

Holland's success earns award



From the notebook: • Richard D. Holland of Omaha was honored Friday night in Washington, D.C., with the 2010 Horatio Alger Award “in recognition of his personal and professional success despite humble and challenging beginnings.”

His name today is associated with the \$100 million Holland Performing Arts Center in Omaha, for which he and his late wife, Mary, gave a sizable but undisclosed donation.

Born in 1921, Dick grew up during the Great Depression, served in the Army Chemical Corps during World War II and then joined his father's advertising agency. He later started the Holland, Dreves and Reilly advertising agency, but also made another wise decision — he was an early investor with Warren Buffett. Horatio Alger was a 19th-century author of adventure stories, often described as “rags to riches,” about young people who rose in life through hard work, determination and concern for others. Among 10 others honored Friday by the Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans were retired Gen. Tommy Franks and former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. The association's president is another Omahan, businessman David L. Sokol — like Holland, a graduate of the University of Nebraska at Omaha. Saying that adversity builds character, Sokol lauded Holland's life story of “strength, resolve and achievement.”

- Other states occasionally talk about switching to a one-house legislature like Nebraska's, but they never do it.

Spurred by U.S. Sen George Norris, Nebraska did so in the 1930s. An article last week in the Port Huron, Mich., Times-Herald quotes Nebraska native Howard Heidemann, a county commissioner in Michigan, as urging Michigan to do so.

The newspaper also quoted former State Sen. DiAnna Schimek of Lincoln, who touted our officially nonpartisan Legislature's transparency, its public hearing on every bill and its lack of committees to reconcile differences in bills passed by two houses.

And then there is the cost-saving. Nebraska, with 49 senators, pays them \$12,000 a year. Michigan, with 110 in the House and 38 in the Senate, pays \$91,650 each.

- J. Brooks Joyner, 65, who resigned as director of the Joslyn Art Museum in Omaha last fall, is the new president and CEO of the Allentown, Pa., Art Museum.

He spent nearly nine years at the Joslyn and was credited early on with steering it through

a financial crisis. He also spearheaded installation of the museum's \$10 million Sculpture Garden.

Joyner had said he hoped to stay in Omaha, but he told the Allentown Morning Call that he was pleased to be near New York, Philadelphia and his native Baltimore. He was selected from dozens of applicants to lead the museum, which has a budget about half the size of the Joslyn.

- Sioux Falls, S.D., patterned its airport governing board after the Omaha Airport Authority, but there's not a lot of love.

The Argus Leader newspaper says the retired director of the Sioux Falls Regional Airport Authority, Mike Marnach, doesn't like to mention Nebraska's largest city by name. Because some people from Sioux Falls drive to Omaha for cheaper fares, he half-jokingly refers to "the Oword" or "that city to the south."

Richard Holland was recognized for his success despite humble beginnings with the Alger Award.