



Waste Paper

A Quarterly Publication Of Keep Nebraska Beautiful

Spring 2004

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WHY DO PEOPLE LITTER?

Admit it. Virtually all of us have littered at one time or another. It might have been a gum wrapper or a can carelessly tossed out a car window. It might have been a cigarette butt stamped out on the sidewalk or a half-eaten hamburger thrown in a ditch.

Why do we do it? Even chronic litterers probably have some vague notion that it's "wrong." A leftover guilt trip instilled in our consciousness from a TV ad or a school presentation. Yet at least 60% of litter is intentional. Never mind the moral implications of littering. Every state and nearly every community in the U.S. has litter laws which carry fines and/or jail time. Still, this appears to be no deterrent. On the contrary, most environmental watchers believe people are actually littering more now than a decade ago.

W. L. Rathje, a University of Arizona archeologist and contributing editor for *MSW Management*, has a unique perspective on the problem. He believes the license to litter is actually an ancient behavior perfectly understandable in the context of mankind's early history.

Rathje says, "I have learned that when it comes to something that is not wanted, a human being's first inclination is, and has been for more than 2 million years, to dump it where and when it becomes useless. From prehistory through the present, dumping there and then has been the means of disposal favored everywhere..."

An interesting theory, but fast forward to present-day Earth and the behavior, for a number of reasons, is no longer appropriate. First, there are a few more humans inhabiting the planet than when man first walked upright--more people equals more garbage. Second, that pile of biodegradable mastodon bones has become mountains of plastic and tin cans that may take hundreds of years to break down in the littered environment. Throw a pop bottle in a ditch and it might be around through the next Ice Age.

Me no want.
Me leave here.



When I no longer
desire this cigarette,
I shall throw it to
the ground.



Continued on page 5...

**THE RESULTS OF THE 2004 NEBRASKA LITTER SURVEY ARE IN!
SEE PAGES 4 & 5 FOR THE RESULTS.**

KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL
NEBRASKA AFFILIATES

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Keep Chadron Beautiful
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Keep Columbus Beautiful
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Grand Island Area Clean Community System
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Keep Keith County Beautiful
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Keep Norfolk Beautiful
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Keep North Platte/Lincoln Co. Beautiful
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Keep Northeast Nebraska Beautiful
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Keep Omaha Beautiful
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Keep Schuyler Beautiful
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Keep Scottsbluff-Gering Beautiful
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Keep Sheridan Co. Beautiful
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Keep Sidney Beautiful
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Executive Director's Comments

Nebraska Students Are Making a Difference

Keep Nebraska Beautiful sponsors a "Litter Free School Zone Program". Schools agree to pick up any litter around their school grounds on a regular basis and many sponsor their athletic and other school events as litter-free so attendees have the expectation to be responsible for their own trash. Keep Nebraska Beautiful provides each participating school with a sign (much like a Drug-Free School Zone sign) to place outside their school to remind people passing by the school not to litter.



North Bend Elementary Students

The results of the more than 100 schools participating in the program during the past school year have been remarkable! Thirty-five additional schools joined the program during the year. Of the schools who have faithfully sent in quarterly reports to let us know of their success with the program, we have recovered the following results:

cleanups held: **650** - an increase of 163% from the previous school year

bags of litter collected: **1,845** - an increase of 247% from the 2002-2003 school year

students participating in picking up litter around their school grounds: **15,835** - an 82% increase

teachers also participating: **985** representing a 60% increase

other personnel (parents, other staff, etc.) participating: **342**

which is an 84% increase from last school year

Total number participating during this school year was **17,162** which represents an 81% increase from the previous year.

Litter-free events held: **74** - up 23% over the 2002-2003 school year

A list of all the schools presently participating can be found on our website at: <www.knb.org/litter_free.html>. If your school is not participating and you would like more information about the program, please call our office at 800.486.4562. An application can be downloaded from our website at the address given above. Once an application is received, our office will send you the sign. All schools in Nebraska, both public and private, are invited and encouraged to join the Litter-Free School Zones Program.

Hats off to all the students, teachers, and other volunteers who helped make their school, their community and our state a cleaner, more beautiful place because of their efforts during the past school year!! We truly appreciate your contributions to keeping Nebraska beautiful!

