

January-February, 2021 Volume XI, Issue 1

## **Membership**

After the Civil War ended in 1865, the Supreme Council of the Scottish Rite gathered in Charleston in November, with only six members present. Sovereign Grand Command Albert Pike, 33° said "During four terrible years our Temples have been for the most part deserted, the ashes... upon our altars have been cold, and the Brethren have met each other as enemies, or ceased to commune with each other."



It kind of feels like that now with COVID. We're wearing masks, practicing social distance, and many Brethren are afraid to come to Lodge altogether. The wearing of masks has become a politically charged topic, and Brethren look at one another with suspicion if a mask is removed. Events are canceled across the

board until further notice. We all wonder if Masonry will resume as normal at some future point, and even if the Brethren will come back.

As a Lodge Secretary, I've had several Brethren of 30+ years membership wonder if they can keep their membership, and it feels like desperate times for Freemasonry. Even as the clouds look the darkest overhead, it speaks about our need for Freemasonry more than ever.

There is a saying attributed to Brother George Washington, "Freemasonry is kindness in the home, honesty in business, courtesy in society, fairness in work, pity and concern for the unfortunate, resistance toward the wicked, help for the weak, trust in the strong, forgiveness for the penitent, love for one another, and above all, reverence and love for God."

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## plan on it!

# establishing a culture of giving in your Valley

Scottish Rite Freemasonry in Nebraska is remarkable on many levels. We don't have the largest membership like California. We don't have the most impressive Scottish Rite buildings like Guthrie, Oklahoma. Nor do we have the deep historical roots like the East Coast.

But we do have a "get 'er done" mentality that makes us the envy of most every state in the Southern Jurisdiction. When the Valley needs iPads for the RiteCare Clinic in Hastings, a Brother steps in to make it happen. When Lincoln wanted to renovate their historical Valley, Brethren leaped to the task of raising the necessary capital. When Alliance needed to renovate the dining room, Brethren showed up to refinish the floor and get new furniture.

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#### Alliance Valley

### **Orient Calendar**

Jan 9KSA Members Appreciation Dinner (O)
Jan 18Installation of 2021 Officers (O)
Jan 23Robert Burns Celebration (L)
Jan 30 Scottish Society of Nebraska Burns Dinner (O)
Feb 4-6GLNE Annual Communication (Kearney, NE)
Mar 6Hastings Spring Reunion (H)
Apr 22-24 Omaha Spring Reunion (O)
May 12Spring Outing at Papillion Gun Club (O)
May 14-15Lincoln Spring Reunion (L)
June 19 (tentative date)WalkRite for RiteCare
Aug 6-7 Lincoln Summer Reunion (L)
Sept TBDRiteCare Conference (St. Louis, MO)
Sept 24RiteCare Classic (O)
Sept 25 Hastings Fall Reunion (H)
Oct 22Nebraska KCCH Investiture (Lincoln, NE)
Oct 29Friends of RiteCare Dinner & Auction (O)
Nov 11-13 Omaha Fall Reunion (O)

# 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 Nov 27, Dec TBD, Jan 22, Feb 26, Mar 2

Hastings, 1st Tuesday of each month Nov 3, Dec 2, Jan 5, Feb 2, Mar 15

Lincoln, 3rd Wednesday of each month Nov 18, Dec 16, Jan 20, Feb 17, Mar 17

Omaha, 3rd Monday of each month Nov 16, Dec 21, Jan 18, Feb 15, Mar 26

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

## Me Supreme Council of the World OF THE THIRTY-THIRD AND LAST DEGREE



## Scottish Rite Appoints Dan Wellendorf 33° As Deputy to the Supreme Council

James D. Cole, 33°, Sovereign Grand Commander for the Supreme Council of the Scottish Rite, S.J., named Daniel J. Wellendorf, 33° as Deputy to the Supreme Council, effective January 1, 2021.

Dan Wellendorf succeeds Charles V. Sederstrom, Jr., 33°, who served as Deputy in 2007 and 2008, and as



Sovereign Grand Inspector General for Nebraska, from 2009 through 2020. Charles Sederstrom retires as SGIG in Nebraska, effective on December 31st, and was pleased to see Dan named as his successor. "Dan brings a wealth of business experience to the Scottish Rite as Deputy to the Supreme Council." Chuck said. "His involvement as a businessman, his service on numerous community Boards, and his involvement as an active Mason and Scottish Rite Mason are what we need as we move into the third decade of the twenty-first century."

Dan is a native of Omaha, graduating from Elkhorn High School in 1985. He received his Bachelor's Degree in Finance and Business from Creighton University in 1989. In his senior year of high school, he began working at Builders Supply Company, selling materials in the Omaha market area. Bro. Dan started his career as a pricing clerk, then yard dispatch/delivery driver, estimator, inside sales and Assistant Vice-President. He currently holds the title of Executive Vice-President where oversees many of the day-to-day operations.

