

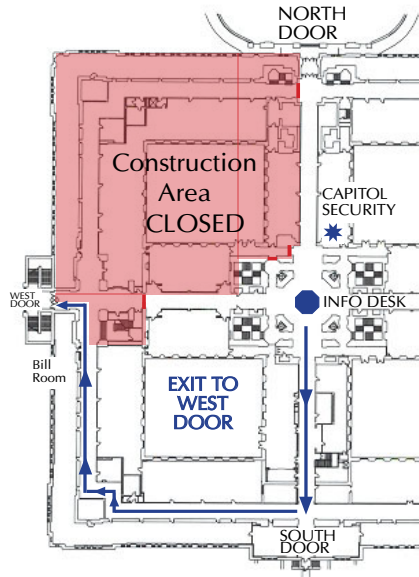
THE CAPITOL SOWER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CAPITOL COMMISSION | VOLUME FIFTEEN | NUMBER ONE | FEB 2023

HVAC Phase 3 Update

Contractors have been busy in the northwest quadrant of the Nebraska State Capitol working on Phase 3 of the project to install a new heating ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system. Starting in 2018 with Phase 1, contractors have been removing the 1960's steam and chilled water system and installing the geothermal VRF (variable refrigerant flow) system. Work in the northwest quadrant included the system in the George W. Norris Legislative Chamber. While work in the rest of the quadrant began in 2021, work in the Norris Chamber had to wait until after the 107th Legislative Session ended in April of 2022. Contractors then focused on the Norris Chamber to be sure work was completed in time for the 108th Legislature to convene in January 2023.

As contractors installed the new HVAC equipment, Capitol staff took advantage of the opportunity to upgrade existing equipment and facilities in the Chamber. The Legislative Technology Office upgraded the display boards in the front of the Chamber. To increase efficiency, staff of the Office of the Capitol Commission built new cabinets for the reconfigured Cloak Room. With the new HVAC system operational as March, April and May approach, Senators will no longer feel too hot or too cold, the new system will be just right. The Legislative Session will be conducted in comfort with these new amenities.



Window repair continues in Phase 3. Limiting air infiltration through the windows is an important part of the efficiency of the new HVAC system.



Above left, scaffold in the West Lounge allows access to the large bronze windows. Above right, the smaller iron windows are easier to access and repair.



The smaller windows on the 3rd floor are removed for repair, above left, and returned as the rooms are finished, above right.

Nebraska Capitol Commission Membership

Jim Pillen
Governor, Chairman

John Arch
Speaker of the Legislature
Vice-Chairman

Michael Heavican
Chief Justice Supreme Court
Vice-Chairman

Kevin Van Den Wymelenberg
Dean
College of Architecture, UNL

Jill Dolberg
Interim CEO
Nebraska State Historical Society

Doug Carey
Congressional District 1

Thomas Sanderson
Congressional District 2

Trent D. Loos
Congressional District 3

Robert C. Ripley
Capitol Administrator
Secretary



The People of the OCC Office of the Capitol Commission

ADMINISTRATION

Bob Ripley, Administrator
Matt Hansen, Preservation Architect
Vacant, Preservation Architect
Brett Daugherty, Capitol Manager
Tammy Honnor, Facilities
Construction Coordinator
Vacant,
Administrative Assistant
Clark DeVries
HVAC Project Manager

ARCHIVE

Karen Wagner, Archivist

CARPENTRY

Vacant, Shop Supervisor
Lana Gabel,
Furniture Conservator
Dawn Snider,
Furniture Conservator
Daren Claymon, Finisher
Dan Kratky, Mason
John MacKichan,
Hardware Conservator
Mike Marshall, Cabinet Maker

CUSTODIAL

Perry Shuman,
Capitol Conservation Supervisor
Richard Mallam, Custodial Leader
David Hoelscher, Custodial Leader

GROUNDS

Heather Dinslage,
Groundskeeper Leader
Aud Koch, Maintenance Technician

MAINTENANCE

Michael Jordan, Shop Supervisor
Jeff Gillett, Plumber
Tahir Karimi, Electrician
Chris Lahmon,
Maintenance Technician
Harry Holcome,
Maintenance Technician

