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Gov. Heineman Receives Nebraska Quarter Designs from U.S. Mint, Secretary of State

(Lincoln, Neb.) Gov. Dave Heineman today accepted the four designs designated by the U.S. Department of the Treasury for the quarter with Nebraska's name on it. Secretary of State John Gale presented the formal designs to the Governor during a news conference held at the Capitol.

"Each of the designs has historical and geographic merit," Gov. Heineman said. "Nebraska has a strong agricultural tradition, the country's only one-house Legislature, important ties to Native American history and a rich pioneer heritage. Any of these designs would serve us well."

Gov. Heineman will announce his selection later this month and forward the choice to U.S. Treasury Secretary John Snow for final approval. The U.S. Mint had originally requested that the selection be made by May 13, but federal design delays led to the later deadline.

The Treasury Department expects to mint around 500 million of the Nebraska commemorative quarters, which are expected to be in circulation for at least 30 years. The first Nebraska quarters are scheduled to be issued to the public in April 2006.

The four designs were the result of extensive input from Nebraskans. The quarter design committee received nearly 6,500 design submissions from citizens across the state. Nebraskans were invited to vote online for their favorite of 25 designs, drawing 61,492 votes over 13 days. In September, the eight-member Nebraska State Quarter Design Committee selected four concepts for final consideration. Officials with the U.S. Mint developed artwork for each.

In addition to Gale, members of the quarter design committee included Norman Geske of Lincoln, Roger Bruhn of Lincoln, Gordon Howard of Bayard, Tom Bassett of Lincoln, Virgil R. Marshall of Wymore, Michael Schuyler of Kearney and Jodi Rave, formerly of Lincoln. The committee included experts in artistic design, coin collecting, as well as on Nebraska history and culture.

"We have developed four outstanding designs," said Secretary of State Gale, chairman of the quarter design committee. "I am confident that the one selected will capture the attention of America and reflect the proud heritage and spirit of Nebraska. We have worked hard to involve Nebraskans in this project, and they have responded with enthusiasm."

(continued)

The four designs are as follows:

- The State Capitol with the inscription “Home of the Unicameral.” The Capitol, widely recognized as an architectural masterpiece, symbolizes the hopes of past, present and future generations of Nebraskans. It was built in 1932 at a cost of \$10 million and is estimated to cost \$500 million if built today. The design reflects Nebraska’s one-house legislature.
- “The Sower” statue with the inscription “Home of Arbor Day.” The design honors the importance of Nebraska’s agricultural tradition and pays tribute to Nebraska’s legacy as the birthplace of Arbor Day. The design reflects state government’s responsibility to sow seeds to promote prosperity and well-being for all Nebraskans.
- Chief Standing Bear with the state motto, “Equality Before the Law.” The Ponca chief, who lived in Nebraska, was involved in a landmark trial that extended legal protection under the U.S. Constitution to Native Americans. The design honors the importance of protecting the constitutionally protected liberties of all citizens.
- Chimney Rock and a westward covered wagon. The Nebraska landmark gained fame during 19th century U.S. migration to western territories. The clay and sandstone rock formation is considered a natural wonder and was a landmark during westward expansion. The design honors the spirit and courage of the pioneers who made Nebraska their home.

Each of the final designs are available online via the Secretary of State’s Web site, at www.sos.state.ne.us/admin/quarter_design/top_5.html.

“As I travel the state, I’ve asked Nebraskans what they would choose and get the same response,” Gov. Heineman said. “I have seen support for Chimney Rock in Omaha and support for the Capitol in Scottsbluff, with each design receiving about a fourth of the vote.”

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