

Connections

WINNER OF THE NATIONAL
PUBLIC HEALTH INFORMATION
COALITION'S GOLD AWARD

Bringing Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services employees closer together

July 2010
VOLUME 10, ISSUE 6



The Road Best Not Taken: A road near Rulo, Nebraska, is washed out by rising waters during recent flooding. More inside. *Photo: Rosemary Niemeier*

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DHHS now on and

You can follow DHHS at <http://twitter.com/NebraskaDHHS>

DHHS in the News Update. . .

Here are a few headlines of news releases recently issued by Communications & Legislative Services about DHHS programs. You can read and subscribe to all DHHS news releases from the DHHS [Newsroom](#). You can also listen to [sound bites](#) issued with releases.

[Health and Human Services Receives Performance Bonus for Excellence in SNAP Program](#) June 29, 2010

[First National Physical Activity Plan Impacts Nebraskans](#) June 22, 2010

[Over 800 People On Developmental Disabilities Wait List Get Services](#) June 9, 2010

Go to [DHHS In The News](#) on the Employee Home Page for links to *Omaha World-Herald* and *Lincoln Journal Star* articles involving DHHS programs and services.

Have a story idea you think DHHS should be sharing with media? Contact Communications & Legislative Services at (402) 471-9108!

make the connection . . .

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DHHS postings earn praise on



&



Communications & Legislative Services posts Twitter and Facebook entries on behalf of DHHS and recently received some encouraging words.

From a representative of a health company in New Hampshire that specializes in social media strategies for hospitals:

Excellent use of Twitter to get the word out on the flooding!

From a resident of Burwell, Nebraska:

Thanks for the consistent updates! Who would have thought Facebook would be the main form of information for those of us flooded?



**Nebraska Department of Health
and Human Services**

The Good Life:

A reminder of what we all share and hope to provide to our fellow Nebraskans



Kerry Winterer

Photo: Bill Wiley

By Kerry T. Winterer, CEO

Thank you.

With your help and determination and with everyone working toward a common goal, the Department met our required budget reductions for the fiscal year that ended on June 30. I understand how difficult this was across the agency and I appreciate

everyone's ideas and the belt-tightening that got us to this point.

If you recall, our required budget reductions were 5% across the board last fiscal year with another 2% in the year just started (except for the operations of our 24-hour facilities).

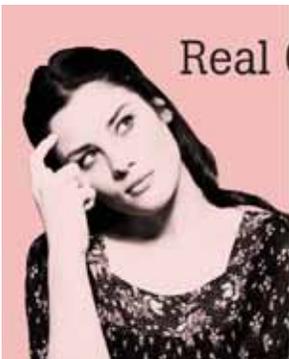
I want to acknowledge that in addition to these reductions you're also giving personally, through the salary freeze for Rules-covered employees and furlough days for Contract-covered employees.

"These decisions are never easy"

The Department met our goal by identifying both agency-wide and division-specific reductions. For example, through the review of vacant positions, the agency eliminated 26.5 full time positions during the last fiscal year, meaning that work has been discontinued, restructured or taken on by someone else.

The activities that resulted in our reductions will continue through the coming year so that we can capture the ongoing savings plus the required reductions for the coming year.

We're in the process of developing the furlough plan for DHHS and will submit it to the Department of Administrative Services for approval. A challenge for us is to implement furloughs while at the same time fulfilling our responsibilities to our customers and to provide for the real human needs of our clients. I want to thank you for your contributions this past year, for your continuing efforts, and for your understanding in this difficult time.



