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Features:

Alliance Honors Kurt Blazek, 32° KCCH at Fall Reunion

Hastings Hits the Road to Burwell for August Meeting

Lincoln Welcomes New Members in Summer Reunion

Omaha Recognizes UNO Scholarship Recipients and Fifty Year Members

RiteCare News of Nebraska

... and much more!

Lincoln Valley Welcomes New Members during the August Reunion. See Page 4 for story . . .

Membership

This past August, I had the opportunity to attend the 2019 Biennial Session of the Supreme Council for the Scottish Rite, Southern Jurisdiction.

Brethren attend from every state in the Jurisdiction and from around the world. I met the Grand Commander from Russia, from Greece, Brazil, SGIGs from around the nation, and Grand Masters from around the nation. The Biennial Session is truly a Reunion, and I sat with Brother Mike Alexander from the Korean Scottish Rite, José Montaña, General Secretary from Santa Fe, whom I've met before, and Brother Tommy Morris from Frederick, Maryland who came to Omaha for the KSA Gathering in 2016 and the Royal Order of Scotland last July. I spent some time with Brethren and staff from House of the Temple, many of whom have been friends for years.



Retiring Sovereign Grand Commander
Ronald A. Seale, 33° at Biennial Session

Fellowship, food and drink are plentiful and the lavish pageantry of the Scottish Rite Supreme Council is impressive. Washington, DC excels as a tourist-friendly city, and I found even the Secret Service or capitol police officers in front of the White House, US Treasury or US Capitol Building to offer that old southern hospitality and charm to everyone.

But in spite of several days of too much rich food and drink, the fellowship of lunches and dinners, and the impressively beautiful ceremony of the 33rd Degree conferral, I remember that this is the ultimate Masonic illusion.

None of it is real. What drove this point home was happening to see the Grand Commander of the Scottish Rite carrying his own bags out of his car into the hotel, looking as tired as he could be. Fifty Brethren would have leapt at the honor of carrying his suitcases for him, but he did it himself. That pointedly reminds me that Biennial Session is the ultimate illusion. When we go back home, we face the reality of our Lodges, our Scottish Rite bodies, membership issues, and the eponymous Lodge debate about \$27.43 spent on the phone bill or a bucket of paint.

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Orient Calendar

- Nov 5 Feast of Tishri (H)
- Nov 8-9 Alliance Fall Reunion (A)
- Nov 15 KSA Trivia Night (O)
- Nov 21, 22, 23 Omaha Fall Reunion (O)
- Nov 6, 13, 20, 27 Wednesday Masonic Lunch (H)
- Nov 7, 14, 21, 28 Thursday Masonic Lunch (L)
- Dec 15 Broadway Series: *Jesus Christ Superstar* (O)
- Dec 16 Scottish Rite Christmas & Awards Dinner (O)
- Dec 4, 11, 18 Wednesday Masonic Lunch (H)
- Dec 5, 12, 19 Thursday Masonic Lunch (L)
- Jan 19 Broadway Series: *Les Miserables* (O)
- Jan 8, 15, 22, 29 Wednesday Masonic Lunch (H)
- Jan 9, 16, 23, 30 Thursday Masonic Lunch (L)
- Jan 20 Installation of 2020 Officers (O)
- Jan 25 Robert Burns Celebration (L)
- Jan 25 Scottish Society of Nebraska Burns Dinner (O)
- Jan 31 Scotch Tasting (O)
- Feb 7-8 GLNE Annual Communication (Kearney, NE)
- Feb 5, 12, 19, 26 Wednesday Masonic Lunch (H)
- Feb 6, 13, 20, 27 Thursday Masonic Lunch (L)
- Mar 7 Hastings Spring Reunion (H)
- Apr 17-18 Alliance Spring Reunion (A)
- May 7-9 Omaha Spring Reunion (O)

Lodge of Perfection meetings:

Alliance, 4th Friday of each month

Sept 27, Oct 25, Nov 22, Dec 27

Hastings, 1st Tuesday of each month

Sept 3, Oct 1, Nov 5, Dec 3

Lincoln, 3rd Wednesday of each month

Sept 18, Oct 16, Nov 20, Dec 18

Omaha, 3rd Monday of each month

Sept 16, Oct 21, Nov 18, Dec 16

**For more information
contact the General Secretary in your Valley**

- Gene Gatti (Alliance) (308) 762-4324
- Phil Odom (Hastings) (402) 462-5813
- Bruce Wood (Lincoln) (402) 435-2144
- John Maxell (Omaha) (402) 342-1300



The Alliance Valley is hosting the Fall Reunion on November 8th and 9th, and as of September, a few candidates are lined up to continue their Masonic journey in the Scottish Rite. If you have a Brother who would be interested in continuing his Masonic journey, please reach out to him about joining the Scottish Rite.



