



# Official publication of the Scottish Rite bodies of the Orient of Nebraska

September-October, 2020 • Volume X, Issue 5

## Features:

Alliance Awards 3 \$2,000 Scholarships

Hastings Presents Teacher of the Year Award

Lincoln Valley Work Continues with Blacktopped Parking Lot

Omaha WalkRite for RiteCare

RiteCare News of Nebraska

... and much more!

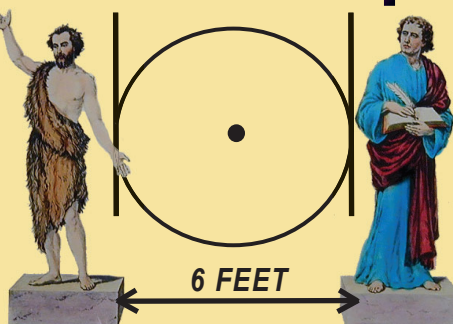
Hastings Presents Teacher of the Year Award.  
See Page 3 for story . . .



## Membership

Masonic author, commentator, and blogger Chris Hodapp raised an interesting point that the COVID-19 quarantine has exposed a fundamental need in society for human interaction. We sit at home, watch television, surf the internet, read, but we hunger for some degree of interaction, whether it is shooting the breeze with neighbors, joking with co-workers, or small talk with strangers at the store cash register. We have been deprived of that, and it didn't take long for society to realize we crave it like water and air!

I know that this has been true for me. Working from home certainly hasn't been a good fit for me. The true test was whether this need for human interaction is long-lasting and society-changing, or we'll immediately revert back to staring at our cell phone when the quarantine has ended.



Sts. John - Social distancing champions

A time away from Lodge really makes a Mason miss the social aspect of Freemasonry. Yes, even that inane debate about the \$23.45 phone bill that seems to stretch into eternity at every business meeting. Hopefully, your Lodge has taken the opportunity to reach out to Brethren, particularly older members, to make sure they have been okay and let them know they are being thought of. If they need anything, Brethren are ready

to lend a hand. Even if your Lodge has only reached out to members via social media or e-mail, it makes us really think about the power of Freemasonry. Freemasonry fulfills a basic human need for contact, and it works best person-to-person. The laughter, the jokes, the sense of purpose, and the simple act of being together are part of the Masonic experience. Even the apps and social media groups provide a necessary forum for jokes, laughter, and purpose, which work because we all knocked on the Lodge room door in the same manner and personally went through the transformative experience of the Degrees.

And perhaps that is part of how we "sell" Masonry to a prospective member in a post-quarantine era. While I take the dim view that many of us will

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# Orient Calendar

- Sept 13 ..... Oktoberfest (H)
- Sept 16 ..... Fall Outing (O)
- Sept 25 ..... Nebraska RiteCare Retreat (Lincoln)
- Sept 30 ..... RiteCare Classic (O) **REVISED DATE**
- Oct 25 ..... Spaghetti Feed (H)
- Oct 27 ..... Halloween Party (L)
- Oct 3 ..... Hastings Fall Reunion (H) **REVISED DATE**
- Oct 13 ..... Spaghetti Feed (H)
- Oct 30-31 ..... Alliance Fall Reunion (A)
- Nov 6 ..... Friends of RiteCare Dinner & Auction (O)
- Nov 19-21 ..... Omaha Fall Reunion (O)
- Nov 21 ..... Banquet in honor of Charles Sederstrom, 33° (O)  
(After Fall Reunion)
- Dec 5 ..... Christmas Banquet (L)
- Jan 23 ..... Robert Burns Celebration (L)

**Please check with your Valley for current updates to events and cancellations due to COVID-19 virus**

**Lodge of Perfection meetings:**

**Alliance, 4th Friday of each month**

Sept 1, Oct 6, Nov 27, Dec TBD, Jan 22, Feb 26

**Hastings, 1st Tuesday of each month**

Sept 1, Oct 6, Nov 3, Dec 2, Jan 5, Feb 2

**Lincoln, 3rd Wednesday of each month**

Sept 16, Oct 21, Nov 18, Dec 16, Jan 20, Feb 17

**Omaha, 3rd Monday of each month**

Sept 21, Oct 19, Nov 16, Dec 21, Jan 18, Feb 15

**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

# Alliance Scottish Rite Awards Three \$2,000 Scholarships

The Alliance Scottish Rite presented three \$2,000 scholarships, which are given over a four year period. Janessa is currently enrolled at Chadron State College. Lane is at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, as is Thomas. Each student presents a copy of their college transcripts, and the Valley sends them a portion of the scholarship each year. Our students reported GPAs of 4.0, 3.4, and 3.75.



