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Our mission is to inspire and educate individuals to take daily actions to improve and beautify their community environment.

KCCB Board of Directors
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 Members: John Baroni, Roger Behrns, Karin Forrest, Rick Yoder
 Exec. Director: Linda Behrns
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Presentations: Contact us for free environmental programs for youth groups, schools or community organizations.

Financing is provided by the Litter Reduction and Recycling Grant Program, Nebraska Department of Environment & Energy, Cass County, local business partners and members. KCCB is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.



DEPT. OF ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY

Close the loop...Buy recycled!



- “Thank You”**

2021 KCCB Partners
- American Exchange Bank,
 Ash Grove Cement Company,
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 Bloom Where You’re Planted,
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 Citizen’s State Bank,
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 Village of Elmwood,
 Village of Manley,
 Village of Murray,
 Village of Union,
 Weeping Water Chamber
 Wilbur-Ellis Agribusiness



Join Keep Cass County Beautiful for

RECYCLE YOUR PUMPKINS DAY

Tuesday, Nov. 2nd from 3:00—6:00 pm

Plattsmouth Hy-Vee Parking lot

Halloween can be a very wasteful holiday, so we’re launching a new event to prevent pumpkins from being landfilled and wasted. Your uncarved

pumpkins will be used to feed animals at the Wildlife Safari Park. Carved pumpkins will be taken to our friends at Soil Dynamics to be made into compost. We cannot accept pumpkins with paint, glitter or other décor.

Here are a few other tips to help you have an eco-friendly Halloween:

Purchase locally grown pumpkins, toast the seeds for a tasty snack and if uncarved, make pumpkin bread, pie or soups; reuse decorations or purchase items meant to last; avoid plastic; opt for minimal candy packaging and paper wrapped sweets; make your own costumes; trick or treat with reusable bags; donate costumes to local thrift stores in Cass County; provide reusable cups, plates and utensils at your Halloween party.

KCCB Cass County Electronic, Large Appliance and Metal Recycling Event

October 16 from 9:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m. in Louisville. Enter through the gate at 1st & Cherry Streets north of the school football field. Anything with a battery or cord will be accepted plus large appliances such as refrigerators, stoves, freezers, washers, lawn equipment, power tools, metals, etc. **Limit of 2 large appliances per household.** Fees apply to alkaline batteries, all styles of televisions (including flat screens) and CRT (Cathode Ray Tube) items. Other items—no charge. KCCB will pay half of the fee of one item per household. Members receive one item with a fee for free! See the KCCB website for more details or call 402-949-0874. **Last collection event for 2021.**

KCCB Hosts Youth Environmental Fair

Nearly 300 fifth-grade students learned information about a wide range of environmental and nature lessons during the Cass County Youth Environmental Fair on September 29. Elementary school children from Conestoga, Elmwood-Murdock, Louisville, Plattsmouth, Weeping Water and St. John the Baptist traveled to the Expo Center at the Cass County Fairgrounds for the event.



Youth rotated to a dozen stations that focused on topics ranging from the importance of bees in food production to the large amount of plastics that are harming ocean animals. Educators also spoke about energy efficiency, how to build a safe landfill, beneficial flowers, how tree rings tell the history of our environment, endangered species of Nebraska, recycling strategies, littered landscapes, Nebraska mammals, the life of an apple and the basics of groundwater. We sincerely thank the Cass Ag Society and all of our volunteers who gave time to make this event possible.

Volunteer Appreciation Event

Volunteers and KCCB members recently enjoyed a beautiful evening of food and entertainment at the Slattery Vintage Estates honoring our volunteers for environmental contributions. Michelle Zahn (left) received an appreciation award for helping start a paper recycling program at Conestoga Elementary School. Jean Heim (middle) was honored for years of beautification efforts maintaining flower gardens in Louisville. Teacher Marla Smith was unable to attend, but was recognized for implementing a water bottle recycling program at Plattsmouth Middle and Elementary Schools last year where thousands of plastic bottles were recycled.

Danielle Easdale, Firststar Fiber, (right) spoke about reducing the threat of plastics and how their company will begin manufacturing plastic lumber from hard-to-recycle plastics in the spring.



Sustainability
Spotlight
Feature

Clete and Darlene Petrzilka -Louisville

by Dana Stahl, Assistant Director

tries. **“There’s never any charge for these bikes; I don’t do it for the money,”** Petrzilka states.

So far, he has salvaged, repaired and donated 200-300 bicycles. Petrzilka obtains bikes in need of repair through word of mouth, social media, and bike stores. Having always loved mechanics since he was a young boy, it was a perfect retirement pastime to get into. “I liked working on cars but as I got older, it was too hard to work on cars; bikes you can manage more easily.” Petrzilka laughed as he remarked that, “Each bike has its own personality as people like to personalize them. Before the bikes go to their new owner, I try to make the bikes look as close to new as I can and even polish the spokes!”