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#### **Valley of Central Nebraska at Hastings**



#### Hastings Valley Explores Placing Historic Masonic Center on National Register of Historic Places

The Hastings Masonic Center was built in 1930 as a collaborative project between all the Masonic bodies in Hastings, replacing the earlier Masonic building built in 1886.

The architects were Keffer & Jones of Des Moines, Iowa. While the original architectural design had a grander look, the Great Depression scaled the design back and the Masonic building was built with elements that would come to be known as **PWA** the Moderne architectural style, which Keffer and Jones would successfully master as architects for many Iowa courthouses in the 1930s and 1940s.

Other noteworthy features of the Hastings Masonic

Center include two Lodge rooms, a proscenium-arch theater with a Kilgen & Sons pipe organ and a stunning chandelier, stained glass windows, hand stenciling, and Art Deco lighting and features. \$10,000 toward the cost of the organ was donated by Mrs. J.P.A. Black in 1929 in memory of her husband, who served as Grand Master of Masons in Nebraska in 1893 and who passed away in 1918.

The Hastings Masonic Center was

dedicated in April, 1930 with 1,500 visiting Masons, including groups from Omaha and Lincoln attending. The dedication was followed by a Scottish Rite Reunion, with the class anticipated to be at 500 members. A Shrine Ceremonial followed on May 7, 1930. Excursion trains were run from Omaha, Lincoln, Topeka, Alliance, and North Platte for visiting guests.

Stephen Pittman, 33° began the extensive research and work to write the application for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in 1986, but the application was never formally approved.

Drawing on Stephen's research, a Chair will be named to head a committee of volunteers to finish the NRHP application.

Further research on the building, its architecture, prominent members and their role in Adams County and Hastings Freemasonry will be necessary to complete the process, which is approved locally, the State Historic Preservation Office, and then through the National Park Service at the Department of the Interior.

## HASTINGS VALLEY PRESENTS JROTC CADET OF THE YEAR AWARD

The Valley of Hastings presented the JROTC Cadet of the Year award to Cadet Gean Garfio Vidana, a Junior at Grand Island Senior High School, starting his third year in AFJROTC. Gean has been a leader not only in AFJROTC but also in other school activities. He is a member of the Junior Varsity and Varsity foot ball team and also competes in Track. In AFJROTC, he took on responsibilities as a Flight Sergeant and Flight Fitness Sergeant in his first year. As a sophomore, he also took on duty as the Fitness Sergeant for his class and was promoted to the position of Lower Squadron Deputy Commander assisting in leading and managing over 60 first-year cadets. For this year,

he serves as the Cadet Corps Fitness Officer overseeing four fitness days each month for eight classes consisting of 115 total cadets. Academically, Gean has a CGPA of 3.83 and continues to challenge himself with honors (Algebra) and college courses for Principles of Law and Public Safety. In addition, Gean has completed over 80 hours of community service to include participation in Wreaths Across America, Thanksgiving Boxing (distributing meals to families), All Hallow's Eve at the Stuhr Museum, Loaves to Fishes at Trinity United Methodist Church in Grand Island, Salvation Army (serving meals on Mondays), Grand Island Library Santa Visit, and presentation of our flag as a member of the Cadet Corps Color Guard.

Gean is an impressive young man, and a true credit to the Scottish Rite fraternity.



Gean Garfio Vidana Air Force Junior ROTC

The award is given annually to a JROTC member who encourages and promotes patriotism, participates in community projects, and has demonstrated academic excellence.

### Valley of Lincoln



Ward Shires, 32° KCCH talks about flying the KC-135 at the Lincoln Scottish Rite with Bruce Wood, 33°

## LINCOLN VALLEY DEDICATES PICTURE IN HONOR OF WARD SHIRES, 32° KCCH

Before the October 21st Lodge meeting, Bruce Wood, 33° (right), General Secretary for the Valley of Lincoln Scottish Rite, presented a framed copy of this photo, which is hanging in 'Chuck's Place' at the Lincoln Scottish Rite to Warder Shires, 32° KCCH (left).

Col. Shires flew this KC-135 refueling tanker during his 20+ year career in the US Air Force. Some of Colonel Shires flight experiences are fighters, bombers, transporters, tankers, and airborne command post aircraft. He also served as an aircraft maintenance officer and as commander of an aircraft maintenance squadron. Colonel Shires has served overseas tours in England, Turkey, and Germany and flew combat missions in Vietnam earning two Distinguished Flying Crosses and four Air Medals. As a pilot, Colonel Shires has over 11,550 flight

hours, over half as an instructor pilot. He flew the T-6, TB-25, T-28, T-33, T-29, T39, B-47, C-46, C-47, C-54, C-119, C-123, F-80, EC-135C, and the KC-135.

