



# Live *it up!* Cass County 2019

Alvo  
Avoca  
Cedar Creek  
Eagle  
Elmwood  
Greenwood  
Louisville  
Manley  
Murdock  
Murray  
Nehawka  
Plattsmouth  
South Bend  
Union  
Weeping Water





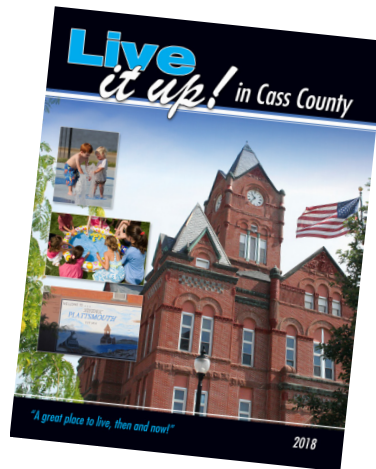
# THE JOURNAL

Covering Cass County since 1881, both in print and digital.

410 Main Street, Plattsmouth, NE 68048 • 402-296-2141

The Journal produces many products including the Consumer Connection; a total market coverage shopper and *Live It Up*, distributed throughout Cass County.

**Consumer Connection**



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*A Product of The Journal*

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Dancers perform at the Cass County Fair each summer. The Open Air Auditorium at the fairgrounds hosts many events throughout the five days of the fair.

# Welcome to CASS COUNTY

**Brent HARDIN**  
Managing Editor

Cass County's positive history is helping guide the area into a productive future.

The land known today as Cass County has been home to forward-thinking people for hundreds of years. Native Americans first formed communities on the present-day site of Nehawka around 1100 A.D., and groups of people from the Otoe-Missouria Tribe walked on Cass County grounds for many centuries. More than 700 Europeans had settled in the county by 1855, with that number skyrocketing to 10,452 just 20 years later.

Those trends are continuing in 2019. Today Cass County is a thriving area that includes many residents, businesses and scenic attractions. More than 26,000 people have homes, apartments, farms and acreages spread across the county's 566 square miles of territory. The U.S. Census Bureau lists the current median household income at \$68,284, and three local tourist spots each drew more than 500,000 visitors in 2017.

One of the goals of the 2019 Live It Up publication is to spotlight the ways history and tourism are primary forces in Cass County's development. This edition focuses on local communities and shows



The butterfly garden at Eugene T. Mahoney State Park in Cass County offers visitors a chance to enjoy the sweet smells of scores of flowers. Visitors are able to take part in many activities at the park throughout the year.

how they have relied on those themes for many decades. There are stories about Alvo, Avoca, Cedar Creek, Eagle, Elmwood, Greenwood, Louisville, Manley, Murdock, Murray, Nehawka, Plattsmouth, South Bend, Union and Weeping Water.

Cass County Nebraska Economic





Louisville students enjoy their new playground at Louisville Elementary School.

## Welcome

From 1

Development Council Director Jennifer Serkiz said local towns have done a good job of highlighting historical, recreational and commercial opportunities. People can enjoy the area's many natural wonders by visiting public places such as Louisville State Recreation Area or private sanctuaries like the new Kimberly Creek Retreat near South Bend.

There are many historical attractions in the county such as the Bess Streeter Aldrich House and Museum in Elmwood, Weeping Water Historical Complex near downtown Weeping Water and the Cass County Historical Society Museum in Plattsmouth. Many area buildings and properties are also listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

"Cass County has many unique features that makes it very marketable to outside visitors," Serkiz said. "Not only does the county have a bright future because of its ability to celebrate and market its history like the places you listed, but also because of the expansions happening within another area that makes this county so great – recreational activities."

Louisville Board of Education member John Winkler and Bess Streeter Aldrich Foundation Executive Director Kurk Shrader said they were also optimistic about Cass County's future.

Winkler has been general

manager of the Papio Missouri River Natural Resources District since December 2006. He served as city administrator for the City of Plattsmouth for nearly six years before taking on his current role. Shrader was a business teacher at Elmwood-Murdock High School for 30 years before starting his job with the Bess Streeter Aldrich Foundation in 2016.

"Cass County is in an excellent position to grow both its population and economy," Winkler said. "As the I-80, Highway 50 and Highway 75 corridors continue to mature and expand in the county, development is sure to follow."

"Cass County will continue to experience growth in the near future," Shrader said. "We have the landmarks, historical significance, entrepreneurial ingenuity, tenacity and resources (like Cass County Tourism and Cass County Economic Development) that will enable us to continue to grow economically and to excel in the tourism market."

A growing number of visitors are noticing the signs of that progress. The Nebraska Tourism Commission has released attendance figures from throughout the state for 2017, which are the most recent tabulations the organization has.

Three of the top ten destinations in Nebraska are in Cass County. These include Eugene T. Mahoney State Park near South Bend, Louisville State Recreation Area in Louisville and Platte River State Park in between Louisville and South Bend.

The most recent visitor



Hundreds of people visit Louisville every summer for a large car show. Vehicles line both sides of Main Street for the event.

counts for Cass County included in the NTC report are as follows:

■ Eugene T. Mahoney State Park – Exit 426 near South Bend – 791,865 visitors

■ Louisville State Recreation Area – Louisville – 594,500

■ Platte River State Park – Louisville – 525,883

■ Lee G. Simmons Conservation and Wildlife Safari Park – Exit 426 near South Bend – 151,351

■ Strategic Air Command and Aerospace Museum – Exit 426 near South Bend – 141,049

■ I-80 Speedway – Greenwood – 75,000

■ Bloom Where You're Planted Farm and Pumpkin Patch – Avoca – 5,575

■ Cass County Historical Society Museum – Plattsmouth – 2,500

■ Bess Streeter Aldrich House and Museum – Elmwood – 1,228

The NTC list doesn't take into account the many local celebrations in Cass County that draw large crowds. More than 30,000 people attend the Cass County Fair over a five-day span every August, and thousands of spectators come to Avoca each winter to watch duck races at the Avoca Quackoff. Fourth of July festivities in both Murray and Murdock, Limestone Days in Weeping Water and Plattsmouth's Victorian Christmas on Main festival, Cruizin' Main car show and Food Truck Wars event are all popular.

Serkiz said all of those factors are helping to boost the



The Cass County Fair hosts a bullriding show at the fairgrounds near Weeping Water each summer.

area's population. The 2018 estimate from the United States Census Bureau lists 26,159 people living in Cass County. That number has grown 3.6 percent from the official 2010 Census count of 25,241.

"Economic development and tourism work hand in hand when it comes to increasing investment in the county," Serkiz said. "Having more restaurants, shops and businesses not only attracts more visitors but it also attracts the folks who might have previously thought they wouldn't likely live in a small town."

"Amenities are what people want when visiting or permanently locating in any area. Cass County allows folks to have the small-town feel while being close to the big city."

Local residents are trying to use their past and present successes to generate similar achievements in the future. The Journal hopes you enjoy learning more about the communities that are making Cass County a positive place to live.





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*The district has a new synthetic turf marching band/soccer/football field, track, a baseball-softball field with a synthetic turf infield, a community walking trail, and a greenhouse.*

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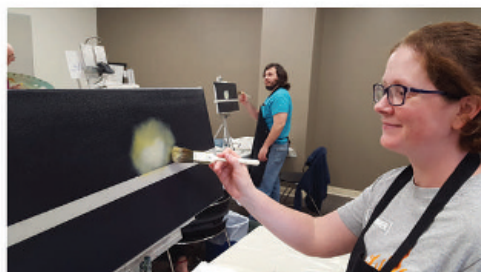
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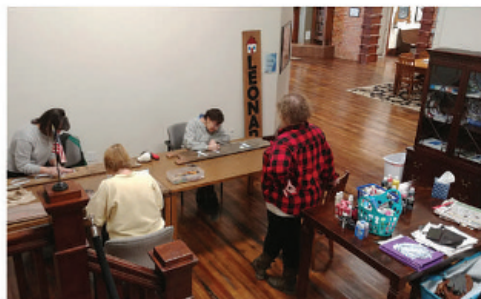
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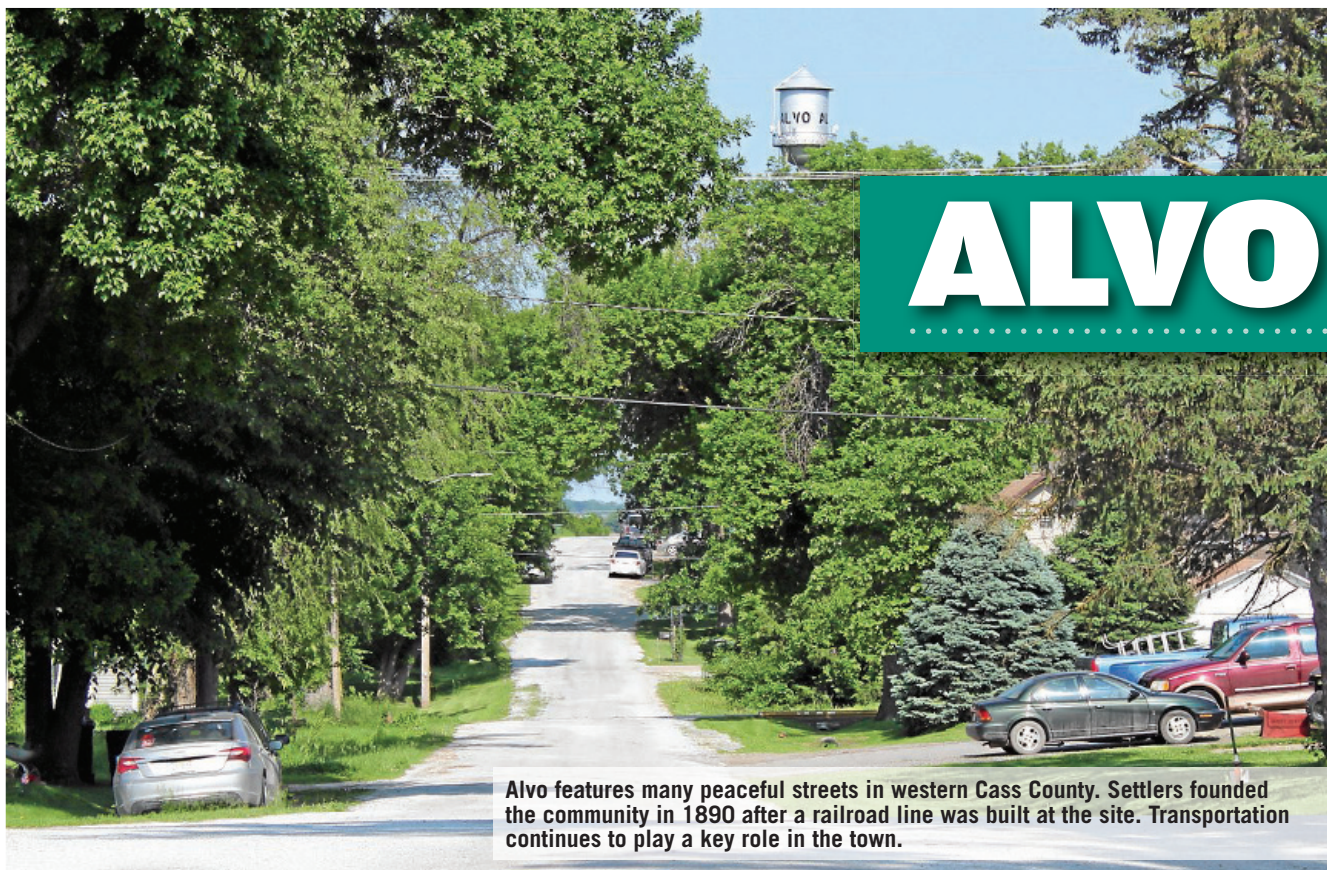
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**MARKET GRILLE**







**Brent HARDIN**  
Managing Editor

**ALVO** — People who speak about the past, present and future of Alvo often include transportation as one of the main subjects of conversation.

Transportation has been a critical piece of Alvo's history since the town was founded in 1890. The Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railway began carving a railroad line through the town's current location that year. A.L. Munger laid out plats for Alvo after the railroad depot was constructed, and Phil Brust became the first person to build a house in town.

The community began to flourish after the railroad completed its line from Lincoln to Murdock. Alvo's commercial district included two general merchandise stores, two blacksmith businesses and a grain elevator, flour mill, hardware store, silver-smith shop, lumberyard, barbershop and livery business within eight years.

Alvo's population reached 250 in 1917. Crews began wiring houses for electricity in 1927, and residents built a water tower that could hold 20,000 gallons for the town. Gravel roads in Alvo became blacktopped surfaces in 1980.

Citizens constructed the first schoolhouse east of the United Methodist Church in 1892. They created a newer structure in time for the 1917-18 academic year. The larger building was three stories tall and provided a learning environment for 169 students in grades K-12.

Alvo was home to many quality high school sports teams. The Alvo Orioles played in front of large crowds for boys basketball games each winter. The program qualified for the state tournament in 1918, 1920, 1921, 1923, 1924, 1926, 1927 and 1953. The school's six-man football team also became one of the best in the state. The Orioles were ranked in the top ten in Nebraska in 1952.

Alvo children began attending classes in Eagle when the two districts merged in 1960. Former Alvo students have kept the memories of their school alive through a major alumni banquet. Students have traveled back to town for the past 39 years to reminisce about their time as Alvo Orioles.

