

# Kimball County, Nebraska

Kimball Area Tourism

Volume 18

Photos by Jessica Rocha



## KIMBALL FFA LENDS A HELPING HAND

Students with the Kimball FFA have been spending some time volunteering their energy to help others. On the 17<sup>th</sup>, Sally Wheeler, the FFA advisor, and multiple students, began their day working at the Kimball Community Walking Trail cutting down and clearing trees and putting in a stump and tires at the dog park. Later in the morning, they came to the Visitor Center and helped remove all the sunflowers that were done blooming for the season.

The group is planning to continue days of community service throughout the county. We thank them for their work and are excited to partner with them again in the future! What a wonderful way for our future leaders to learn the meaning of hard work and helping others to build a stronger community!!

Also, a shout out to the Kimball FFA American Degree recipients for 2020: Greg Wilke, Hannah Acheson, Zachery Wagner, Jake Jenkins, and Jordan McGinnis!!

## VIRTUAL TOURISM CONFERENCE

The 2020 Nebraska Tourism Conference, along with so many other meetings and conferences, went virtual this year. Multiple webinars and zoom meetings took place each of the three days of the conference.

Sessions included Nebraska Tourism's New 5-Year Strategic Plan, The Benefits of Diversity & Inclusion, Editorial Impacts & Inspiration for 2021, and more. It was interesting to get more input on the impact that COVID had on the tourism industry, as well as what the future looks like for a comeback from the pandemic.

The last day of the conference included the 2020 Tourism Awards. There are an incredible amount of people, companies, and places that have continued to be outstanding across the state, but the winners are the ones who went above and beyond to stand out in 2020. Below is a news release from the Nebraska Tourism Commission highlighting the award recipients.

## 2020 Nebraska Tourism Industry Award winners announced

“Congratulations to our award winners! While it has been a tough year, our tourism industry has done a lot to be proud of and it’s nice to celebrate that,” said John Ricks, Nebraska Tourism Commission executive director. “We appreciate all of the nominations we received this year from creative marketing and virtual events, to businesses adapting during COVID-19 and all of the extra work that has gone in to making sure Nebraska isn’t forgotten about as a travel destination.”

The awards ceremony was held virtually this year. John Ricks presented winners with their awards last week and Jon and Taryn Vanderford, 1011 Now Anchors/Producers, announced the following 2020 Nebraska Tourism Industry Award winners during the virtual event.

**The 2020 Henry Fonda Award**, the state’s highest tourism award representing leadership, vision and dedication to the tourism industry, went to **Muriel Clark**. Muriel is currently the North Platte/Lincoln County Visitor Center Assistant Director. She has spent many years in the tourism industry, dedicating her time and sharing her passion for her region, the sandhills and the Lincoln Highway. Over the past 10 years, she has authored a blog visiting every town in Nebraska and has opened up her home to travelers through her own Airbnb. Muriel never stops contributing to the growth and success of the industry and is admired and respected by the people around her.

**The Friend of Tourism Award** went to **Maly Marketing**. Maly Marketing is a trusted partner of many tourism entities across the state and when the devastating impacts of COVID-19 started to show, they stepped up. They created a weekly support session called “Overcoming the Coronavirus Together” to help individuals, organizations and small businesses who were struggling navigate hard times. Maly Marketing also recently started a video series called “What’s Up Nebraska,” that highlights communities across the state, focusing on safe, socially distanced activities for tourists.

**The Outstanding In-Person Event Award** was awarded to **Nebraska’s Big Rodeo**. Although many events were cancelled this year due to COVID-19, Nebraska’s Big Rodeo worked closely with the Loup Basin Public Health Department to make sure measures were in place to help keep volunteers, contestants and spectators safe. The rodeo brought visitor spending to Burwell and the surrounding communities with some businesses seeing an increase in their year over year sales.

**The Outstanding Virtual Event Award** was a new award created specifically for this year. The award was given to **Mac’s Creek Winery & Brewery** for their virtual wine tastings. After Mac’s Creek was forced to close due to COVID-19, the McFarland family started weekly wine tasting videos through Facebook Live. The family worked to share information about their wines and also got creative by sharing wine cocktails and food pairing suggestions. The live videos averaged 3,000 viewers each week. The success from these videos helped Mac’s Creek maintain their sale of wine. It also helped save them from having to furlough more employees or shut down parts of their production during the pandemic. The family plans to continue the virtual wine tastings in the upcoming winter months.

