

September 7, 2016

“Nebraska by Heart” is a statewide Public Art Project celebrating Nebraska’s Sesquicentennial in 2017, the 150th Anniversary of our State. The Project was modeled after Omaha’s J. Does, Lincoln’s Tour de Lincoln and the light bulbs featured in *Illuminating Lincoln: Lighthouse*. *Nebraska by Heart* will feature 6-foot fiberglass Hearts – symbolic of Nebraska, the Heartland of America! It is sponsored by the Sadie Dog Fund and Boys Hope Girls Hope, and has been named a Legacy Project by the Nebraska 150 Committee.

The 6-foot Heart was unveiled on September 6 in the Botanical Garden and Arboretum on the University of Nebraska’s East Campus by *Nebraska by Heart’s* Honorary Chairs, Rhonda Seacrest and Nebraska’s First Lady, Susanne Shore. Nebraska has 93 counties. Therefore, the goal of the project is to see 93 bigger-than-life Hearts exhibited, May 1 – October, 2017. *Nebraska by Heart* will be promoted as a not-to-be-missed component of Nebraska’s Sesquicentennial and a destination for millions of Nebraska, national and international viewers.

Unlike other Public Art Projects, which are displayed over a wide geographic area, our wish is to make *Nebraska by Heart* more accessible for visitors coming to Lincoln. For this reason, we hope to display the Hearts in one localized area within the capitol environs district and downtown Lincoln. Displaying the Hearts on private and public property within a one mile radius of the Capitol and University Campus will make it a destination and activity visitors can do as they participate in the state-wide celebration (visit the Nebraska State Capitol, view Sesquicentennial exhibits at the Nebraska History Museum, Husker football weekends, summer youth camps, etc.). Both the *Nebraska by Heart* sculpture and its base (manufactured by Patrick Keough in Seward, Nebraska) will be made from fiberglass and use 300 – 400# of sandbags inside the fiberglass base for stability. The base was developed to eliminate the potential risks associated with using concrete, such as forklifts, back injuries, scratches to surface where the concrete base was set, etc. By using the fiberglass base the Hearts can be displayed anywhere without worrying about putting ruts in the landscaping or scratches on display surface. Finally, the addition of sandbags inside the sculpture make it as heavy as concrete and there is no danger of persons trying to move or remove them from the installation site. In addition, wind will not be an issue due to the weight of the sculpture.

Nebraska by Heart wishes to make a monumental impact for the 150th Anniversary of our State and, as a result, bring National media attention to Lincoln for its Sesquicentennial Celebration! For that reason, we look forward to being a part of the September 22nd Capitol Environs Commission meeting and presenting the option of displaying *Nebraska by Heart* sculptures on private and public property within the environs district and beyond.

Sincerely, Liz Shea-McCoy, Director, *Nebraska by Heart*