

# LHA Today

*Lincoln Northeast High School instructor Bob Freese instructs Braydin Stanard, senior, while stapling studs in the basement of the home.*

## LHA AND LPS: 32ND AFFORDABLE HOME

Lincoln Housing Authority (LHA) and Lincoln Public Schools (LPS) will complete their 32nd affordable home through a longstanding partnership — with NeighborWorks Lincoln joining the collaboration.

The three-bedroom, 1.5-bathroom home at 3127 U St. with a detached single-car garage and unfinished basement is being built by residential construction students from Lincoln Northeast High School. Throughout the school year, the students gain valuable hands-on experience by participating in nearly every phase of construction, including framing, drywall installation, trim work, painting and cabinetry. Under the guidance of instructor Bob Freese, students build practical skills while licensed contractors complete the electrical and plumbing work.

Many students enroll in the program with plans to pursue careers in construction after graduation. Others take the class to develop lifelong skills while giving back to the community through a meaningful, real-world project. Braydin Stanard, a senior, has been enrolled in the class for the entire school year. During the first semester, several students worked together on framing the home. Now, as the only student remaining under the guidance of Freese, Stanard continues the project independently. He said he enrolled in the class because he enjoys hands-on learning and the opportunity to build something tangible.



*The home at 3127 U St. will be completed this summer and sold to an eligible LHA-involved family.*

NeighborWorks Lincoln is overseeing general contracting for the home. LHA will continue its role in selecting the eligible family who will purchase the property. The home will be sold through the Prairie Roots Community Land Trust, which ensures the home remains affordable for the initial buyer and preserves long-term affordability for future homeowners.

Once construction is complete, the home will be sold to an income-qualified family participating with LHA. Interested LHA families are encouraged to begin the eligibility process as soon as possible. Applicants should contact SusanT@L-housing.com to determine eligibility and express interest, as well as apply online and complete the NeighborWorks Lincoln Homebuyer Education course at <https://nwlincoln.org/our-work/apply/overview.html>. Please indicate on your application that you are interested in the LHA house.



*Freese and Stanard are working to complete the house in partnership with the Lincoln Housing Authority.*

# Contractors, residents go above and beyond during Burke renovation

A major renovation project at Burke Plaza has wrapped up — and it's leaving more than just beautiful new bathrooms behind.

Over the past several months, crews replaced bathtubs in more than 90 units with walk-in showers, along with installing new flooring, additional lighting, adjustable shower heads and new medicine cabinets. The improvements have made bathrooms safer, brighter and more accessible for Burke's senior residents of all abilities.

But according to Ruby, resident services specialist, what truly stood out was the people behind the work.

"I wish every contractor could be like them," she said. "They treated the tenants like royalty."

The people at Tru-Built Construction, including Logan and Gabe, worked in the building from November through February. Residents quickly grew fond of them — often making lunch, brownies and other treats to show their appreciation. For many tenants, especially those without nearby family, they eagerly anticipated the daily visits. The contractors took time to make small talk, listen to stories and were always patient and apologetic if they needed to re-enter a unit.

"I never got one complaint," Ruby said. "They were adopted by the tenants."

The plumbers from Bouwens Plumbing, BJ and Kevin, were equally

thoughtful and attentive.

"They were incredible," said Carlene, Burke resident. "I had fun with them being here, and I love my new shower. The process was great. The contractors left no mess, no fuss and cleaned after themselves."

The contractors were equally happy with the experience and the warm welcome they received from residents.

"They made it easy for us and accommodated us so we could get our work done," Gabe from Tru Built said. "Everyone was great, and we were able to snack and talk during little breaks. Honestly, we didn't want to leave."

Adding to the positive impact, the contractors personally donated money for laundry, bingo prizes and other resident activities — going above and beyond their contractual work.

"Residents were thankful to have us there and we felt very wanted; it was a great feeling," Logan from Tru Built said. "We wanted to give back and help make the residents' lives better any way we could. They made our job easy by not causing extra stress, and we wanted to pay that forward."

LHA's Bob Goggins also played a key role, designing the showers and



Carlene smiles beside her brand-new walk-in shower, one of more than 90 tubs recently replaced to enhance comfort, safety and accessibility for residents throughout the building.

visiting daily to ensure everything progressed smoothly.