Janessa was Honored Queen of Job's Daughters. Lane was a DeMolay (and received a \$2,000/year scholarship from the Supreme Council for the Order of DeMolay). We certainly don't require our scholarship recipients to be in our Masonic youth orders or to have a higher GPA, but we expect more of them, and our Masonic youth scholarship recipients continue to make us proud!



On a sadder note, the Alliance Public Schools lost a grant to furnish school lunches, so Community Table anticipates an increase from 120 to 200 people per day. I am proud that Community Table is able to meet the increased demand. I am working to hire someone to refinish the floor in the kitchen, which has received greater wear and tear with our Community Table caterers. Please let me know if you'd be interested in donating to the Valley to support our scholarships or Community Table partners.



The Valley is still planning on our Reunion on October 30-31st, and we have a few petitions in hand. Please plan to attend, help with some Degree work if you can, or simply watch the Degrees and welcome our new Brethren. Join us on the Fourth Friday of each month for our business meeting, or let me know if you would be interested in hosting a meeting in your town.

~ Gene Gatti, 33°  
General Secretary  
gene123@mail.com



# HASTINGS TEACHER OF THE YEAR



Ruth Raun said it best.

“People don’t get into teaching to be recognized,” she said. “It’s not about personal recognition, it’s about the kids and it’s about the families and it’s about making connections and relationships.”

Thus, Raun wasn’t expecting anything, but she certainly suspected something with how her husband and family were acting most of Thursday and Friday. On Friday afternoon, she found out why.

Raun opened the door to her home to find her street lined with cars, and administrators and colleagues from Hast-

ings Public Schools, as well as friends standing on her front lawn.

Superintendent Jeff Schneider and Hastings Public School Board president Jim Boeve led the charge in presenting Raun, a fourth-grade teacher at Longfellow Elementary, with Hastings Public Schools’ Educator of the Year award.

“This is a very deserved award for Mrs. Raun,” Boeve said. “If you look at all the teachers Jennifer had in the Hastings Public Schools, it is an all-star lineup. But every one of them had (Raun) to measure up to.

Boeve said that when HPS was looking for its new superintendent, he recommended Raun to chair the teacher committee and it was unanimously approved “because of the work that we think that (she does) and the character (she has).”

“I’m humbled. I am beyond honored,” said Raun, who is finishing up her 23rd year of teaching. “Thank you to Jeff, and to our wonderful administrative team. And thank you to our tireless school board, and to the Scottish Rite, who sponsors this award.”

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Sponsors included Hastings Family Medical Center, Eileen’s Colossal Cookies, Pacha Soap Company, and Dunmire, Fisher and Hastings, Jon and Ricki Yocom, Milt and Debbie Kennedy, Hastings Physical Therapy, Special Scoops Ice Cream Shop, and Big Dally’s Deli.

In addition to hard work from our Clinicians as well as Kris’ daughter Shannon, Sydney’s husband Zane, Dana Odom, Randy Jones, 33° and Bill Taylor, 32°, who came out with stands he made for the RiteCare banner and the flag.

Several families came by to see the Clinicians and support RiteCare, and the weather could not have been more perfect for a day in the park. The Hastings Valley is looking forward to the Walk next year, and all members are invited to join us for the annual Walk for RiteCare!

## Hastings Hosts DriveRite for RiteCare



Flexibility has been the watchword in 2020, and the annual Walk for RiteCare has also adjusted to accommodate health and safety.

This year, Hastings RiteCare families were invited to a scavenger hunt, and they could drive to visit sponsors, and then stop by Libs Park to see Speech Pathologists Kris Althouse and Sydney Norton, get a goodie bag and cookies donated by Eileen’s Cookies.





## LAYING DOWN THE BLACKTOP

The Lincoln Valley started serious consideration of repairing the parking lot in the Fall of 2018, but with 40 paid parking spots used each day it was difficult to coordinate a time to do the work. Most of our paid parking are State of Nebraska employees.

With the quarantine during COVID-19, many of our parkers are now working from home and we only have about four or five cars in the lot each day. We decided this was a good time to get the work done. Fortunately the contractor had some open time and the State of Nebraska allowed our remaining parkers to use the state lot just north of the Scottish Rite during construction.

The work was done by America's Pavement Maintenance Specialist (APMS). The project started on April 27, 2020, and was completed on May 1, 2020. The total cost for the project was \$50,476.00, though avoiding the giant pothole in the middle of the lot is priceless! The work should be good for at least 12 to 15 years.