WELCOME KEEP LOUP BASIN BEAUTIFUL!

Keep Loup Basin Beautiful is our newest Keep America Beautiful affiliate in Nebraska. The new regional affiliate received their pre-certification training on April 28. Loup Basin is comprised of nine north central counties including: Blaine, Custer, Garfield, Greeley, Howard, Loup, Sherman, Valley, and Wheeler. The affiliate will be housed in the Loup Basin Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D) office in Ord.

MORE AFFILIATE SUCCESS STORIES....

Keep Nebraska Beautiful now has 21 affiliates across the state. Whether it's working hard to continue already successful programs or organizing new, innovative events, dedicated staff and volunteers strive to educate students and adults about litter reduction and community beautification. Congratulations to these KNB affiliates for their successful efforts!

KEEP LINCOLN/LANCASTER COUNTY BEAUTIFUL

Clean Sweep Kids Trash Can Band

For the past 12 years, Keep Lincoln & Lancaster County Beautiful has been promoting Lincoln's Star City Holiday Parade as a litter-free event. Over 150 people volunteer each year to help in this effort.

While an estimated 80,000 people watch the parade, over 50 volunteers spread out through the crowd and explain the event is "litter-free" and provide a convenient way for parade-goers to dispose of trash.

The other 100 plus volunteers are 5th through 12th grade students who are recruited from all Lancaster County schools, and even some schools outside of the county. The youth play rhythms using a variety of instruments including cardboard barrels, tin cans, milk jugs with gravel inside, metal pipes, 90 gallon garbage totes on wheels, metal trash can lids, and brooms. A chant is also yelled out to promote the litter free message. The students have so much fun, younger siblings of band members often can't wait until they reach the 5th grade so they can join the band!



This successful effort has received a first place Litter Prevention national award from Keep America Beautiful. The Star City Holiday Parade has also honored the "Trash Can Band" with an award every year they have participated in the parade. The sidewalk volunteers must also be recognized for their contribution. Without their hard work, the parade wouldn't be the successful litter-free event that it is.

Keep Lincoln & Lancaster County Beautiful is also participating in Keep America Beautiful's Cigarette Litter Prevention Program. More details about this program will be available in the summer issue of **Waste Paper**.

KEEP ALLIANCE BEAUTIFUL

Reuse -- Imagine the Difference

In conjunction with the 2003 and 2004 Great American Cleanup™, Keep Alliance Beautiful organized an art contest competition with Alliance Middle School Sixth Graders. Students were asked to make a sculpture entirely of recyclable materials. An educational program was presented to the students emphasizing reuse alternatives as well as recycling.

Students were allowed one month to work on their art projects. At the end of the month, the local Carnegie Arts Center was asked to judge the entries. The prize for 1st place was \$125 donated by the United Transportation Union. Second place received \$50 from ACR Glass and third place was the recipient of \$25 from No Place Like Home Realty.

The students' art work was displayed during Parent-Teacher Conferences, and the Alliance Times Herald wrote an article about the contest. After the article was placed on the newswire, the Scottsbluff, Omaha, and Sioux City newspapers carried articles about the event. What started as a small, local art project resulted in at least \$10,000 worth of advertising!



WHAT DO NEBRASKANS



In the past 6 months, Keep Nebraska Beautiful has mailed hundreds of Litter Surveys to Nebraska citizens across the state. We wanted to know what you think about litter in Nebraska. Is it a problem in your community? Who litters and why? And how can we reduce littering in the state?

We heard from respondents in 67 out of the 93 Nebraska counties. Statistically, 89% of those responding to the survey have lived in Nebraska for over 10 years. Females out responded males 58% to 42%. The age of the respondents ranged from 18 to 65+ years, with the vast majority (61%) falling in the 40-64 year-old category. More than 71% who sent in the surveys are married.