TOURS

Roxanne Smith,
Public Information Officer/
Tourism Supervisor/
Special Events Coordinator
Allison Monzu, Tourism Aide
Susan Myers, Tourism Aide
Kirk Wiota, Tourism Aide

OCC AT WORK Experience and Service

Capitol Administrator Reappointed



Nebraska Governor Jim Pillen reappointed Robert C. Ripley, FAIA, to continue to lead the Office of the Capitol Commission team as they preserve and maintain Nebraska's monumental Capitol. Ripley will guide the preservation of the Capitol and work to educate the public on the significance of the national landmark building and its ability to meet the needs of Nebraska's three branches of government for generations to come. 🏛️

Service Recognized



*Dan Kratky
Mason 5 years*



*Karen Wagner
Archivist 25 years*



*Harry Holcomb
Maintenance 25 years*

Three Office of the Capitol Commission team members were recognized in 2022 for their years of service to the citizens of Nebraska.



*Allison Monzu
Tours*



*Daren Claymon
Carpentry*



*Aud Koch
Grounds*

The Office of the Capitol Commission welcomes three new staff to support the mission of preserving the Nebraska State Capitol for future generations.

Commission's 2023 Schedule

The Nebraska Capitol Commission will hold their quarterly meetings in Hearing Room #1507 on the ground floor of the Capitol. The Commission uses these meetings to oversee and review Capitol maintenance and preservation projects, discuss and approve projects and the upcoming budget for the Office of the Capitol Commission, and set administrative rules for the use of the Capitol. The last

meeting of the year includes a joint Capitol Commission/Capitol Environs Commission meeting. These meetings are open to the public. 🏛️

- February 28, 2023, at 10:00 a.m.
- June 27, 2023, at 10:00 a.m.
- August 22, 2023, at 10:00 a.m.
- November 28, 2023,
Joint Meeting at 10:00 a.m.
Capitol Commission at 11:00 a.m.

CONSERVATION PROJECTS

South Entrance Door

The original bronze entrance doors created for the Nebraska State Capitol are still in use, except one. As state government grew and the flow of staff in and out of the Capitol shifted to the south entrance, the original bronze south door began to wear. In the 1990's the heavy bronze door was removed from service and the Office of the Capitol Commission's highly skilled carpenter staff recreated the original door in wood.

While the marine grade plywood and maple wood trimmed door is easier to operate, the wooden door suffers with constant exposure to the elements and needs periodic maintenance. The mild weather in the autumn of 2022 enabled OCC's Carpentry staff to remove the door, inspect it for damage and do the repairs needed to keep it in service. 



Staff entering the south door early in 2022 would have noticed the cracks and fading paint of the wood door. The door frame is the original bronze.

The first step in the repair process was removing the ornamental studs, then staff reglued the lower section of the door which cracked and expanded from exposure to rain and snow, right. The custom made wood studs, lower right, were sanded smooth, inspected and cracks sealed with epoxy before they were repainted and returned to the door.

Far left, to repair the larger cracks in the door a plug was placed in an existing hole in the trim to slightly expand the crack. Left and below left, staff then carefully filled all the cracks in the door with a wood filler. Below, Lana Gabel, left, and Dawn Snider, right, sand the door to prepare it for repainting.



Removing and getting the heavy wood door into the carpenter shop required several staff and a fork lift. The 8' by 4' solid wood door weighs 200 pounds. Once inside it was moved on a cart.



Above, the crack repaired in the top photos can be seen running from lower right to upper left. Wood filler seals the cracks around the spaces in the decorative molding.

South Entrance Door Maintenance

Door repair includes hardware and masonry

With the south door removed, the Office of the Capitol Commission's mason and machinist went to work on the door opening. Some doors in the Capitol swing open and closed on pins rather than hinges; the south entrance door is one. At the top is a center pivot and the bottom is equipped with a door closer. The hydraulic fluid and a spring in the closer control the door's movement and the viscosity of the fluid fluctuates with external temperature. That fact and constant use caused the fluid in the south door's closer to leak onto the granite and limestone surfaces. OCC's mason worked to remove the stains while the machinist worked to clean and rebuild the closer. Once this work was done, the repaired and repainted door was returned to service.