The Class will honor Brother Kurt Blazek, 32° KCCH, who sadly passed away in December, 2018. Kurt was always a fixture at Scottish Rite Reunions, and will be dearly missed.

He was born September 26, 1955 in Schuyler, Nebraska, graduated from Schuyler High School in 1973, and graduated from Midland University with a degree in Accounting in 1977. Kurt worked for several years at Fleischer Manufacturing in Columbus before opening Auditax in Norfolk which he owned and operated.

As a long time Mason and Shriner, Kurt was a Past Master of Acacia Lodge #34 in Schuyler, a Past Master of the Norfolk Lodge and very active in the Scottsbluff Lodge. He was invested with his KCCH in 1999 at the Alliance Scottish Rite, and had been a 43 year member. He was also a member of York Rite of Lincoln, Tehama Shrine in Hastings and the Panhandle Shrine Club. He was a devoted volunteer at Cirrus House and loved sports, particularly the St. Louis Cardinals, Kansas City Chiefs, and the Nebraska Huskers.

The Valley continues to move around to different towns to meet, and we met in Kimball in September. Thanks to James L. Eatmon Lodge #294 for hosting us. If you want the meeting to come to your town, please let me know and I'll work with you to make that happen.

I hope to see you at the Reunion in November!

*Gene Gatti, 33°
General Secretary
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Loup Valley Scottish Rite Club Proposed at Meeting at Burwell

Members of the Central Nebraska Scottish Rite at Hastings visited the Brethren at Blazing Star Lodge #200 in Burwell, Nebraska on August 8, 2019.

After a wonderful dinner of lasagna, salad, garlic bread, and carrot cake, George White, 33° spoke about the Central Nebraska Valley and the value of Scottish Rite Masonry. As part of the Valley's initiative to engage Brethren throughout central Nebraska, George proposed a Loup Valley Scottish Rite Club, which might take in Brethren in Burwell, Broken Bow, Ord, Sargent and the surrounding communities. A Loup Valley Scottish Rite Club might be empowered to confer the 4° and 14° Degrees, meet in host Lodges, provide fellowship, education with the Master Craftsman program, and even host a Degree team for the Reunions in Hastings.

Les Seiler, 33° spoke about the RiteCare services offered in Hastings and Kearney, and how the Clinics are able to provide services to any child in need in Nebraska through telepractice, as well as the nationally-recognized therapy expertise the clinicians are able to provide.

Phil Odom, 33° spoke about the Hastings Scottish Rite Valley Foundation. Besides supporting RiteCare services throughout central Nebraska, Scottish Rite Masons can also create their own community philanthropies, such as their



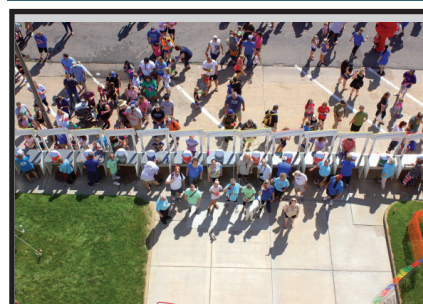
*Above: Members enjoyed a great dinner and learn about Scottish Rite philanthropies.
Below: Blazing Star Lodge #200*

own Teachers of the Year award through the Hastings Foundation. After the Scottish Rite program in the dining room, members were welcomed to Blazing Star Lodge #200 for the monthly communication.

The Central Nebraska Valley has met in Burwell each year for several years and extends appreciation to the members of Blazing Star #200 for the hospitality. If your Lodge is interested in hosting a meeting, please contact Phil Odom at podom@hastingsmasonic.org or call the Valley at (402) 462-5813.