"He went above and beyond in my eyes to make sure everyone could use the showers, whether they are tall, small or handicapped," Ruby said.

Thanks to teamwork, thoughtful design and genuine care for residents, the shower renovation project has been a resounding success — improving both the building and the sense of community within it.

https://www.L-housing.com/RentalAssistance.html

## Rental listings for those with LHA voucher

Free to all Lincoln Housing Authority participants, LHA has a new online Rental Listing portal in which landlords may include up-to-date rental listings accepting vouchers.

To view current listings, visit [www.L-housing.com/RentalAssistance.html](http://www.L-housing.com/RentalAssistance.html) or scan the QR code and click on the "Rental Listings" building icon. Participants may also stop by the main office for a copy of



Scan QR code to view current rental listings

the Voucher Friendly Landlord list which may have additional contacts. This list is generated every Tuesday.

**Remember:** Please be aware of any type of rental scams and never pay deposits with bitcoin or gift cards.

**Please note:** Properties on the directory have NOT been pre-approved by the Lincoln Housing Authority. All units must meet Lincoln Housing Authority program requirements, pass rent reasonableness, and meet Housing Quality Standards before assistance may begin.

## Reading Matters

### Holiday book giveaway

Lincoln Housing Authority's Reading Matters Committee spread holiday cheer and a love of literacy during a book giveaway Dec. 16 at the Carol Yoakum Family Resource Center.

LHA staff distributed 125 books to tenants, helping ensure children and families had new reading material to enjoy over the holiday break. The event was part of the committee's ongoing efforts to promote literacy and encourage reading at home.



In addition, books were made available in the lobby of the LHA main office, making it easy for families to pick up a story

during regular visits.

Through initiatives like this, the Reading Matters Committee continues to reinforce the importance of reading and provide meaningful resources to support children's learning and long-term success.

### Dolly Parton's Imagination Library delivers free books



A love of reading can begin with a single book — especially when it arrives in the mailbox addressed to a child.

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is a free book-gifting program that mails high-quality, age-appropriate books each month to children from birth to age 5. Designed to foster early literacy and a lifelong love of learning, the program ensures every child, regardless of income, has access to books in the home.

The early years of a child's life are critical for language development and cognitive growth. Reading together strengthens family bonds, builds vocabulary and comprehension skills, sparks imagination and nurtures creativity. Yet, many children, particularly those in lower-income households, have limited access to books. Imagination Library helps close that gap by delivering books directly to families at no cost.



Scan code to visit the Imagination Library.

All children in Lancaster County ages 0–5 are eligible to enroll. After signing up, families can expect their child's first book to arrive within six to eight weeks, followed by a new book every month until the child's fifth birthday. Each title is carefully selected by early childhood experts to support developmental milestones and encourage a joy of reading.

By placing books into the hands of young children during these formative years, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is helping build strong readers, confident learners and brighter futures.

To enroll a child, visit [imaginationlibrary.com/check-availability](https://www.imaginationlibrary.com/check-availability) or scan the QR code to get started.

## Free citizenship classes and legal assistance

Individuals interested in becoming U.S. citizens have a new opportunity to prepare — at no cost. Free citizenship classes are available both in person and online via Zoom, making it easier than ever to take the next step.

The 10-week course meets twice a week and is open to any lawful, permanent resident who is interested in applying for U.S. citizenship. Classes are offered quarterly throughout the year, and new sessions begin each quarter to accommodate participants' schedules.

The next round of classes will run from April through June 2026, and registration is open. While the April session

is approaching, classes are ongoing, so check back for more information.

Participants in the classes also receive free legal assistance to complete their N-400 Application for Naturalization. This support helps ensure applications are prepared accurately and professionally, removing financial barriers that often prevent eligible residents from applying.

All information shared through the program is kept confidential.

These classes are made possible through a partnership between the Asian Community & Cultural Center, El Centro de las

Américas, Lutheran Family Services and the Center for Legal Immigration Assistance.

To register or learn more, visit <https://bit.ly/freecitizenshipclasses>. For additional information, contact: Sarah at [sarah@elcentrone.org](mailto:sarah@elcentrone.org), 402-413-6457 or Joy at [joy@lincolnasiancenter.org](mailto:joy@lincolnasiancenter.org), 402-417-0683.



