



Winter
Spring
2017

the Newsletter for Visitors of the State Capitols



Big Birthdays for Mississippi and Nebraska

Two states will be having significant birthdays this year. Mississippi will be celebrating its bicentennial and Nebraska its sesquicentennial. Both states will have numerous things going on, so it's a great time to plan a visit to one (or both!) to participate in all the events.

On December 10th, 1817, Mississippi became our country's 20th state. In two hundred years, the state has undergone numerous transformations and much growth. The capitol, in Jackson, is an outstanding building and well worth a visit. In fact, it is the third capitol constructed in Jackson. The first, completed in 1822, was not retained as the city developed. The second, built in 1839, served until 1903. It may still be enjoyed today, as the Old Capitol Museum. A need for more space and more modern amenities brought the new capitol into being, and it has been serving ever since. At its dedication, Governor Longino said the new building would represent the state's public spirit, pride and integrity. The building's funding was an example of sound planning on the part of the state: costing more than one million dollars, it was paid for by back taxes from a lawsuit settled with the Illinois Central Railroad.

The beautiful Beaux Arts-style building boasts art and stained glass within, as well as an eagle atop its dome. The eagle is eight feet high and fifteen feet wide, though naturally appearing smaller from the ground. On the grounds, a replica of the Liberty Bell, a gift from the people of France, may be found among fine examples of the state's tree (and source of its nickname), magnolias.

During the year, a rare twenty-star flag, flown in the U.S. in the years immediately after Mississippi's admission to the Union, will be on tour for residents and visitors alike to learn about and admire. The numerous events all over the state will culminate with the grand opening of the Museum of Mississippi History and the Mississippi Civil Rights Museum, in Jackson. A postage stamp will also be out for your use (above)!

For more information, please visit:

<http://mstourism.com/mississippi-bicentennial/>

Brought into the Union on March 1st, 1867, Nebraska will be enjoying a jubilant year in honor of its sesquicentennial. Events across the state will include a rare chance to cross the state aboard a Union Pacific train, in August. Information on all going on may be found at:

<https://ne150.org/>

Many of the celebrations will, of course, center around the capitol. The state's capitol stands starkly different from the



territorial and state capitols that preceded it. Predecessors in Omaha and Lincoln were too small or suffered from poor construction and materials, which brought the idea of a new building again to the fore in the 1910s. The result was the first capitol within the nation to depart radically from the style prevalent up until that time, as demonstrated by the building in Washington DC. It was constructed in phases, 1922-1932, with mosaics that will certainly delight any capitol visitor, making it one of the most breathtaking and memorable of our nation's capitols. At the top of the central tower, the Sower honors the state's agrarian roots.

There will be a postage stamp for Nebraska as well (previous page).

A birthday is a fine thing, and we hope that you will join in on everything going on in Mississippi and Nebraska this year. Here's to many more birthdays to come!



From Your Fellow Capitol Travelers

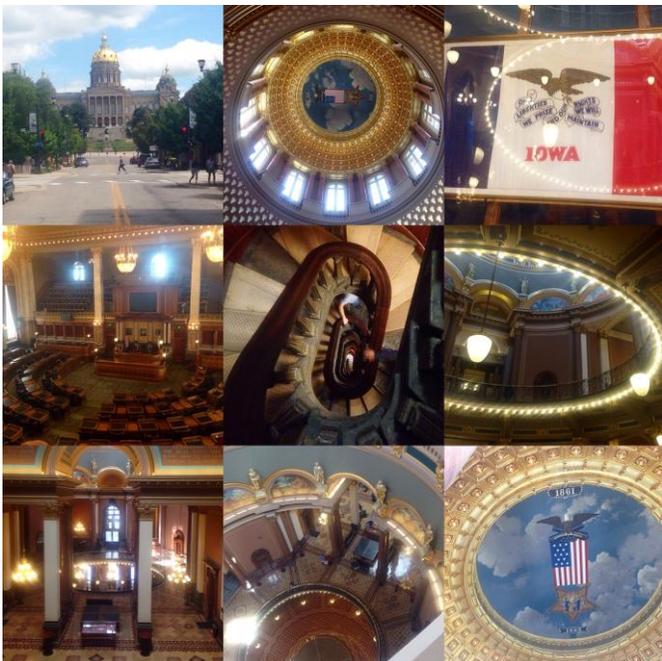
After becoming a widower and going to part-time work at Fort Leavenworth in 2015, I took the advice of my grown children to start visiting all the state capitols (as I do have a degree in architecture, but I never practiced). Through July of 2016, I made nine from my home in the Kansas City area without much difficulty. The first week in August I had time to try four more doing a North Central driving tour and posting composite pictures on Instagram. I got SD and ND but I found that MN was closed. With IA (my favorite on the trip) I'm now at 12 instead of 13. In addition, I've decided to visit presidential libraries too. At West Branch, IA, the Hoover library was amazing, as it had so much more than about the Crash of 1929.