Here is a look at the results:

1. How serious a litter problem is each of the following materials along Nebraska roadways?

- ❖ Cans & bottles: 83.5% think they are a moderate to major problem
- ❖ Food or organic material: 77.7% think there is little or no problem
- ❖ Tires & other car related items: 82.4% think there is a minor to moderate problem
- ❖ Construction debris: 74.4% think there is little or no problem
- ❖ Paper or cardboard: 77.5% think there is a minor to moderate problem
- ❖ Diapers, plastic bags, other plastic items: 75.5% think there is a minor to moderate problem
- ❖ Animal remains: 68.2% think there is a minor to moderate problem
- ❖ Fast food containers or wrappers: 84.2% think it is a moderate to major problem
- ❖ Other food or candy wrappers: 75.6% think it is a minor to moderate problem
- ❖ Cigarette or cigar butts and containers: 66.9% believe they are a moderate to major problem

2. What impact do you believe each of the following would have in reducing litter?

- ❖ Telling people not littering is the "right thing to do": 47.6% think it would have a slight to moderate impact
- ❖ Presenting a message that emphasizes pride in Nebraska: 84.4% think it would have a slight to moderate impact
- ❖ Reminding people that even small items contribute to the litter problem: 77.3% think it would have a slight to moderate impact
- ❖ Reminding people there is a fine for littering: 84.9% believe it would have a slight to moderate impact
- ❖ Telling people it costs millions of dollars each year to pick up litter: 53.7% think it would have a moderate to major impact
- ❖ Establishing a toll-free hotline for reporting people who litter: 53.8% believe it would have a moderate to major impact
- ❖ Increasing the enforcement of litter laws: 84.1% believe it would have a moderate to major impact
- ❖ Increasing the penalties for littering: 83.6% believe it would have a moderate to major impact
- ❖ Having celebrities speaking out against littering: 57.9% believe there would be little or no impact

3. Littering and Dumping

- ❖ Litter is a problem in my community: 83.4% agree or somewhat agree
- ❖ Litter along roads entering my community is a problem: 80.6% agree or somewhat agree
- ❖ Litter in my immediate neighborhood is a problem: 47.6% agree or somewhat agree
- ❖ Illegal dumping occurs in my community: 70.2% agree or somewhat agree
- ❖ I am involved in efforts to clean up my environment: 79.4% agree or somewhat agree
- ❖ It is important to maintain a clean environment: 98.1% agree or somewhat agree
- ❖ Litter & dumping could be reduced in my community by:
 - #1 - Increasing enforcement of litter/dumping laws
 - #2 - Raising public awareness of the issues
 - #3 - Providing better access to disposal sites

THINK ABOUT LITTER?



4. What are the primary sources of litter in your community:

- #1 - Motorists littering from vehicles
- #2 - Pedestrians
- #3 - Teenagers hanging out

5. Items respondents listed as having discarded as litter in the last 2 years:

- #1 - Foods & organics
- #2 - Other food and candy wrappers
- #3 - Paper/Cardboard

6. What media do you use most to get information:

- #1 - Newspaper
- #2 - Radio
- #3 - Television

We thank everyone who sent in their surveys! We will use the information as a guide in planning for new and improved litter-related programs. If your community has a concern with increased litter, you may want to consider the following:

- ⇒ Become a Keep America Beautiful affiliate to focus on increased education and to initiate new litter-related programs.
- ⇒ Participate in the Great American Cleanup™, Litter-Free School Zones Program, International Coastal Cleanup, etc.
- ⇒ Sponsor litter-free events in your community
- ⇒ Apply for a Litter Reduction & Recycling Grant from the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ). **See page 6 for more details on the grant programs offered by NDEQ.**

Continued from page 1....

WHY DO PEOPLE LITTER

So why are our parks and roadways strewn with garbage from coast to coast even though most of us living in a modern society understand that littering is illegal, immoral, and illogical? While there is little research on **WHO** litters, Keep America Beautiful has spent nearly 50 years studying **WHY** people litter. KAB's research suggests people litter primarily because:

- ❖ *They feel no sense of ownership, even in areas such as parks or beaches which are considered "public property." People are less likely to litter on their own property.*
- ❖ *They believe someone else--a park maintenance or highway worker--will pick up after them.*
- ❖ *People litter in areas where litter is already present.*

Whether we continue to litter our roads, beaches, and parks because we feel no sense of pride in our communities or because the behavior is the result of prehistoric genetic coding, the consequences are the same. Litter is a blight in our communities: it costs millions of dollars each year to clean up, poses substantial health problems to humans and animals, and reduces property values.

