

New Nebraska License Plate Unveiled

On Tuesday, May 31, Governor Pete Ricketts and First Lady Susanne Shore revealed the design of the next general issue Nebraska license plate. The design is a mosaic pattern depicting the Genius of Creative Energy and is based on artwork inside the Nebraska Capitol Building.

The original “Genius of Creative Energy” mosaic kicks off a series of mosaics around the Nebraska Capitol, all working together to relate the State’s history to the ideals of Western Civilization. Designed by world-renowned artist Hildreth Meiere in 1927, the Genius brandishes a lightning bolt in his right hand and is propelled across the sky by harnessing the power of the four elements.

The license plate design pays homage to this Genius and all the mosaics in the Nebraska Capitol depicting Nebraskans’ shared story. It was designed by Nebraska-based brand and design consultant Drew Davies. “I’m deeply honored to have the opportunity to design a license plate celebrating the creative energy of all Nebraskans,” Davies shared.

“I want to thank the countless Nebraskans who have come to us with ideas and feedback over the years,” said First Lady Susanne Shore. “Ultimately, we found a design that every Nebraskan can relate to. I especially want to thank Drew for unleashing his creative genius to depict our state’s own.”

More information on the artwork in the Nebraska Capitol can be found here: [www.hildrethmeiere.org/commissions/nebraska-state-capitol](http://www.hildrethmeiere.org/commissions/nebraska-state-capitol-foyer-floor)



COURTESY

Gov. Ricketts (podium); Drew Davies (right of Gov. Ricketts); First Lady Susanne Shore (front right); Capitol Administrator Bob Ripley (back right); and ASL Interpreter Frances Beaurivage (far left).

ol-foyer-floor. During today’s announcement, the First Lady also shared plans to release video footage showcasing the mosaics around the Capitol. The videos are expected to be released in conjunction with the new

license plates.

A new license plate is designed and implemented every six years, as is required by Nebraska law. Production of the plates is underway, with distribution to begin in January 2023. Owners of vehicles

with a standard issue license plate will receive new plates from their county treasurer in the month the vehicle registration expires. This currently amounts to approximately 1.3 million vehicles statewide.

Memorial Day observed At Hillcrest Cemetery

Memorial Day 2022 was observed Monday, May 30, in the Hillcrest Cemetery Chapel, Thedford.

Miles Maseberg gave the opening and closing and everyone recited the Pledge of Allegiance and

sang “Star Spangled Banner” and “God Bless America.”

The Ewoldts and Mintles provided music and “Amazing Grace” by Haxton Hoffman.

Ben Eickhoff was the

guest speaker and Dixie Hoffman and Velma Ewoldt placed the memorial wreath.

Taps was played by Trae Hickman.

Be watching next week for pictures and story.

2022 Summer Stocker/Yearling Meeting & Tour June 23 In Imperial

By: Brent Plugge & Hannah Greenwell, Nebraska Extension Beef Educators

Nebraska Extension will host a stocker/yearling systems summer meeting and tour Thursday, June 23 in Imperial, Nebraska. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. MDT and the program will kick off at 9:00 a.m. MDT at the Crossroads Wesleyan Church, Imperial. Lunch is sponsored by Merck Animal Health, followed by a tour of Wine Glass Ranch in the afternoon.

The morning program will begin with a research update from Dale Blasi, beef cattle nutritionist and manager of the Kansas State University Beef Stocker Unit. Other speakers will also cover topics that include backgrounding systems and implant use data from the University of Nebraska.

Brian Vander Ley, DVM and Becky Funk, DVM from UNL Great Plains Veterinary Educational Center will detail a systems approach to receiving calf health. The morning program will wrap up with Brandon Nuttelman, Merck Animal Health, discussing the use of technology for disease detection. The afternoon tour of Wine Glass Ranch will feature fourth generation operator, Logan Pribbeno. Logan will share an overview of their operation and how stockers are managed in their production system.

Please register by June 14 for an accurate meal count by calling 308-236-1235 (Nebraska Extension in Buffalo County). For more information, contact Brent Plugge (308-236-1235, brent.plugge@unl.edu) or Hannah Greenwell (402-387-2213, hannah.greenwell@unl.edu).

Hwy. 83 flag raising on June 14

A first-time raising of the U.S. flag will occur on Flag Day, June 14, 2022 at 10:00 a.m. at mile marker 100 on U.S. Highway 83. This location is 15 miles north of North Platte or 10 miles south of Stapleton. The flag will fly from a lighted 70’ pole.