March 7.....Spring 2020 Reunion
October 10..... Fall 2020 Reunion



Eastern Star, Shrine, Scottish Rite and Midwest Lodge #317 members (pictured above) participated in Kool-Aid Days in Hastings this August, celebrating the Hastings most famous drink. Members of Eastern Star served Kool-Aid at the Worlds Largest Kool-Aid stand for two hours on a hot Saturday morning. At noon approximately 70 members of the Eastern Star enjoyed a meal in the ballroom afterward.

Midwest Lodge #317 hosted a CHIP event again this year during Kool-Aid Days. 100 kids walked up to the 2nd floor of the Hastings Masonic Center for pictures, fingerprints and DNA samples, which are given to families in the event that a child is missing. Law enforcement can use the CHIP kit to aid in finding and identifying a missing child.



Valley of Lincoln Summer Reunion

3rd Row (l. to r.): Andy Seachord, 32°, Michael Lagueux, 32° KCCH, Charles Perdew, 32°, Ed Bennett, 32°, Nick Furchert, 32°, Jim Batten, 32° KCCH, Bruce Wood, 33°

Second Row (l. to r.): Michael Gray, 33°, Dennis Hecht, 32°, Micheal Buchhardt, 33°-elect, George McCabe, 33°, Ken Rouch, 32°, Bill Hayes, 32° KCCH-elect, Jeffrey Schumacher, 32°, Myron Coleman, 32°

First Row (left to right): Don Albrecht, 32° KCCH-elect, *John Knoell*, 32°, *Oscar Sinclair*, 32°, *Gary Olsen*, 32°, *Jeffrey Axelson*, 32°, Charles V. Sederstrom, Jr., 33°, Dennis Brydl, 33°

Valley of Lincoln Welcomes New Members in Summer Reunion

The Valley of Lincoln welcomed four new 32° Scottish Rite Masons during the Summer Reunion on August 2-3, 2019.

The evening began on Friday, August 2nd, with the 4th Degree, followed by the 8th Degree, hosted by the officers of the Grand Lodge of Nebraska.

On Saturday, the Reunion continued with the 14th Degree, the 18th Degree, 29th Degree hosted by the Knights of St. Andrew, and the 30th Degree. The Degrees concluded with the 32nd Degree, which is always one of the most impressive. While most Valleys use a painted scenic backdrop to represent the "Grand Encampment," the Valley of Lincoln is unique, with colorful tents set up on the Lodge floor. Beginning with a martial procession of the actors into the Lodge room accompanied by organ music played by Burt Schernikau, 33°, the candidates progress from tent to tent, and the actors recall the symbolism and philosophy of the preceding Degrees.

After the Degrees, Venerable Master Don



John Millington, 32°, *John Ferguson*, 33°, *Jim Carlton*, 32° KCCH *Ron Stites*, 33° and *M. W. Bob Moninger*, 33°-elect hosted the *Intendant of the Building 8th Degree on Friday.*



Candidates with the Knights of St. Andrew after the 29th Degree on Saturday

Albrecht, 32° KCCH presented the new Scottish Rite brethren with their caps, a copy of *A Bridge to Light* and Albert Pike's *Morals and Dogma*.

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Laura Moody and Denise Wolfe from the University of Nebraska at Kearney meet to share ideas at the RiteCare Retreat

Nebraska's eleven RiteCare Clinicians and Scottish Rite Masons from across the state met on September 13 at the Valley of Lincoln Scottish Rite for the annual RiteCare Retreat.

Led by Amy Nordness, Ph.D., state director for the RiteCare Clinic, the clinicians met to share the success stories from each clinic, what has worked well, what processes can be improved, and their goals for the coming year.

Some of the milestones shared included the renovation of the original clinic space in the Hastings Masonic Center, a NICU follow-up grant, the involvement of graduate clinicians, a preschool group for Korean-speaking families, a lending library for families, and parent support programs. While Amy meets with the clinicians by a teleconference each quarter, a face-to-face meeting facilitated clinicians' collaboration and ideas on how these programs can be improved or shared among the clinics.

Afterward, the RiteCare Clinicians met to discuss operational and management issues, including the national RiteCare Conference to be hosted in Omaha on September 9-11, 2022.

The Scottish Rite Masons benefit by meeting the program providers whose therapy we support. The Clinicians have always expressed their profound gratitude that the Scottish Rite Foundation of Nebraska frees them from having to track deductibles or therapy sessions covered by insurance.