Real Questions, Real Concerns, Real People
We want to help!
Call the DHHS Helpline
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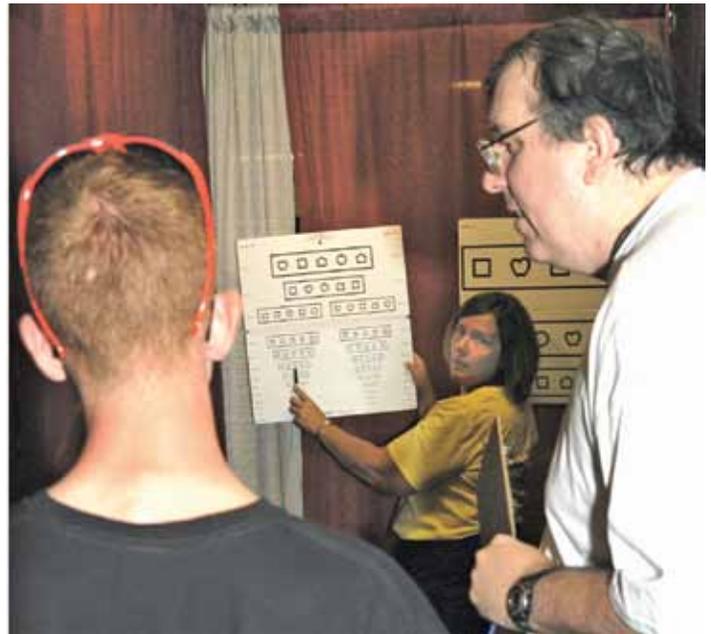
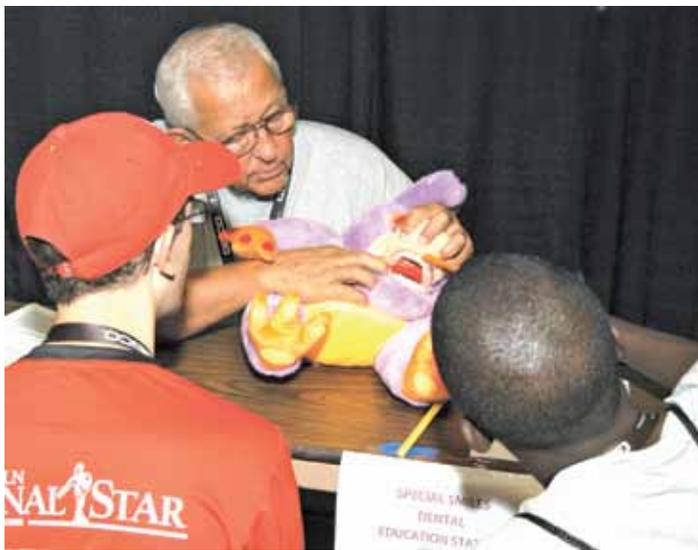


10-08

Division of Public Health promotes good health during Special Olympics

Several years ago, it came to the attention of Special Olympics officials that many of the athletes had unmet medical and dental needs. The result was a health fair at each Special Olympics that offers vision, dental, podiatric and fitness evaluations. Athletes receive bone density tests, weight, height and blood pressure measurements, as well as information on sun safety and tobacco cessation.

“Oral hygiene exams turned up cavities, instances of oral disease and a case of oral cancer in an early stage,” says **Dan Cillesen**, administrator of the DHHS Health Promotion Unit that supported health stations at Pershing Auditorium in Lincoln. “Bone density tests also revealed a case of severe osteoporosis, and eye exams provided participants who couldn’t see well a pair of prescription glasses. These examples clearly show the benefit of this entire endeavor.”



The lower level of Pershing Auditorium was the scene for health activities staffed by volunteer specialists from across the nation.

(Top right) **Vanessa Tenderup**, a volunteer from Tekamah, Nebraska, helps a Special Olympic participant learn more about eating the right foods.

(Bottom left) A volunteer instructs participants in proper dental hygiene, while (Bottom right) other volunteers test distance vision.

More than 8,500 volunteers from around the nation, including physicians, dentists and opticians, gave their time to staff the health stations and enhance the health of Special Olympic athletes. *Photos: Jerry Crisp*

Agencies provide combined response to recent flooding

By Mike Wight

The rivers in our state are excellent sources of water for drinking and irrigation and for recreation—that is, until they start overflowing their banks. At that point they become the source of a major public disaster.

If you were watching the live streaming video of a news conference on the flooding emergency last June you would have seen a who's who of state agencies with emergency responsibilities. No less than nine state agencies had a representative at the conference to answer media questions.

The June flooding affected 60 counties around the state with the hardest hit areas around Norfolk on the Elkhorn River in the northeast, Cass County in the east and Rulo in the southeast.

The agencies, including [DHHS](#), have expertise and statutory responsibility needed in most state emergencies. The Department of Environmental Quality, for example, is responsible for sewage treatment and, as you can guess, sewage can be a big problem during massive flooding. The same is true of closed roads – Department of Roads; managing state emergencies – Nebraska Emergency Management Agency; fire hazards – State Fire Marshal and others.