So go ahead and admit it. We've all littered at one time or another. But regardless of why we might have littered in the past, it is no excuse for continuing to litter. It's not too late to take responsibility for our actions and change our behavior and the behavior of those around us. The safety and health of our planet depends on it.





International Coastal Cleanup

Rivers, lakes, and oceans are often considered to be the most polluted areas in the world. Every year, tons of plastic bottles, cigarette butts, and other debris are carried by runoff and sewer systems into our waterways. Sadly, garbage like tires and even cars are often dumped deliberately into our rivers and lakes. This debris often pollutes drinking water, makes beaches unusable, and results in the death of millions of fish, birds, and other marine wildlife.

For nineteen years, the Ocean Conservancy has sponsored the International Coastal Cleanup. The effort organizes volunteers to pick up trash and clean debris in and around our waterways. This year's event is scheduled for September 20, 2004. Any group or individual interested in cleaning up a lake, river, stream, or pond in their community can complete the enclosed registration form and return it to Keep Nebraska Beautiful. All supplies will be furnished free of charge.

"Getting Tough on Litter" Conference

Keep Nebraska Beautiful, in collaboration with Keep Iowa Beautiful, will hold its annual conference October 20-21, 2004 at the Lied Conference Center in Nebraska City. The theme of the conference will be "Getting Tough on Litter." The conference is open to the public.

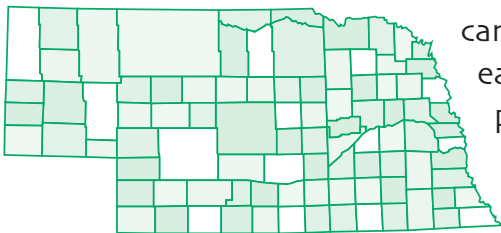
The Keep Nebraska Beautiful Environmental Awards will follow the conference at the Steinhart Lodge at noon on Thursday, October 21. The KNB Environmental Awards honor individuals, organizations and communities across the state that have completed an environmental project between July 1, 2002 and July 1, 2004. Entries must be postmarked by September 1, 2004 to be considered.

For more information on both the awards, including a copy of the awards application, as well as, the upcoming conference, please go to our website at <www.knb.org>.



Litter Reduction and Recycling Grants

The Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ) provides grant funds to political subdivisions, public and private entities, and organizations for the purpose of promoting litter reduction and recycling. Annually, over one million dollars is awarded to grantees for a variety of programs in three general categories; litter cleanups of public areas, public education, and new or improved community recycling programs.



While there is no limit on the amount of grant funds that can be requested, generally, maximum funding is \$200,000 for each grant proposal. Large grant awards would only apply to projects that would provide benefits to a substantial number of Nebraska citizens. NDEQ staff review applications for eligibility and completeness, and the Grant Review Board evaluates and ranks applications using a Program Priority

System. The NDEQ Director makes the final determination on all grant awards.

Other grant funds are also available to political subdivisions to clean up illegal dump sites. For more information about these and other grant programs available through NDEQ, contact the Waste Planning and Aid Unit (402-471-3457) or email MoreInfo@NDEQ.state.NE.US. You can also find additional information at NDEQ's website, <<http://www.deq.state.ne.us/>>.

Keep Nebraska Beautiful Members

Bold text indicates new or recently renewed members

Sustaining Corporate (\$1000+)

Coca-Cola Bottling Company.....Omaha
Kiewit Companies Foundation.....Omaha
Nebraska Soft Drink Association.....Lincoln

Sponsoring Corporate (\$500-999)

Baldwin Filters.....Kearney
Coors Brewing Company.....Golden, CO
Ralph & Beth Kernes Krause.....Julian
Northern Natural Gas.....Omaha
Omaha World-Herald.....Omaha
Weyerhaeuser.....Omaha

Supporting Corporate (\$100-499)