Organizer Pat Umland said the 2019 banquet included 36 people from across the country. Class of 1948 member Minnie (Roe-lfesz) Elliott of Lincoln was the oldest person who attended. Class of 1950 member Norma (Elliott) Halvorson was the second-oldest Alvo graduate. Umland said many of the graduates came to Alvo from nearby cities such as Lincoln, Elmwood and Ashland, but three traveled to town from Kansas and California.

One of the top events on Alvo's community calendar each year is the Alvo Car

Show. The town celebrates its transportation heritage every May with an event that draws more than 100 vehicles to city streets. The 2019 event included new classes for antique tractors and motor sports cars. All proceeds from each year's event are used to support Alvo's volunteer fire and rescue department.

Another current transportation topic for Alvo is Highway 63. The state highway connects the town with U.S. Highway 34 to the south and Interstate 80 to the north. Residents from Alvo and surrounding communities use the road for a variety of commercial and recreational needs. Approximately 1,300 cars travel on the highway every day.

Local residents are eager for the completion of a large construction project. State officials are upgrading 6.29 miles of road from Alvo to I-80. The new highway will include wider shoulders and flatter side slopes.



# AVOCA

**Brent HARDIN**  
Managing Editor

Avoca has served as home to many Cass County residents for more than 150 years. Amos Tefft purchased land on the town's current site in 1857 and his wife and son joined him the next year. Other settlers soon noticed the rich agricultural land near the area and bought their own parcels near the Tefft property.

Avoca was officially incorporated on Sept. 2, 1884, and was a thriving community. Eight businesses were operating in town then and the population had reached 150 people. That number doubled over the next decade as the Missouri Pacific Railroad brought services and goods to the area.

The 250 people who live in Avoca today have maintained the town's historical character with their work on several projects. Village residents established the Books in the Bank program in 2016. Avoca Library Board members approached city officials with an idea to use the former downtown bank building as the home for a new library. Volunteers began turning the dream into reality after village board members enthusiastically approved the project.

Avoca Library Board members spent more than 600 hours of volunteer time renovating the building, acquiring new and used books and

purchasing furniture, shelving and carpet. The space now features hundreds of books and movies for residents and visitors to enjoy. Volunteers also host a summer reading series for area children each year.

Local residents have also poured time and resources into the historic Avoca Town Hall. The downtown structure was built in 1912 and has served as a gathering spot for many festivals, meetings, civic events and celebrations over the past century.

Residents wanted to preserve the structure and began renovation work in the 2000s. The refurbished building includes a kitchen, meeting room, restrooms and exterior landscaping. Some of the newer features include energy-efficient windows and doors and a handicapped-accessible entrance.

Avoca is home to one of the top tourist attractions in Cass County. The Avoca Quackoff takes place the last weekend of January each year and has become famous across the world. People from as far away as Great Britain and Australia have visited the community to watch people race ducks on the Tefft Park tennis court.

More than 225 people entered the Avoca Quackoff competition in 2018. Approximately 2,500 came to town to view the races and



Elmwood-Murdock graduate Nikki Novak enjoys participating in the 2018 Avoca Quackoff. The annual duck racing event draws thousands of people to the Cass County community each year.

meet old and new friends. Dozens of tour buses from across the Midwest arrived in Avoca early in the morning, and they stayed until the event came to a close in the late afternoon.

Avoca Quackoff organizers will celebrate the event's 40th anniversary in 2020. They are hoping a large crowd will attend the races.

The Avoca Quackoff serves as the main fund-raiser for the Avoca Volunteer Fire Department. Department members have used proceeds from the event to buy many items over the past 39 years. These purchases include fire trucks,

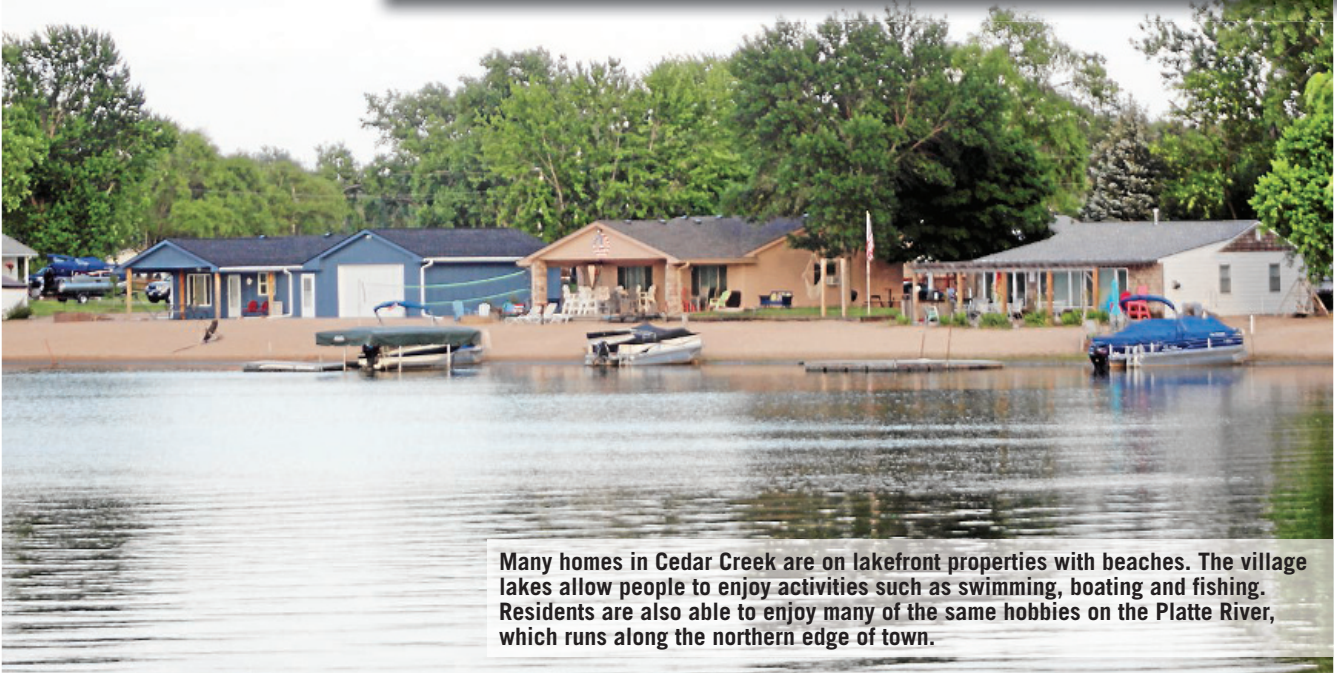
safety materials, uniforms and firefighting equipment.

The Quackoff isn't the only tourist attraction in the Avoca area. Bloom Where You're Planted pumpkin patch will hold its 15th annual fall activities season from Sept. 28-Oct. 27 this year.

The large pumpkin patch will host hayrack rides, rubber duck races, yard games, scavenger hunts and basketball events during this time. Visitors will also be able to walk on nature trails, view farm animals, explore agricultural-themed exhibits and soar down a 40-foot tube slide.



# CEDAR CREEK



Many homes in Cedar Creek are on lakefront properties with beaches. The village lakes allow people to enjoy activities such as swimming, boating and fishing. Residents are also able to enjoy many of the same hobbies on the Platte River, which runs along the northern edge of town.

**Brent HARDIN**  
Managing Editor

**CEDAR CREEK** — Cedar Creek's residential, commercial and tourism opportunities have been intertwined with the Platte River since the 1860s. The river flows along the northern edge of town and has served as a water source and transportation highway for many people over the years.

Early settlers noticed the rich soil next to the Platte and decided to create a village at the spot. The U.S. Postal Service officially approved the town's name as Cedar Creek in March 1872, and the city's population began to multiply by the late 1890s. Cedar Creek's business district soon included a grain elevator, general merchandise store, icehouse, three-story mill, hardware store, lumberyard and hotel.

John Inhelder and George Sayles both played key roles in the formation of Cedar Creek.

Inhelder was born in Switzerland in 1808 and came to the United States in 1856. He began farming near Plattsmouth and soon acquired 520 acres of land in northern Cass County. Forty acres of his land includes the present-day site of Cedar Creek.

Sayles moved to Nebraska from Illinois as a child with his parents in 1857. He began a farming career and added a job as a grain dealer in 1880. He became invested in many sectors of the early Cedar Creek community. He was appointed Cedar Creek postmaster in 1876 and later operated a dance and skating hall in town. He also served as director of the city's school board.

One of the biggest banks in the early days of Cedar Creek was the Farmers Bank. First Security Bank of Cedar Creek arrived on the scene in 1917 and filled a key role in the community. W.J. Schneider, Thomas Parmele, Charles Parmele and J.R. Wolff were

the first directors.

Today's residents can bank on finding scenic views along the Platte River and at several other locations in town. Five lakes dot the landscape inside the corporate limits of Cedar Creek, and a road circles a sixth lake that sits just to the west of town.

Many beachfront homes surrounds several of the lakes, and residents and visitors use the ponds and beaches for a variety of activities. Swimming, boating, hiking, sand volleyball, fishing and nature viewing all take place in the town.

The community's population peaks during the summer when people from across the Midwest come to enjoy the different outdoor hobbies. The town hosts a Fourth of July celebration that includes both boat and antique car parades.

The Platte River has also provided opportunities for Cedar Creek residents to showcase the close-knit

nature of their community. Residents came together this past spring to battle historic flooding along the Platte. They filled more than 20,000 sandbags and kept water from reaching many homes and streets.

Residents and visitors who prefer not to spend time on the water can enjoy other outdoor activities. Cedar Creek Village Park covers 20 acres of land along Platteview Drive in between the southern and northern sections of town. Many community events take place there each year.

The park features a basketball court, picnic area, covered pavilion, playground equipment and a large amount of grassy space. The western edge of the park includes an updated baseball diamond. The Keep Cass County Beautiful organization gave the city a \$20,000 grant in 2015 to improve the facility. It now hosts many youth baseball and softball games during the spring and summer.



# EAGLE

**Brent HARDIN**  
Managing Editor

**EAGLE** — Eagle residents have created a vision of a fast-growing and optimistic city in southwestern Cass County.

The community's 1,086 people provide a boost to the social and economic livelihood of Cass County. The town features multiple businesses, newer housing developments, a swimming pool and large park.

Eagle was platted and dedicated on July 1, 1886, and was incorporated on Aug. 11, 1891. Members of the first village board were Chairman S.S. English, Secretary Richard Wilkinson, City Clerk W.J. McAllister, Treasurer G.M. Beach and board members S. Benton, J.J. Hudson and William Sharp. Travis Crabtree won the first election for village marshal over fellow candidates C.M. Sollars, E.L. Lewis and William Standley.

Transportation played a key role in Eagle's early development. The Missouri-Pacific Railroad built a line at the site in 1886 and trains brought many goods and supplies to town. Passenger service allowed early residents to travel to places such as Lincoln in a short amount of time.

Streets inside village limits were changed from dirt to gravel in 1925. Highway 34 received gravel a year later and became a blacktopped surface when it was appointed a federal highway in 1934. The new road ran along the southern edge of town and gave residents a convenient way to drive west to Lincoln or east to other Cass County cities.

Both of those transportation routes serve Eagle residents in different ways today. The Missouri-Pacific Railroad



**Eagle Community Park allows residents and visitors to enjoy many recreational activities. The park includes playground equipment, benches and a ball diamond, sand volleyball court, tennis court and basketball court. The city swimming pool is located at the northern end of the park.**

eventually abandoned its railroads, but that ending led to a new beginning for recreational enthusiasts. The former railroad corridor is now home to the MoPac Trail, which allows people to enjoy bicycling, running, walking, hiking, horseback riding, cross country skiing and wildlife viewing.

The western edge of the trail begins in Lincoln and continues past Eagle into other sections of Cass County. Eagle is now part of the weekly Nacho Bicycle Ride during the late spring, summer and early fall. The Great Plains Bicycling Club sponsors the Tuesday night rides, which begin at the MoPac East Trailhead on 84th Street in Lincoln and end at Eagle. Nearly 200 bicyclists take part in the event each week.

Highway 34 continues to be a vital automobile artery for Eagle's commercial, residential and recreational needs. It takes people from town to one of the top tourist attractions in southwestern Cass County.

Eagle Raceway is located two miles east of the city and has become a major player on the national sprint car scene. Thousands of spectators attend events at Eagle Raceway each year from late March

through early September. The facility includes a 0.33-mile dirt track and a smaller go-kart raceway.

Eagle Community Park features a large amount of green

space for family and community activities. It includes a ball diamond, sand volleyball court, basketball court, tennis court, playground equipment and park benches.



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# ELMWOOD



**Brent HARDIN**  
Managing Editor

ELMWOOD — World-famous author Bess Streeter Aldrich once said that love is like a lantern in a person's hand.

Elmwood residents have followed through on that statement by illuminating the positive traits of their community for thousands of others to see.

Aldrich, who lived in Elmwood from 1909-45, was a proud supporter of the town and used it as the location for many of her short stories and novels. Her work appeared in publications such as "Saturday Evening Post" and "Cosmopolitan" and circulated around the world. Many of Aldrich's stories were translated into other languages and shared in hundreds of thousands of homes.