Above left and right, the open door allowed OCC's machinist John MacKichan access to remove the upper mechanism and free the door for repair. Once the door was gone, the cover plate, right, and closer mechanism, below right, were removed to join the upper pivot, below, for service.



Above and right, OCC mason Dan Kratky applies a degreaser and cleaner to the granite and limestone area which absorbed the leaking hydraulic fluid.



Right, the initial cleaning removed the hydraulic fluid from the surface of the granite step and the limestone face of the door. The mason also cleaned the box which houses the door closer.



Below the cleaned and repaired door closer ready to be reinstalled. Right, after the door was reinstalled OCC staff



worked together to calibrate the closer to the proper speed, not so fast as to slam, but not so slow as to let a cat inside.



Right, the south entrance door repaired, repainted and ready to be opened and closed hundreds of times each day. Office of the Capitol Commission staff work as a team to preserve and maintain the Nebraska State Capitol.



BEHIND THE SCENES

Legislative Chamber Upgrades

As HVAC contractors were working behind the scenes replacing the heating and cooling system in the George W. Norris Legislative Chamber, staff members from the Unicameral Information office and Office of the Capitol Commission were upgrading areas behind the scenes used by the Legislature. Both upgrades will help State Senators do their work for Nebraskans more efficiently. When the Capitol was completed in 1932, legislative staff posted bill numbers on chalk boards located in the front of the chamber. Electronic dot matrix display boards were introduced later, and during the current project the display boards were upgraded to video quality LED panels.

As senators conduct the State's business, they often need refreshment. Now, rather than having to remove themselves from the chamber, they will find coffee, tea, and water available in the cloak room. Office of the Capitol Commission staff built new cabinets to house the upgraded beverage station, which includes a sink for handwashing. During legislative late nights, the senators and staff will benefit from having coffee conveniently available.



The Legislative Technology Office coordinated the timing of the upgrade of the display boards in the front of the Legislative Chamber with the HVAC project. Legislative Technology staff Gary Wieman (left) and OCC's electrician Tahir Karimi (right) hold one of the LED panels that will make up the display board.



The Legislative Chambers in the Capitol were constructed initially with electric voting systems. As the voting boards are upgraded, (left), the voting stations on the senator's desk are upgraded as well. OCC staff works to integrate modern technology into the original fabric of the building.



Left, large racks in the back of the Chamber hold the components of the system. Below, OCC electrician Tahir Karimi works on the system behind the scenes.



Walls opened to allow for routing of ducts and refrigerant pipes also allowed the routing of plumbing to create a new beverage station in the Legislative cloak room.



Mike Marshall, OCC's cabinet maker, worked in the carpenter shop using high quality birch plywood and walnut veneers to construct the new cabinets. The plywood accepts stain readily and was stained walnut to match original finishes.



Left, the cabinets were stored until the HVAC project schedule allowed for installation. The installation was completed in time for the beginning of the 108th Legislature.

WHAT'S OLD IS NEW

The black and white marble tile mosaics created by Hildreth Meiere for the floors of Bertram Goodhue's Nebraska State Capitol are a striking feature and remembered by the thousands of visitors touring the Capitol each year. For the next seven years, one specific floor mosaic will be viewed by millions of people as Nebraskans motor across the state and nation. Former First Lady Susanne Shore chose an adaptation of Meiere's "*Genius of Creative Energy*" mosaic designed by Drew Davies as the art for Nebraska's new automobile license plate. An example of the license plate will be included in the Nebraska Capitol Collections, part of the documentation of the history of the Capitol available to future generations of Nebraskans.