The idea to repair bikes came to Petrzilka through a series of events. “Our granddaughter came to live with us when she was about 5 years old. She wanted a bike so we got her one I could fix up. Shortly after, I saw a few bikes set out next to the dumpster across the street at our neighbors. They couldn’t ride the bikes, because they were broken but still looked new! I asked if I could have them. The neighbors said yes, so I repaired them and called the county to ask if they knew anyone that could use them. I found a need and my new hobby began. Another outlet emerged for adult bicycles when a friend of ours noted that she thought veterans would love to have bicycles to ride as well. She volunteers to cut hair once a month free of charge for veterans, so she connected us. Many veterans depend on a bicycle to get to work and run errands, so there is always a need for my repaired bikes.”



Petrzilka noted the large role his wife plays in this operation as well, “She helps to post on social media so we can get more bikes donated and orders many parts as well.” Petrzilka’s grandchildren also play an important role of test driving the repaired bikes. “It’s important to make sure to have someone ride the bikes before we give them away to make sure everything is working properly,” he said. “The grandkids are always happy to help Grandpa out! Sometimes we get worn out repairing all these bikes, so we just take a few weeks or months off; then we’re refreshed and ready to get back to it.”

We thank Clete and his wife Darlene for their dedication practicing the “reuse” motto in our community and for providing such a great service of the gift of a free bicycle to those who need and can enjoy them! If you have a bike or parts to donate, Clete invites you call him at 402-234-2035.

Cass County Fair Follow-up



We’re happy to report that 685 people visited our booth at the Cass County Fair along with 58 youth who completed our litter scavenger hunt! We brought our compost worms to show children and adults the benefits of vermicomposting and worms’ important role in nature. We marketed the new Hefty Energy bag program, and we had a bee hotel giveaway. Each year we also collect used cell phones and rechargeable batteries. Those who sign up for our newsletter, become a member or bring us used cell phones and batteries receive a car litter bag or reusable grocery bag. We hope if you missed us this year, you’ll stop in next year!

Another important role we have at the fair is litter clean up and recycling. KCCB provides over 25 recycle bins located throughout the fair to reduce waste and encourage recycling. We provide supplies for a large litter cleanup following the fair. We enlist the help of 4-H members and some boy scouts to help with this endeavor. This year we had over 50 volunteers help! The cans collected are redeemed for cash which is a great fundraiser for the boy scouts each year. Our board members empty the recycle bins each morning of the fair. This year we diverted over 600 lbs. of plastic and cardboard from the landfill plus many pounds of aluminum cans. We are proud of our partnership with the Cass County Fair. We also appreciate the help each year from our wonderful volunteers committed to keeping Cass County beautiful!

Adopt-A-Spot

It is estimated that to create a litter free world, every man woman and child in the United States would have to pick up 152 pieces of trash. Cass County is no exception. When driving down a road, walking a trail or visiting a park, it isn’t hard to find pieces of trash. Cigarette butts are the most littered item, second is fast food litter along with beer and soda cans and water bottles.

Unfortunately, the eyesore of trash is a small issue when compared to the effects litter can have on our environment. If litter is not picked up, wind or rain can carry litter into streams and rivers, and eventually it ends up in our oceans. Studies estimate that if major change doesn’t happen, by 2050, we will have more plastic in our oceans than fish. Furthermore, trash can easily be mistaken for food and ingested by birds, turtles, and other animals. In addition, litter can cause animals to be stuck, strangled, or suffocated. Litter also has an impact on Real Estate values. Heavily littered neighborhoods have lower land values than clean and beautified neighborhoods. As you can see, having a clean litter free community is about much more about just beauty.

This is why we created our new program called “Adopt a Spot” that allows volunteers to pick up litter as an individual, family, group, or business anytime. Your participation helps KCCB receive grant funds to further beautify Cass County! Here’s how to join:

- 1. Simply choose a road, trail, or park in Cass County
- 2. Commit to keeping it clean! We recommend at least two cleanups each year. (Spring and Fall are great times to do so!)
- 3. Go to our website and log your time and approximate amount of litter collected. It’s not too late to sign up for a fall cleanup!

Support KCCB While Shopping Any Time of the Year at [Smile.amazon.com](https://www.smile.amazon.com)

Select **Keep Cass County Beautiful** to receive donations from eligible purchases before you begin shopping. Then every eligible purchase you make at [smile.amazon.com](https://www.smile.amazon.com) will result in a donation of 0.5% to KCCB. Thanks for your support!