Abe's Trash Service.....Omaha
ADM Corn Processing.....Columbus
Aquila.....Lincoln
Ash Grove Cement Company.....Louisville
Beatrice Scrap Processing Inc.....Beatrice
Bryan LGH Medical Center.....Lincoln
Butler County Landfill, Inc.....David City
Cargill.....Blair
Chief Industries.....Grand Island
Clean Harbors Environmental Services, Inc.....Kimball
Countryside Energy.....Firth
Davidson Insurance Agency, Inc.....Lincoln
Dempster Industries, Inc.....Beatrice
Duncan Aviation.....Lincoln
Firststar Fiber.....Omaha
Flowerserve Corp.....Hastings
G & P Development Landfill.....Milford
Great Plains Packaging.....Hastings
Hewlett-Packard Computers.....Omaha
ITW Hi-ConeItasca, IL
McDonalds of Alliance.....Alliance
McDonalds of Chadron.....Chadron
MFG, Inc.....Omaha
Midland Recycling Lincoln.....Lincoln
Molex, Inc.....Lincoln
National Paper Co.....Omaha
Nebraska Beer Wholesalers Assn.....Lincoln
Nebraska Public Power District.....Columbus
Nebraska Rural Electric Assn.....Lincoln
Novartis Consumer Health, Inc.....Lincoln
Nucor SteelNorfolk
Paul O'Hara.....Lincoln
Olsson Associates.....Lincoln
Olsson Associates.....Omaha
Omaha Public Power District.....Omaha
Papio-Missouri River NRD.....Omaha
Pepsi Cola Bottling.....Lincoln
The Pepsi Bottling Group of Omaha.....Omaha
Peter Kiewit Sons', Inc.....Omaha
Pfizer, Inc.....Lincoln
QC Supply.....Schuyler
Shell Valley Companies.....Platte Center
Sherman County Bank.....Loup City
Solid Waste Agency of Northwest Nebraska.....Chadron

Speece-Lewis Engineers.....Lincoln
Tri-Con Industries Ltd.....Lincoln
URS Corporation.....Omaha
Kevin Warneke.....Omaha

Community : 5000+ Population

City of Lincoln Public Works & Utilities.....Lincoln
City of North Platte.....North Platte
City of South Sioux City.....South Sioux City

Community: 1-4999 Population

City of Alma.....Alma
City of Auburn.....Auburn
City of Benkelman.....Benkelman
City of Creighton/Keep Creighton Beautiful.....Creighton
City of Long Pine.....Long Pine
City of Minden.....Minden
City of Red Cloud.....Red Cloud
Village of Verdigre.....Verdigre
Village of Wolbach.....Wolbach

Non Profit/Civic Org./Schools/Other Corp.

A Plus Insurance Services (George Acker).....Ogallala
Abate of Nebraska, Inc.....Lincoln
Beatrice Board of Public Works.....Beatrice
Doane College.....Crete
Folsom Children's Zoo & Botanical Gardens.....Lincoln
Gage County Agriculture Society.....Beatrice
GFWC Seward Womans Club.....Seward
GFWC/NFWS Sower Club.....Schuyler
Grand Island Area Clean Comm. System.....Grand Island
The Groundwater Foundation.....Lincoln
Heartland Community Schools.....Henderson
Hebron 1st Impressions Committee.....Hebron
Holmes Elementary School.....Lincoln
Immanuel Lutheran School.....Columbus
Keep Alliance Beautiful.....Alliance
Keep Beatrice Beautiful.....Beatrice
Keep North Platte/Lincoln Co. Beautiful.....No. Platte
Keep Omaha Beautiful.....Omaha
Keep Scottsbluff-Gering Beautiful.....Scottsbluff
Lower Loup NRD.....Ord
Lower Platte North NRD.....Wahoo
Mosaic.....York
Nebraska Association of Resources Districts...Lincoln
Nebraska Press Association.....Lincoln
Nebraska Safety Council.....Lincoln
NIOGA.....Kimball
NMPP Energy.....Lincoln
North Platte Catholic Schools.....North Platte
Ogallala/Keith Co. Chamber of Commerce...Ogallala
Pepsi-Cola Bottling Co. of Hastings, Inc.....Hastings
South Platte NRD.....Sidney
Southeast Community College.....Lincoln
Washington County Recycling Assn.....Washington
WASP, Inc.....Falls City
Wastecap of Lincoln.....Lincoln
Wider Omaha Lutheran School Assn.....Omaha