Aldrich's legacy lives on today in Elmwood. Bess Streeter Aldrich Foundation Executive Director Kurk Shrader said the

Please see **ELMWOOD**, Page 12

## Bess Streeter Aldrich House

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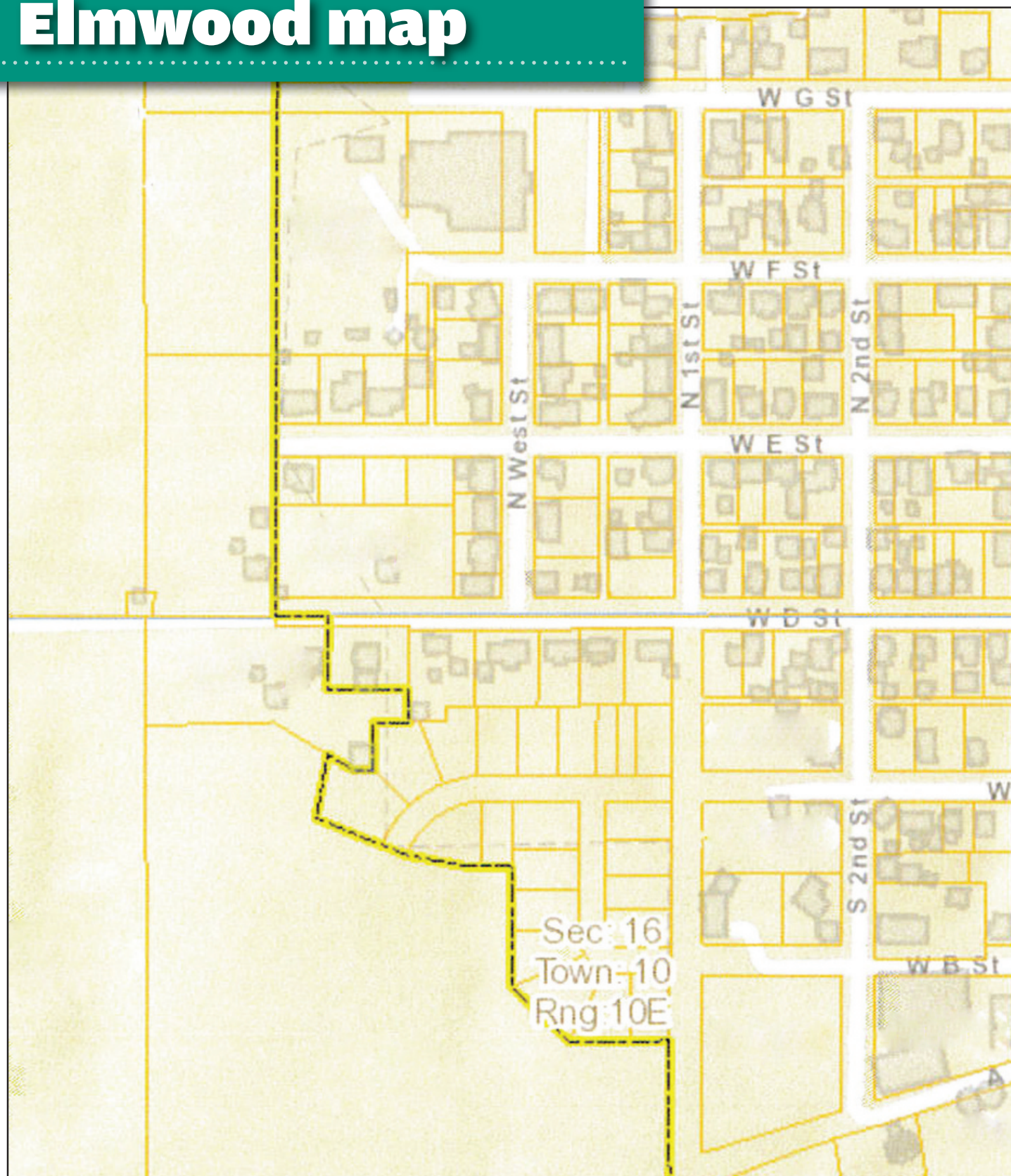
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# Elmwood map











Elmwood children take part in a fun run this past year at Elmwood's city park.

## Elmwood

From 9

organization is aiming to pass her love of writing on to current and future generations.

"The Bess Streeter Aldrich Foundation will continue to promote the significance of Mrs. Aldrich to our state and her legacy to the literary world," Shrader said. "That being said, it makes sense that we also remain community oriented and visionary as promoters of reading and writing."

"We are currently developing curriculum for summer writing camps and materials for traveling trunks for schools in our effort to reach the younger generation. Community-wise, we offer our garden venue for weddings and outdoor events and will continue to develop educational and entertaining activities."

Elmwood has also benefited economically from Aldrich's presence in the community. More than 1,200 people visited the Bess Streeter Aldrich House and Museum in 2017.

Elmwood has long been a welcoming place for military veterans and their families. Many Civil War soldiers moved to town in the late 1860s and early 1870s. Elmwood Cemetery is the final resting place for multiple people who fought in the Civil War. Scores of other people who served in later military conflicts are also buried in the cemetery.

The introduction of Memorial Day spurred the creation of a large parade on the holiday.

The 1888 parade stretched for a half-mile and included many wagons, buggies and horse-back riders. Civil War veterans dressed in full uniform for the parade and service.

Sixteen Civil War soldiers formed the Elmwood Chapter of the Grand Army of the Republic in November 1882. They soon constructed the G.A.R. Hall that remains in town. It is one of only four original G.A.R. Halls still standing in Nebraska. It is now the home of a veterans museum that features many historical artifacts from Cass County residents.

Local G.A.R. members held a large reunion in Elmwood City Park from June 20-July 4, 1907. They then held a four-day reunion in town the following year. The park was also the site of a speech by William Jennings Bryan in 1908. He was a three-time candidate for President of the United States.

Elmwood-Murdock's school system has earned many state awards for academic excellence. Students have achieved national recognition in business contests and have been part of multiple championship teams.

Both current and former residents have placed education near the top of their priority lists. Elmwood built a two-story schoolhouse in 1889 and completed a new brick structure in 1911. The Class of 1912 became the first set of Elmwood graduates to earn diplomas from a 12-grade system.

Elmwood's growing



Children use Elmwood's city park for a variety of activities. Residents have made many improvements to the park over the past five years. These changes have included new playground equipment and a new basketball court surface.

population caused the construction of a larger building on the western side of town. It was dedicated on Feb. 25,

1962. Residents of Elmwood and Murdock approved a merger in 1990 that formed the current school system.





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**Brent HARDIN**  
Managing Editor

**GREENWOOD** — Greenwood residents have made a positive difference in Cass County since the community was founded nearly 150 years ago. Today's city includes many businesses, historical artifacts and recreational sites.

The village is named for Silas Greenwood, who was a hunter and trapper in the region for many decades. Greenwood arrived at the town's current location in the 1820s and raised a family in the Salt Creek region.

John Atkinson was another early European settler. He bought a parcel of land for \$500 on July 11, 1865. Robert E. Farmer, E.C. Coleman and members of the Sheffer, Laughlin, Loder, Kehler, Armstrong and Parks families also arrived by this time.

Smith C. Bethel became Greenwood's first postmaster in 1870 and also opened a store near the new railroad. Burlington & Missouri River Railroad officials built tracks in the area in order to service the growing farming community. The railroad officially opened on July 26, 1870, and began making a major impact.

The Nebraska Gazetteer and Business Directory of 1879 said Greenwood's two grain elevators provided 400 railroad cars worth of grain in 1877. That number rose to 800 cars the following year and included shipments of wheat, corn, rye, barley and oats.

The legacy of that early railroad business lives on today in Greenwood. More than a dozen grain elevators tower over the town along U.S. Highway 6. Farmers from both Cass and Saunders

counties use the facility for their agribusiness needs. The elevators can house up to 2.9 million bushels of corn, soybeans, wheat and other crops.

Education has played a key role in Greenwood since its early days. Polly Laughlin taught classes at the first-known school in the area in 1859. Students met at a log cabin approximately three miles northeast of the present-day site of Greenwood.

Salt Creek School became the first public school in town in 1866. The district's enrollment grew to 100 by 1881, which caused residents to construct a new school building that year. Steady growth inspired citizens to build a larger brick schoolhouse in 1907 for \$10,000.

Greenwood High School students made names for themselves in both academics and athletics. Greenwood won state championships in boys basketball in 1921 (Class K), 1926 (Class J) and 1928 (Class O). The school included upper-level classes in subjects such as math, reading and journalism, and students were able to compete on baseball, basketball and track and field teams.

Enrollment began dropping during the Great Depression in the 1930s. Greenwood High School merged with Ashland's school system in 1957, and elementary classes eventually followed the same route. Students from both communities attend Ashland-Greenwood Public

Schools today. AGPS facilities are located in Ashland.

Local residents have made many improvements to Greenwood Village Park over the past decade. The park includes new playground equipment and open space for activities such as ballgames and festivals. Children ages 3-13 use the park for Ashland-Greenwood Soccer League matches. Volunteers help run leagues for children in both the fall and spring.

The Greenwood Historical Society Depot Museum is also located in the park. Greenwood residents have donated scores of local items and artifacts from the early days of the railroad. Area students tour the facility each year to learn more about the town's history.

# GREENWOOD



**Greenwood Historical Society Depot Museum is located in Greenwood Village Park. The museum houses a wide variety of artifacts from the town's history. Greenwood Historical Society formed in 1976. Members raised \$1,400 to move the former depot from the railroad line to its current location.**



# LOUISVILLE



Louisville residents hold a car show every summer along Main Street. The event takes place on the last Sunday of July and draws hundreds of visitors to town. Organizers award prizes as part of the car show.

**Brent HARDIN**  
Managing Editor

LOUISVILLE — Louisville's prominent location along the Platte River has helped it become a leader in Cass County economic, social and recreational circles.

The town is preparing to remain in a prestigious position for the foreseeable future.

Louisville's long history of success is helping it enter a new phase of growth and development. The U.S. Census Bureau's 2018 population estimate for Louisville was 1,295. That number has risen from 1,106 people living in town in the 2010 Census.

Louisville Board of Education member John Winkler said school officials are already making plans to handle additional students. He said

the district is projecting to outgrow its current facilities within five years. He said that was a good sign for the rest of the community as well.

"Louisville is an extremely attractive location to grow a business and to raise a family," Winkler said. "The community has quality and abundant recreational facilities and opportunities, a new business park, a quaint and vibrant Main Street, a high-quality school district and is a short drive halfway between Omaha and Lincoln."

"In addition, the Louisville community leadership is pro-growth and development which is vital to attracting new industries and retaining the existing businesses already located in the area. If you add up all of the above you have the formula



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Louisville community leaders have created new banners for the downtown business district.

for controlled growth and a bright future.”

Louisville’s history has been equally sunny. Gardner Powers built the first log cabin after the Territorial Legislature incorporated the town by a special act in February 1857. The Kentucky native registered the first plat later that year.

Louisville did not begin to experience growth until Captain John T.A. Hoover came to Nebraska. He convinced Burlington & Missouri River Railroad officials to construct a new line through the area. Settlers began arriving in larger numbers after a train depot was built in Louisville in 1870. Hoover officially dedicated the city on June 8, 1872.

The new railroad system made a major impact on local education. Area students had met in small country schoolhouses before Louisville built



Louisville State Recreation Area features a new floating playground on one of the park’s five lakes. The floating playground opened for the first time in the summer of 2018. The park attracted nearly 600,000 visitors in 2017.

a structure in 1874. It was located one block east of the old water tower on North Hill.

Citizens then spent \$4,000 on a two-story frame building in the southeastern part of Louisville in 1882. The first high school came onto the scene in 1896. A new 22,000-square-foot facility was built in 1953. Louisville patrons voted to make several additions to the school in the following decades.

Area residents were able to experience a bit of prehistory in 1940 when they uncovered the skeleton of a woolly mammoth. University of Nebraska paleontologists excavated the woolly mammoth at the Ash Grove quarries in Louisville. It was the first mammoth discovered in southeastern Nebraska.

Louisville’s Main Street district has been a thriving center for businesses for many years. Hoover built the first store building at the corner of Second and Main in 1870. He sold clothing, dried foods, fish, butter, dishes, paper, pencils and railroad tickets. The store was also the site of Louisville’s post office.

The city contained a hotel, grain elevator, physician’s office, drug store, blacksmithing business and harness shop within a decade. Hardware, bakery, banking and printing businesses came to town soon after that.

Many stores line Main Street today. The commercial district includes shops, restaurants, medical businesses and customer service enterprises.

Main Street is the site of one



Louisville children have enjoyed a new playground at Louisville Elementary School for the past year.

of Louisville’s biggest celebrations each year. The Last Hot Sunday in July event features a car show, food vendors and craft show. Cars line both sides of the street for several blocks.

Louisville is also home to one of the state’s top tourist attractions. Louisville State Recreation Area is located next to the Platte River on the west end of the city. The 192-acre park includes five sandpit lakes with 50 surface acres of water. Nearly 600,000 people came to the park in 2017 to enjoy activities such as swimming, fishing, canoeing, hiking and kayaking.