What some might not know is this is standard practice for state emergencies and is planned and exercised on a regular basis.

Separate local, state and federal agencies, along with many non-profit agencies, join together under a National Incident Management System to provide organized help to Nebraskans during natural disasters and, if it was to happen in Nebraska, a terrorist event.

Nebraska's state agencies exist to help Nebraskans and this is never more noticeable than during state emergencies.



(Above) Sign welcoming visitors to King Lake west of Omaha could be taken more literally during recent flooding. *Photo: Randy Fischer* (Below) Traffic flows on a Neligh road thanks to workers who hold back rising water that threatens a washout. *Photographer unknown*



[Coverage continued on next page]

Behavioral Health component helps people cope with flood's aftermath

By Jeanne Atkinson

Five preliminary damage assessment teams went to 60 counties the week of June 21st to gather information on the magnitude of damage to homes, property, businesses and public infrastructure.

These employees supported the teams, assessed the behavioral health needs of people impacted by severe storms and floods and provided “psychological first aid” to people they came in contact with along the way.

Psychological First Aid focuses on reducing the initial distress caused by traumatic events. It offers practical assistance and information to help people cope effectively with the psychological impact of disasters, helps people articulate immediate needs and concerns, supports positive coping and acknowledges coping efforts and strengths. People impacted by the disaster are connected as soon as possible to social support networks, including family members, friends, neighbors, and community helping resources.

“I want to thank these employees so much for using their professional skills to help people in need in our state,” said **Scot Adams**, director of the [Division of Behavioral Health](#).



The Behavioral Health Disaster Team: (above from left to right), DHHS employees **Jennifer Cimpl-Bohn**, **Patricia Wickwire** and **Jodi de la Concha**; **Janet Donovan** (Corrections), **Amanda Longwell** (DHHS) and **Dave Atkinson** (Corrections). Five Division of Public Health employees also volunteered for preliminary damage assessment teams: **Randy Fischer**, **Steve Schlife** and **Julia Schmidt** from Environmental Health, **Judy Anderson** from Health Promotion, and **Cyndi Smith** from Community Health Planning & Protection. Photo: Jeanne Atkinson

Flooding ultimately a story of victims and heroes

Recent flooding that ravaged Nebraska called for a broad response involved many state agencies and community groups but finally comes down to individuals coming to the aid of their fellow citizens. One of countless individuals was **Tom Blacketer**, Facility Maintenance Supervisor at the Eastern Nebraska Veterans' Home (ENVH) at Bellevue.

Always honored to serve the American heroes who call ENVH their home, the facility recently recognized Blacketer for being “a hero of his community.” He evacuated many of his King Lake neighbors with his airboat when the area was reeling under overflow from the Elkhorn River.

The first two days Tom and his son **Brandon** worked non-stop from 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. shuttling residents to safety, Humane Society workers to rescue pets and food, water and medicine to those who chose to stick out the flood in their homes.

“The worst thing from this disaster is to now watch my neighbors try to regroup and get their houses back to code with the fear of losing their belongings and house,” Blacketer says. “The best thing to come out of this disaster was to be able to lend a helping hand to my neighbors.”

Only one of many DHHS employees who aided members of their own communities during recent floods, Tom Blacketer offers an example of the impulse to serve others, both on and off the job.



Tom Blacketer at the helm of his airboat and inset close-up Photo courtesy of KETV.

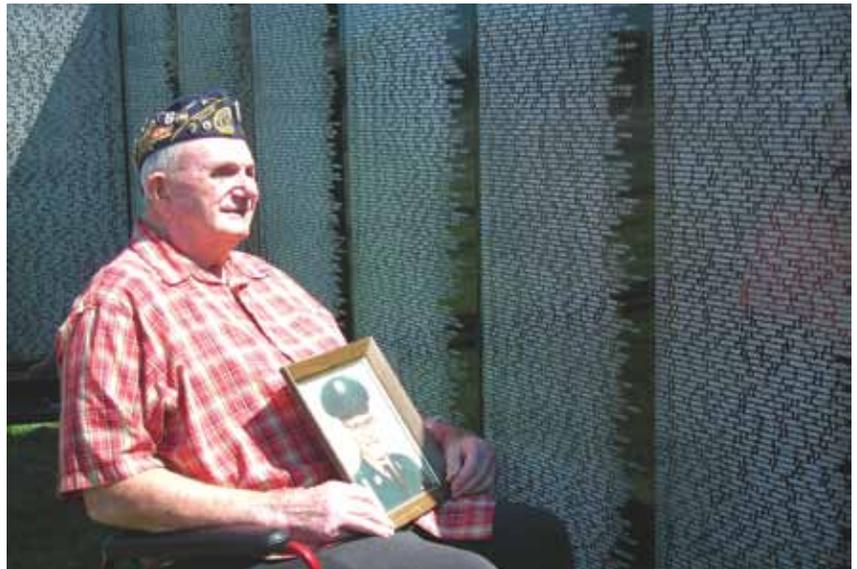
Celebrating freedom & remembering sacrifices that safeguard it in Grand Island

