



The **Nebraska School for the Deaf Alumni Association** and the **Nebraska Deaf Heritage Museum and Cultural Center** hosted a successful event on April 5, 2025, at the former NSD campus, specifically in the old cafeteria. The event had over 65 attendees, and we are grateful to everyone who participated.



Nebraska Deaf Heritage  
Museum and Cultural Center



**National Deaf History Month** is celebrated from **April 1 through April 30** each year to commemorate the achievements of people who are deaf and hard of hearing.

Deaf History Month occurs during this time because of **three significant events in the history of deaf education.**

Here are three important dates in deaf history:

**April 1, 1869:** Nebraska School for the Deaf was founded in Omaha by William D. French, an alumnus of Indiana School for the Deaf, and Rev. Kuhns near 22nd and St. Mary. The school closed in 1998 but has produced many successful alumni.

**April 8, 1864:** President Abraham Lincoln signed the charter of Gallaudet University in Washington, the first school for the advanced education of the deaf and hard of hearing worldwide.

**April 15, 1817:** The first permanent public school for the deaf, the American School for the Deaf in Hartford, Connecticut, opened.

**The National Association of the Deaf (NAD)** first introduced National Deaf History Month in 1997, and in 2006, the **American Library Association** collaborated with NAD to promote and increase awareness of this celebration.



The **Nebraska School for the Deaf** was established in 1867 by the Nebraska Territorial legislature.

A Deaf man named **William DeCoursey French** initiated the effort and the school was finally opened on **April 1, 1869**.

#### Details about the school's founding:

- The school was located on Twenty-Second Street between St. Mary and Leavenworth in Omaha, Nebraska. Two years later, it was moved to the current location.
- The school's first student was Katie Callahan from Omaha.
- The school was overseen by Principal William DeCoursey French, a deaf man, and Rev. Henry W. Kuhns.

#### History of the school's closure:

- The school closed in 1998 due to low enrollment caused by harmful policies and ideologies.
- The former campus was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2019.

#### Other notable facts about the school:

- The school was a site of educational controversy that abandoned the use of sign language in favor for oral method.
- In 1911, Nebraska Gov. Charles Aldrich signed a law banning the manualist curriculum that sparked the national discussion.
- In the late 1960's, the school began reincorporating sign language back into their classrooms.
- The school's basketball team won an all-classes state championship in 1931.

## Pictures of Deaf History Month Kick-Off Event on April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025



TOP: Treasurer Debra Weyers was fulfilling her responsibilities.

BOTTOM: Registrants checked in and received a gift for the 3K Walk.



TOP: Deaf History Month and 3K Walk information are available on the display board.

BOTTOM: Treasurer Debra Weyers assisted in placing a wristband on Bob Brentlinger.



TOP and BOTTOM: Everyone is waiting for the 3K walk to begin.







TOP: President Amy Willman explained what to do while the brave walkers stood outside in 38-degree weather.

BOTTOM: Our Honorary Chair of the Day, Kyle Miers, Executive Director of the Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and an official starter for the 3K Walk. LET' S GO!



TOP: President Amy Willman instructed them on the route, explaining that six laps around the track equals a 3K distance.

BOTTOM: Everyone was having a great time. Just look at how much fun Jean Bradford was having with her thumbs raised in celebration!



TOP: Get Ready! Set your mark!

BOTTOM: Everyone kept walking to stay warm.







TOP: Are you all on your third lap? Keep walking!

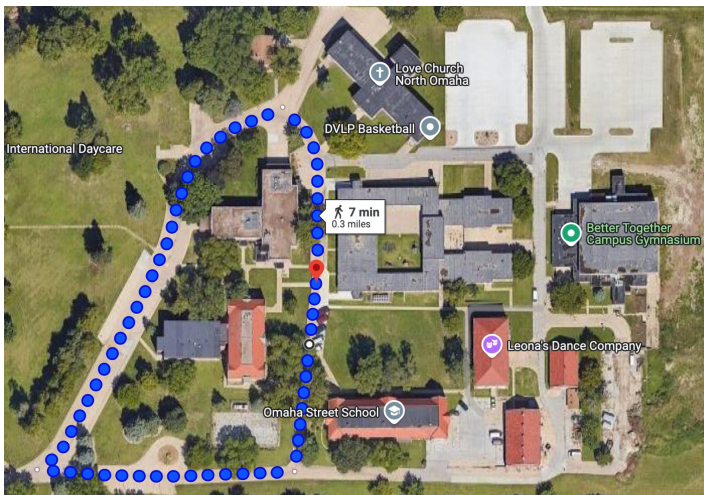


TOP: Jenna and Jonathan Scherling, along with their son Jaxon, braved the cold weather, while Karen Paasch looked so comfortably warm.