Scan code to learn more about the classes.

# LHA students have Nebraska NAHRO Scholarship opportunity

The Nebraska NAHRO Scholarship is designed to support graduating high school seniors and nontraditional students who are preparing to pursue post-secondary education.

Eligible students must be involved with Lincoln Housing Authority (LHA) and plan to enroll in college or other post-secondary education either part time (fewer than 12 credit hours) or full time (12 credit hours or more).

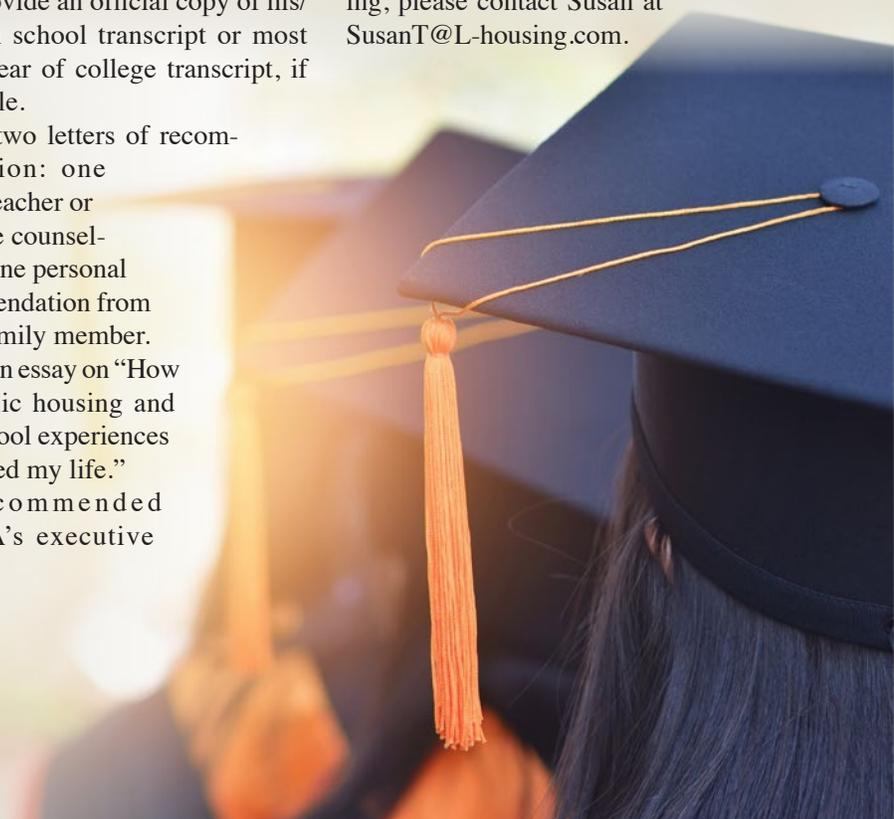
Scholarships are awarded in the amount of \$1,000 for full-time students and \$500 for part-time students. Awards are applied toward the fall semester and paid directly to the school. Funds may be used for tuition, books and other education-related expenses. Students must reapply each year to be considered for continued scholarship support.

### Applicants must:

- Be a high school senior or nontraditional student residing in a Lincoln Housing Authority property, including LHA-managed or owned units, public housing or Section 8 housing.

- Have a minimum cumulative grade point average of a “B” or 3.0 on his or her school’s grading scale and must provide an official copy of his/her high school transcript or most recent year of college transcript, if applicable.
- Submit two letters of recommendation: one from a teacher or guidance counselor, and one personal recommendation from a non-family member.
- Submit an essay on “How my public housing and high school experiences influenced my life.”
- Be recommended by LHA’s executive director.

Applications must be submitted by June 15. LHA may submit up to two applications. If you are interested in applying, please contact Susan at [SusanT@L-housing.com](mailto:SusanT@L-housing.com).



 **2026 Resident Scholarship Program**

Lincoln Housing Authority tenants can apply for the 2026 HAI Group’s Resident Scholarship Program. The deadline is June 5.

HAI Group will award 20 scholarships, valued at \$6,000 each, nationally in a drawing this spring. The scholarship helps students pay for higher education. LHA residents have been awarded this scholarship in the past.