The giant Ch-47 “Chinook” helicopter coming in for a landing just west of the Grand Island Veterans’ Home (GIVH) looks smaller than it is until it lands, giving a more accurate perspective on its real size.

The purpose of the Nebraska National Guard flight was to be on display along with the Vietnam Memorial Traveling Wall over the July Fourth holiday. GIVH vets and the public, numbering around 7,000, not only enjoyed the landing and inspect the aircraft but watched construction volunteers assemble the Wall.



(Right) Among those viewing the assembled tribute to those who made the ultimate sacrifice during the Vietnam War was GIVH member **Virgil Burney**, a Gold Star Father whose son was killed in action during the battle at Hamburger Hill. Virgil served as a Sergeant from 1943 to 1945 in the Pacific Theatre in WWII. *Photos: Nancy Klimek*



More BSDC individuals working in communities

By Jerry Crisp

Individuals living at the [Beatrice State Developmental Center](#) (BSDC) are now employed in surrounding communities more than ever before. More than 33 people now hold jobs that range from working at manufacturing plants, car dealerships and delivering newspapers and Avon booklets to working in enclaves or their own entrepreneurship ranging from lawn care to selling their own greeting cards or calendars.

“The wonderful businesses and community of Beatrice have embraced our employment services,” says **Nancy Sedlacek**, BSDC Vocational Services Coordinator. “I believe employers are now realizing what an untapped resource BSDC has to offer.”

Jenny Rosecrans works at the Department of Roads in Lincoln. Her work includes sweeping and mopping tile floors in three offices, a large break room, three bathrooms and hallways. She also dusts, takes out trash, restocks supplies and vacuums the front entryway and receptionist station.

“I really love my job,” says Jenny. “I love to clean and to help people out. I also love working with my friends, and it’s really good money for doing the job, too.”

In addition to washing dishes at the “Back Alley Eatery” in downtown Beatrice, **Robbie Shepard** keeps supplies stocked and does other tasks to help his co-workers.

“Robbie caught on fast and is doing a fine job,” says owner **Kathy Diekman**. “When we deep-cleaned the grill grates, Robbie dug right in to help, and that’s a tough job. He’s even asked for more hours, and I’m glad he likes his job enough to want to do more.”

Job opportunities don’t just happen, of course, but are the result of ongoing efforts of a community of BSDC job developers that includes **Ernie Drent, Karen Engelman, Brenda Guenther, Becky Jones, Rod Koch, Ron Leitschuck** and **Dan Sikyta**.

“We try to get into each and every business in Beatrice and outreach into surrounding communities as well,” says Karen Engelman. “We visit with owners and managers to find out as much as we can about their business needs and ask how we might be able to help. Building an ongoing relationship of trust is a key to success.”

“Area employers recognize that we have valuable people with valuable skills to enhance their businesses,” says Nancy Sedlacek. “I am excited that individuals are seeing their dreams come true and that possibilities for meaningful employment are virtually endless.”

According to CEO **Dan Howell**, “Community employment is a great step in creating the most inclusive environment for persons supported at BSDC. As our facility continues to become a service and not a place, my hope is that we continue to partner with local businesses for employment opportunities.”



REACHING FOR THE HEIGHTS: Jenny Rosecrans dusts at the Department of Roads in Lincoln. Photo Kory Krzycki



Robbie Shepard washes dishes at the Back Alley Eatery in Beatrice. Photo Nancy Sedlacek

BSDC car club hits on all cylinders

By Jerry Crisp

Formed in 2009, the Car Club at the [Beatrice State Developmental Center](#) (BSDC) boasts 22 members, who share a fondness for vehicles large or small, old or new. They enjoy visiting downtown dealerships to look at new cars and trucks and also attend car shows in Beatrice and Lincoln to admire older models.