TOP: Scott Miller approved that the walk was a good form of exercise, while Sarita Hovinga showed off her tiger spirit outfit.

BOTTOM: Follow the route. Completing 6 laps equals a total distance of 3 kilometers.



BOTTOM: Lloyd Weyers quickened his pace as Jimmy Petersen struggled to catch up to him. ☺



BOTTOM: The joyful expressions on the faces of Kelli Thomas, Kyle Miers, and Amy Willman reflected their happiness during the walk.







Relax  
and  
Unwind

TOP: Hands waved to all the brave walkers who achieved their goal of completing the 3K walk.

BOTTOM: Vice President Angela Walz, Cheryl Santo, and President Amy Willman were preparing and setting up for the taco lunch.



TOP: After completing the 3K walk, everyone had a chance to relax and chat before lunch.

BOTTOM: A delicious taco plate was the perfect choice for lunch!



TOP: Vicki Hoyer and her family were waiting for lunch after their fantastic 3K walk.

BOTTOM: We all enjoyed our lunch while chatting together at the same time.







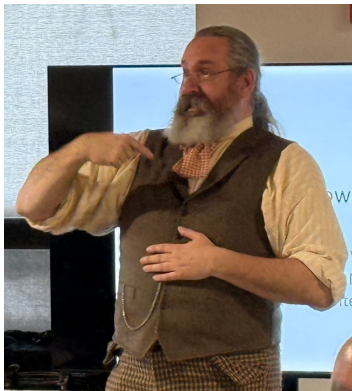
TOP: Everyone finished eating tacos, but their eyes stared at the sweet treats before President Amy Willman said, "Go get your sweet treats."

# S w e e t s



TOP: A variety of homemade cookies and a bowl of chocolate candies. Yummy!

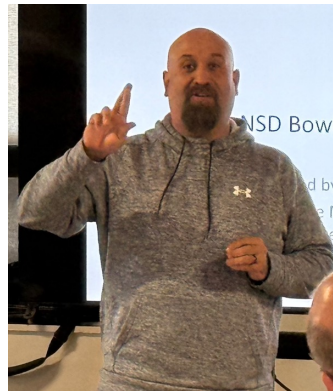
President Linsay Darnall, JR of the Nebraska Deaf Heritage and Cultural Center



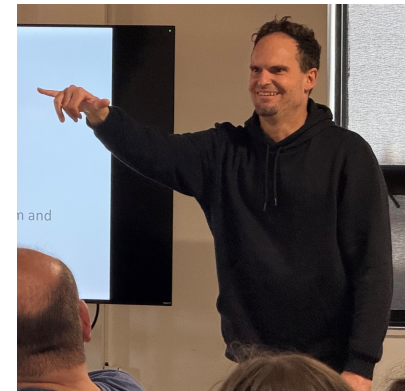
President Amy Willman of the Nebraska School for the Deaf Alumni Association presented a fundraising check to President Linsay Darnall, JR.



President Jonathan Arteaga of the Nebraska Association of the Deaf



Jonathan Scherling, the Athletic Direction of the Lincoln Association of the Deaf



Kyle Miers, Executive Director of the Nebraska Commission of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing







TOP: Everyone was so enthusiastic about the trivia game.

BOTTOM: Look at how the Class of '87 dressed up for the 3K Walk! Ha-ha!



TOP: Dwight Holtmeier shared a story about living in a new boys' dorm in 1975.

BOTTOM: The NSDAA Board wants to give a huge THANK YOU to Cheryl Santo for her volunteer work at the event. Cheryl, you are an AWESOME VOLUNTEER!

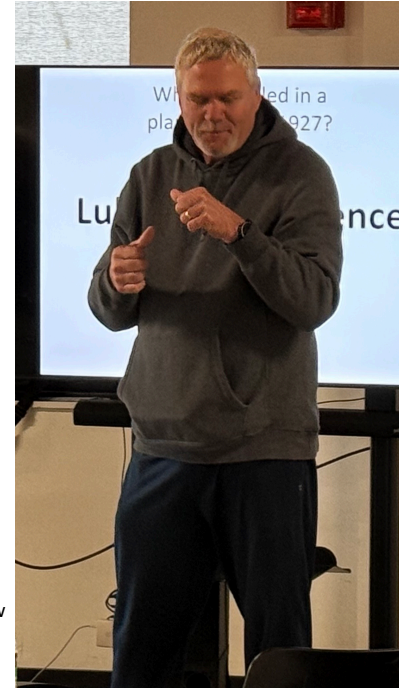


# F U N T I M E



TOP: They played a trivia game for over an hour.

RIGHT: Jerry Bierman told a story about how his parents believed a certain treatment would cure his deafness, but obviously, it failed.



Thank you for your support and donation.  
We hope you all had a great time. See you  
at the next fundraising event.