The next RiteCare Retreat will be held at the Lincoln Scottish Rite on September 25, 2020.



Hannah Widger, a Senior majoring in Information Science & Technology was our speaker

Scottish Rite Recognizes 2019-2020 UNO Scholarship Recipients

The September Lodge meeting is one of the best-attended of the year. The Culinary Masters outdid themselves with grilled salmon, wild rice, and vegetables, and 130 Scottish Rite Masons, guests, and scholarship students with the families enjoyed the dinner.

Patrick Watson, 32°, Venerable Master for the Lodge of Perfection began the evening by recognizing our fifty year members: Leroy C Daniels, 32°, George C. Eckert, 33°, Al M. Sesemann, Jr. 32°, John L. O'Loughlin, 32°, Edward E. Marshall, 32°, George E. Rouse, 32°, Bertrand N. Sherwin, 32°, Robert H. King, 32° (who sadly passed away before he could receive his fifty-year pin), and Samuel A. Pfeifer, 32°.

Andrew Muska, 32° KCCH was called up to present a certificate to Lee Terry, 33° who made the most successful calls to retain members who were in arrears on their dues. The award also contained \$200 "Maxell bucks," which Lee could use any way he wanted for Scottish Rite events. Lee immediately presented them to the Foundation as a donation.



Andrew Muska recognizes Lee Terry for the most successful membership retention phone calls.

The focus of the evening is the UNO scholarship students. For nearly 30 years, the Scottish Rite Foundation of Omaha has provided \$2,000 scholarships to tomorrow's leaders, and Scottish Rite Masons have an opportunity to meet them and their families, as well as Dr. Sacha Kopp, Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

Our speaker was UNO Senior Hannah Widger, majoring in Information Technology. She thanked the membership, telling us how her scholarship has freed her from the stress of paying for college to focus on her studies. She intends to use

Scottish Rite PICNIC

Masons and their families came out on a perfect Sunday for the annual picnic at the Omaha Home for Boys Cooper Farm Picnic Pavilion on August 18th. The annual picnic was jointly hosted by the Omaha Scottish Rite and Tangier Shrine as an event to boost participation and engagement among members of both organizations.

The Culinary Masters grilled hamburgers and hotdogs, and members made s'mores on the fire afterward.



Scottish Rite Membership Secretary Christa with her sons Owen and Gavin

This year, Scottish Rite staff hosted a Bingo tournament, which members enjoyed. Lee Terry, 33°
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50-Year members: Leroy (Dan) Daniels, George Eckert, Al Sesemann Jr., and Bertrand Sherwin with Venerable Master Patrick Watson

her education to develop applications to make technology more accessible for the speech and vision-impaired. Hannah concluded her remarks with a quote from Brazilian novelist Paulo Coelho, who wrote "The ship is safest when it is port, but that is not what ships are built for." "Thank you for helping me build my ship and sail," Hannah told the members.

Dr. Kopp followed Hannah and recounted the story of a grandfather, holding up his citizenship papers, having studied for his exam on computer app designed by a UNO student like Hannah in partnership with a non-profit. "UNO is graduating students who are not only doing great things for themselves, but we hope we are graduating really great students who are doing great things for the community. It is because of you that this is happening."

Valley of Lincoln Welcomes Brethren in Summer Reunion

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Jeffrey Axelson, 32°, Oscar Sinclair, 32°, Don Albrecht, 32° KCCH-elect, and John Knoell, 32°

Andy Seachord, 32° led the new Brothers and members in a few toasts to the Valley, to friendship, and all Brothers present and departed.

This Reunion was the first Reunion held in the Lincoln Valley after the substantial renovations in the Lodge room, small Lodge room, dining room, and lounge have been substantially completed. The new bar on the first floor is scheduled to be completed by September.

PICNIC

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won a ceramic chicken, of which he was immensely proud!



Scottish Rite Financial Secretary Barb Coonce and Membership Secretary Christa Hickie are already planning next year's Scottish Rite/Tangier Shrine picnic for Sunday, August 22nd at Mahoney State Park. "Get your bingo daubers ready, and plan for an even better picnic!" Barb said.

The Scottish Rite/Shrine picnic is open to all members, families, and potential Masons.

C'est magnifique - TJ Brumfield, 32° enjoys his s'mores!



