



Sandhills Journey Scenic Byway Newsletter

November 2016

"World Class Natural Wonders"

DOCUMENT LINKS

[Nov 9 Mtg Agenda](#)

[October Finance](#)

[October Minutes](#)

Custer County Historical Society

The Custer County Historical Society has an awesome [new website!](#) Please check it out for Museum photos, a few Butcher Gallery Photos, family and research, and events on the calendar.

They also do an interesting newsletter with the latest issue [here](#). Please contact Tammy if you would like added to their email list!

**STILL TIME TO APPLY
TO BECOME THE
HOST SITE FOR THE
2017 SJSB ANNUAL
MEETING!**

"From the Ground Lookin' Up"

Summer sunshine, winter snow, warm fall days, cold chilly evenings! The Almighty is reminding us we live in Nebraska! But, Oh the Sunrises and Sunsets! Magnificent Nebraska! How "nice" is that!

I just got back from the Nebraska Tourism Conference in Gering. Nice job Tourism staff, of great speakers, camaraderie, networking, sponsor booths, and entertaining all of those attending. The speakers were very helpful for both organizations and small businesses; ideas and help with sponsorships, promotions, personnel relationships, and improving business sales. The "farm to table" supper experience at the Legacy Museum and old time music entertained us all. At the conference the Passport Program staff gave a great report of the 2016 event. I can personally agree, having CaLinda's Pot Shop as a new Passport Stop this year, to their reports of a fantastic program with more travelers and more sales than ever before. (Kudos to Amanda Barker, 2016 Passport Program coordinator.) They invite everyone to "tell their story" of their history or connection to Nebraska on their destination website. It's going to be an enlightening and powerful 2017 Passport program with Erin Wirth as the new coordinator. I can't wait! The rest of the staff also gets a "thumbs-up" for a fantastic job. Promotions were awesome! Quite a busy, productive, and fun, three-day conference and the city of Gering was a great host.

A big sigh of relief from the committee for Follow the Rails Art Trail, as we ended the big event with successful reports. We met on Wednesday to brain storm the dos and don'ts of 2016 event and discuss the future. All in all, though the travel numbers were less, host sites and artists



There is still time apply to become the host for this annual event. The date will be Saturday, Jan. 21, 2017.

We traditionally begin the annual meeting at mid-morning, followed by lunch. The workshops are held in the afternoon, followed by the banquet and entertainment or speaker. Sandhills Journey Scenic Byway will provide speakers for the workshops and table decorations.

If your community is interested in holding this event please see the [community letter](#) outlining room needs as well as the [bid sheet](#) to submit meal bids. Please return bid sheets to Linda Lacy, P. O. Box 22, Ashby, NE 69333 by the Nov 9th meeting!! The bids will be reviewed and a location decision made at that time.

ECLIPSE UPDATE 292 DAYS AND COUNTING.....

On August 21, 2017, millions of people across the United States will see nature's most wondrous spectacle - a total eclipse of the Sun. It is a scene of unimaginable beauty; the Moon completely blocks the Sun, daytime becomes a deep twilight, and the Sun's

were increased substantially, host sites reported good sales and the van travelers were wined and dined to their delight. A fun time was had by all. A big thank you to Charity, Terri, Twila, Bill, and all who helped make the FRAT a success. Evaluations and thank yous were sent out to host sites and sponsors. Lots of great ideas were thrown in the hat for 2017 so, we hit the trail again!

SJSB has received approval of a booth at the SpaceCoast Birding Festival in Florida in January. This will be a new experience for us, but we feel we need to "spread our wings" (excuse the pun) to promote our beautiful Byway and invite the greater USA to experience our wonderful Sandhills and the nature we have to offer. After all, Nebraska IS "nice" and we want to share it!

We are still open to bids for our annual conference in January. Anyone interested please contact me asap. We will choose the location and details at the next SJSJB meeting in Dunning on the 9th. Be sure to attend.

Our website and fb page are still in the process of getting facelifts. We are a participant of the UNK Capstone project to educate us "baby boomers" to new and better social skills and media. Boy do these millennial students have a challenge! So, as part of the additions to our website, we ask each member or VB to contact Twila or myself with current news and events for a community calendar to be posted. Help us will you? We need your input...and pics too!

The Race is on!! Coming soon is our 10th annual Polar Bear Tank Race! I heard it's going to be bigger than ever, so get your team pulled together.

2017 events - Big-Big! Celebrating Nebraska's 150th birthday, Agri-Eco Conference on the Byway in Bow!, and the Solar Eclipse in August 2017! Wow! Such excitement in Nebraska! NICE! And all on our SJSB...even nicer!

From the Ground lookin' up!
Linda

Stuhr Museum Received the 2016 "Outstanding Tourism Attraction" Award

The Nebraska Tourism Commission named Stuhr Museum the state's "Outstanding Tourism Attraction" on Thursday afternoon during the Nebraska Travel Conference in Gering.

