



Raise your hand if you are tired of snow and cold weather. Chances are you are anxiously awaiting the

arrival of spring. Remain positive. Spring's arrival is only twenty-five days away! Another exciting spring arrival, one that is a few more days away, is an event that has been happening for the past thirty-two years. I am referring to the event called Spring Affair. From its humble beginnings in 1986, Spring Affair has become the Midwest's biggest plant sale and garden event.

The Nebraska Statewide Arboretum (NSA) sponsors Spring Affair. The Nebraska Statewide Arboretum's (NSA) mission is to develop sustainable landscapes for healthy homes and communities. NSA has over eighty affiliate sites (arboretums, historic landscapes and other public gardens) in more than fifty Nebraska communities. This network is unique in the nation. The Arboretum has delivered over eight million dollars in grants to more than 245 communities resulting in over one thousand public landscaping projects involving parks, schools, libraries, hospitals, business districts, and other places important to community life. To learn more about this impressive organization, log onto [www.arboretum.unl.edu](http://www.arboretum.unl.edu)

More than 700 varieties of plants will be offered at the daylong plant sale. In addition, there will be on-site educational plant talks and assorted garden vendors. The plants for sale include perennials, herbs, native plants, temperennials, trees and shrubs. Bluebird Nursery of Clarkson, Nebraska, provides the herbaceous plants, and the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum provides the trees and shrubs. All plants available are selected for regional suitability, uniqueness and demand.

This year's Spring Affair plant sale takes place on Saturday, April 28, 2018, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the Lancaster Event Center Pavilion I, 4100 North 84<sup>th</sup> St., in Lincoln, Nebraska. Admission is free, and parking is free. My wife Rita and I have attended this event many times in the past and plan to attend again this year.

I offer one other item of interest. There will be a Preview Party the night before Saturday's sale for enthusiasts who wish to get a sneak peak of this year's offerings. The Preview Party is scheduled for Friday evening, April 27, from 6 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Tickets are required for this event and will be available on line beginning March 5. The Preview Party starts with cocktails and a silent auction. A gourmet dinner follows. During and after the dinner, attendees are able to preview and purchase plants before Saturday's sale. Imagine attending a huge garden party where 45,000 Nebraska-grown plants involving 700 varieties are set among tables brightly decorated while the fragrance of dinner fills the air. By the way, I strongly encourage becoming a member of NSA. Through membership, one is entitled to receive a 10% discount on plants and a discount on Preview Party tickets.

By visiting the arboretum's website, one can also sign up for the Spring Affair Newsletter to be mailed in March. To receive the newsletter, all one needs to do is send an email to [arboretum@unl.edu](mailto:arboretum@unl.edu) When sending the email, place Spring Affair News in the subject line. Then, fill in your full name and mailing address. The newsletter will include all the information on what plants are available, their prices and other valuable plant information.

Put your hand down. I know you, too, are tired of snow and cold. Instead, be positive. Look forward to spring and while doing so, check out the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum's Spring Affair. You will be glad you did.