30 p.m., Civic Center Auditorium
- ✓ Dennis Bowers and His Harmonica Show, 1 p.m., Civic Center Auditorium
- ✓ Sally Jost in Concert, 1:30 p.m., Civic Center Auditorium
- ✓ Wissmann Family Singers, 2 p.m., Civic Center Auditorium
- ✓ Macrowave, 7 p.m., Seward bandshell
- ✓ Sunset Lounge, 8 p.m., Plum Creek Park



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# Ketner

(CONTINUED FROM 29)

a handful of Kooser's poems about the midwest.

Both Kooser and his wife Kathleen Rutledge gave the book their blessing, Ketner said.

"I hope it reflects who he is," she said.

She couldn't leave out Kooser's connection to Ketner and Chapters.

"My first encounter with him was one of his books, 'Local Wonders,'" Ketner said.

Kooser was the featured guest at Chapters' grand opening, which came after he'd been named poet laureate.

Ketner also enjoys Kooser's poetry.

"The more you read it, the more you appreciate the skill that goes into it," she said.

Her critique partners were the first audience for "More Than a Local Wonder."

"My goal was for them to say that's good," Ketner said. "I read it out loud to them, and they said it was good. I feel like my vision came through on paper."

As she worked on drafts of the book, she also pitched it to publishers.

"I didn't want to self-publish. It had to be good quality. I wanted to make sure it was as good as it could be," she said.

She sent it to the University of Nebraska Press in June of 2020. In October, UNP representatives told her they were interested, but they'd never published picture books.

Ketner met with an editor in

January 2021. The next step was to find an illustrator.

"Usually the publisher chooses the artist with no input from the writer," Ketner said.

She wanted to help find the perfect artist for her book and wanted them to be from Nebraska. She went to the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators website and came across Paula Wallace.

The two had met before, and Wallace's watercolors seemed to match Ketner's idea. Wallace was also interested, Ketner said.

Once all the contracts were signed, Wallace created the illustrations for the book, which were exactly what Ketner had hoped for.

"I cried when I saw the cover," Ketner said.

"It's a long process," Ketner said of getting a book published. "So much of it was out of my control."

As a bookseller (Ketner owns Chapters Books and Gifts in Seward), she hadn't been on the other side of the book cover.

She worked with an acquisitions editor, a project editor, a publicist and a designer. She was surprised to see how many people actually invest in one picture book.

A cover reveal event unveiled the cover March 31. Page proofs are supposed to be done in early April.

As an author, Ketner said she will do book signings and hopes to be able to do events around the area.

She said everyone who has heard about the book has been supportive and excited to see it.

"It's nice to see the support for me and Ted," Ketner said.

"More Than a Local Wonder" will be officially released Nov. 1. Ketner said Chapters will host a release party in October.

Copies of the book can be pre-ordered at Chapters or through Ketner's website, [carlaketner.com](http://carlaketner.com).

## Who is Ted Kooser?

Ted Kooser lives in the Bohemian Alps by Garland with his wife, Kathleen. He is retired from careers as a life insurance executive and as a professor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where he taught writing poetry.

He has written 16 books of poetry, the most recent, "Cotton Candy: Poems Dipped Out Of the Air," published in 2022. He has also published five nonfiction books, including "Local Wonders: Seasons in the Bohemian Alps" in 2002 and five children's books.

Kooser won his first award, the Prairie Schooner Prize in Poetry, in 1976. He received the Pulitzer Prize in Poetry in 2005 for "Delights and Shadows," which was also named the Best Book of the Year in 2004. He was appointed United States Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry in 2004 and served in that position for two years.

"House Held Up By Trees" was named the Best Illustrated Book by the New York Times in 2012 and a Best Children's Book of the Year for 2013 by the Children's Book Committee.

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