

‘Nebraska Philanthropy’ Explores Connection Between Philanthropy, Economic Development on Nov. 2 on NET1/NET-HD

Philanthropic activities often yield unexpected community development. The next episode of “Nebraska Philanthropy: Investing In Our Future: explores that relationship. The program premieres Friday, Nov. 2, at 7:30 p.m. CT on NET1 and NET-HD.

What began as a fundraiser for a nonprofit organization in North Platte has turned into a destination event for railroad enthusiasts from all over the world. The Original Town Association of North Platte created Rail Fest to fund growth and rehabilitation of the first neighborhoods in North Platte. Rail Fest recognizes the impact of Union Pacific and pays homage to the North Platte Canteen, a World War II effort to support troops. In 2012, Rail Fest drew 15,000 visitors from around the world.

Rudolph “Rudy” Elis, a bachelor farmer from Verdigre, wanted to help build new businesses in the O’Neill and Norfolk area. His \$2.3 million estate gift to the Nebraska Community Foundation sparked a new era of collaboration and entrepreneurship in the region. Elis’ wishes aligned with NCF’s Hometown Competitiveness Initiative, providing annual support for Holt County Economic Development’s programs. We meet four young business owners who have come back to their hometowns, taking advantage of opportunities to succeed and be close to their families.

In Prague, brothers Jeremy and Justin Stanislav have created an annual mud volleyball tournament that helps women battle breast cancer while bringing people and attention to their hometown.

The Nebraska Children’s Home Society (NCHS) has been setting standards in fundraising and philanthropy since the 1890s, when Nebraska was in the throes of a historic drought. Homesteaders who had followed their dreams were finding it hard to sustain those dreams or their families. NCHS was founded to help families in distress. Stephen and Nellie Cole survived the challenges, and they contributed what they could: \$2 per year to the NCHS field men who visited their home to solicit donations. The couple arranged their estate so their entire land holdings in Gosper and Dawson counties would be sold and proceeds given to NCHS upon the death of their daughter, Hazel Sitlington. It turned out to be a \$4 million gift, nearly 120 years in the making.

In addition to the Nov. 2 premiere, the program repeats Sunday, Nov. 4, at 12:30 p.m. and 10 p.m. CT on NET1/HD, and 3:30 p.m. NET2 World; Tuesday, Nov. 6, at 11:30 p.m. CT on NET1/HD; Wednesday, Nov. 7, at 8:30 p.m. CT on NET2 World; Saturday, Nov. 10 at 12 a.m., CT on NET2 World; and Tuesday, Nov. 13, at 12 a.m. CT on NET2 World.

Watch current and past episodes anytime online at [netNebraska.org/givingback](http://netNebraska.org/givingback). Feel free to submit comments and story ideas on the website. Questions, call 402-470-6629, or email [pcostello@netnebraska.org](mailto:pcostello@netnebraska.org).

NET1 and NET-HD are part of NET Television, a service of NET. For a complete program schedule, visit NET’s website ([netNebraska.org/television](http://netNebraska.org/television)).

RELEASE WRITTEN BY: Kim Hachiya, 402-472-9333, ext. 694, or e-mail at [khachiya@netNebraska.org](mailto:khachiya@netNebraska.org)