This award is given to "Nebraska tourism attractions that have worked toward the continued success and growth of their communities and the state's tourism industries,"

corona shimmers in the darkened sky. The Sandhills Journey Scenic Byway is a great place to plan your eclipse viewing!

WHERE WILL YOU BE?

Great [website](#) for everything eclipse!

SHARE WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR COMMUNITY!!

The Sandhills Journey Scenic Byway would like to hear what events and activities you have happening in your local community. Please visit the SJSB website and share your events on our events page. Once that entry has been reviewed it will be entered on the SJSB website events page so that everyone will be better able to plan their visit!

according to the commission.

The commission's press release announcing the award said: "For almost half a century, the Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer has served as the cultural hub of the Grand Island community, as well as Central Nebraska. In 2015, the community celebrated the reopening of the main building after an 18-month, \$7.4 million renovation. Dubbed the Gem of the Prairie, the Stuhr Building is the visual anchor of the museum's 207 acre living history experience and is an attraction in itself.

...Continue with entire article [here](#)

FOLLOW THE RAILS ART TOUR COMPLETED A SUCCESSFUL SIXTH YEAR -by Terri Licking

The late Charles Kuralt called Nebraska's Highway 2 "one of America's 10 most beautiful highways" exclaiming, "This road will take you to one of the last unexplored frontiers where vast treasures can be discovered." For the last six years, volunteers along 272 miles of Nebraska Highway 2, what is known as the Sandhills Journey Scenic Byway (SJSB) between Grand Island and Alliance have encouraged visitors to enjoy the vast treasures of art inside and out during their 'Follow the Rails Art Trail tour.' This self-guided tour, always in October showcases the myriad of artistic mediums from the residents and guests as well as the fantastic fall foliage along the way.

"This year we had 14 communities that hosted 36 sites dedicated to the arts from the usual paintings, pottery, woodworking, photography to the unusual - floral, culinary including wines, beers and honey to the musical talents of locals," stated SJSB president Linda Lacy, Ashby. The communities this year from east to west included Grand Island, Cairo, Ravenna, Mason City, Ansley, Broken Bow, Merna, Anselmo, Thedford, Mullen, Hyannis, Ashby, Antioch and Alliance. Lacy went on to exclaim the appreciation to the various sponsors that helped make this Follow the Rails Art Trail or FRAT as it is lovingly referred to by the byway volunteers, the best yet. "Radio stations KAAQ/KCOW from Alliance and KBEAR 92.3 in Broken Bow did fantastic jobs of getting our ads out. I and others did live interviews on their stations as well as NPR, Nebraska Public Radio. KCOW did live remote at the opening reception at the Knight Museum in Alliance. KBEAR sponsored the first ever 'Bow Arts in the Square' in Broken Bow which had five vendors for its first time. Gaylean Millsap of Broken Bow was the coordinator and should be commended for her effort. Charity Adams, Cairo, also should be recognized as she did the social media

posts, FRAT brochures, website and put together our guide book."

Other sponsors included the Nebraska Arts Council, Custer Co. Tourism and Custer Co. Foundation, Hooker County Tourism Board, Thedford Area Community Foundation Fund, Consolidated Communications, PREMA (Panhandle Rural Electric). Alliance supported with outstanding sponsorship from Gregory's Insurance, Posh Family Consignment Store, Special Stiches and Studio A, Hoffhaus Garden, Alliance Visitor's Bureau, Carnegie Art Center, Box Butte Visitor's Bureau, Rock, Paper, Scissors Hair Salon, Sandhills State Bank and Alliance Chamber of Commerce. Hyannis sponsors included That Stop, Whisperin Angel Inn and Hyannis Hotel. Sandhills Oil from Hyannis, Thedford and Valentine also sponsored as did Ashby Lumber and Flowers and Lacy's own, CaLinda's Pot Shop and Art Gallery.

For the first time ever, opening receptions at Stuhr Museum in Grand Island and the Knight Museum and Sandhills Center in Alliance kicked off FRAT Thursday evening before its three official days of October 14 to 16. The Hyannis School again ran a one day bus from Hyannis to Alliance and back on the 15th. Also for the first time, a van load of five paid for the chance to take the tour and leave the driving to Bill Burdett of Cairo. Burdett does 'Horizons without Borders', offering amazing agri adventure tours for a van or bus load. "FRAT may not be my usual tour offering, but we had a great time and saw a lot of amazing art. I made five new friends as did the byway. The van riders were also the official judges for the student organizations that did bale art during FRAT. Lodging and meals were all inclusive in the cost and all five would recommend doing this art tour again, some want to come next year in their own vehicles. We made it to all 36 sites which was a little rushed, but we didn't want to miss anything."

The next major event for the SJSB will be the Polar Bear Tank Race at Mullen the first weekend of March 2017. Go to www.sandhillsjourney.com for more details on that. For full pictorial recap of this year's FRAT, go to the Follow the Rails or the Sandhills Journey Scenic Byway Facebook pages.