Applicants must be U.S. citizens or permanent residents with a green card and live in a public housing authority property or have a Housing Choice Voucher. The applicant also must be attending an accredited or licensed technical school, two- or four-year college or university, or a master’s degree or PhD program for the fall 2026 semester.

For more information or to apply, visit [www.haigroup.com/scholarships](http://www.haigroup.com/scholarships).



## LPS KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION OPEN

Do you have a child that will start kindergarten next year? Lincoln Public Schools is accepting kindergarten registrations for the 2026-2027 school year.

Children turning age 5 on or before July 31, 2026, can be registered. A parent/guardian should go to [LPS.org](http://LPS.org) and click on the red “Enroll Your Student” button. You’ll also find information necessary for registering, required documents needed and answers to frequently asked questions.

For parents unable to register their child online, contact the elementary school in your attendance area. Questions about kindergarten registration should also be directed to the child’s attendance area school.

For more information about kindergarten registration and assessment testing for incoming students, please go to [home.lps.org/studentservices/kindergarten-registration-assessment](http://home.lps.org/studentservices/kindergarten-registration-assessment). This website also includes information on translation services.



## Small steps to big goals, FSS helps build self-sufficiency

A safe and stable home is essential for families to thrive, supporting stronger physical, mental and developmental well-being. Since its inception in 1993, Lincoln Housing Authority's Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program has empowered hundreds of families to move toward long-term independence and financial stability.

For Megan, the FSS program played a key role in helping her accomplish goals. Through the program, she learned how to monitor her credit score and received practical advice on improving it.

"The most valuable thing I learned from the FSS program is that accomplishing your goals takes time and even the smallest steps in the right direction count," Megan said.

She encourages others to take advantage of the opportunity.

"I think people should utilize the FSS program because it holds you accountable to your goals; and by the time of graduation, you are a lot more self-sufficient than when you started. It is also a great way to build up a little savings to use toward a big end goal."

FSS is a free, voluntary program

available to LHA tenants who are motivated to become more self-sufficient. The program helps participants take meaningful steps toward goals such as building an emergency fund, paying off debt, improving credit, pursuing education or job training, preparing for homeownership and securing stable employment. Participants commit to setting clear goals and following through with action steps designed to create lasting change.

FSS Coordinators Amy and Carrie provide individualized guidance and support tailored to each participant's needs. Assistance may include educational programs, career assessments, job training, child care resources, counseling, case management, credit counseling, homeownership preparation and coordination with community service providers.

The FSS program can last up to five years, and participants continue receiving housing assistance as long as they remain eligible.

One of the program's most powerful tools is its escrow savings component. When

a participant's earned income increases and their rent rises as a result, a portion of that rent increase may be deposited into an escrow savings account. When participants successfully complete the program and meet their goals, they receive the funds in the account plus accrued interest.

Graduates can use their escrow savings however they choose. Many invest in education, pay down debt, purchase reliable transportation or put the funds toward buying a home.



To learn more about the Family Self-Sufficiency program, watch an informational video and read newsletters, visit [www.L-housing.com/FamilySelfSufficiency.html](http://www.L-housing.com/FamilySelfSufficiency.html).

To apply, contact Amy at [AWagner@L-housing.com](mailto:AWagner@L-housing.com) or 402-434-5527, or Carrie at [Carrie@L-housing.com](mailto:Carrie@L-housing.com) or 402-434-5529.



CenterPointe's SquareOne program provides free, compassionate support for youth up to age 19, and their parents or guardians facing substance use and mental health challenges. SquareOne meets families where they are offering nonjudgmental guidance, empathetic assessment and practical solutions for a fresh start in navigating mental health and substance use challenges.

SquareOne offers immediate and ongoing support tailored to each youth and family's unique situation through:

- **Crisis Response:** Accessible 24/7, SquareOne provides walk-in and mobile crisis services for youth and families. All youth are screened for suicide risk, assessed for immediate safety needs, counseled on access to lethal means,

and provided with safety planning as necessary. Staff also help identify coping skills, social supports and community resources.

- **Crisis Therapy:** Up to two sessions with a licensed therapist include an assessment, follow-up and recommendations for ongoing care or referrals.
- **Post-Crisis Ongoing Support:** For up to 90 days, a family support worker collaborates with youth and families to create a recovery plan, identify goals, and coordinate care across resources and services.