According to car club leader **Mike Hitchcock** of the Recreation Department, the Car Club offers opportunities for members to meet with car owners and talk about cars and their history. As a result, they learn various features of each model including engine specs, style changes and transmission types.

“These opportunities are great learning experiences for Car Club members and also offer enjoyable social interactions,” says Hitchcock. “Members enjoy all types of cars, but they especially like hot rods, Dodge Chargers, Ford Mustangs and Chevy Corvettes.”

“Mike Hitchcock took on the Car Club this year and has worked hard to research many car shows throughout the area,” says BSDC Recreation Director **Julie Belding**. “On top of that, he maintains a high level of enthusiasm and fun for the benefit of members.”



SOMETHING OLD, SOMETHING NEW AND RED, WHITE AND BLUE: (Above) Car Club member **Chris Vasko** admires newer models like the Mustang GT and Corvette, while **John Nichols** (right) prefers an antique 1930 Ford. Photos: Mike Hitchcock



“**Respect your elders, Lightning McQueen,**” this 1942 Chevrolet seems to proudly proclaim.



Front Liners

There are thousands of stories to be told about DHHS employees who deliver direct customer services that *help people live better lives*. This is only one of them.

By Jerry Crisp

With DHHS for nearly a decade, **Scott Rasmussen** has spent most of those years as Human Resources (HR) Manager at the [Lincoln Regional Center](#) (LRC). Overseeing the HR function for about 500 employees at both LRC and the Whitehall campus serving adolescents, his office's duties include recruitment, payroll, benefits, workers compensation, medical leave, as well as providing interpretation of labor contract policies and procedures for LRC supervisors and managers.

"I couldn't do it without the help of five very talented staff members," says Rasmussen.

The LRC leadership team, of which Rasmussen is a member, meets weekly for three hours in order to provide the facility with direction.

"It's always interesting to know about the incredible array of HR actions needed to help patients live better lives," Rasmussen says. "My primary contribution is protecting the right of good staff to work side by side with other good staff. This involves a constant focus on employee relations, facility compliance with employment standards, and assisting in applying rules and regulations to unique situations."

The major challenge Rasmussen faces in doing his work is the ongoing effort on behalf of many to recruit the best and most qualified staff members.

"Not an easy task but necessary to serve our unique patient population appropriately," he says.

In doing his work, Rasmussen continues to be struck by the high quality of professionalism and the dedicated direct care staff he believes provide top-notch services to about 250 LRC patients.

"I'm always impressed by the day to day work of the employees and the care they provide to the patients," says Rasmussen. "Their patience, persistence and skill are simply amazing."

Rasmussen is most proud of the facility's ability to deal successfully with major changes over the past few years.

"When CEO **Bill Gibson** came on board, he melded separate services so that patients could be served in a more consistent, efficient and effective way, and as a result, LRC is now a more unified hospital," Rasmussen explains. "Through his direction, LRC implemented the roles of compliance specialist, security officer and team leader to ensure the best care possible for patients while ensuring employee safety at the same time."

Rasmussen's contribution has been to ensure that HR efforts support Gibson's vision.

"I'm impressed by how much Bill Gibson appreciates the HR function and sees it as a strategic part of the facility's operation," Rasmussen says.

"I always feel strong support in my work."

The feeling is mutual.

"I need someone in HR who gives me straight answers and good advice in a timely manner," says Gibson, "and Scott delivers all those qualities and supports the rest of the team."

According to Human Resource Administrator **Mary Shanahan**, "Scott is a tremendous asset to DHHS, LRC and the HRD team. It's been a pleasure over the past ten years to watch him grow into an outstanding professional who sees immediate needs but is always looking toward the future."

Rasmussen recalls receiving a postcard from an employee he hired, thanking him for giving the employee "a wonderful opportunity."

"He said it was the best thing that ever happened to him," Rasmussen reports, "and getting cards like that is very rewarding."

The best part of Rasmussen's work is seeing how positive most of the recent changes have proven to be.