Louisville State Recreation

Please see **LOUISVILLE**, Page 40



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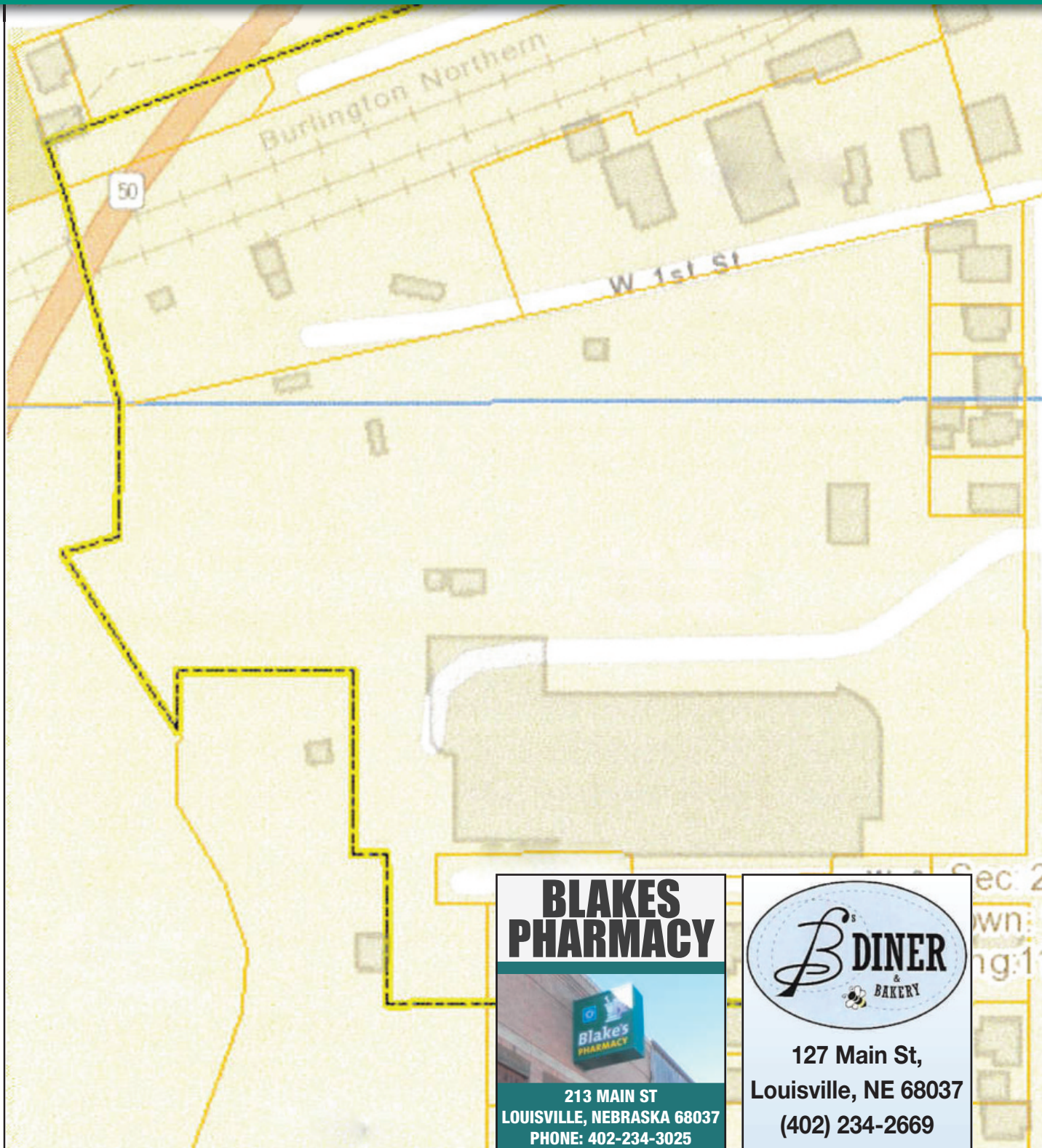


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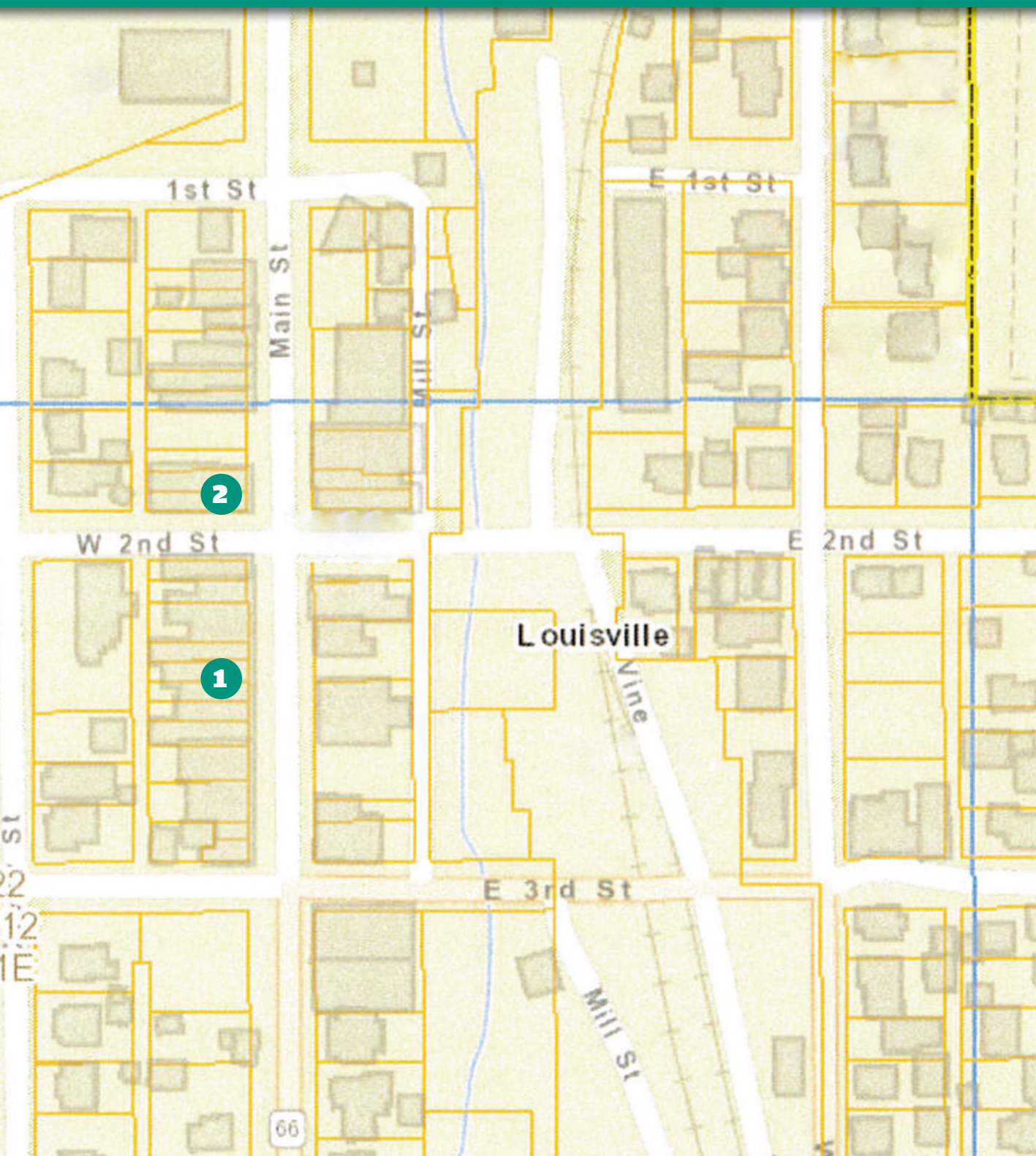
# Louisville map



1

2







# MANLEY

**Brent HARDIN**  
Managing Editor

MANLEY — Manley residents believe one of the town's most historic buildings will help the village enjoy a bright future.

Scores of people celebrated the sole ownership of the Manley Community Center this year. They made the final payment toward the purchase of the building from Weeping Water Public Schools in March 2019. Residents then held a festive ceremony at the former schoolhouse in June 2019.

Manley Village Board of Trustees Chairwoman Denise Swenson said the event marked a significant achievement for the town.

"Everybody's happy to see this done, because this is something that has long-term value," Swenson said. "There are always those procrastinators who wait to do things because they don't look at the future and they think nothing needs to change. But we're doing this now because we want this to be around in 30 or 40 years."

"We're looking at this for the long run and not for the short term. We're very glad to see this get done and have the community center for everyone to enjoy here in town."

Manley residents formed a school district in 1888 and used the original structure for many years. The current schoolhouse was built in 1931 and served as the town's educational center for more than seven decades. District patrons opted to join Weeping Water's school system in 2006.

Residents now use the former schoolhouse as a community center. Weddings,



Manley residents smile during a conversation at a classic car show held in town in June 2019. The event was part of a community-wide celebration.

graduation parties, baby showers, family reunions and many other activities take place in the building each year. Manley leaders built a clerk's office in the structure in 2015 and installed a handicapped-accessible lift in 2018.

The town is also in the process of updating its playground for area children. The current playground in the village park is more than 30 years old and is at a point where replacement is the best solution. Manley has received several grants for the project and is continuing to seek additional funding.

Manley is also home to a major tourist attraction in Cass County. Thousands of people come to the Lofte Community Theatre each year to watch plays, comedy shows, high school speech contests, educational workshops and music concerts.

Lofte Community Theatre members operated out of a barn for 29 years before the organization built a new facility in 2006. The red building is located on the eastern edge



Manley residents are making continuous improvements to the Manley Community Center. They installed a village office in 2015 and a handicapped-accessible lift this past year. The historic building is located next to the village park.

of Manley and features many state-of-the-art amenities. The 2019 season includes performances of well-known plays such as "Of Mice and Men" and "The Voice of the Prairie."

Manley is located near the geographical center of Cass County by the intersection of Highways 1 and 50. This spot has helped the town in many economic and social ways. A new Cass County Roads

Department building is just south of town on Highway 50, and railroad tracks on the eastern edge of Manley still see traffic each year.

The year 1954 was significant in Manley's history for several reasons. The town became officially incorporated on April 6 and the first street lights arrived on Nov. 11. Residents celebrated the new street lights with a sausage and pancake feed that day.



# MURDOCK



Children race to collect candy during the 2018 Murdock Fourth of July Parade.

**Brent HARDIN**  
Managing Editor

**MURDOCK** — Murdock residents have helped shape the story of Cass County for more than 125 years. The town was officially born on Dec. 16, 1890, but homesteaders had settled the land around present-day Murdock for several decades before that.

Many German immigrants came to Murdock to pursue agricultural opportunities. Other European settlers also arrived in the area and established many farms and small businesses. The Mullen Ranch was one of the largest of these enterprises. Early homesteaders said the ranch held approximately 1,000 longhorn cattle.

Murdock began to grow after the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad began constructing a line west from Omaha. Louis Eickhoff sold land to the railroad for \$7,000. Louis Neitzel bought the first property lot in Murdock in early 1891. He built a two-story structure that doubled as the home for both his family and a hardware business.

Ackley, Iowa, native Fred Wolf was one of Murdock's first financial developers. He moved to town in 1891 and built many houses and stores.

He also told former Ackley neighbors about Murdock's potential. E.J. Tool started a lumberyard in Murdock, Art Tool opened a harness shop, Henry Tool operated the town's first mercantile business and Frank Martin was an investor in a general store.

The first post office was built in 1891 on the current site of Corn Growers State Bank. Hounselman and Company of Kansas City also began construction on Murdock's first grain elevator that year. The company partnered with Neitzel in the grain business. Farmers dropped off their crops at the elevator and then went to Neitzel's store to receive payment.

Several country schools sprouted up near the Murdock area in the late 1800s. These included Maine Land School, Holden School, Center School, South Callahan School, Grand Prairie School, Rose Valley School, Pawnee School, Belmont School and North Callahan School.

Many of these schools discontinued after Murdock built its first public schoolhouse in city limits in 1892. Landowners moved several of the former schoolhouses into town and transformed them into houses.

Neitzel, George Pickwell and John Connally were members of the original schoolhouse building committee for the village. They oversaw construction of a facility that cost \$1,800. Students attended classes in the two-story wooden structure until 1924. The first graduates from a 12-grade system received diplomas in 1922. Alma Oehlerking Marshall, Della Oehlerking Renwanz, Selma Schliefert Lau and Richard Tool were members of the class.

Residents were forced to construct a new schoolhouse after the State Fire Marshal declared the original building a fire hazard in 1923. Residents passed a \$45,000 bond issue for a new brick school. It opened in time for the 1924-25 academic year.

The Elmwood and Murdock districts approved a school merger in 1990.

Elmwood-Murdock students have won a large number of awards for their academic work in subjects such as math, science, business and social studies. The district's fine arts programs have performed in prestigious venues such as Carnegie Hall, and E-M sports teams have captured conference, district and state championships.

One of Murdock's biggest events each year takes place on the Fourth of July. Elmwood-Murdock Merchants Association sponsors a full day of activities on Independence Day.

These include the Dillon Synovec Memorial Run/Walk, afternoon ballgames, fireworks and a petting zoo, tractor pull, pie/ice cream social and large parade. The Murdock Museum and a local historic one-room schoolhouse are also open for tours. Hundreds of people come to Murdock for the July 4 events.



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# MURRAY



**ABOVE:** All six members of Murray's local Boy Scouts troop recently earned their Eagle Scout awards.



**LEFT:** Conestoga High School cheerleaders indicate they are having a good time at the Murray Freedom Festival. The community holds a daylong celebration on the Fourth of July each year.

**Tim ROHWER**  
Journal Reporter

## MURRAY NOW

Murray's population was listed at 481 in the last census.

It features two parks. Tyson Park is located in the center of town and features a new playground and a ballfield for the younger kids. It is named for Dr. Ronald W. Tyson, a long-time prominent resident.

Young Park is located on the western edge of the community and features a larger ballfield for the older kids.

Conestoga Elementary School is a two-story building within the village that offers classes through the sixth grade. Students then go to the Conestoga Junior/Senior High School located two miles west on Hwy. 1.

Murray's biggest annual event is its Independence Day celebration that lasts all day.

It begins in the morning with a pancake feed, followed by a volleyball tournament, plus other activities. The evening portion features a parade, a local talent show, a live band performance, and climaxed with a fireworks show at 10 p.m.

Scouting is big in this community, and last year the local Boy Scouts troop made news when all six of its active members earned their Eagle Scout awards.