Youth and families may voluntarily seek SquareOne's services directly at the CenterPointe Campus for Health and WellBeing, at 2202 S. 11th St., Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.–8 p.m. Recognizing that crises can occur at any time, families may call 402-899-8608 for assistance outside these hours or by calling the 24/7 crisis line at 402-475-6695.

SquareOne supports youth and families throughout the Region V area, including Lancaster, Butler, Fillmore, Gage, Jefferson, Johnson, Nemaha, Otoe, Pawnee, Polk, Richardson, Saline, Saunders, Seward, Thayer and York counties.



# Free tax preparation services offered

As the April 15, 2026, tax deadline approaches, consider taking advantage of the Lincoln EITC Coalition's free community tax preparation services offered through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program.

VITA offers no-cost federal- and state-tax preparation and filing for low- to moderate-income households. VITA sites operate in various Lincoln area locations from February to April.

For more information, call 211 or visit [vita.unl.edu](http://vita.unl.edu). To make an appointment, go to [vita.unl.edu/signup](http://vita.unl.edu/signup).

*Note: The IRS determines what types of tax returns can be prepared at a VITA site. If your return falls "out of scope," VITA volunteers will not be able to complete it.*

## Please bring the following to any tax preparation site:

- Photo ID for all tax return signers. Both spouses must sign if filing jointly.
- Social Security numbers and birth dates for all dependents.
- W-2s from employer, W-2Gs for gambling income, and 1099 forms for miscellaneous income, including interest, dividends, unemployment, pension, 401(k) distribution and other income.
- Banking information for deposit/debit, routing and account numbers.
- Tax identification numbers, name, address and phone number for any and all day care providers.
- If filer is a college student, bring 1098T and student account information showing payment of tuition and qualified fees.
- 1095-A forms if you purchased insurance through the Health Insurance Marketplace (exchange).
- 1098-E form for student loan interest.

## FREE Community Tax Preparation 2025 Federal and Nebraska State Returns

### Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Site Schedule

Must have an appointment.

Schedule an appointment at <https://vita.unl.edu/signup/> OR scan the QR code beginning Jan. 15. When scheduling your tax preparation appointment, please choose a site location, date, and time.

All sites listed below will be face-to-face and require an appointment.

Facilitated self-assistance (FSA) Self-Prepared, is available.

Can't make it to an in-person appointment? Sign up for our virtual tax preparation.



*Schedule an appointment today by scanning the QR Code:*



*VITA follows Lincoln Public Schools and/or UNL bad weather closures. Please refer to your confirmation email/text to reschedule your appointment during these events. When in doubt, check our social media or call/email our office.*

*If you have questions, contact Lincoln VITA (Tax Credit Alliance of Nebraska).*

*Visit us at [vita@unl.edu](mailto:vita@unl.edu) or 402-472-0857*

Site Name	Address	Hours	Dates Available
<b>Monday</b>			
American Job Center	1330 N St., Suite A	10 a.m.-3 p.m.	Feb. 2-April 13
<b>Tuesday</b>			
Asian Community & Cultural Center	144 N 44th St., Ste A	11 a.m.-1 p.m.	Feb. 3-April 7
Southeast Community College	8800 O St., T-102	1-4 p.m.	Feb. 10-April 7
Victor E. Anderson Branch Library	3635 Touzalin Ave.	4-6 p.m.	Feb. 3-April 7
<b>Wednesday</b>			
Loren C. Eiseley Branch Library	1530 Superior St.	1-6 p.m.	Feb. 4-April 8
Southeast Community College	8800 O St., T-102	2-5 p.m.	Feb. 4-April 8
<b>Thursday</b>			
Air Park Community Center	4900 Mike Scholl St.	10 a.m.-1 p.m.	Feb. 5-April 9
<b>Saturday</b>			
Nebraska East Union	1705 Arbor Drive	10 a.m.-3 p.m.	Jan. 31-April 4
<b>Sunday</b>			
Bennett Martin Public Library	136 S 14th St.	1-3 p.m.	Feb. 1-March 29
Good Neighbor Community Center	2617 Y St.	1-3 p.m.	Feb. 15-March 22



# HealthToGo machines offer free health supplies

Earlier this year, Lincoln-Lancaster County installed several HealthToGo vending machines throughout the city, providing free access to essential health, hygiene and safety supplies.