*RiteCare Clinician Suzie Budzinski shows off her juggling skills for the kids at the Lincoln 'DriveRite Thru for RiteCare'*

The Lincoln Clinic hosted a virtual Walk on Saturday, July 25th at the Barkley Memorial Center on the UNL East Campus. Like the events in Hastings and Omaha, 'DriveRite Thru for RiteCare' was a virtual event, and parents could maintain social distancing without even leaving their cars.

RiteCare Clinicians Holly Schlautman and Suzie Budzinski set up a scavenger hunt, with signs set up around the parking lot of the Barkley Memorial Center, and kids could 'find' the different items on the signs. Kids could throw balls into a small pool from their car, and win prizes including a RiteCare water bottle and tote bag.

Several families participated in the event, and the kids enjoyed seeing their Clinicians. Like the other Clinics, most therapy sessions have been done by telepractice.

To support the virtual Walk, please consider a donation at <http://www.scottishritelincoln.org/walk>.



## Broken Windows at the Lincoln Scottish Rite

On Sunday May 31<sup>st</sup>, at the height of demonstrations in downtown Lincoln, Nick Furchert, 32<sup>o</sup> went down to the Lincoln Valley Scottish Rite building to show support during the Black Lives Matter protest occurring on the front steps of the Nebraska State Capitol building, as well as to keep an eye on the Lincoln Scottish Rite on Centennial Mall.

During his time at the building, Nick witnessed a peaceful and powerful

protest speaking out about the nature of policing across the country, and heard many of the protesters sharing their stories and fears. He saw many law enforcement officers on the scene who were very respectful, giving protesters space and support while staying in the background.

By the time Nick left the building shortly before curfew, protesters had largely left the Capital Mall area.

*... continued on page 6*





## WalkRite for RiteCare Hosted as a 'Virtual' Walk at Lake Zorinsky

With social distancing, the quarantine, and the COVID-19 pandemic, events have had to adapt to changing circumstances. The annual WalkRite for RiteCare was no exception, and was redesigned for social distancing.

It was held on Saturday, June 27, 2020 at Lake Zorinsky, but the RiteCare Clinicians created a virtual walk so families, particularly with vulnerable children, could stay in their car. They stopped at the first station to pick up a scavenger hunt flier, WalkRite t-shirts, and donate. As they drove through Lake Zorinsky, the children would mark off items they saw as their families made a loop around the park in their cars: the bubble station, a T-Rex (Clinician Beth Hughes' daughter Jane in costume), the RiteCare Clinicians, bumblebee and a ladybug signs, and other items. On their way out, the Clinicians gave them a goody bag with a few treats.

Besides the RiteCare Clinicians from the UNMC Munroe-Meyer Institute, we welcomed the women from the Nebraska Student Speech-Language Hearing Association (NSSLHA), speech pathology majors at the University of Nebraska at Omaha who volunteer each year.

About 50 RiteCare parents and children drove through Lake Zorinsky for the virtual Walk, and we raised around \$3,000 this year. If you are interested in supporting the Walk, please consider a donation at <https://walkrite2020.everydayhero.do>.



Photos (top to bottom): UNO NSSLHA students; NSSLHA students with their signs; Jane Hughes as our T-Rex; Mark Pilley, 32° and Larry Jacobsen, 33°

The Scottish Rite Foundation of Omaha

## RITECARE CLASSIC

### GOLF BENEFIT

Weds., September 30, 2020

PACIFIC SPRINGS GOLF COURSE 16810 Harney St. Omaha, Nebraska	\$100	\$400
	PER PERSON	PER FOUR-SOME

For more information, call (402) 342-1300

A benefit for the RiteCare Speech and Language Clinic at the UNMC Munroe-Meyer Institute

[www.ScottishRiteOmaha.org/golf](http://www.ScottishRiteOmaha.org/golf)



After a four month hiatus due to the COVID-19 quarantine, the Scottish Rite hosted a Lodge dinner on July 20th, welcoming 60 Scottish Rite Masons and their ladies.

The evening began with a debate on abolishing certain taxes in favor of a consumption tax. Our debaters were George Davis (pictured above), owner of Ollie the Trolley, and Doug Kagan, Director of Nebraska Taxpayers for Freedom. Afterward, the Culinary Masters served an excellent dinner of grilled pork chops and vegetables, with ice cream for dessert.

Venerable Master Andrew Muska, 32° KCCH announced that the Scottish Rite Almoner's fund purchased 6 iPads to be anonymously donated to area senior living homes. These will be available for residents to stay in touch with family during quarantine.

The Valley has a goal of resuming monthly business meetings, but please continue to check e-mails and the website for updated guidelines regarding social distancing.