Paul Rutherford, M.W. John Maxell, Charles Sohm, Art Stricker, John Ferguson, Don Kavalec, M.W. Bob Moninger, Micah Evans, Armel MacDonald, Steven Barchus, M.W. Dean Skokan, Dan Wellendorf at the 33° Inspectors General Honorary Conferral at the Valley of Washington, D.C.

Nebraska Delegation Attends Biennial Session of the Scottish Rite in Washington, D.C. as four Nebraskans are Coroneted 33° Inspectors General Honorary

Eleven members of the Orient of Nebraska Scottish Rite and seven wives went to Washington, D.C. for the 2019 Biennial Session of the Scottish Rite and Coronation of the new 33° Inspectors General Honorary.

After a few days of visiting the sites of the nation's capitol, Scottish Rite Masons attended the opening ceremony of the Biennial Session. This was an auspicious session, as Lt. Grand Commander James Cole, 33°, SGIG for Virginia, was installed as the new Grand Commander for the Scottish Rite. As newly elected Chancellor for the Scottish Rite, Charles V. Sederstrom, Jr., 33° will advise Scottish Rite bodies on what may or may not be permissible based on interpretation of the Supreme Council By-Laws.

As new Grand Commander, Jim Cole, 33° cautioned Scottish Rite Masons, particularly the newly coroneted 33° members against thinking that since they have achieved this new honor, they can kick back and say they're done. Brother Cole reminded us what we often say in Nebraska - this honor is not for what you've done, but for what you will do. In that respect, the theme for the Biennial Session was "Passing On the Tools of Leadership," and we were reminded that not only do we as Brethren continue to labor in the quarries of Masonry, and we are responsible for imparting the tools of the Craft, the leadership, and the wisdom to the next generation of members.



M.W. Bob Moninger signs the Gold Book



John Ferguson, 33° displays the Grand Tyler's sword, dating to 1915

Our new 33° Honorees signed the Book of Gold, which attests that they have accepted the Vow of Allegiance and Fealty to the Supreme Council. As 33°-elects receiving the Degrees in Washington, DC, they sign the Gold Book alongside such luminaries as Col. Harland Sanders, General Jimmie Doolittle, Senator Robert Byrd, and President Harry S. Truman, all of whom signed the book.

The coronation took place in the Valley of Washington, D.C. Scottish Rite, and the session concluded with a formal banquet at the Capitol Hilton.



UNMC Munroe-Meyer Institute Breaks Ground on New \$86 Million Dollar Campus

The University of Nebraska Medical Center hosted a groundbreaking for renovations to the Munroe-Meyer Institute for Genetics and Rehabilitation (MMI) on Monday, August 26, 2019. Chancellor Jeffrey Gold served as emcee for the ceremonies and welcomed Lt. Governor Michael Foley, Omaha Mayor Jean Stothert, MMI Director Karoly Mirnics, and MMI advocates Denise Gehringer and her son Jacob.

Because the project at 69th and Pine Streets does not involve breaking ground on an all-new building, donors instead joined medical center officials and others in pounding ceremonial nails for the occasion.

The \$86 million dollar project will double the current size of the institute's size to 220,078 square feet. Nebraska's Scottish Rite Masons have made a 5-year \$100,000 pledge toward the project as part of our commitment to MMI.

In addition to improving clinical space for our RiteCare Clinics' speech therapy, the newly renovated space will offer several new amenities:

- An accessible, family-centric floor plan, designed to simplify the patient's clinical experience;
- A redesigned and integrated Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders (iCASD), under the leadership of a

newly recruited, nationally recognized expert in autism, where MMI professionals will provide interdisciplinary care;

- A one-bedroom "apartment," where occupational therapists can help individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities learn and practice hands-on life skills;
- The Caring For Champions Program, a collaboration with Special Olympics that will enhance the experience for youngsters who attend Camp Munroe.

UNMC says the renovation will be finished in the Fall of 2020.

Membership, *continued*

After the gold chains come off and the regalia and tuxedos get hung in the closet, the illusion is over and we get back to work.

As Ill. Ronald A. Seale, 33° prepared to retire from his role as Grand Commander of the Scottish Rite for the past 15 years, he reminded us that "Masonry is not something we can do ourselves - to progress from musty ritual and old traditions... we must see our fellow member as someone of equal worth and value."