## MURRAY THEN

**MURRAY** – Located one mile west of the intersection of Nebraska Highway 1 and U.S. Highway 75, this small community began being



Many Murray residents attend Conestoga Junior/Senior High School each year. Conestoga students have earned a host of academic awards and participate in numerous extracurricular activities.

settled in the 1870s and was called Fairview and Pleasant Hill for a time.

Then, in 1884, when a post office was established in a blacksmith shop, the name Murray was chosen to honor the Rev. George Reed Murray, an early resident.

Rev. Murray, who was born in Pennsylvania, was orphaned at nine years of age, and after serving in the Civil War, studied for the ministry, including for a time at Princeton University. After a pastorate in Centerville, Iowa, he accepted a call to the Fairview United Presbyterian Church in Cass County, the first resident pastor of this church.

Murray's life would not be spared from tragedy. His wife, Mary, would die of consumption at age 33. Their daughter, Mary, born two weeks before her mother's death, died a year

later, and a son, Lou Russell, died of typhoid fever when he was two.

The mother and the two children are buried at Oak Hill Cemetery in Plattsmouth.

Eventually, Rev. Murray and three other sons moved back to Pennsylvania.

In the summer of 1912, Rev. Murray returned to his namesake town for what would be the last time. He died in 1931 at age 86 and is buried in Pennsylvania.

Like other area communities, Murray's growth was influenced by the arrival of the train. When a Missouri Pacific Railroad route was built between Omaha and Union, a Murray depot was built south of Main Street.

With the train drawing business, Murray began to

Please see **MURRAY**, Page 40

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# NEHAWKA

**Brent HARDIN**  
Managing Editor

NEHAWKA — Nehawka has played an instrumental role in Cass County's symphony of success since the 1850s. Village residents have served in the territorial and state legislatures, been Nebraska governor and established famous apple orchard operations.

Samuel Kirkpatrick, John Knabe, J.C. Hansen, Andrew Sturm, Lawson Sheldon, Isaac Pollard, William Rose and Rev. W.D. Gage were the first group of European settlers near present-day Nehawka. Many of them arrived in the area from 1855-57.

Nehawka outlasted several other potential towns in the same vicinity. Gage laid out

plats for Cassville in 1855 and was one of several trustees of a community called Mt. Pleasant in 1856. Both were established north of Nehawka's current location.

Pollard also laid out plats for a community called Waterville in June 1857. No sales were registered for Waterville, so it never became a full-fledged town. Waterville was located in the southern part of present-day Nehawka.

Nehawka was officially platted with 137 lots on Sept. 14, 1887. Missouri Pacific Railroad officials wanted to build a line from Weeping Water to Auburn, and their proposed path would take trains southeast from Weeping Water through Nehawka and



Elmwood-Murdock/Nehawka baseball teams use Nehawka Ball Diamond each summer for American Legion games. Volunteers have made several updates to the facility over the past five years.

Nebraska City.

The arrival of the railroad caused Nehawka to bloom. The town contained 30 businesses by 1888 and there were 200 residents five years after that. The business district included three general stores, two hotels, two meat markets, two grain elevators,

two livery stables and a lumberyard, hardware store, drug store, bank, millinery shop, barbershop and stone quarries.

Pollard became one of the biggest proponents of agriculture in Nebraska. He became

Please see **NEHAWKA**, Page 40

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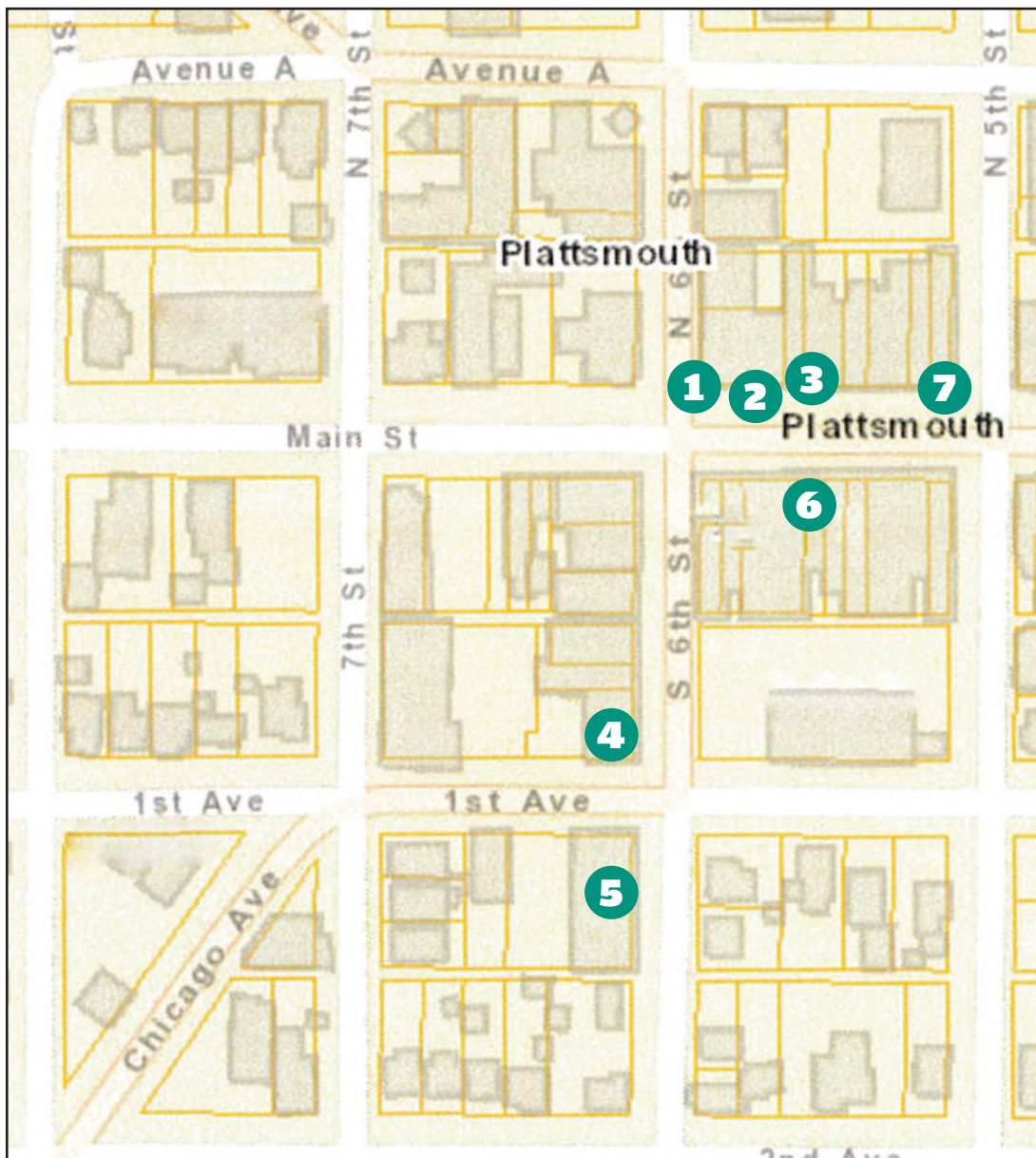


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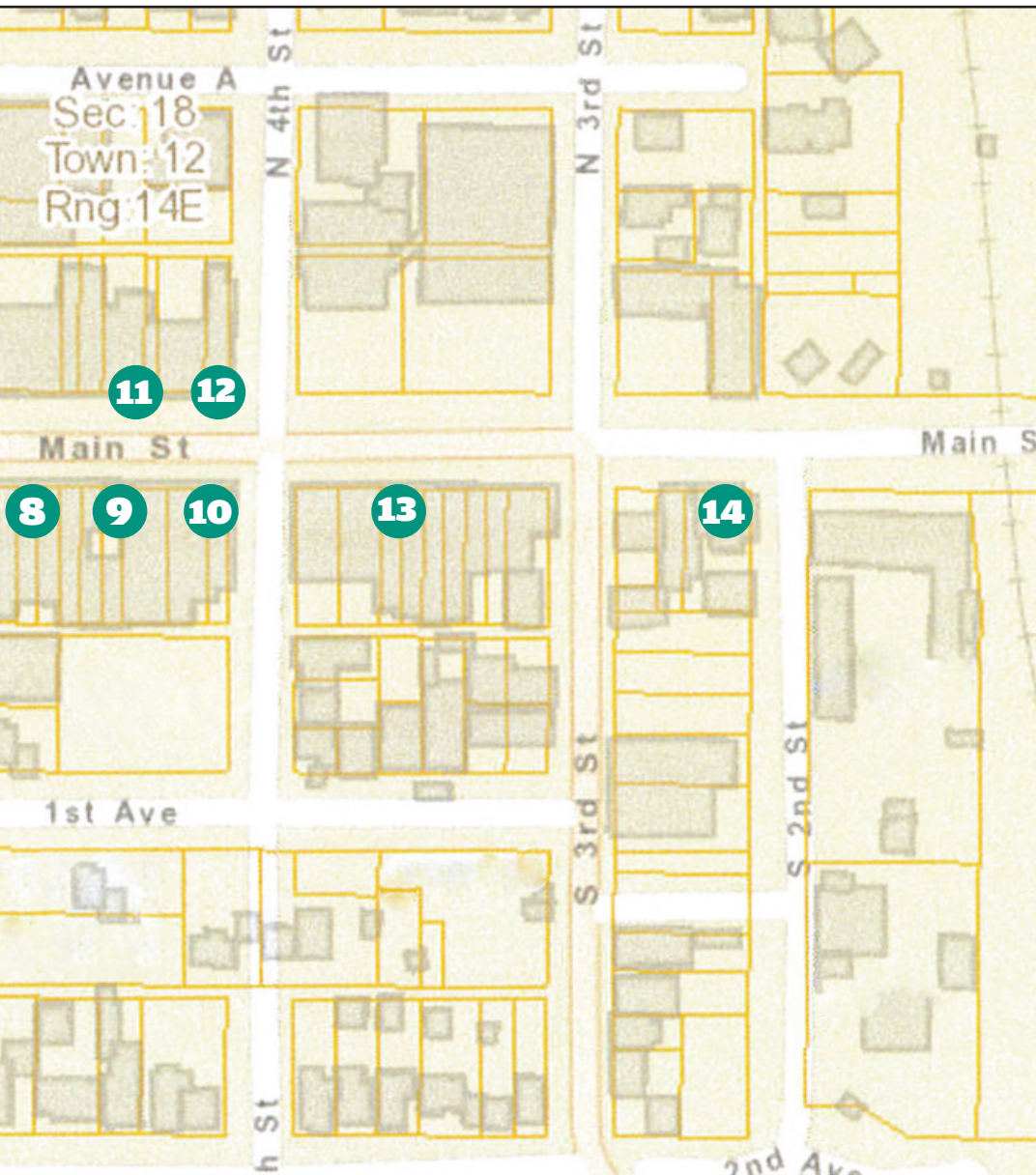
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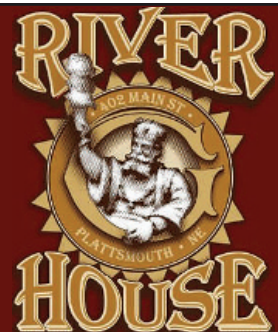
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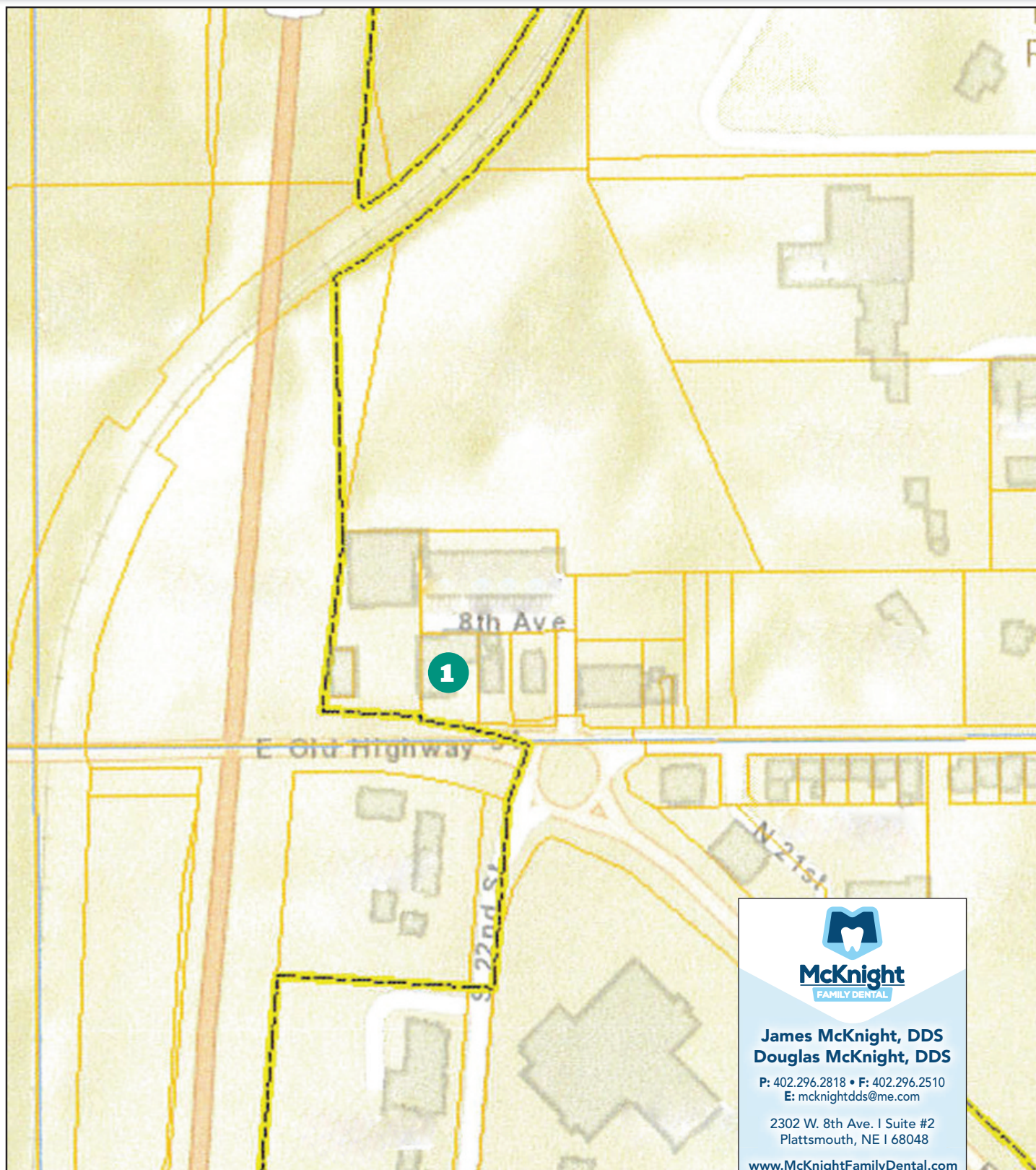
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# Plattsmouth area map