**Hastings Teacher of the Year Award,** *continued from page 3. . .*

The Hastings Public Schools Foundation joins with the Scottish Rite of Freemasonry in providing a stipend for the Educator of the Year.

A short time later, more friends and fellow teachers stopped by Raun's yard to catch up and congratulate her.

"I wish I could give you all a hug," she said.



**Broken Windows at the Lincoln Scottish Rite**

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Unfortunately, later in the evening, a handful of people not affiliated with the official peaceful event earlier in the day turned violent, causing an estimated \$10 million in damage to downtown buildings. The Scottish Rite suffered broken windows along the front, but thankfully escaped the worst of the unrest which occurred late in the evening after the peaceful protestors had dispersed.

Gary VerMaas, 32° KCCH of VerMaas Construction promptly boarded up the windows which will be replaced.

Fortunately, the true spirit of Lincoln emerged the following morning with dozens of volunteers showing up in downtown Lincoln to donate their time to cleaning up broken glass and graffiti.

**DAWSON'S STORY**



As Dawson sits here reading (yes, reading!) a book to his brother I can't help but think less than a year ago I was desperate for my son to call me 'mom' or tell me he wants milk.

It's because of the Scottish Rite RiteCare Clinic that I was able to teach my son how to communicate. He is saying full sentences, having complete conversations, his behavior issues have almost completely stopped (outside of being a normal toddler) and he's even reading words he recognizes and starting to write letters, numbers, and his own name!

I sincerely am so grateful for you, Holly [Schlautman]. You have helped my family so much. Thanks to the Scottish Rite Masons, my son has become a "normal" toddler - who now doesn't stop talking!

*story submitted via Holly Schlautman, M.S., CCC-SLP  
RiteCare Clinician  
holly.schlautman@unmc.edu*

**WANTED**

**CONGRATULATIONS**

**A**lliance Lodge #183 held their annual rifle raffle, raising \$2,140 which supports scholarships and the CHiP program. 320 tickets were sold, and Alice Ford won the Freemason Henry Rifle this year, valued at \$1,100.

The .22 Freemason Tribute rifle is engraved in 24 karat gold on the stock with the Square and Compass, the level, plumb, and square, and the columns. George Washington is depicted in full Masonic regalia with apron, trowel, and Warden's column. Congratulations Alice on winning this beautiful collector's item!



# OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Speech Pathologists Kris Althouse and Sydney Norton in the Hastings RiteCare Clinic recently submitted a plan to re-open the RiteCare Clinic in the Hastings Masonic Center for speech therapy.

To get back to work, they will stagger days they are in the Clinic to decrease number of people and support social distancing in the office.

Masks will be worn and replaced each day. Some toys and the bean bag have been removed from the waiting area, and some of the toys in the Clinic have been moved to reduce the number of toys that need to be cleaned after each session. Communication with Masons will take place between the glass window in the waiting area, and the Clinicians will have a no-touch thermometer, cloth masks, safety goggles and cleaning wipes. Only one family member will be allowed with a patient, and guardians will call the Clinic when they arrive. Clinicians will perform a screening and take a child's temperature at the car or meet the family at the door. Speech-Language Pathology student supervision will resume in the Fall.

In addition, they continue to meet with some families via telepractice, providing the same level of care they would in person. Many families have even preferred this method, leading to less cancellations or no-shows in the Clinics.

Kris and Sydney are confident that these new procedures will allow the Clinic to operate safely, so they can offer therapy for children in greater-Hastings.



*RiteCare Speech Pathologists Sydney Norton, MS and Kris Althouse, MA are all smiles with the new clear face masks. They are looking forward to trying them out with the kids in the Clinic!*

## Photos from 'DriveRite Thru for RiteCare' in Lincoln



*Lincoln RiteCare Clinicians Suzie Budzinski and Holly Schlautman engage their RiteCare kids at the Lincoln virtual "Walk" on July 25th*

## Membership, continued

be right back to burying our noses in our cell phones the moment this is all over, I do think we have the rare opportunity to reach a fair number of prospective members who have hungered for something more during the time (weeks as I write this; hopefully not months by the time this is published) we have been social distancing. We have the chance to show these prospective members that Freemasonry provides a genuine place for social outlet in a more meaningful way than water-cooler talk, check-out line chit-chat, and social media.

Men in society have been hungering not for superficial sociality, but true connections. Lodges have been working



to maintain those connections by calling Brethren, wishing them Happy Birthday, personally checking on members to see how they are coping, and learn what members might need. Some Brethren are using the time to work on their proficiency or mentor Brethren through their long-form proficiency.

This mentorship will build those deep, long-lasting social ties that will stretch for decades. The men who emerge proficient have built those interpersonal relationships that will withstand any quarantine.