"I'm excited to be part of an organization that continues to evolve in order to meet new challenges," he says. "I'm also proud to see how front line staff strive daily to empower patients to manage their challenges," he says. "That, of course, is the real bottom line and ultimate reward for all of us."

Everything Scott Rasmussen and other HR professionals throughout DHHS do is intended to achieve that bottom line. We are all rewarded in knowing they are working hard in a common effort to further the mission of helping people live better lives.



Scott Rasmussen Photo: Jerry Crisp

Standing on the job

By Jerry Crisp

If a stand-up kind of guy is one you can count on, then **Brian Coyle**—a Community Health Educator with the Nutrition & Activities for Health, Prevention Works Program within the Division of Public Health—might be the poster boy for stand-up guys everywhere. That’s because he literally stands up on the job throughout most of every work day.

“I’ve been standing maybe six out of eight hours a day for three years,” Brian says. “Of course, I do sit down when exhausted, attending meetings, writing a grant and the like.”

Previously a personal trainer in a gym where he was on his feet all day long, Brian later interned at the Iowa Department of Public Health, where a couple of co-workers who stood on their jobs got him to thinking about continuing this custom. While some might think standing on the job a bit odd, that initial reaction is often replaced with more respect when they learn why he does it.

“One reason I stand is because I don’t experience the neck and back aches that those who sit all day often do, and I just feel more comfortable,” Brian explains. “Another reason is that one burns more calories standing than sitting, and that helps me stay fit.”

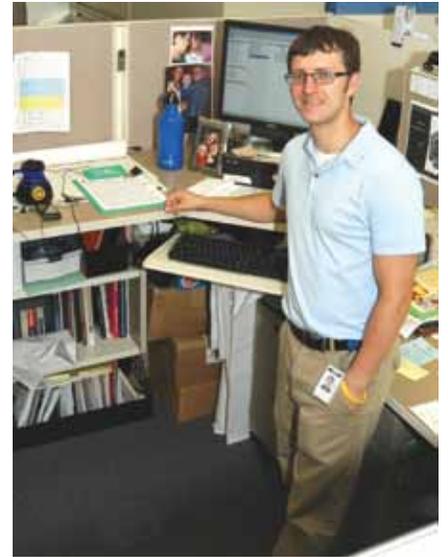
A higher desktop also affords Brian much more storage space than one at regular height.

Bruce Rowe, Brian’s supervisor, offers an alternative explanation for Brian’s standing on the job.

“When Brian told his Nutrition & Activity for Health team members that he wanted to stand out in his area of work, we thought he said he wanted to stand up in his work area so we had his work station raised.”

“But seriously,” Rowe added, “seeing Brian standing while doing his work might be somewhat out of the ordinary, but it makes good sense. When standing, much of your weight bearing is through the hips, knees and ankles, as opposed to having the weight bearing through the pelvis and spine when sitting. Good posture is important for those who sit to help reduce pressure being placed on your back.”

Brian would be the first to say that other people don’t need to stand throughout a work day but still feels they just might feel better and even be a tad healthier if they did.



Brian Coyle stands at a higher than normal desktop most of every workday to enhance personal comfort and physical activity.
Photo: Jerry Crisp

August Observance: National Immunization Awareness Month

August is National Immunization Awareness Month. The goal of the observance is to increase awareness about the importance of immunizations across the lifespan, from babies to the elderly.

Immunization is one of the most significant public health achievements of the 20th century. Vaccines have eradicated smallpox and significantly reduced the number of cases of measles, mumps, tetanus and other diseases.

Make sure your kids are up to date on their shots and check with your doctor to see if there are any vaccines you should receive, like a tetanus booster (every 10 years) with a whooping cough component, shingles, an annual flu shot, and for individuals over 60, a pneumonia vaccine.



In their own words

Letters to DHHS employees who are *helping people live better lives*

Dear **Todd Reckling** (Director, [Division of Children & Family Services](#), Lincoln):

I am writing to share with you an experience I have had with an employee of yours. Her name is **Judy Regelin** (Social Service Worker, DHHS Holdrege office).

I and a friend have been appointed by the courts as a guardian for an incapacitated adult. Both of us are new to the systems in Nebraska. We received notification that there was going to be a meeting to help determine if our ward was eligible for Medicaid, so we and his spouse went to the meeting. I had nightmares about what this was going to be like, since I wasn't really sure what my role was supposed to be.