**The Outstanding Marketing Campaign Award** went to **North Platte/Lincoln County Visitors Bureau** for their COVID-19 Tourism Awareness Marketing Campaign. North Platte worked quickly and creatively to change their marketing messaging after the COVID-19 outbreak first appeared. North Platte/Lincoln County Visitors Bureau collaborated with local restaurants and attractions to create fun, engaging and safe activities for visitors and families. They promoted social distancing outdoor activities, virtual scavenger hunts, encouraged locals to be a tourist in their own backyards and more. Despite all the challenges in 2020, North Platte Visitors Bureau went above and beyond to make this year positive and memorable for the people traveling to and living in their community.

**The Outstanding Tourism Attraction Award** was given to **The Golden Spike Tower** in North Platte. The Golden Spike Tower closed in March and didn’t open again until Memorial Day. Through it all though the staff took a proactive response and got creative with a drive through Easter bunny event, daily Kids Korner Crafts on Facebook and a virtual North Platte Rail Days event that train lovers from all over the world could attend. When staff reopened the doors to the public they had a long list of new procedures and adjustments to their day-to-day operations to keep staff, volunteers and visitors safe.

**The Outstanding Agritourism and/or Ecotourism Entity Award** went to **Midwest Hop Producers LLC**. First established in 2013 as a hop farm enterprise, The Midwest Hop Producers continues to grow and expand their business. In 2016, they opened the hop yard, a tasting room and restaurant, featuring local and regional beers crafted by area brewers using their hops. They continued to get creative in their offerings, expanding into events. Midwest Hop Producers also holds one of Nebraska’s first 10 hemp-plot licenses and provides educational activities, workshops and conferences that get consumers and Nebraskans more

familiar with hemp.

Another new award category created this year was the **Passport Champions Choice Award**. The winner was **The Southeast Nebraska Cancer Memorial Garden** in Humboldt, chosen by Nebraska Passport travelers who visited all 70 stops in 2020. The garden has a variety of plants, trees and flowers; resting benches, walking paths, water features that flow into a peaceful koi pond containing water lilies, statues, personalized bricks, remembrance stone and much more.



## FALL IN NEBRASKA

This autumn has not disappointed. The colors across the Panhandle were absolutely spectacular! I enjoyed being able to drive past Oliver Reservoir daily as well as being able to take a breather from 2020 at Chadron State Park in northwestern Nebraska.

The weather also stayed pretty mild, until last weekend. It snowed about 8-12” across Kimball County and was bitter cold for a day or two. The moisture was needed, but I am not quite ready for winter to be here.



## HARVEST TIME

Farmers have been busy harvesting corn, beans, and sugar beets this past month. Lots of long hours and hoping the weather cooperates makes this a stressful time for people in this profession. We are grateful that we have such hard workers in Nebraska. It is awesome to be reminded that Nebraska helps feed the nation!

Remember to always give the tractors, combines, semis hauling sugar beets, etc., a little extra room on the road. Slow down, enjoy the view, and be thankful that Nebraska is still raising farmers and ranchers!





## WONDERFUL VISITORS!

As always, we have enjoyed meeting new people who are still traveling this year. We also welcome our regulars in! It is nice to see friendly faces and be able to check in with visitors who have been in multiple times. I am happy we can be here for everyone!

And of course, we love cuddling with our newspaper delivery puppy each week...

## RECENT PHOTOS FROM THE SURROUNDING AREA



My husband was attempting to teach our son how to fish and skip rocks at Oliver Reservoir – he prefers to just throw rocks...



If you haven't been to Chadron State Park, I highly recommend staying in the cabins there. They have a wonderful set up and great access to walking/hiking paths and close to the pond for fishing and paddleboating!



## QUILT RAFFLE

The Kimball County Visitor Center is currently displaying a beautiful quilt, made by the Kimball Quilt Guild, that is being raffled off. The money made from the raffle will benefit the High Point K-9 Dog Park here in Kimball.

Tickets are \$2 each or 6 for \$10.

The drawing will be in December. The guild is willing to ship the quilt to the winner, so let us know how many tickets we can get for you!



**KIMBALL COUNTY VISITOR CENTER**  
*presents a*  
*“be thankful” bake sale*

**Friday November 6, 2020**  
**8:30 am – 5:30 pm**  
**Saturday November 7, 2020**  
**9:00 am – 12:00 pm**

*All proceeds from the sale will go to the  
Volunteer Fire Departments in Kimball County*

**Kimball County Visitor Center**  
**204 S Kimball Blvd, Kimball, NE**

*Please call Jessica at 308-241-0573 with questions.  
Separate donation boxes will also be available for each department.*

## KIMBALL ART WALK

A new group in Kimball has begun working to create an Art Walk in the community. We are excited to announce that this will begin with a photography show from November 13<sup>th</sup> – December 20<sup>th</sup> here in Kimball.

You can check out the Facebook page (Kimball Art Walk) for more information on the artists, get a map that shows in which businesses around town the photographers will be set up in, and information on any upcoming shows.