Veterans of military

service, veterans groups, police-sheriff-state patrol, fire fighters, first responders, and medical personnel will be invited.

Everyone in the area is invited to attend and support all those who have served.

Contact John Childers at 308-539-4450 for more information.

Sandhills Elixir now available locally

Marcia Hora

You’ve read about it in a feature article by Flatwater Press in newspapers all across Nebraska. It’s soon to be featured in national publications and magazines.

There’s been lots of publicity about this new “booze” without the “buzz” and it’s now available locally at Herbie’s Speakeasy, located in Creative Printers in Stapleton.

Andrew Wassinger, a food scientist, and Erica Wassinger, a venture capital investor, have combined their skills and their own desire for an alcohol alternative to conjure Sandhills Elixir, a “zero-proof spirit.”

It’s a liquor substitute made by blending ingredients and know-how from across Nebraska right down to the Ogallala Aquifer water they use from the heart of the Sandhills.

The product was created after the Wassingers spent the summer of 2020 with their young sons along Long Pine Creek, east of Valentine.

During the family’s stay in Long Pine, where Erica’s great-grandparents homesteaded in Brown County, Andrew began thinking about de-



MEGAN AMOS - THE STAPLETON ENTERPRISE

Melody Hansen, right, was on hand to try out Sandhills Elixir at Herbie’s Speakeasy in Stapleton. The “zero-proof spirit” made in Valentine using water from the Ogallala aquifer and prairie flavors, is being widely publicized nationwide and provides an alternative to those wanting “alcohol-free” spirits. Select from chokecherry, cranberry, elderberry, ginger lemon, and sage to create delicious “mocktails” for family and friends. Erica Wassinger of Omaha was on hand for the tasting event. She and her husband, Andrew, invented the product and are marketing it across the state in small shops and boutiques. Marcia Hora, left, Herbie’s Speakeasy owner said she knew she had to offer this as soon as she read the Flatwater Press story.

veloping a beverage with flavor, ingredients and changing consumers desires.

Andrew has developed and improved products such as frozen vegetables and microwave popcorn during his career at ConAgra Brands.

Working with flavors and extracts from

chokecherries, elderberries, and sage, he worked to create a layered taste with a bit of alcohol’s warmth and Sandhills Elixir was born.

The Wassingers asked Valentine brewer, Chris Hernstrom of Bolo Beer, to produce their creation.

Erica said since Hernstrom said yes, over 5,000

bottles of Sandhills Elixir has been brought back to their home in Omaha from Valentine in a 1971 Forester camper where it is shipped out of their garage.

“One fourth of our customers are repeat buyers,” Erica said. “They love that there’s no sugar and low calorie. It’s a

great alternative for those looking for a great tasting “mocktail.”

The Nebraska Liquor Control Commission said alcohol intake in the state continues to rise. Beer sales climbed in 2020 and 2021. Wine sales jumped. The biggest gainer was hard liquor with spirits shooting up 16 percent in the past two years.

But there are signs that people are looking for alternatives and Sandhills Elixir is filling that need.

Erica is putting her branding, marketing and start-up business development to work now by contacting places to place their product.

“We’re looking for smaller venues, especially boutiques and shops in the Sandhills and Herbie’s Speakeasy certainly fits what we’re looking for in the way of getting our product into the hands of customers. Stapleton is the smallest community that’s shown an interest.”

The Wassingers are pleased to see how the state has embraced their creation.

Mercury in downtown Omaha is known for its cocktail menu and there has been a big uptick in the number of people wanting a “mocktail” and Sandhills Elixir is a staple there.

Melody Hansen of Sta-

pleton stopped in for the tasting at Herbie’s featuring Sandhills Elixir and purchased two bottles.

“I’m dieting and this is something that will help me stay with it,” Hansen said.

Erica said having a glass is a great way to form a positive, healthy habit.

Marcia Hora, Herbie’s Speakeasy owner said she knew she had to have Sandhills Elixir in Herbie’s after she read the Flatwater Press article.

“I was so excited when I read about the Wassingers and what they were doing with zero-proof,” Marcia said. “I knew this was something we needed to have locally to promote the Sandhills. That’s how Herbie’s started by featuring Nebraska wine, craft beer and spirits, and that’s what we always push first. We want to showcase what our great state has to offer, and especially our small, rural communities.”

Herbie’s will now be carrying all five flavors - chokecherry, cranberry, elderberry, ginger lemon, and sage.

Watch for upcoming events at Herbie’s where Sandhills Elixir will be featured in special “mocktails or pick up a bottle and try a recipe or two at home.