We met Judy in the office. The wife of my ward was very nervous and disoriented. Judy was extremely patient and helpful, helping her to understand not only the question but the reason behind the question. I'm pretty sure she gave up her lunch hour to help us out in this process. She was highly professional, very personable, very friendly, very efficient and focused.

Then I learned from another source that she was doing this as a courtesy for another county.

I'm sure you hear a lot of things about how things could be done differently and how people are frustrated with the system. I wanted you to hear first-hand that there are parts of the system that are working perfectly and doing a wonderful job to provide care for the people of Nebraska—especially those who are more vulnerable. Part of that outstanding job is being done by people like Judy Regelin. She is an incredibly valuable asset to your Department.

Rev. Darren T. Stroh

Dear **Kim Seelmeyer** (Children & Family Services Specialist Supervisor, DHHS North Platte office):

We wanted to tell you how much we appreciated the help we received from **Megan Harwager** (Children & Family Services Specialist, DHHS North Platte office) over the past year. We can honestly say we have a lot to be thankful for. We wouldn't have been able to say that if it had not been for Megan. She was always there to steer us in the right direction where our son was concerned. There were several times we would have agreed to have him come home before he was ready had it not been for her, and as I'm sure you know, that would have led to a much longer process for all of us.

Megan truly listened to us when we had concerns about our son and always had a solution to our problems. She is very knowledgeable and was always willing to go above and beyond to make sure our concerns were addressed and our son was receiving the right care. Nobody can ever really know all the things parents go through during these times, and we were so fortunate to have Megan there to help us.

Please be sure she receives the recognition she deserves for being a truly wonderful, caring person. It's obvious she really loves her job and wants to make a difference. She certainly made a difference in our relationship with our son, as well as our son's future.

The Parents of a Service Recipient

Dear **Todd Reckling** (Director, [Division of Children & Family Services](#)) and Yolanda Nuncio (Administrator, Central Service Area):

It's always great for staff to hear when they are doing well, so I just wanted you to know that today we received a commendation with regard to one of your workers. The mother of a service recipient wanted to let us know that **Jeremy Chizek** (Children & Family Services Specialist, DHHS Kearney office) is great to work with.!

Mary Furnas
Program Coordinator
Foster Care Review Board
Lincoln, NE

In their own words

Letters to DHHS employees who are *helping people live better lives*

Dear **Connie Miller** (Children & Family Services Specialist, DHHS Seward office):

It was great to finally meet you in person and thank you for all you've done over these many years in helping our daughter and sister and her children. We always felt good knowing things were in your hands. It was a blessing to know that you were in charge. So we say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

We thank God for you were there those many times to show your loving care for our family members. You have our deepest gratitude.

Relatives of a service recipient

To administrative officers of the [Eastern Nebraska Veterans' Home](#) (ENVH), Bellevue:

The wife of one of our ENVH members called to compliment the Home and staff. She said not only do all of the staff here know their jobs but they go out of their way to be helpful and pleasant. She said she could recommend this Home to anyone with nothing but high praise.

She did a comparison between her husband's previous placement and ENVH, and we came out a thousand times better. She said she is grateful to everyone here for the care that her husband receives.

Verna Evans

ENVH Business Manager

Dear **Jodi Minardi** (Social Service Worker, DHHS Intake Center, Omaha):

I'm sending this to thank you for being an awesome case worker! You're greatly appreciated for your hard, yet dependable work.

I'm praying your supervisors know what a great job you do! Take care and keep up the good work.

A Satisfied Customer

Dear **Diane Hansmeyer** (Administrator, Office of Rehabilitation & Community Services Licensure Unit, [Division of Public Health](#)):

I wanted to send you our deepest praise on one of your licensing processors, **Sue Kopera-Crumb** (Health Licensing Specialist, State Office Building, Lincoln). Yesterday we were in urgent need to have one of our travelers licensed in order for her to begin an assignment the next day. Sue went above and beyond the call of duty to be there to support us in a desperate time.

Her professionalism was amazing, and I wanted to make sure it was commended and brought to your attention. We are very appreciative of your services and look forward to working with you again in the future!

Danielle Taylor

Manager Administration, Medfinders
Boca Raton, Florida

Please send letters from satisfied customers via any method listed in our editorial box on page 2, and we'll publish as many as space allows.