Sitting home alone certainly is not fun for any of us. But it gives us the opportunity to practice our commitment to Masonry, reaching out to our current Brethren. Additionally, it gives us an opening to build our Craft by showing prospective members that we offer the social ties they've clearly been craving.

How we use the quarantine is up to each of us, but it is an opportunity that Freemasons should not ignore.

# Giving the Gift of VOICE

## What Do Your Donations Support?

In my role as Donor Officer for the Supreme Council I am tasked with identifying potential donors for the Orients, Valleys, and the Supreme Council. When considering a gift to a charity, I personally like to know where the money is going and how it will be used. I'd like to tell you where and how the gifts you provide are utilized.

### About the RiteCare Scottish Rite Childhood Language Program

Most of us have heard about RiteCare however, do we really know the story. RiteCare Scottish Rite Childhood Language Program (SRCLP) clinics provide diagnostic evaluation and treatment of speech and language disorders, as well as learning disabilities.

Here in Nebraska, we work with the UNMC Munroe-Meyer Institute and the University of Nebraska. Your donations provide for over 400 children annually to receive treatment throughout the state of Nebraska thru in person clinic seasons and via telemedicine.

Children who might have remained educationally behind for a lifetime can now talk, read, and lead productive lives. More importantly we give children the ability to say, "I love you Mommy and Daddy."

### Scholarship and Education Programs

On a national level, our scholarship programs are going through a transition period, introducing a new program that will provide scholarships to individuals with ties to Masonry. Individuals or groups can donate \$1,000 and name a scholarship for 1 year or permanently endow a scholarship with a donation of \$50,000. In Nebraska, Scottish Rite Masons provide 17

scholarships to students. We also recognize teachers for their outstanding work.

### Disaster Relief

Through the Scottish Rite Foundation, SJ, USA, Inc., the Supreme Council provides direct relief to disaster victims and works with other Masonic groups to provide additional assistance.

### Rebuilding the Temple Campaign

The Rebuilding the Temple Campaign (RTC) is a multi-million dollar fundraising effort that supports the necessary rehabilitation goals for the House of the Temple and the 21st-century renovation plans that have been put into place for the future of the headquarters building. Since opening to the public in 1915, millions of brethren and visitors have come to the Temple, located in the heart of Washington, D.C., to view the ceremonial rooms, treasured symbols, ancient books, and prized artifacts. The RTC is a fundraising campaign of the House of the Temple Historic Preservation Foundation, Inc., which is a non-profit Virginia corporation recognized as a tax-exempt public charity under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended. Its tax identification number is 52-1664576. Contributions to the House of the Temple Historic Preservation Foundation, Inc. and the RTC are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by the law.

The above programs can be immediately supported with a gift of Cash, Securities, Property, or other Tangible Assets.

For information about supporting Scottish Rite philanthropies, nationally or locally, please reach out to me at my contact information above or Micah Evans at (402) 342-1300 at micah@SRNE.org.

Gary Unger, 32° KCCH  
Orient Development Director  
(402) 651-9710  
gunger@scottishrite.org

**SGIG Circle Donors (\$300+) to the Scottish Rite Foundation of Nebraska: July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Valley</u>
Kenneth Beebe.....	Lincoln
Gary Bunnell.....	Omaha
T.J. Brumfield.....	Omaha
Micheal Buchardt.....	Lincoln
William Craig.....	Omaha
Michael Gray.....	Lincoln
Charles Hastings.....	Hastings
James Heinke.....	Lincoln
Reginald Kuhn.....	Lincoln
Terry Nelson.....	Omaha
Jeffrey Passer.....	Omaha
Charles Sederstrom, Jr.....	SGIG in Nebraska
Charles Sohm.....	Omaha
Gary Unger.....	Omaha

Nebraska Scottish Rite Masons will have received the 101-Club/SGIG Circle appeal, mailed in July. This appeal raises funds specifically for speech therapy for Nebraska children, provided by RiteCare Speech Pathologists.

Donors who donate \$101 to \$299 receive the beautiful 101-Club lapel pin. Donors who donate or pledge \$300 or more receive the lapel pin and the SGIG Circle challenge coin. SGIG Circle donors will also be recognized in the *Scottish Rite Journal* each month. Most important, donors know they are providing as much speech therapy as a child may require, without regard to a family's ability to pay.

*“Preschool class has helped my daughter’s speech and social skills grow more than we could have ever imagined!”*

During these challenging times as many services are temporarily or permanently halted, our families are profoundly grateful for speech therapy for their children. Thank you for considering a donation, *and thank you for being a Scottish Rite Mason.*