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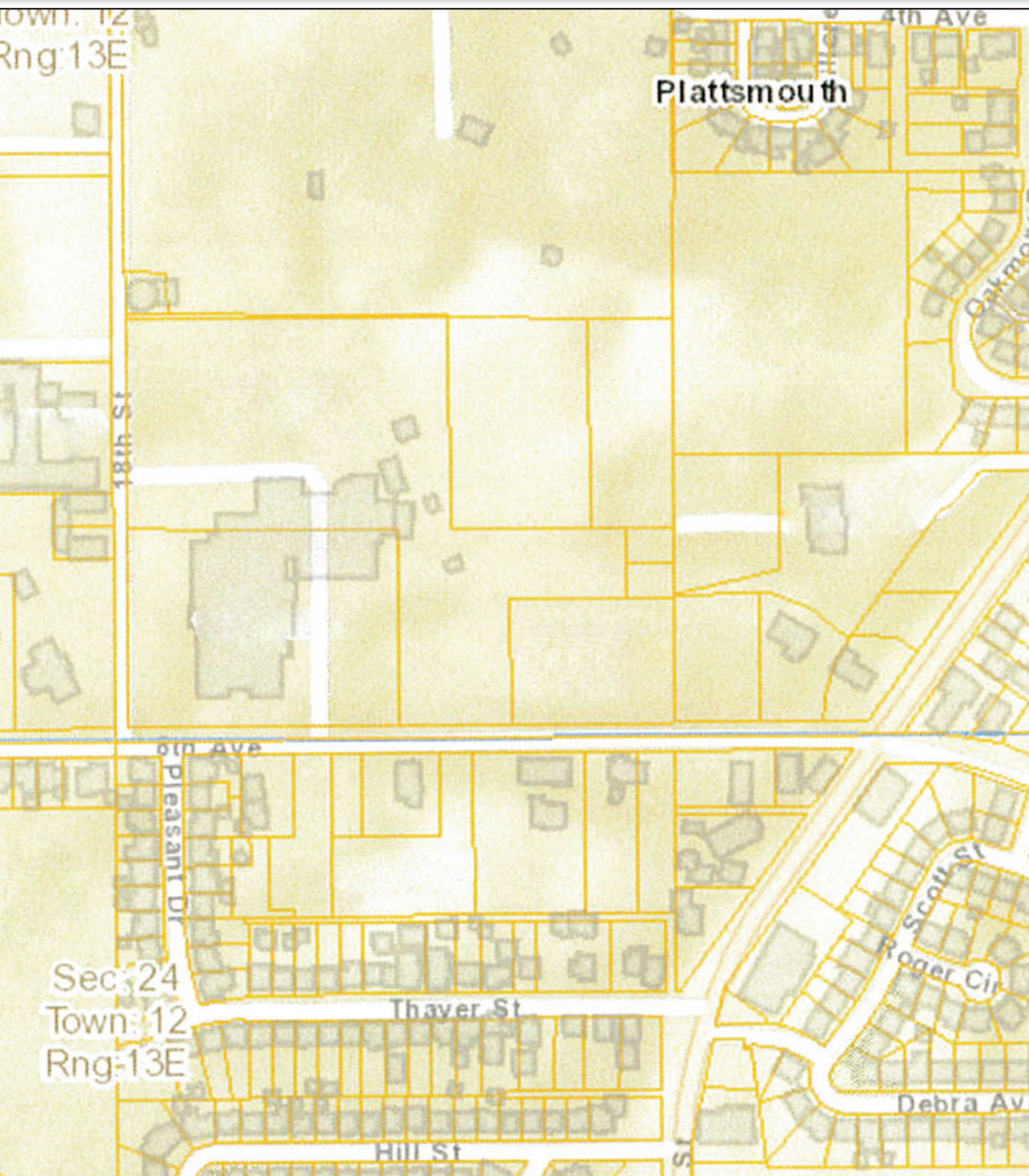
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# PLATTSMOUTH

**Tim ROHWER**  
Journal Reporter

## PLATTSMOUTH NOW

PLATTSMOUTH – To visit Plattsmouth is like a trip back in time that continues ticking today – and no doubt tomorrow, as well.

Located just south of where the mouth of the Platte River meets the wide Missouri in northeast Cass County, Plattsmouth features downtown buildings with timeless architecture that seems to pull residents and visitors inside where activities of all sorts await.

All along Main Street, in fact, there are specialty stores, restaurants and ice cream shops, plus financial and legal services. There's even a



The Cass County Historical Museum oversees an outdoor exhibit area in downtown Plattsmouth where the public can view large historical artifacts like a threshing machine shown here.

community college downtown where today's young people are learning the jobs of tomorrow in a historical setting.

One of the taller downtown buildings is the site of the

former Fitzgerald Hotel, now converted into apartments on the upper levels with busy commercial activity below.

"This is a great community and we have great tenants," said Ben Katt, a co-owner.

"We like being down here."

Also on Main Street is the expansive Cass County Historical Society Museum where large and small artifacts that shaped the course of this city and county can be seen up close.

The museum also oversees the large outdoor exhibit area on the east side of downtown that features a caboose, a threshing machine, even a replica of a boat used during the Lewis and Clark expedition to the West.

In the heart of downtown is an outdoor community plaza area where concerts and major events take center stage.

Just off Main Street is the Plattsmouth Public Library,

Please see **PLATTSMOUTH**, Page 28

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Plattsmouth's Main Street is taken over by all sorts of vehicles during the annual Cruizin' Main car show.

## Plattsmouth

From 27

which was founded as a Carnegie Corporation Library in 1916. It offers an impressive book circulation, video and computer technology and hands-on reading programs for the whole family.

Of course, towering over it all is the impressive Cass County Courthouse, the continuing hub of county government that dates back to the days when people arrived

in horse and buggy to do their business.

Built in 1891 and designed by architect William Gray, it was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1990.

That's also the current goal of the former Plattsmouth High School, just up the hill from the business section, and an impressive center of secondary education for decades until a modern, state-of-the-art school was built in 1996.

A similar structure for the elementary and middle school

students was built around the same time nearby.

Commercial development and new housing subdivisions are on the rise in the western section of Plattsmouth around the newly-widened U.S. Highway 75, which is making the drive to the immediate Omaha area safer and quicker.

Plattsmouth also offers three beautiful parks — Rhylander on Lincoln Avenue, Garfield on Fifth Street and Memorial on Fourth Avenue — for pleasant outdoor recreation and relaxation.

The Twin Rivers Water Park on 18th Street provides a cool way for beating the heat on summer days.

Two golf courses, Bay Hills and Lake Ridge, provide top-notch challenges for golfing enthusiasts in the area.

Besides the draw of the historic downtown area, Lewis and Clark history can be found where the Platte River joins the Missouri at Schilling

Wildlife Refuge, east of the downtown area.

The community also showcases its proud past with special events throughout the year, such as the annual Plattsmouth Harvest Festival. Held continuously for more than 80 years, the festival (formerly Kass County King Korn Carnival) draws thousands of people each September to the community.

Another autumn event is Cruizin' Main, which draws car enthusiasts from near and far to showcase their vehicles to the thousands who attend annually.

During the summer, there is the Food Truck Wars along Main Street, plus the new Taste of Brews featuring the finest beverages from area breweries.

Hundreds of kids turn out each spring for the annual Easter Egg Hunt in Rhylander Park, as well as Halloween trick or treating downtown in



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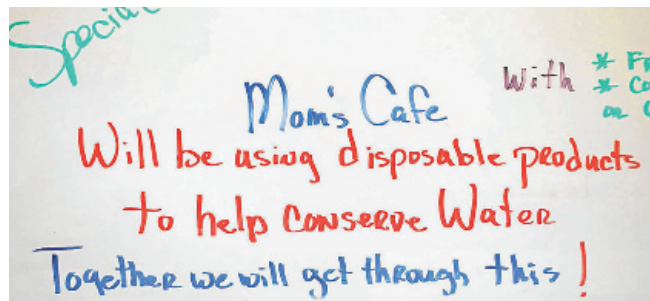
Christmas on Main Street rings in the holiday season that features a Christmas tree lighting, singing business tours, plus a visit from Father Christmas.

Perhaps the true character of any town is how its residents respond to difficult moments.

Such was the case for Plattsmouth during the historic flooding in the spring of 2019.

Like other communities in this area, Plattsmouth was not spared from nature's wrath with rising rivers knocking out the two water plants the community depends for daily usage and for waste treatment. Though an emergency water source was found, city leaders requested residents conserve water usage as much as possible.

They responded in such a manner that city leaders



**Plattsmouth's recent flooding has banded the community together to save water, including this downtown business encouraging its patrons to stand together.**

quickly gave praise.

"People are doing a great job," City Administrator Erv Portis said.

Mayor Paul Lambert added, "They are thinking of more ways to conserve."

Businesses did their part, such as Mom's Café downtown that began using paper plates and cups to reduce dishwashing.

Its daily menu wall reads, "Together we will get through this."

Some other business leaders even took it upon themselves with their own time to provide water for the outdoor pool so that local children would not miss this fun part of summer.

Perhaps the mayor said it best:

"We'll get through it and be stronger."

#### PLATTSMOUTH THEN

With a name like Plattsmouth it's easy to understand how water played such an

important role in this city's history.

In fact, decades before Plattsmouth became a town, the Lewis and Clark Expedition camped along the Missouri River just downstream from present day Plattsmouth on July 20, 1804, and reached the mouth of the Platte River to the north the next day on its famous journal west, according to information from the Cass County Historical Museum.

(Recently, the museum unveiled a full-size replica of a boat, or pirogue, used by those explorers.)

Several decades later, Mormons crossed the Missouri in this same area on their way to a permanent home in Utah.

But, it would still be some years before people began putting down roots just south of where Nebraska's two biggest rivers meet.

Please see **PLATTSMOUTH**, Page 30



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## Plattsmouth

From 29

In 1853, a man named Samuel Martin, who is credited of being the first settler and founder of Plattsmouth, successfully got a permit in Mills County, Iowa, to operate a ferry across the Missouri between Mills County and the undeveloped land on the Nebraska side.

During the winter of that year, he and two other men brought logs across the river on the ice and erected a two-story trading house and a one-story building used as a place to meet the Indians who lived in that area. This tiny settlement was called The Barracks.

Martin got along well with the Pawnee and Otoe tribes with whom he dealt (he even married an Otoe squaw), and thus encouraged other white people to cross the river and settle down.



Plattsmouth's Main Street is where many special events are held each year that bring hundreds, even thousands, to town.

The Plattsmouth Town Company was formed on Oct. 26, 1854, and soon after the town was mapped by W.W. Tyson.

On March 14, 1855, the territorial legislature approved official incorporation and designation of Plattsmouth as the seat of Cass County government.

Please see **PLATTSMOUTH**, Page 32



The people of Plattsmouth love their country as shown here during Memorial Day tributes.



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Plattsmouth's Christmas on Main event attracts all kinds of visitors.

## Plattsmouth

From 30

An election occurred in late January 1856 with Whitney Mickelwaite chosen as mayor.

The first school in Plattsmouth, a private institution, opened in 1856, followed by a public-funded school the next year with an enrollment totaling 100 at both schools. By 1860, enrollment at Plattsmouth schools had increased to 214. According to the book, *The History of Cass County, Nebraska*, the territorial commissioners of education reported to the Legislature in 1861 that "Cass County has the most perfect school organization in the territory."

The first high school graduating class, comprised of three students receiving diplomas, came in 1882.

The process of starting St. John's School by the Catholic Church began in 1881 and opened three years later as an elementary school.

Also, according to the Cass County history book, the era from 1855 through 1860 was considered the "golden age" of steamboating on the Missouri, and Plattsmouth's location became an important port.

At first, cargo brought to this port consisted mostly of lumber, building materials, implements and merchandise.

Eventually, crops produced by area farmers were then shipped to markets elsewhere.

During one week in June of

1865, according to that history book, 500,000 pounds of freight were brought by steamboats to Plattsmouth for western destinations. During a four-day period in August of that year, 400,000 pounds of corn were unloaded at the port.