“Walk This Way” success means stepping in the right direction

Governor Dave Heineman brought together state employees in the State Capitol Rotunda in Lincoln last spring (see photo) to express appreciation for their successfully completing the Walk This Way program, part of the State of Nebraska’s wellness plan. Walk This Way encouraged employees to increase their physical activity by logging at least 360,000 steps by the end of March. Meeting or exceeding this challenge were 1,684 people since the program began in July, and 487 of them were DHHS employees.

A total of 521 employees walked over one million steps; 171 reached two million steps, including Governor Heineman; 42 logged more than three million steps; four people reached four million steps—three of them DHHS employees: **Roxie Anderson** and **Bonnie Engel** in Central Office and **Renee Tichota** at the Norfolk Veterans’ Home. One state employee reached five million steps and another, six million.

Examples to follow or shoot for and a source of pride for all state employees. For testimonials about successes participants experienced, go to <http://www.dhhs.ne.gov/wellness> . Photo: Jen Rae Hein

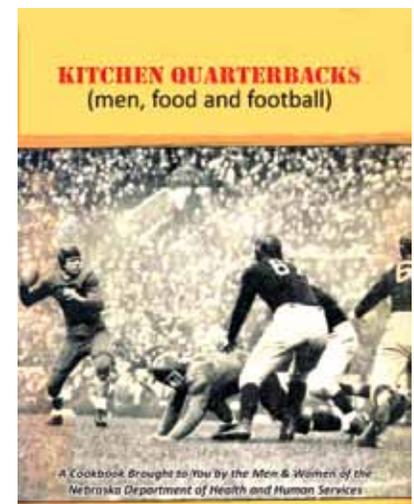


New men’s cookbook offers recipes for healthier eating

“Kitchen Quarterbacks” is a cookbook by men for men. It contains more than 90 pages of tasty recipes contributed by DHHS men and employees with male family members. Many of the recipes are associated with football, and the innovative book is organized in sections called the “Pre-game Commentary” (breakfast), “Kick-offs” (appetizers and breads), “First Downs” (soups, salads and sides), “Touchdowns” (entrées) and “Post Game Wrap-ups” (desserts).

Kitchen Quarterbacks was created by the Men’s Health Task Force with the [Office of Women’s and Men’s Health](#) to develop projects to improve the lives of men. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln Department of Nutrition and Health Sciences partnered with DHHS to do nutritional analyses of the recipes and provide tips on making the recipes healthier. Healthy tips are included with many of the recipes.

The on-line cookbook is located at <http://www.dhhs.ne.gov/menshealth/> . This innovative project even received National publicity in an Associated Press article on [MSNBC.com](http://www.msnbc.com) .



Happenings!

Photos spotlighting DHHS activities around the state

MILLION POUND MARATHON! Youth at the Youth Rehabilitation & Treatment Center at Kearney participated this spring in the facility's first "Million Pound Marathon"—a weight lifting competition in which each group strives to accumulate 1,000,000 pounds using total pounds lifted in a month. Each member kept track of how many repetitions he made lifting with arms, legs, back or shoulders and multiplied that by the weight he used. Each lift was then added to the group's total. Strict guidelines were maintained to ensure that youth lifted safely and the most beneficial rate.

The Creighton group 3 was the only group accumulating one million pounds (1,092,519 to be exact). Each member was presented with a pair of sports boxer briefs for their efforts. *Photo: Richard Wetjen*



CELEBRATING FLAG DAY: Staff

members in the DHHS Gering office paid tribute to the American flag and what it represents by gathering on June 14 at the flagpole outside. After reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, they reflected on what Old Glory means to each. They also wore red, white or blue for the week and brought goodies to work with a red, white and blue theme. *Photo: Joanie Frahm*



If you have a photo of a DHHS activity you'd like to share with co-workers across the state, contact *Connections* by any means listed in the editorial box on page 2, and we'll publish as many as space allows.

Newly-discovered viruses? Never-before-seen creatures from the ocean depths? Alien invaders?

NOPE. Just some spectacular fireworks over the Fourth of July that the [Beatrice State Developmental Center \(BSDC\)](#) shared with members of the community of Beatrice to thank them for their support. Thanks to the BSDC Recreation and Maintenance Departments for putting on this display and to Vocational Services Director **Nancy Sedlacek** for the fiery photos.