Individual & Family Members

Cindy Adkins.....Gothenburg
Norma Bappe.....Lexington
Rod & Robin Bates.....Lincoln
Joe Baxter.....South Sioux City
Roger & Linda Behrns.....Louisville
Nadine Blair.....Omaha
Matt Boerkircher.....Kearney
Frosty Critchfield.....Lincoln
David C. Dow.....Omaha
Marilyn & Dick Elder Family.....Richmond, VA
Nancy Friesen.....Henderson
George & Barbara Frye.....Lincoln
Cheryl Gerkins.....Lincoln
Jim Goeke Family.....North Platte
Dennis & Lynn Grams.....Lincoln
Patricia Greene.....Papillion
Linda & Allen Grell.....Beatrice
Bob Hemphill.....Des Moines, IA
John & Deb Hendry.....Lincoln
Rod & Deb Horn & Family.....Sidney
Rick Inderlied.....Lincoln
John Kinter.....Columbus
Frank Kosiba.....Omaha
Anne Kramar.....Omaha
Carla Loemker.....Beatrice
Bob McCarty.....St. Edward
Dr. Thomas & Evelyn McKnight.....Fremont
Kathy McWilliams.....St. Paul
Tomas S. Miller.....Norfolk
Delmar W. Morgan.....Elkhorn
Michael S. Mostek.....Omaha
Jill Oldehoeft.....Ohiowa
David R. Ostdiek.....Scottsbluff
Steve & Trish Owen.....Lincoln
Mary Alice Park.....Lincoln
Alan Phares.....Columbus
Dave & Jane Polson.....Lincoln
Dr. Wayne R. & Janice Price.....Beatrice
Sharilyn Rector.....Lincoln
Sue Reyzlik.....Fremont
Harry Richardson.....Broken Bow
Trixie & Dave Schmidt.....Lincoln
Mike & Lorrie Schrad.....Omaha
Ken Shea.....Lincoln
Jim & Sue Smith.....Clark Lake, MI
Merlyn & Caroline Stadler.....Axtell
Mark Stephens.....Ft. Calhoun
David & Dorothy SternOmaha
Don & Cynthia Thies.....Lewellen
Martha Thomas & Family.....Wymore
Dick Varner.....Omaha
Jeff Waszgis.....Crete
James D. Whitaker.....North Platte
Virginia White.....Grand Island
Hugh Wilkins Family.....Geneva

Do Your Part to Help Keep Nebraska Beautiful! Become A Member Today!
Keep Nebraska Beautiful Membership

Name _____
 Co./Org. _____
 Mailing Address _____
 City/State/ZIP _____
 Phone: () _____ Fax: _____

Your paid membership entitles you to several benefits. Please indicate the benefits you would like to receive below. Items not checked will not be sent and that part of your contribution will be used on educational programs.

- A KNB Canvas shopping bag
- Quarterly mailings of the KNB newsletter *WastePaper*
- Quarterly mailings of the exchange newsletter *The Link*
- Information on workshops & conferences

For Sustaining, Sponsoring & Supporting Members Only:

- Corporate member wall plaque (or brass disc for renewals)
- A free copy of Keep America Beautiful's *Waste in The Workplace*

Funding for Keep Nebraska Beautiful is provided by a grant from the Litter Reduction & Recycling Fund and through contributions and memberships from corporations, associations, families, and individuals. We thank NDEQ and our members for their support!

Categories of Membership (check one)

- _____ Individual \$15/yr/ or \$30/3yrs
- _____ Family \$20/yr or \$45/3yrs
- _____ Non-profit/Civic Org./School \$30/yr
- _____ Sr. Citizen/Student \$10/yr
- _____ Community-Pop. under 5,000 \$50/yr
- _____ Community-Pop. over 5,000 \$100/yr
- _____ Chamber of Commerce \$50/yr
- _____ Supporting Member \$100-499/yr
- _____ Sponsoring Member \$500-999/yr
- _____ Sustaining Member \$1000+

Total amount enclosed \$ _____

Send your check and Membership Form to:
 Keep Nebraska Beautiful
 3201 Pioneers Blvd., Suite 306
 Lincoln, NE 68502-5963
 Phone: 402-486-4562 Fax: 486-4563
 Email: info@knb.org

Make Checks Payable to: **Keep Nebraska Beautiful**
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