As elsewhere, Plattsmouth grew with the arrival of the railroads. In 1870, when trains arrived, the city's population was around 2,500. By 1880, that number increased to nearly 5,900.

A railroad bridge over the Missouri from the Iowa side to Plattsmouth opened for traffic on Sept. 12, 1880, which obviously helped the community create connections to the east.

Eventually, a new mode of transportation, the automobile, gained traction in Plattsmouth, and in 1911, an auto/wagon bridge was opened over the Platte River. At the grand opening, a caravan of 14 vehicles from Plattsmouth, Nebraska City and Omaha made the first crossing. A \$700,000 vehicle bridge across the Missouri opened in 1930.

One of Plattsmouth's proudest treasures is the stately Nebraska Masonic Home on Webster Boulevard. On June 22, 1903, the home was established in Plattsmouth, and in 1925 what was called the Infirmary Building was completed. It was of solid stone, slate roof construction, strictly fireproof and three stories high. Several additions were made to the structure over the years and today it's



Downtown shop owners pass out candy to kids during Plattsmouth's annual Halloween event.



The historic Fitzgerald Building in downtown Plattsmouth was recently renovated into apartments that were quickly leased.

now situated on 60 acres surrounded by a green lawn and tall mature trees, a handsome way for the city to welcome visitors who approach town on that road.

Just a few blocks away, at 801 Washington Ave., is the city's tallest building, five stories high, and completed in the late 1960s. It is the home of Cassco Arms, built by the City Housing Authority in cooperation with the federal government to provide subsidized housing.

To tell the history of Plattsmouth would be incomplete without mentioning the Kass County King Korn Carnival that began in 1932 as a fall celebration, started by local business leaders to raise the spirits of Depression-weary residents, according to the county's history book.

The first king and queen

were crowned in 1935, and today, known as the Plattsmouth Harvest Festival, it has become one of the more unique civic celebrations in the Midwest, focusing on the area's corn crop.

The list of notable people who lived all or part of their lives in Plattsmouth is impressive.

They include Raymond Chandler, the legendary novelist and screenwriter, whose works include *Farewell, My Lovely* (1940) and *The Long Goodbye* (1953).

John O'Rourke, a Plattsmouth mayor, was the subject of the American Civil War song: *When Johnny Comes Marching Home*.

John Falter, born in Plattsmouth in 1910, was an American artist best known for his many cover paintings for *The Saturday Evening Post*.



# SOUTH BEND



**Eugene T. Mahoney State Park is located just five minutes away from South Bend on State Highway 66. Some of the park's features include horseback riding stables in the foreground and an ice skating rink and activity center in the background. More than 790,000 people visited the park in 2017.**

**Brent HARDIN**  
Managing Editor

**SOUTH BEND** – Wild buffalo, historic airplanes and several scenic state parks are all within a five-minute drive from the streets of South Bend.

The 104 residents of the northern Cass County community have the advantage of being close to many of Nebraska's top recreational attractions. Eugene T. Mahoney State Park had 791,865 visitors in 2017 and Louisville State Recreation Area and Platte River State Park both topped 500,000 visitors. Lee G. Simmons Conservation and Wildlife Safari Park (151,351) and Strategic Air Command and Aerospace Museum (141,049) both saw significant tourist numbers.

Louisville State Recreation Area and Platte River State Park are both located east of South Bend along Highway 66. Louisville SRA features hiking trails, views of the Platte River and five lakes.

Platte River State Park has dozens of acres of land for people to use for many activities. The park features glamping (glamorous camping) cabins and trails for hiking, horseback riding and mountain biking. Campgrounds, picnic areas and a swimming pool, shooting range, observation tower, paddleboat area, waterfall and baseball diamond are all at the park.

Eugene T. Mahoney State Park, Wildlife Safari and Strategic Air Command

and Aerospace Museum are all located west of South Bend along Highway 66.

Mahoney State Park includes an observation tower, fishing lakes, marina and craft center, water park, conservatory, butterfly garden, sledding hill, paddleboat area, tennis complex, theater, activity center, sand volleyball courts, disc golf course and picnic shelters. There are also many trails for hiking and horseback riding.

Wildlife Safari includes two miles of hiking trails and animals such as bison, elk, bears, wolves and pelicans. Many historical airplanes, lunar modules and other aviation items are located at the aerospace museum. The facility has hosted many dignitaries in the aerospace and aviation fields over the years.

Kimberly Creek Retreat is a new attraction located several miles west of South Bend near 310th Street. The property features more than 20 acres of land with hills, cliffs, hiking trails, creeks and picnic areas. It includes new glamping cabins, pods and geo-domes for visitors to stay in.

Quarry Oaks Golf Club is also situated several miles west of South Bend. It has been ranked as one of Nebraska's top golf courses. The 18-hole layout features several views of the Platte River Valley.

Natural resources found in the South

Bend area have made it a desirable place for people to live for many years. Native Americans inhabited the site for several centuries before Europeans moved into the region.

Henry Keyes built the first house at present-day South Bend in 1860. The community's first general merchandise store opened in 1872 and a post office, lumberyard, hotel and drug store arrived within four years. Commercial opportunities grew after a wagon bridge across the Platte River was completed in 1879.

South Bend residents built their first schoolhouse in 1874 and opened a second structure in 1881. J.M. Campbell served as principal and Anna Lykes was assistant principal when the new school opened its doors. The average attendance in 1881 was 100 students.

Enrollment began to drop in the 1950s and South Bend patrons voted to close the school district in March 1978. South Bend students attend classes at Louisville Public Schools today.

James G. Romine was one of the most prominent early residents of South Bend. He was a farmer before entering the fish hatchery business with both carp and salmon. His success in the area helped him become superintendent of the Nebraska State Fish Hatchery in the late 1800s.



# UNION



Renovation efforts in Union's village park include a new gazebo.

**Tim ROHWER**  
Journal Reporter

## UNION NOW

**UNION** – The village of Union may be small with a population of some 240 people, but it's big on pride.

It shows through the efforts of Union United, a non-profit organization, whose mission is to rebuild and revitalize the village by promoting community involvement and volunteerism.

Established in 2010, Union United encourages environmental awareness and accountability by facilitating a full-time, multi-stream recycling center for household waste, and through events such as a semi-annual community cleanup that includes recycling of used tires, electronics, and metal.

In partnership with Keep Cass County Beautiful and the Nebraska Department of Transportation, the group also sponsors a semi-annual litter cleanup along a two-mile stretch of Highway 34 outside of Union.

Union United's other ongoing projects include:

- Management of the town's feral cats, in which volunteers transport the cats to veterinary clinics for spay/neuter

surgery and vaccinations, as well as continuously providing food and shelter for the free-roaming cat population.

- Caboose restoration project. An historic Missouri Pacific caboose, No. 12124, stands at the west end of Union and serves as a reminder of the town's rich railroad history. Decades of vandalism and neglect have plagued the unique historic landmark. With guidance from the Missouri Pacific Historical Society, Union United has begun developing a multi-phase plan to undertake restoration of the caboose.

- Concession stand sales. Union United members oversee volunteer recruitment and operation of the concession stand during Union Dirt Devils home games, generating proceeds that support the baseball program and other improvement projects to the village park and baseball fields.

Indeed, that area, in particular, is an excellent example of the importance of Union United to the village, according to Keep Cass County Beautiful Executive Director Linda Behrns.

What was once a blighted floodplain is being

transformed into a welcoming and sustainable green space, Behrns said.

"It's a community gathering spot," she said.

Residents were aided last fall with a \$5,000 grant from a Keep America Beautiful/Lowe's Community Partners Grant program.

With the help of that money, Union United members spent nearly 30 hours on their own time building seats and railings in the park's gazebo, along with planting new flowers and installing improved trash and recycling containers.

"They've gone above and beyond to enhance that area," Behrns said. "This group is doing its best to revitalize Union and keep it going."

And, it isn't just a recent effort, either, she added.

"For the last two decades, they've been revitalizing the community," she said. "They love their community and are trying their best to make it a welcoming community."

Keep Cass County Beautiful has been awarded four of these national grants in the past six years providing \$40,000 to fund local community improvement projects, Behrns said. One of those, a \$5,000 grant, also went to Union to refurbish its baseball fields.

## UNION THEN

The railroad was responsible for the creation and growth of the village of Union.

And, grow it did – in a hurry.

In just a few short years after the arrival of the train, a small but bustling town arose from the grassy plains. Union was surveyed in the spring of 1887 at the time the Missouri Pacific Railroad was first surveyed from Nebraska City to Weeping Water. Union is located 10 miles north of Nebraska City and 16 miles south of Plattsmouth.

G.A. Rose, seeing that graders laid out a side track at this point, proceeded to build and start a business that same

year.

The railroad completed its side track, built a depot, and by November of 1888, two passenger trains ran each way every day, and one freight train each way every day, but Sunday.

A post office and a newspaper, the Union Ledger, were also established that same year.

In 1890, a branch of the Missouri Pacific Railroad was built from Union to Omaha for the purpose of making a shorter route from the south into Omaha. It proved to be a popular route, for by 1893, eight passenger trains passed through Union every day. By then, the village had been organized as a municipality by order of the Cass County Board of Commissioners. Rose was selected as chairman of the first village board.

Thriving businesses lined the dirt streets in the early days, including three general stores, a furniture and undertaking business, a drug store, a doctor's office, and, of course, a blacksmith.

What was known as the Old Settlers Picnic began in 1889 and became a big hit with parades, music and food. In 1899, the affair became a two-day celebration.

In May of 1889, a contract was let for the erection of a school to be located on a hill on the south side of town. In 1912, a fire destroyed the original school building, but a brick structure was completed the following year.

Students in town continued to graduate from Union until the district merged with Nebraska City Public Schools in 1956. Children today attend either Nebraska City or Conestoga Public Schools for classes.

According to local historian Ruth Stine, Union's centennial celebration was held in 1987 and great numbers of former residents came to enjoy it.



# WEEPING WATER

**Tim ROHWER**  
Journal Reporter

## WEEPING WATER NOW

**WEEPING WATER** – Weeping Water is a town of some 1,050 people, located in the central part of Cass County.

It's a community proud of its history and shows it in many ways.

Weeping Water is best known for its limestone quarry, and even calls itself the Limestone Capital of the World. In celebration of this, Weeping Water holds Limestone Days every year in late June featuring a grand parade, games, duck races, a fishing contest, food, music, magicians, crafts, book sales and fireworks.



Students take part in livestock shows at the Cass County Fair every summer. The Cass County Fairgrounds are located three miles north of Weeping Water. Thousands of people attend the Cass County Fair each year.

A few years back, townspeople began holding an annual Cemetery Walk in the fall in which local residents dress up as early community

residents and discuss their importance, while standing by their gravestones.

Another attraction is the Heritage House Museum

Complex that includes Native American artifacts and early Weeping Water memorabilia.

Weeping Water City Lakes provide the community and visitors a source of many outdoor activities. Campgrounds for both recreational vehicles and tents are available near one of the lakes.

The community recently got a boost in the local economy when a Dollar General store opened. This was important, according to city leaders, because previous grocery stores had closed causing residents to travel miles to purchase everyday items.

Please see **WEEPING WATER**, Page 38

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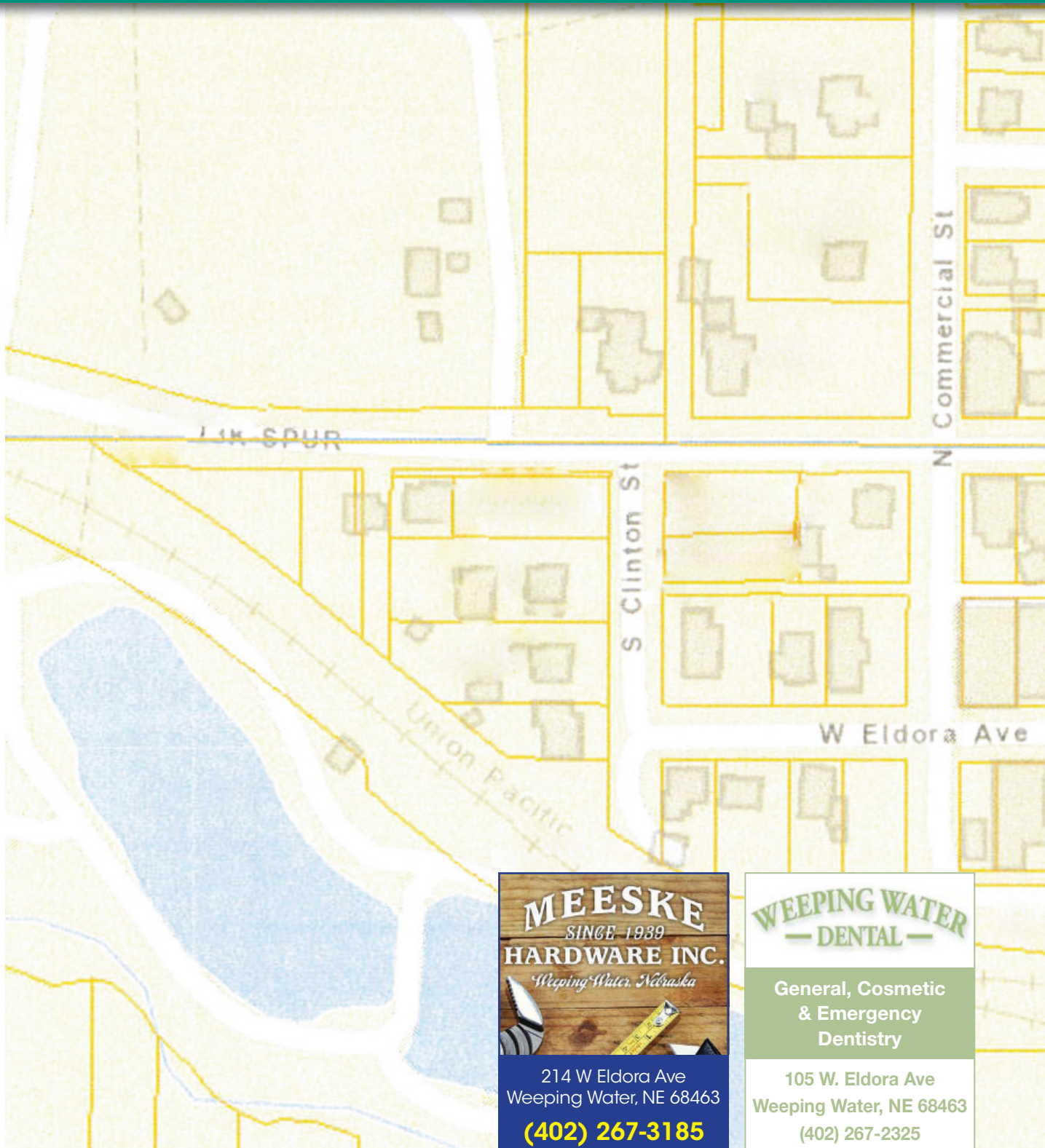
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# Weeping Water map



