



For immediate release: April 14, 2022

The Buffalo County Historical Society's 2022 Annual Meeting was held on Sunday, April 10, where the winners of the BCHS '2022 Preservationist of the Year Award' and the '2022 Volunteer of the Year Award' were announced. BCHS was also happy to declare both recipients for the first ever BCHS Scholarships.

The Preservationist of the Year award honors a person, organization or business working to preserve Buffalo County's physical history. Completed or ongoing projects or renovations, longtime work in preservation or a commitment to preserving historical structures and places are eligible for the award.

Previous winners of the Preservationist of the Year Award are: 2010-Chan Lynch; 2011-June Flesner-Becker; 2012-Bobbie McKenzie and Mardi Anderson; 2013-the Pleasanton FBLA and their instructor, Corliss Dixon; 2014-Dr. Walter Martin; 2015- Kent and Ray Buchanan; 2016-Richter Family, 2017- the Gibbon Heritage Center; 2018-Corene Phillips, 2019-Elaine Batenhorst; 2020-DAR-Kearney Chapter; 2021-The World Theatre.

The Awards Committee met and had a tough time deciding amongst the nominees, but one dedicated person really stood out. Lisa Atchison and her sister found a dog tag at the old army air base. With some research, they found the owner's family in New York and they arranged to return it there. This story has been picked up by many media outlets and she has given speeches about it. In fact, you can hear about her journey in an upcoming presentation, in the new Family History Center's West Wing at the Trails & Rails Museum, on May 19th at 7 pm.

Please join us in congratulating the 13th Annual Preservationist of the Year Award winner: Lisa Atchison.

“On a side note, Lisa was also nominated for the Volunteer of the Year Award, says BCHS Executive Director Jennifer Murrish, “One nomination letter said, and I quote, ‘She has worked ... to get bids for painting and repairing the buildings. She is willing to do most anything to help at the museum.’ Lisa is an amazing person and we are lucky to have her as part of our Museum family!”

The Volunteer of the Year Award honors those that go above and beyond to help with fundraising, maintenance, archive research, answering phones, giving tours, and/or many other ways to assist BCHS with their mission of preserving and sharing Buffalo County's vast history.

Previous winners of the Volunteer of the Year award are: 2013-Todd Pickering; 2014-the 1733 Blacksmith Guild; 2015-Elaine Batenhorst; 2016-Katherine Wielechowski, 2017-Dora Day; 2018-Robyn Kendle, 2019-Mary Beth Lowe; 2020-Janice Martin; 2021-Pat Neff.

The Awards Committee had another hard decision when debating the nominations for the Volunteer of the Year Award. We have many volunteers representing the Society that put in thousands of hours of volunteer time, both at the Museum and off-property.

This particular person shows up with a smile and joke while rolling up his sleeves to pitch in, however possible. He has helped to unload tables, assemble chair racks, repaint the livery barn trim, haul trash, repair sprinkler heads, and even repaint the parking lot lines. He comes in monthly to meet with the YRTC youth for projects around the Museum and helps facilitate scout projects, as well. We are grateful for all of our volunteers shared talents. Today, we will celebrate one.

Please join us in congratulating the 10th Annual Volunteer of the Year Award winner: Chuck Prochaska.

BCHS started a scholarship program in 2022, with an anonymous donor. In summary, the scholarship will be awarded to a Buffalo County resident that is graduating in the current year and will be entering a local higher education program full time. Each candidate had to submit a one-page resume with a brief essay on a Buffalo County topic of their choice.

The two 2022 winners were announced at the BCHS Annual Meeting: Faith Poggioli of Kearney and Jamie Adam of Ravenna. “We are proud of these two young ladies and their applications,” says Broc Anderson, BCHS Community Engagement Director. “We look forward to continuing to work with them and we want to thank all of the applicants for the first ever BCHS Scholarship.”

Make nominations by e-mailing bchs.us@hotmail.com, mailing a nomination to Buffalo County Historical Society, P.O. Box 523, Kearney, NE 68848, or calling (308) 234-3041. Please include your name, phone number and the reason the nominee should be honored. Winners are picked by a committee choosing from nominations by the public and committee members. Both awards are announced at the historical society’s Annual Meeting each April. Nominations are accepted all year long but are due by April 1 annually.

Scholarship details are listed on www.bchs.us or you may email Broc Anderson, the BCHS Community Engagement Director, at bchs.buffalotales@hotmail.com.

Contact information:

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About Trails & Rails Museum

The Trails & Rails Museum has six historic buildings visitors can tour, as well as a livery barn, the new JC Marlatt blacksmith shop, and a Union Pacific steam engine and caboose. The Family History Center is the new entrance into the Museum and houses the Buffalo County records and archives, which are used by researchers worldwide. The Trails & Rails Museum is located on the original Mormon Trail route at 710 W. 11th Street in Kearney. The Museum is owned and operated by the Buffalo County Historical Society, which is a not-for-profit, 501(c)(3) organization. Join us on Facebook at “BuffaloCounty HistoricalSociety”. Please visit www.bchs.us for additional details, special events, group tour reservation forms and membership information. Memberships are open to everyone.