



Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation

Connecting people with Nebraska history since 1942.

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Announcing Boyer Family Matching Grant

We have some exciting news to share!

In October of this year, the John K. and Lynne D. Boyer Family Foundation provided a \$25,000 matching grant towards NSHSF's [Statewide Grants Program](#). The Boyer Foundation has donated \$25,000 to this program, and will provide an additional \$25,000 if we can match that amount between December 1, 2023, and April 1, 2024 – that's a grand total of \$75,000 toward support for this program!

Please consider donating between today and April 1, 2024 to have your donation matched, allowing us to fund more historically-focused 501(c)(3)s in Nebraska in the upcoming year!

Read on to learn about one of the amazing projects this program helped to fund in 2023.

DONATE TODAY

Butler County – 2023 Statewide Grants Program Recipient



2023 marked the 150th birthday of David City, the county seat of Butler County, just west of Omaha. Gina and Steve Barlean, [Butler County Historical Society](#) promotion volunteer and Board President, wanted to do something special to honor the town while recognizing the importance of the smaller surrounding communities. As Gina emphasized when we met with her on a site visit in November, "David City could not have survived without the

support of the surrounding towns."

Accordingly, Gina met with [Hruska Memorial Library](#) in 2022 with the idea of hosting one presentation a month on the history of each of the 12 surrounding incorporated towns, led by a community member of each town. Gina liked the idea of a partnership with the library—She knew that the library already had around 50 dedicated stewards, so even if she could only get these 50 to attend, she would count the event as a success and be happy to provide them with an additional program.

To Gina's despair, a week before the first presentation on Bellwood, the library flooded. The library director, Kay Schmid, scrambled to find a new place to host the event and utilized Winfield's, a rental hall that is just down the block from the library, in downtown David City. This change of plans ended up being a blessing – while the library could host 75, the first event on Bellwood saw a turnout of 119 individuals, and Winfield's was able to accommodate only 100 with chairs. It was standing room only for the last 19 at the first event. Homemade kolaches were provided for all attendees by a longtime community volunteer and secretary of the BCHS, Jacque Masek.

As word got around about the first event, Gina believed the February presentation would have an even larger crowd, so she upgraded their venue to the Butler County Event Center which could accommodate a potentially larger group.



The second edition of the series in February on Dwight saw an attendance of close to 200 individuals. (The total population of all 12 incorporated towns in Butler County is 8,444) For every subsequent presentation since February, the series has hosted upwards of 200 individuals, with free kolaches and bottled water for all, provided through their [NSHSF Statewide Grant](#) award.

When Gina initially identified and met with community members about presenting their town's history, some were hesitant to agree. But by the time of their presentation, "Everyone delivered their talk as if they were a professional. You didn't hear a stutter or a single mistake," said Gina. "You can feel the pride radiating from the presenting town."

As the series went on throughout the year, presentations by community members on their respective towns only got better and better. "It was like each presenter was trying to top the last," said Gina. Gina gave presenters creative freedom to deliver their presentation however they wanted. All made PowerPoints and brought in community memorabilia, and one even dressed in character and gave their presentation as that character.

"The presentation series has become like a family," said Gina. By November's presentation, many in attendance were staying afterward to talk and help rerack chairs at the auditorium.

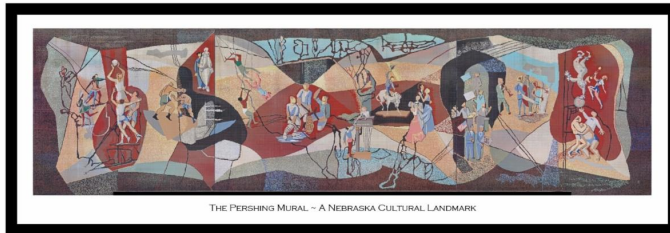
Gina looks forward to hosting more events quarterly next year. They already have 3 of the 4 presentations planned on the county's unincorporated towns, as well as country schoolhouses in the area.

The NSHSF would like to thank the Butler County Historical Society for what they are doing to preserve and promote their unique Nebraska history. We loved hearing your story, and are proud to be providing advertising, space rental, kolaches, and bottled water to fuel this presentation series!

The Butler County Historical Society presentation series is available on [YouTube](#).



A Meaningful Gift Idea Just In Time For Christmas!



According to Barb Ballard, owner of [From Nebraska Gift Shop](#), "The demand for prints of the Pershing Mural – depicted in its original installation and splendor - continue to be in high demand and difficult to keep on the shelf!" The 10" x 30" limited

edition photographic prints (provided by Pioneer Printing) are available for \$25 and contain high-resolution, digitally enhanced images, originally photographed by a drone in February 2022.

Proceeds of the sale of prints are part of the Phase 2 fundraising effort which began during the Lincoln Community Foundation's "Give to Lincoln Day" in the spring of 2023. Thus far, generous donors have committed almost \$1 million toward the \$3.1 million needed for the restoration, endowment for future maintenance, and the reinstallation of the Pershing Mural within Historic Wyuka Park. During 2022, in Phase 1 of the project, Nebraskans contributed approximately \$844,000 in 4 short months, which ultimately saved the Pershing Mural in advance of the auditorium's demolition.

Nebraskans love their State and take tremendous pride in its culture and all it has to offer! Because the Pershing Mural is considered a Nebraska Cultural Landmark, the Historic Preservation Committee hopes its citizens will step forward, embrace the Project, and generously support the effort to restore and resurrect the Pershing Mural for the benefit of its present and future generations.

Questions about the Pershing Mural Preservation Project can be directed to Liz Shea-McCoy, lizwshea@gmail.com or (402) 430-5923.

Read more about the Pershing Mural and see informative videos on our [website](#).

The Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation accepts and manages DONATIONS for the project. Please note "Pershing Mural Project" in the memo line of your donation.

[From Nebraska Gift Shop](#) is located in Lincoln's Haymarket at 803 Q Street, 402-476-2455.

Contact us:

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