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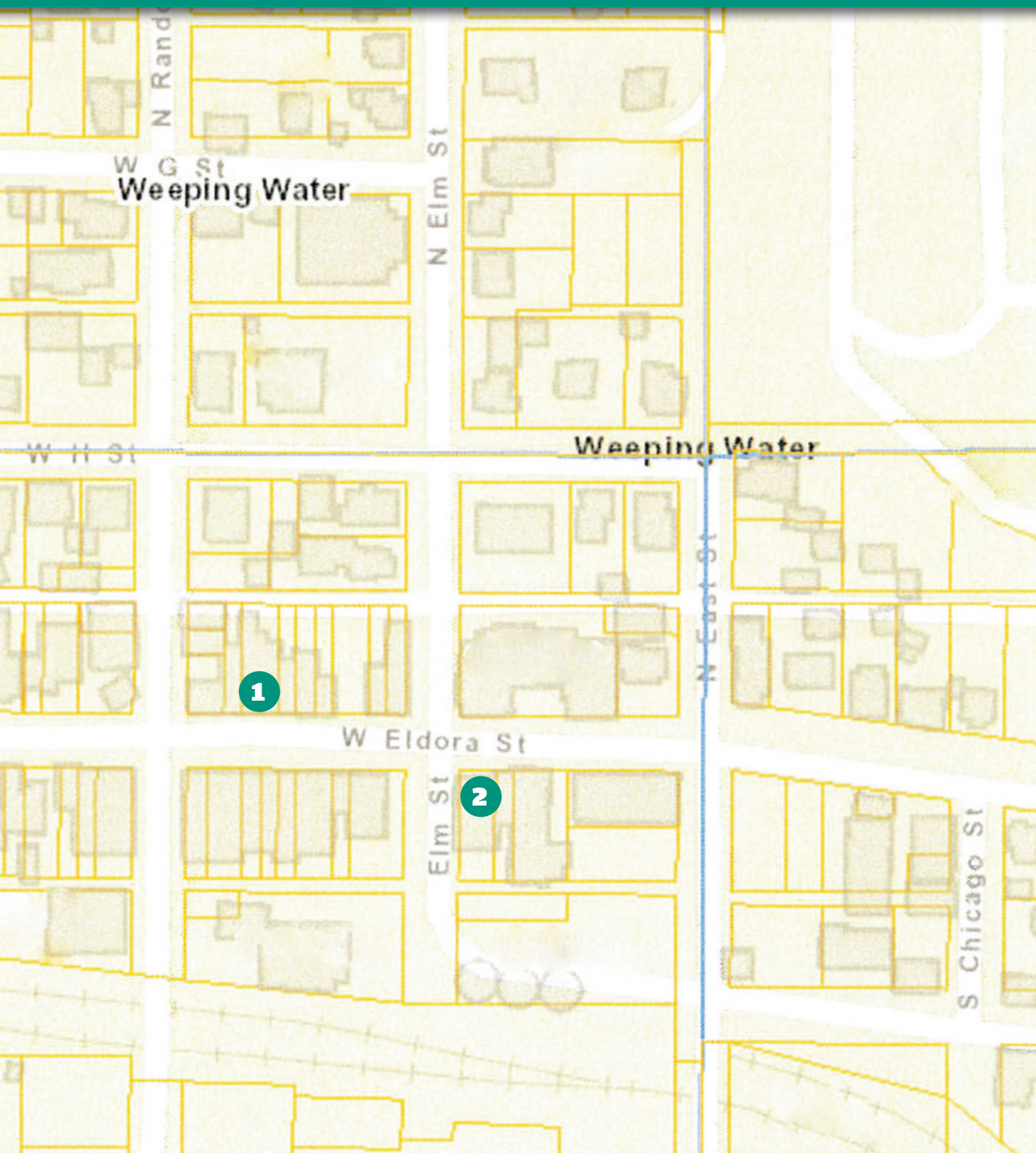
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Children enjoy participating in bicycle and tricycle races at Limestone Days in Weeping Water every summer. Community members host the celebration during the last weekend of June.

## Weeping Water

From 35

Tourists would certainly enjoy a visit to the nearby Slattery Vintage Estates. The business features an upscale restaurant, vineyard, seasonal bands and entertainment.

While the city is proud of what occurred in past centuries, local students attend 21st century schools in town after voters passed a bond issue in 2013 with upgrades completed two years later.

This bond went for an expanded vocational education department, new library facilities, additional elementary and secondary classrooms, along with new heating and cooling systems.

The town is also located only a few miles from the Cass County Fairgrounds, where one of the more popular fairs in Nebraska takes place yearly. Approximately 30,000 people visit the fair each year.

### WEeping WATER THEN

Perhaps the first question visitors to this central Cass County community inquire about concerns the origin of its unique name.

Were there actual water-

ways in the area that flowed with tears? Was it a misinterpretation by white settlers of a Native American word? Was there an armed battle that caused great grief?

According to the book, *The History of Cass County, Nebraska*, the town was named Nigahoe by a tribe of Native Americans, meaning rushing water. White men, however, called it Nihoage, meaning weeping water.

There is also a legend involving two Native American tribes that fought each other after one tribe stole the daughter of another tribe's chief, and ended three days later when all the braves lay dead. The tears cried by the families of the fallen warriors were said to have formed the "Weeping Waters."

In any case, the beginnings of the town can definitely be traced back to the mid-1850s when Elam Flower became the first settler. Then, in 1858, a post office was established with William Young the first postmaster.

The first school was taught during the summer



Heritage House Museum Complex includes a wide variety of artifacts. The complex includes a downtown museum on West Eldora Avenue and several historical buildings one block away.

of 1859 by Celestia Bellows at a salary of \$12 a month.

By the time the town was incorporated in 1870 there were 481 people in the area, according to a census. G.W. Norton became the town's first mayor in 1881.

One of the major commercial developments in the early years was the arrival of the Noble sewing machine factory that employed up to 200 workers.

However, the town's eventual claim to fame involved work in the nearby limestone quarries.

That part of the town's history can be traced back to when the first quarry operations started in the 1860s

when stoneworkers used hand tools in removing rock from a nearby exposed ledge. Limestone was then removed by use of picks, hammers and spall forks. The abundance of limestone became such an important part of the community's identity that a limestone festival was created in 1890.

Weeping Water is today known as the Limestone Center of the Nation.

Concerning the construction of churches, Weeping Water was the site of the first church built by Christian Scientists in the state of Nebraska in 1892.

Another place of worship, which celebrated its 150th an-





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**Weeping Water High School students perform in the annual Limestone Days parade each summer. WWHS students participate in many community and school activities throughout the year.**

niversary in the fall of 2018, was a Methodist Church founded in 1868, just 18 months or so after Nebraska became a state. The congregation was small and the place of worship was a little stone schoolhouse.

A new church was later completed.

Today, it's known as the Weeping Water United Methodist Church.

Like other area towns, Weeping Water began to grow with the arrival of the railroad, which in this case was 1882. Within a short period of time, the town had two banks, three furniture stores, two men's clothing stores and two hotels.

As far as entertainment for the residents, a band concert was held every Thursday evening throughout the summer months for many years, which brought out large crowds.

Weeping Water opened its first movie theater in 1913. In 1930, the town's City Council voted not to show movies anymore on Sundays. Two years later, it voted to strike out baseball games on Sundays, also.

The Civilian Conservation Corps Company 751, formed at Nebraska's Fort Crook in 1933, moved to Weeping Water three years later. The CCC was established to train un-

employed young men in various types of work so that they could support themselves and contribute to the support of their families during tough economic times.

During World War II, the CCC camp was the site of a POW camp.

The annual Cass County Fair, considered one of the more popular fairs in Nebraska, was once held within Weeping Water city limits before moving to its current location only about three miles to the north in 1967.

Interesting sidenotes:

In the 1960 film, *Inherit the Wind*, a fictionalized account of the 1925 Scopes "Monkey" trial, Weeping Water is referenced as the hometown of Matthew Harrison Brady, played by Fredric March, appearing for the prosecution.

In reality, William Jennings Bryan, who was from Nebraska, was the prosecuting attorney.

Another sidenote, Charles A. Ralston, a Cass County law officer assigned to Weeping Water, and who was gunned down as he was approaching two suspected bank robbers in 1908, was recently honored by having his name engraved on the National Law Enforcement Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C.



**People from across the state come to Weeping Water Lakes each year to enjoy fishing and other activities.**



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## Murray

From 20

boom. A doctor, whose office had been outside of town, opened a new one within Murray's borders. A hardware and implement business began, and a grain elevator was erected in 1890.

At one time, Murray had a hotel and twice through the years a drug store.

Concerning education, there were several locations early on where elementary school was taught.

In November of 1914, a new high school was dedicated, but in December of 1932, a fire destroyed the



**Conestoga High School's band program performs in Murray several times every year.**

structure, causing classes for the remainder of that school year to be taught elsewhere until a new structure was

completed in 1933.

Speaking of fires, residents were awakened one early June morning in 1927 to

a fire that was raging out of control in the business district. Businesses that were destroyed included a hardware store, a grocery store, the local post office building, a meat market and a soft drink parlor.

In more recent times, the Murray and the nearby Nehawka school districts combined to form the Conestoga school district in 1978.

Among notables who visited Murray in its early days included 1896 presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan who made a speech, and Charles Lindbergh who stopped in Murray for two days taking passengers in his plane for a view of the land.

## Nehawka

From 21

well-known for his work with his apple orchards. He experimented with multiple varieties of apples for 60 years. He also planted a large number of pine and cedar trees and was interested in how they helped shield his land from the wind.

Kirkpatrick was twice elected to the Nebraska Territorial Legislature in the 1850s. He represented Cass County as Speaker of the House in the State House of Representatives in 1864. He

was also a member of the Nebraska Constitutional Conventions of 1871 and 1875.

Sheldon was a member of the final Nebraska Territorial Legislature and the first Nebraska State Legislature. His son, George Lawson Sheldon, later served in the State Senate and became Nebraska governor in 1906. George Sheldon was the first person born in Nebraska to serve as governor.

Fellow Nehawka residents Fred Nutzman, Michael Kime and Ernest M. Pollard all served in the Nebraska

Legislature. Pollard also spent time in Washington, D.C., as a member of the United States House of Representatives. He was elected to two-year terms in Congress in both 1906 and 1908. Pollard later led the Nebraska Departments of Welfare and Labor and was one of the first organizers of the Nebraska Farmers Union.

Nehawka residents built the town's first school in 1872. They constructed a newer schoolhouse in 1893 for \$10,000. The district soon became known for both academics and athletics. Nehawka boys basketball players

competed in state tournaments in 1918, 1926, 1928 and 1938, and the school's six-man football team was featured in a November 1937 issue of the national *Life* magazine.

Athletics continue to play a key role today in Nehawka. The Elmwood-Murdock/Nehawka American Legion baseball program has brought many visitors to town over the past decade. Junior and Senior Legion teams play home games at Nehawka Ball Diamond. Volunteers have made many improvements to the field during this time.

## Louisville

From 15

Area introduced a new floating playground last year. The inflated playground features a climbing wall, slides and obstacle courses. It was part of a new venture parks initiative from the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission.

Another recreation hotspot in Louisville is

Ash Grove Ball Complex. Area residents completed the facility in 2018. It features three ball diamonds and a concession stand, press box, playground and large parking area.

The first bridge transporting people across the Platte River at Louisville was officially dedicated on Sept. 24, 1890. The oak-planked bridge cost \$9,000. Floodwaters washed portions

of the original bridge away in both 1903 and 1905, but residents regrouped after both incidents. They built a new toll bridge over the river in 1909.

Louisville gave the bridge to the State of Nebraska in 1926. A second toll bridge was constructed in 1930 and the current structure was completed in 1973. Thousands of vehicles use it to cross the river on a daily basis today.

## Union

From 34

That planning called for the formation of the group P.R.O.U.D. (Premature Rumors of Union's Demise) to make sure the town remained a viable entity.

Then, in 2010, Union United, a

non-profit organization was established to promote community involvement and volunteerism.

Sports, particularly baseball, has always been a tradition in Union with one of its native sons, Harry Smith, reaching the major league Chicago White Sox, albeit for one game in 1912.





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