The importance of these words reflects the perfect marriage between the illusion of Biennial Session and the reality of Brethren working together on the level back in our home Lodges and Valleys. Our new Grand Commander said that now that we have these titles and honors, we can't simply kick up our feet and say that the work is done.



Grand Commander James D. Cole, 33°

Because we have these titles and honors, someone will be looking at us as the example of what a Masonry should be. That doesn't set us apart from the Brethren. Rather, it give us the additional responsibility of being part of the Brethren.

As Scottish Rite Masons, particularly Honors Brethren, we must engage with all the members to address the issues that face our Craft today.

Ron Seale and Jim Cole instinctively knew that Masonry is more than "musty ritual and old traditions." As Ronald Seale said when he visited Omaha in 2011, Masonry happens when the guys in the kitchen making lunch and sharing jokes or working in the wardrobe room between degrees. If you look at those guys, you'll find they are pretty heavy with titles, honors, and past offices, earned through their labors and their time.

Biennial Session is over. The dinners were excellent and the speeches were beautiful, but it was all for show. The real work begins now back at the Lodge. The new year and new leaders will bring unknown changes, but we will see a leadership that accepts the challenges and is ready to work with the members, listen to us, and create a strong future. I hope you'll be part of this reality!

Giving the Gift of VOICE

A Brother recently called me to tell me he had November 2 marked on his calendar. That's the day he turns 70 1/2. More importantly, that is when he becomes eligible to contribute



For eligible Brethren, please consider a year-end distribution from your IRA

part of his Individual Retirement Account (IRA) to his Valley's Scottish Rite Foundation.

Not only does a donation from his IRA make a significant impact on the ability to serve our RiteCare children, but he can take advantage of the so-called IRA charitable rollover. If not for the charitable rollover, he would have to start taking yearly required minimum distributions.

IRA account owners must take distributions at age 70 1/2 and pay tax on the withdrawals. With the charitable IRA rollover, the donation - up to \$100,000 - can count towards the minimum required distribution you would otherwise be required to make.

This has a few advantages. Donations to charitable organizations like the Scottish Rite Foundations do not

require paying income tax on withdrawals from IRA accounts. While there is no income tax deduction for a donor's contributions, the sum going to charity is not included in his adjusted gross income. Plus,

donating these assets, rather than taking minimum required distributions, may also enable older donors to avoid certain penalties that come with a higher AGI, such as higher Medicare premiums.

To make a charitable distribution from your IRA, simply direct your IRA plan administrator to make a donation directly from your account to the charitable organizations of your choice. Increasingly, Scottish Rite Masons are using this option to support our RiteCare Clinics and their favorite Masonic philanthropies.

As always, please think about ways to support RiteCare. Talk to your attorney or financial advisor about how these options directly impact your own situation.

Thank you for being a Scottish Rite Mason, a Brother, and for supporting our RiteCare Clinics throughout the year!

SCOTTISH RITE[®] JOURNAL

OF FREEMASONRY ♦ SOUTHERN JURISDICTION ♦ USA

“Your dues change the light bulbs. Your donations change the world.”

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SGIG Circle Donors (\$300+) to the Scottish Rite Foundation of Nebraska: July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020

Name	Valley
Adam Bailey	Omaha
Gary Bunnell	Omaha
Thomas Brummett	Omaha
Karel Capek	Omaha
William Cook, Jr.	Lincoln
Larry Courtneage	Omaha
Micah Evans	Omaha
John Ferguson	Alliance
David Fisher	Hastings
Michael Gray	Lincoln
Charles Hastings	Hastings
James Heinke	Lincoln
Virgil Johnson	Omaha
William Kimme	Omaha
Reginald Kuhn	Lincoln
Jeffrey Passer	Omaha
Homer Puderbaugh	Lincoln
Charles V. Sederstrom, Jr.	SGIG in NE
Donald Shiu, Jr.	Omaha
Ron Stites	Omaha
Dan Wellendorf	Omaha

Thanks to the generosity of numerous Scottish Rite Masons, Nebraska RiteCare children receive all the services they need, without regard to a family's ability to pay. SGIG Circle donors have pledged or donated \$300 or more toward speech therapy for the year. Please consider a donation or pledge and join these Brethren in making a significant impact on our ability to provide exceptional Speech Therapy for Nebraska children.