The machines are designed to reduce barriers to basic necessities by placing free items in easily accessible public locations. Residents can discreetly pick up supplies they may need, helping support personal health and overall community well-being.

## HealthToGo machines are currently at:

- Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department, 3131 “O” St.
- “F” Street Community Center, 1225 “F” St.
- Union Plaza, southeast corner of 21st and “P” streets

- Carriage Park Parking Garage, 1128 “L” St., north-east corner of 11th and “L” streets, ground level next to the bike racks

The Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department is piloting the selection of products stocked in the machines. Items offered will be driven by community need, allowing the department to adjust inventory based on feedback and usage patterns.

By placing these machines in central, high-traffic areas, the county aims to make essential supplies more accessible while promoting health, hygiene and safety for all residents.



# Seniors celebrate with festive parties

LHA’s senior residents at Burke Plaza, Crossroads House and Mahoney Manor celebrated the Christmas season with festive gatherings and plenty of holiday cheer.

At Burke Plaza, residents shared their favorite Christmas cookies and enjoyed music, a visit from Santa and special gifts, including ornaments, necklaces and candy. Crossroads House welcomed a group of tuba players who filled the building with classic Christmas carols. Residents at Mahoney Manor also gathered to celebrate with refreshments and fellowship, making the season bright across all three communities.

The celebrations at all three properties highlighted the importance of connection and shared experiences during the holiday season. Through music, treats and community, residents created memories and enjoyed the magic of Christmas together.



# All School Graduation Party 2026

Saturday, May 30

Antelope Park from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.



## Party to help graduates begin next chapter

Marvilee, a Lincoln agency helping families suffering from substance abuse, will host an all-school graduation party for 2026 graduates. The May 30 event is scheduled from 2-5 p.m. at Antelope Park, 3200 Memorial Park Drive.

This is open to all graduates, with special emphasis on those who may not otherwise have a celebration. It will connect graduates and their families with community resources that support their next steps, including employment, education, health care and mentorship opportunities.

There will be music, food trucks, games, prizes and swag bags, along with opportunities to engage with local businesses and organizations. The goal is to help graduates build strong futures and confidently begin their next chapter.

For more information or questions, call 402-890-8723, email [mysonnymarvinlee@gmail.com](mailto:mysonnymarvinlee@gmail.com) or visit [www.marvilee.org](http://www.marvilee.org). Student registration for the event can be found at [www.marvilee.org/all-school-graduation-party.html](http://www.marvilee.org/all-school-graduation-party.html).

## Job and bid opportunities

Under the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Lincoln Housing Authority is required to publicly post employment and bid opportunities. To learn about employment with LHA, visit [www.L-housing.com/Employment.html](http://www.L-housing.com/Employment.html).

LHA regularly issues public bid notices and request for proposals (RFPs) for ongoing repair, renovation and new construction projects. Review a list of current bid opportunities at [www.L-housing.com/Vendors.html](http://www.L-housing.com/Vendors.html).



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## Free reuse store open

Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department opened a new reuse store where individuals can find quality products for the home, garden, hobbies, automotive care and more all at no cost through its GoodToGo reuse store.

GoodToGo is stocked with gently used or unopened products that were donated at HazToGo, Lincoln's Hazardous Waste Center.

Items may include wood filler and patching, paint-related solvents, adhesive removers, ice melt, fertilizers, snap-line chalk, chainsaw bar oil, lubricant, glue, adhesive, caulk, joint compound, grout, wood/deck cleaner, carpet cleaner, motor oil, brake fluid, antifreeze, transmission fluid, windshield wiper fluid, interior and exterior car cleaners and polishes, spray paint, stain and varnish. Inventory changes regularly.

GoodToGo is at 5101 North 48th St., right next to HazToGo and is open Wednesdays, Fridays and the third Saturday of each month between 9 a.m.-1 p.m., and is closed on federal and city holidays.

Visit GoodToGo and browse the shelves of quality products — an easy way to try out products before you buy or if you need something for a small project. This store will help reduce waste and cost, helping to promote a more sustainable community.

For more information, call 402-441-8021 or visit [GoodToGoLNK.com](http://GoodToGoLNK.com). For more information about HazToGo, visit [HazToGo.com](http://HazToGo.com).