Come out and support your local artists!!

THE GOODHAND THEATER PRESENTS:



UPCOMING AREA EVENTS:

**November: (due to COVID-19, some of the following events may be postponed or cancelled)**

- 1st – TIME CHANGE – Don't forget to 'fall back' an hour!
- 1st – Gering, NE – WyoBraska Metaphysical Fair at the Gering Civic Center
- 6th – Kimball, NE – “Be Thankful Bake Sale” at the Kimball County Visitor Center
- 6th – Scottsbluff, NE – Texas Hold’Em Tournament at the Scotts Bluff Country Club
- 6th-8th – Kimball, NE – “Midway” at the Goodhand Theatre
- 7th – Kimball, NE – “Be Thankful Bake Sale” at the Kimball County Visitor Center
- 7th – Bridgeport, NE – Holiday Craft & Vendor Show at the Prairie Wind Community Center
- 7th – Pine Bluffs, WY – Inaugural Bar Buck Chili Cook Off at Pine Bluffs Distilling
- 7th-14th – Sidney, NE – Christmas Open House at the French Door Antique Mall
- 7th – Bridgeport, NE – 20th Anniversary Christmas Open House at the Tarnished Halo
- 9th – Kimball, NE – Christmas Wreath Make & Take Class at the Kimball Public Library
- 10th – Gering, NE – Paint & Sip at Union Bar & Grill
- 11th – Veteran’s Day – Thank you to all the Veteran’s who have served this country!
- 11th – Kimball, NE – City of Kimball: Sales Acceleration Workshop
- 13th – Kimball, NE – Downtown Art Walk begins (runs through December 20th)
- 13th-14th – Kimball, NE – “The Secret Dare to Dream” at the Goodhand Theatre
- 14th – Sidney, NE – Holiday Craft Fair at Sidney Elk’s Lodge
- 26th – Thanksgiving – Safely enjoy time with your loved ones!
- 28th – Kimball, NE – Holiday Craft-aganza at the Sagebrush
- 28th – Kimball, NE – Parade of Lights “Believe in the Magic of Christmas”
- 30th – Kimball, NE – Final day to turn in photos for the KCVC Fall Photo Contest

**December: (due to COVID-19, some of the following events may be postponed or cancelled)**

- 5th – Scottsbluff, NE – Jingle Jog 2020 at Trails West YMCA Camp
- 6th – Bridgeport, NE – 2020 Sunday Snow Flurries at the Tarnished Halo
- 12th – Ogallala, NE – Old Fashioned Christmas Market at J Dawg’s Junk & Embroidery
- 25th – Christmas – remember the reason for the season – spread love and kindness

# PHOTO CONTEST



## CATEGORIES:

**Open Class (open to community residents and visitors)  
&  
Business Owners/Families advertising on the storefronts**



## **KIMBALL COUNTY VISITOR CENTER WANTS TO SEE YOUR PHOTOS!**

**Post selfies or photos of friends or family with the new murals, the storefronts, or anywhere else around the Visitor Center, on Facebook or Instagram with #KVCVfallphotocontest, email them to [visit@kimballcountyne.us](mailto:visit@kimballcountyne.us), or text them to 308-241-0573.**

Winners will be chosen by the Kimball County Visitors Committee.

One winner from each category will receive a \$25 gift card to be spent at the Kimball County Visitor Center Gift Shop!

Contest deadline has been extended to November 30, 2020!



**November 13<sup>th</sup> - December 20<sup>th</sup>**

Downtown Kimball, Nebraska



**LOCAL PHOTOGRAPHERS SHOWCASED  
IN DOWNTOWN BUSINESS WINDOWS**

**The Kimball Art Walk, a new group in Kimball, is providing community events that celebrate the diversity and culture for lovers of art and future art lovers.**

***Check out “Kimball Art Walk” on Facebook for more information!***



Our gift shop is open and full of amazing locally-made items for that perfect gift for the hard to shop for person!! We also have great Nebraska souvenirs!



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*We are still welcoming donations to Kimball Area Tourism to assist in keeping our Visitor Center open. Please contact Jessica for more information on how to donate.*

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**Please check out our Facebook page to see more events. [www.facebook.com/KimballCountyVisitorCenter](http://www.facebook.com/KimballCountyVisitorCenter)**

**You can also look at our website to get more information about Kimball County: [www.visitkimball.com](http://www.visitkimball.com)**

**Come visit us!! 204 S Kimball Blvd, Kimball, NE 69145 ~ Exit 20 off of I-80**

**Give us a call at 308-241-0573 if you have any questions.**

**#highpointofnebraska #highpointwelcomecenter #kimballcountyvisitorcenter**