As part of the license plate promotion, Mrs. Shore commissioned photographers to document the artwork in and on the Capitol for other projects she is undertaking to bring the art of the Nebraska Capitol to a much wider audience via www.nebraskacapitolart.com. Once she has achieved her goals, the photographs will be donated to the Nebraska Capitol Collections. Photo-documentation is an important tool for the long term care and preservation of the Capitol. In the 1990's, the Office of the Capitol Commission brought in a professional to photograph the 20 wall murals in the Capitol, the first time they had been documented. Since then, the 12 murals on second floor have been cleaned and restored, and the 8 murals on 14th floor were completed in situ. The donated photographs will help preservation architects and conservators understand how the Capitol's artwork has changed over time.

The Nebraska Capitol Collections also contain material that shows the evolution of the design process which lead to the Capitol as we see it today. While Capitol architect Bertram Goodhue had an overall vision of what the building should be, his untimely death in 1924 meant that others had to carry out his vision. His initial discussions with thematic consultant Hartley Burr Alexander, Ph.D., and Alexander's knowledge of art history and philosophy guided the work of Capitol artist Hildreth Meiere. From her initial interpretations of Alexander's themes to the finished mosaics, having the maquettes and correspondence sent between Alexander and Meiere helps OCC staff and scholars understand and interpret the story told in the Capitol's artwork and symbolism.



Image courtesy Nebraska DMV



Hildreth Meiere submitted the above design to the Nebraska Capitol Commission, it became part of the archive. Alexander and Meiere worked to refine the concept. In the final design the fire was removed, the figure turned, and the drapery and lightning reworked, as seen in the actual mosaic, below.



Image courtesy of collector



Hildreth Meiere created the above 36" by 18" gouache and ink drawing as a final draft for the Capitol Commission. Once approved she used this maquette to guide the actual size working drawings the stone cutters used to fabricate the mosaic. The drawing, held by the Meiere family, became available and was purchased by a Capitol admirer and collector, who understood its value, with the intent to donate it to the Capitol archive at a later date. The Office of the Capitol Commission appreciates the willingness of citizens to contribute to the Collections.

CAPITOL EVENTS

AFSP State Capitol Awareness Display

February 27 - March 3, 2023

The American Federation for Suicide Prevention Nebraska Chapter will have a display in the 1st floor rotunda.

Problem Gambling Awareness

February 27 - March 3, 2023

The Department of Health and Human Services and Creating Family Choices will have a display providing information on the Gamblers Assistance Program in the 1st floor rotunda.

Statehood Day

March 1, 2023

Nebraska's 156th Birthday

Naturalization Ceremony

March 1, 2023

The US Citizenship and Immigration Omaha Field Office will hold a naturalization ceremony in the 2nd floor rotunda at 2:00 p.m.

Mother of the Year Recognition Ceremony

March 2, 2023

The Nebraska Mothers Association Inc. will recognize the Nebraska Mother of the Year and the American Mothers Inc. state 5th grade essay winners at noon in the 2nd floor rotunda.

State Fair Awards Ceremony

March 3, 2023

The NEBRASKAland Foundation will recognize State Fair educational competition winners at 1:00 p.m. in the 2nd floor rotunda.

Capitol Closed

March 4, 2023

The Capitol will be closed for statehood day activities.

Expanded Learning Opportunities Display

March 6 - 10, 2023

Beyond School Bells will highlight innovative after school and summer learning opportunities in the 1st floor rotunda.

Theater in Our Schools Day

March 7, 2023

The Nebraska Thespians will have a first floor display celebrating the importance of theater in schools and a musical performance in the 2nd floor rotunda at noon.

Nebraska State College Display

March 10 - 17, 2023

The Nebraska State College System will have a display in the 1st floor rotunda.

Problem Gambling Awareness

March 14 - 18, 2023

The Department of Health and Human Services and Creating Family Choices will have a display providing information on the Gamblers Assistance Program in the 1st floor rotunda.

Youth Art Month Display

March 19 - April 1, 2023

The Nebraska Art Teachers Association will display student artwork in the 1st floor rotunda.

Nebraska Trial Court Week

March 20 - 24, 2023

The Nebraska Court Services Division will have a 1st floor rotunda display.