One more thing I discovered about visiting all the capitols in the capital cities concerns longest and shortest routes. A friend who is a "computer geek" sent me this link about Interesting Map Problems:

<http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~bryant/boolean/maps.html>

The shortest capital tour route of the 48 contiguous states totals 11,698 miles!

John C., of Lansing KS



We took a long, three-week road trip this summer with three of my kids. We stopped at ten state capitols along the way. What a fun way to road trip! I'm so glad that our neighbor told us about this passbook program! It's fun and educational. (Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Missouri are pictured below and Nebraska is shown on the previous page.) We met so many nice people along the way.

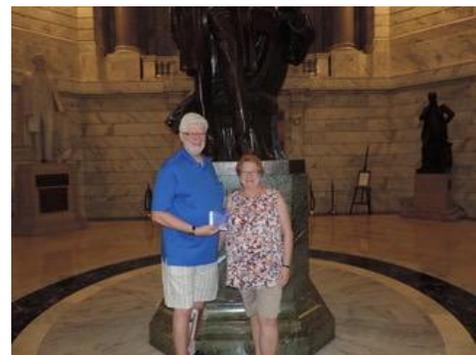
the Donnellys





The Ricketts family, from Dallas, Texas had a summer trip to Topeka, Jefferson City, Springfield and Madison. They sent an artistic image of the capitol in Madison, altered using a 'waterlogue' app. "We loved Springfield and really enjoyed everything that city offered. We decided to ride Amtrak from St. Louis to Springfield to Chicago and then Milwaukee. The kids loved the train. Madison was an amazing city and the capitol and downtown area was wonderful! Madison was our 30th capitol."

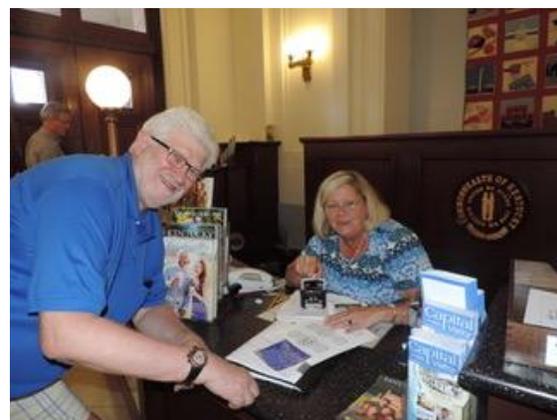
Congratulations to Judy and Joe C. --- 50 Capitols!



Judy and Joe C. have conquered all the capitols, doing so in a unique way. They saw their 50th capitol on their 50th anniversary!

"The staff in Frankfort were amazed when we told them Frankfort was our 50th state capitol and it was on our 50th anniversary. It was a first for them. For many years when we were in the vicinity of a capitol we would visit, but most of the time we didn't know the date so we revisited some after we had the book. Fortunately we went to the capitol in Juneau when we stopped on a cruise in 1992. We purchased the book when we were in Montpelier, Vermont in September, 2012. So

we have done most of them since then. Judy's favorite was Hawaii's, due to its unique style of architecture. I think mine is Connecticut. It is tough to decide; all are different, beautiful and unique in their own way.



As a final note, remember that it's always a wise idea to call ahead to make sure the capitol you're hoping to visit will be open. Perhaps they're planning a special event on the day you're thinking, so better not to be surprised!

If you hear of any other news we should share, please let us know. We try to stay informed, but there are too many things happening in those fifty capitols to track them all alone.

As always, safe travels!