

Though the match ended prematurely, there was still plenty to smile about for NU volleyball.

SPORTS



Omaha teen earns a national master title in chess.

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Omaha World-Herald

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CHRIS MACHIAN, THE WORLD-HERALD

The statue of the Rev. Livingston Wills, known as the Broom Man, is seen at the studio of sculptor John Lajba in Omaha on Wednesday. “I wanted him to be really connectable as a human being,” Lajba said of the sculpture, “as if people could come up to him and say, ‘hi.’ I have him very well-dressed, as he always was.”

Statue will honor life of Omaha’s Broom Man

The sculpture will be dedicated in Turner Park to honor the long life of the ‘poor peddler’

MICHAEL KELLY
Special to The World-Herald

More than a decade after it started, the Broom Man Project is coming to fruition with the dedication of a bronze statue of a self-described “poor peddler.”

The Rev. Livingston Wills, with 5 percent vision from birth, died in 2008 at age 91. He had warmed the hearts of Omahans for six decades by boarding buses to distant neighborhoods and walking the city’s streets, selling brooms door to door.

He whistled as he walked, in his later years with a cane in one hand and another steadying brooms over a shoulder. Friends affectionately joked that whistling was his “sonar” that kept him from bumping into things.

On his walks he bumped into countless people who may not have known his name but remembered the Broom Man. Omaha sculptor John Lajba said the 600-pound finished product won’t be on a pedestal but at street level, appropriate for his subject.



BILL BATSON, THE WORLD-HERALD

In this Feb. 18, 1999, photo, the Rev. Livingston Wills stops in a doorway of a business near 13th and Pierce Streets on his rounds to sell brooms.

Please see **BROOM MAN**, Page A2

Convention center by stadium pitched

Nebraska Athletics wants the building next to Memorial Stadium with a connecting walkway

CHRIS DUNKER
Lincoln Journal Star

LINCOLN — Lancaster County last week completed its \$8.9 million purchase of the downtown site for a proposed \$150 million convention center, moving the project forward even as its financing remains unresolved and Nebraska Athletics has explored

a competing location near Memorial Stadium.

The county closed last week on Block 90, a site near the Cornhusker hotel selected from more than 1,000 considered for the convention center. But its application to use a turnback tax to help finance the project remains pending after Gov. Jim Pillen asked a state board in May to delay a vote.

During that pause, Nebraska Athletics pitched a separate proposal to locate the convention center adjacent to Memorial Stadium, potentially tapping the same type of state tax financing the county is seeking.

At a meeting in June, Athletic Director Troy Dannen and Deputy Athletic Director

Kortne Gosha pitched the idea to Pillen and others to locate a convention center on the ground floor of a condo/hotel tower with a connecting walkway to the stadium.

Pillen said he may be open to the idea, but no formal plans for the site just west of Memorial Stadium, which is home to the Champions Club and a parking lot, have been publicly announced.

Work on a \$600 million stadium renovation, which is being funded through private donations and bond financing, is underway and will accelerate after the Huskers’ final home game this fall.

Please see **CONVENTION**, Page A8

Bacon looks to support ‘old-school’ Republican

The congressman hopes next president like Ronald Reagan

BEN DOODY
World-Herald Executive Editor

Rep. Don Bacon has at least one clear political pursuit in mind as his tenure in the House of Representatives winds down: The five-term Nebraska Republican told The World-Herald he is eyeing a supporting role in a 2028 presidential campaign, hoping to elect a Republican in the Ronald Reagan mold.

Bacon, who’s not seeking a sixth term this fall in the Omaha-based 2nd Congressional District, said he recently met with members of Our Republican Legacy, an advocacy group that says it’s working to “advance historic Republican principles and apply them to America in the 21st Century.”

The group says on its website that it’s dedicated to “unity, the Constitution, fiscal responsibility, free enterprise, and peace through strength.” The organization lists former Vice Presidents Mike Pence and Dan Quayle and former Speaker of the House John Boehner among its founders.

Bacon said he has no particular 2028 candidate in mind, though he reiterated his admiration for Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp and former Virginia Gov. Glenn Youngkin.

“I’d like us to go back to our roots, and I want to advocate for more old-school Reagan Republicanism,” Bacon said, adding, “I want to be involved and get the party back to where it was.”

Bacon has endorsed President Donald Trump in all three of Trump’s general election races but been an increasingly vocal critic of Trump on areas ranging from tariffs to Trump’s comments on multiple foreign-policy topics.

The congressman has said he supported then-Sen. Marco Rubio in the 2016 GOP primary and that he thought former South Carolina Gov. and UN ambassador Nikki Haley was the best GOP candidate in 2024.

Bacon has been critical of Vice President J.D. Vance, the early polling front-runner in the 2028 race.

Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas, the runner-up to Trump in the 2016 presidential race, has openly flirted with a 2028 run. Bacon said he has “some skepticism” about Cruz as a candidate but that he’s appreciated the senator’s voice on the rise of antisemitism.

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Helping families

A nonprofit unites a Nebraska family with their son after a combat injury.
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Fire training exercise

A fire training exercise takes down a Sarpy County motel raided for sex trafficking.
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Weather

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