NMEA Capitol Concert Series

March 20 - 23, 2023

The Nebraska Music Education Association will hold their annual concert series in the Capitol 2nd floor rotunda from noon to 1:00 p.m. each day.

Youth Art Awards Ceremony

April 1, 2023

The Nebraska Art Teacher's Association will hold an awards ceremony in the Capitol 2nd floor rotunda from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Nebraska Community College Display

April 2 - 16, 2023

The Nebraska Community College Association will have a display in the first floor rotunda.

State Holocaust Commemoration

April 23, 2023

The Jewish Federation of Lincoln and the Institute for Holocaust Education will hold a 2:00 p.m. ceremony in the 2nd floor rotunda.

Bar Admission Ceremony

April 24, 2023

The Nebraska Supreme Court will swear in new attorneys in the 2nd floor rotunda at 2:00 p.m.

Arbor Day

April 28, 2023

Nebraska's home grown holiday. Capitol tours 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Worker's Memorial Day Vigil

April 28, 2023

The United Support Memorial for Workplace Fatalities will hold vigil on the North Plaza at 6:30 p.m.

Mayor's Run

May 6, 2023

The Lincoln Track Club will host a youth fun run around the Capitol from 8:00 a.m. to noon.

Peace Officer's Memorial Day

May 15 - 21, 2023

The Nebraska State Patrol will sponsor a 1st floor display to honor Nebraskan's fallen peace officers.

Memorial Day

May 29, 2023

Capitol tours 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Cornhusker Girls State

June 8, 2023

The American Legion Auxiliary will hold the Girls State Inauguration ceremony in the 2nd floor rotunda at 2:00 p.m.

Guided Tours are offered Monday-Friday from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm, except at noon; Saturday and Holidays from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, except at noon; Sunday from 1:00 to 4:00 pm. Please call 402.471.0448 or visit www.capitol.org for more information.

All events at the Nebraska State Capitol are free and open to the public.



In this issue:

DOOR REPAIR	3
DOOR REPAIR CON'T. 4	
NORRIS UPGRADES . . 5	
THE GENIUS.	6
EVENTS.	7

Guided Tours are offered Monday-Friday hourly from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., except at noon. Saturday and Holidays from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., except at noon and Sunday from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. Please call 402.471.0448 or visit www.capitol.nebraska.gov

The Capitol Sower, published by the Office of the Capitol Commission, is available online at www.capitol.org. Contact the Tourism Supervisor at roxanne.smith@nebraska.gov for more information.

Please contact us if you have any questions or comments about the content. All images are property of the Office of the Capitol Commission unless noted.

THE CAPITOL SOWER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CAPITOL COMMISSION |

FEB 2023

Nebraska Capitol Commission

Nebraska State Capitol
Seventh Floor
1445 K Street
P.O. Box 94696
Lincoln, Nebraska
68509-4696
www.capitol.org
402.471.6691



Capitol Architect
Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue, 1869-1924

Cornerstone Commemoration

After three years of work, commencing in 1919 with an architectural design competition, the Nebraska Capitol Commission celebrated a milestone in the construction of the third state Capitol on November 11, 1922. The Capitol Commission, national dignitaries, and Nebraska veterans participated in the cornerstone laying ceremony on Armistice Day 1922. Built right after WWI Nebraskans dedicated the building to the memory of those who fell in the service of their country. One hundred years later on November 11, 2022, the Nebraska Capitol Commission rededicated the Capitol to the memory of those who have fallen in service to their country since WWI.



Above, the Cornhusker Boy Scouts Council Crew 21 Color Guard dressed in WWI uniforms as they performed the Color Guard duties that began the ceremony. Right, clockwise from upper left. John Hilgert, Director of Nebraska Veteran's Affairs discussed the importance of veteran's sacrifice. Gov. Pete Ricketts remarked on the Capitol as a symbol of Nebraska and a monument to inspire future generations to service. Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Daryl Bohac introduced Craig and Wendy Adelson, parents of Cpl. Daegen Page, the most recent Nebraskan to fall in service to the country. Mementos from Cpl. Page and the 2022 Cornerstone Commemoration will take their place near the Capitol's cornerstone.

