



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

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WAUNETA SENIOR CENTER TO EXPAND

North Platte, Neb., May 23, 2003--The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development awarded this month, a grant of \$44,000 to Wauneta Senior Services Center, Inc. for the expansion of the Wauneta Senior Center that serves 625 patrons from Wauneta and surrounding communities. The expansion will allow for the addition of an activity room and specialty clinic area. Leveraged monies of \$72,750 from Wauneta Senior Services Center, Inc. and \$10,000 from the Wauneta Community Foundation completed the project funding.

"Senior Centers are a source for community-based social, medical and nutritional supports that help seniors remain independent and in their communities," stated Roberta Mues, rural development specialist for Nebraska USDA Rural Development. "I have been amazed at what the Wauneta Senior Services Center, Inc. has been able to achieve in the past with limited funds and a lot of volunteer labor from the seniors. I look forward to the completion of their expansion project."

The Wauneta Senior Center has been in existence since 1990 and at its present location since 1999. Hot meals are served to the senior citizens at the center five days a week. The center hosts activities such as health clinics, bingo, quilting, and game clubs. Internet access is afforded the seniors via the center's computer. Specialty clinics are held on toenail care, for blood pressure readings, exercise classes and Chase County Hospital health care. The facility is available to the public for meetings, family dinners, anniversaries, receptions and other activities.

The growing popularity of the Wauneta Senior Center has resulted in increased patron usage. Patrons come from Wauneta, Palisade, Hamlet, Imperial and Benkelman. The increase brought the need for expansion of the center in order to accommodate its larger patron base.

The \$126,750 expansion project will allow Wauneta Senior Services Center, Inc. to rehabilitate the 23x76-ft. building that they purchased in 1999 which is located south of the current senior center. The expansion will allow the center to accommodate the growth in demand for their services. An activity room will be added so hobbies and social activities will not have to be cleared or interrupted in order for meals to be served. Specialty clinics will be held on a time schedule conducive to providers and seniors instead of during non-meal hours. Additionally, exercise equipment will be available during the center's open hours.

USDA grant funds were provided through the USDA Rural Development Community Facilities Grant program. For additional information contact Roberta Mues at 1202 S. Cottonwood North Platte, Neb. 69101 or phone (308) 534-2360, (402) 437-5093 (TDY).
Visit <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/ne/>.



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