



By Tim Linscott

Managing Editor

In his pursuit of visiting all 93 Nebraska counties this year, gubernatorial candidate Sen. Tom Carlson (R) visited Perkins County last Friday (Oct. 18).

Carlson is currently in his second term representing the 38th district and the native of Holdrege feels his being from this end of the state will serve him well in the state capitol.

“On this end of the state I feel people feel detached from Lincoln and Omaha,” Carlson said.

“People feel that people in Lincoln and Omaha don’t care about this end of the state. I don’t fit into this category because I live in Holdrege. I grew up on a farm near Holdrege and lived there over 30 years. I am rural Nebraska.”

Of the five Republican gubernatorial candidates, Carlson is the only one who lives in the third district.

Being from a rural area has given him a different perspective and the major need for Nebraska is to keep citizens safe.

“We don’t think about that a lot because we take our safety for granted. We feel safe. Look back to 9-11, when our safety was threatened, nothing else mattered for a while,” Carlson said. “We need a strong highway patrol and judicial system and prison system. That all takes tax dollars.”

Also, a very important aspect of being a strong state is increasing private sector jobs.

“It is those private sector jobs that pay the taxes to ensure we can deliver services,” Carlson said. “We have to be careful on expanding government but if we expand government jobs one position, we need 10 private sector jobs to pay for that.”

Building a strong education across the state is vital to the future of Nebraska, Carlson points out.

“All children in this state deserve the opportunity to earn a quality education. We don’t have the responsibility to give them one, but we have the responsibility to give them the opportunity to study and earn one,” Carlson said.

Building a system of quality roads and bridges all throughout the state is important because citizens need to get around safely, but for the commerce aspect of the economy, it is a vital piece of the puzzle in Carlson’s book.

Carlson is on the Natural Resources Committee and was on the agriculture committee last year as a senator.

Water is a particular concern for Carlson.

His priority bill last session established the Water Sustainability Taskforce and a policy is being developed for the state to not use more water than what is given in a year.

“If our supply is not enough, we can increase the supply, cut back what we are using or a combination and that is what we will wind up doing,” Carlson said. “Water is vitally important, especially out here.”

With 66 percent of the Ogallala Aquifer under Nebraska, he said establishing guidelines and options for water is important.

“We can’t be water bankrupt,” he said.