

LARRY FILBRANDT SELECTED AS PARADE GRAND MARSHAL

When Larry and Linda Filbrandt moved to La Vista in 1962, the City was still a fledgling community with only houses and no businesses to speak of from which to build a tax base. But it was also out of the hustle and bustle of Omaha, and it seemed like an ideal place to raise a family.

So the Filbrandt family settled in to their home off of Olive Avenue, and although they eventually moved to a bigger house in a different neighborhood, they never had a desire to move to another community.

“We became friends with a lot of people and we got involved,” Larry said. He and others were founding members of the La Vista Jaycees, which provided funding for community programs such as youth sports. In November 1985, at the urging of then-Mayor Harold “Andy” Anderson, Filbrandt joined the La Vista Civil Service Commission to assist with the hiring of police officers.

For the next 36 years, Filbrandt had a role in hiring every officer currently working as a member of the La Vista Police Department, going all the way back to when Chief Bob Lausten was a new hire from Los Angeles, California.

The Civil Service testing process has evolved over the years, Filbrandt said, progressing from giving a badge to any Joe off the street who was interested, to today with the Sarpy-Douglas Law Enforcement Academy.

“At that time you just picked someone off the street and asked them if they wanted to be a police officer,” he said. “The commission created all sorts of testing for them. I think the training here covers everything and you’re given a chance to branch off to a section you want. You’re not going to be strictly a street cop. You have the chance to do something different, and you’re given the opportunity to branch off into other aspects of the job.”

In February, Filbrandt retired from the Civil Service Commission after 36 years of service. For his family’s commitment to the La Vista community, Larry and Linda and their children will be honored as this year’s Salute to Summer Festival Parade Grand Marshals. “It was well worth it, seeing the police department grow from part-time policemen to the department it is today.”

