



# NEBRASKA STATEHOOD 150

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*Media Release:*

## **Governor & First Lady Preview Events, Programs for Nebraska 150 Celebration**

***Celebration launches new website to engage Nebraskans in events,  
initiatives***

**LINCOLN** – Today, Governor Pete Ricketts and First Lady Susanne Shore previewed several events and programs being planned for the state's upcoming sesquicentennial celebration, called the Nebraska 150 Celebration, which will commence in 2017. They also announced the launch of a new website, [www.ne150.org](http://www.ne150.org), which will provide regular updates on sesquicentennial celebration activities and initiatives.

"Nebraska's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary will be a unique opportunity to bring our state together to celebrate who we are as Nebraskans," said Governor Ricketts. "Through these programs and activities, Susanne and I hope that Nebraskans feel a deeper connection to the heritage, culture, and people, which make Nebraska the best place in the world to live, work, and raise a family."

"This is an important and exciting time in Nebraska's history," said First Lady Shore. "We want to thank everyone who is so graciously volunteering their time and talents to planning this celebration. It is an enormous undertaking and we so appreciate their efforts. This is a celebration meant for all Nebraskans. Through the Nebraska 150 Celebration, we are going to bridge communities and individuals to form a greater overall community, build stronger connections between Nebraskans and their state, and help to create an enhanced sense of pride in Nebraska."

Some of the events being planned include:

### **Statehood Day Celebration – March 1, 2017**

A statewide celebration of our 150th anniversary, featuring special events at the State Capitol in Lincoln and throughout Nebraska.

### **Whistle Stop Tour Across Nebraska**

A three-day train tour of Nebraska, sponsored by Union Pacific Railroad, with stops and events throughout the state.

### **Traveling Children’s Museum Exhibit**

A partnership with the Omaha Children’s Museum that will celebrate Nebraska’s heritage and focus on future career opportunities for Nebraska’s youth.

### **The Nebraska Experience**

An initiative to ensure that all fourth grade students studying Nebraska history have the opportunity to visit the State Capitol or another historically or culturally significant site in 2017.

### **One State, One Book Distribution**

A program to provide free books about Willa Cather and Chief Standing Bear to Nebraska high school and elementary students with accompanying curriculum.

### **eNErgize Nebraska**

A web-based fitness challenge program (with accompanying mobile app) that will challenge Nebraskans to walk, run, bike, or swim 150 miles or more in 2017.

### **Impact Nebraska**

An initiative to spark teams of volunteers to engage in 150 hours or more of service in 2017 and track their progress through a web-based program.

### **The Nebraska Atlas Project**

A program to provide workbooks developed by Wayne State College Professor Dr. Randy Bertolas and curriculum that highlight fun information about the state and our citizens for every fourth grader in Nebraska.

### **Preserving Our History**

An initiative to digitize, transcribe, and index aging oral histories at the Nebraska State Historical Society in jeopardy of being lost to time and decay. The project will also involve collecting new stories of Nebraskans from all walks of life, generations and experiences for future generations.

### **A “Sesquicentennial Spectacular Celebration” on Centennial Mall in Lincoln**

A large-scale tribute to Nebraska’s history and culture featuring a parade, light show, fireworks, music, art, and more.

### **Tree Planting Initiative**

A partnership with the Arbor Day Foundation to help restore the state’s forests and public green spaces that have been affected by ash bore and pine disease.

## **Special Veterans Day Celebration**

In addition to the above events, which will be paid for through private donations, the Nebraska 150 Celebration is lending its support to a variety of events and programs being planned by communities and organizations across the state.

“We hope Nebraskans utilize the sesquicentennial celebration as a catalyst for growth and community building,” said Nebraska 150 Celebration Executive Director Regan Anson. “Each and every community across the state has an opportunity to find their own unique way to participate in or benefit from the celebration. We are here to help inspire, energize, and support those endeavors.”

Anson said communities, organizations, schools, businesses, government entities, and others who have on-going parades, festivals, fairs, programs, events, etc. in 2017 can apply to be recognized as official projects and events of the Nebraska 150 Celebration. Additionally, communities and organizations can apply for the same designation if they intend to plan one-time special events or projects in celebration of the sesquicentennial.

Successful applications will, among other attributes:

- Bridge Nebraskans across different communities, perspectives, and cultures.
- Build a connection with every citizen to the Nebraska 150 celebration and the state.
- Instill a greater sense of pride in our state in every Nebraskan.
- Encourage a deeper connection to Nebraska’s history and heritage.
- Celebrate Nebraska's cultural and ethnic diversity.
- Foster a spirit of community involvement and enrichment.
- Create an engaging educational opportunity.

Official events and programs will be publicized via the Nebraska 150 Celebration’s website and social media sites. They will also be granted use of the official Nebraska 150 Celebration logo to use for promotional purposes.

The application form is available online at [www.ne150.org](http://www.ne150.org).

Nebraska was granted statehood on March 1, 1867. The state will celebrate its 150<sup>th</sup> birthday beginning January 1, 2017 with a yearlong celebration involving a wide variety of programs and projects across the state.

Planning for the Nebraska 150 Celebration began in 2012 when a group of active citizens from across the state formed the Friends of the Nebraska 150 Foundation. In 2014, the Nebraska Sesquicentennial Commission was established by the Legislature and 17 members from across the state were appointed by the Governor to lead the initiative. In 2015, the Celebrating Nebraska Statehood Foundation was established to help coordinate efforts and direct everyone toward collective success.

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