Ward went on to get his Masters in Agricultural Education, serving for 23 years as an Extension Educator. His list of civilian and military honors is truly impressive. You'll find Ward and his wife Sandy at the Lincoln Scottish Rite volunteering to set up for dinners and events, never seeking recognition and you'd never know about his incredible service to the nation and the State of Nebraska.

Ward truly embodies Albert Pike's direction "to do that which it is right to do not because it will insure you success, or bring with it a reward, or gain the applause of men... but because it is right, and therefore ought to be done." Read more about Ward Shires on page 4 of the July-August, 2020 Scottish Rite Journal, online at <a href="https://www.scottishritelincoln.org/newsletters">www.scottishritelincoln.org/newsletters</a>.



## SGIG COMMUNICATES DEGREES TO CANDIDATES IN SPECIAL REUNION

Two candidates became 32° Princes of the Royal Secret of the Scottish Rite on November 3, 2020 as Charles V. Sederstrom, Jr., 33°, SGIG in Nebraska, communicated the Degrees. A privilege only extended to SGIG in each state, the SGIG can read the obligation of the five mandatory Degrees (4°, 14°, 18°, 30°, and 32°). 9 Brethren were present to see Robert (Rob) Schafer of Lincoln and Roger Edgar from Omaha receive the obligations. A total of eight Candidates received the Degrees in September and October at the Lincoln Scottish Rite. Despite being made 32° Scottish Rite Masons, the Brethren are still expected to go through a Reunion at an upcoming Reunion in their home Valley.

#### Lincoln Scottish Rite Hosts Annual Thanksgiving Lunch

Ei g
hty-five
people including
Scottish
Rite members and
friends of
the Scottish



Rite enjoyed the annual Lincoln Scottish Rite Thanksgiving lunch on Thursday, November 19, 2020. The menu included a full feast of turkey, dressing, mashed potatoes, gravy, green bean casserole, cranberry salad, and pumpkin pie. Not a bad deal for \$6.00!

Joni Bennett and Linda Wood worked the day before roasting six turkeys, baking 16 pumpkin pies, and making the Cranberry salad. On Thursday Ed Bennett, Kathy Berger, Nancy Eggerling, and Richard Eggerling helped in the kitchen making the potatoes, gravy, stuffing, and plating the pies and salad. When everything was ready, they helped serve and then stayed to clean up afterward. Their help was very much appreciated! The General Secretary was busy doing what they do best - collecting money.

Valley of Omaha



## Scottish Rite Celebrates Charles V. Sederstrom, Jr., 33°, Retiring as SGIG in Nebraska

The 272nd Scottish Rite Reunion was held on November 20-21st in the Valley of Omaha Scottish Rite. Due to the pandemic, this was a different Reunion, pared down to just Friday night and Saturday, with only nine Degrees staged.

In spite of a record class size of 20 Candidates, members and Candidates were kept socially distant. Candidates and Members ate at different times. Every other row was kept roped off in the theater. Masks were required during the entire Reunion. The Wardrobe Crew created a protocol for picking up costumes before Degrees, returning them afterward, and having them cleaned and sterilized in between use.

After the Reunion concluded, the Valley hosted a banquet in honor of Charles V. Sederstrom, Jr., 33°, who retires as Sovereign Grand Inspector General in Nebraska after 13 years. He was first appointed Deputy to the Supreme Council in 2007, and then elected SGIG in Nebraska in 2009. Since then, Chuck has moved to put the RiteCare Clinics' finances on a sound



financial path. Chuck broke down barriers between the RiteCare Clinics, which for many years operated as their own semi-independent organizations. Now, they act as a cohesive unit, with Clinicians collaborating and working with one another to best utilize their expertises in the field. Chuck was responsible for bringing a Scottish Rite Leadership Conference to Omaha in 2018, the Royal Order of Scotland to Omaha in 2019, and inviting the RiteCare Conference to be hosted in Omaha in 2024.

Among the speakers and presentations of the evening was Scottish Rite poet laureate Richard Gilmore, 33°, M.W. Freddie Clopton, 33°, Grand Master of Prince Hall Masons in Nebraska, M.W. Ronald D. Stites, 33°, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Nebraska, Ill. Brother Jeff Larson, 33°, SGIG in South Dakota, and Sovereign Grand Commander James D. Cole, 33° from the Supreme Council of the Scottish Rite.

Among the presentations, Don Leu, 32° KCCH, President-elect of the Scottish Rite Foundation of Omaha, presented Chuck with a certificate naming one of the annual UNO scholarships to be given in Chuck's name in perpetuity.



Top: Lodge room with new carpet Bottom: the hard wood floor beneath

## LODGE ROOM RECARPETED

Frank Kroupa, 33°, Chairman of the Scottish Rite Cathedral Board estimated that the Lodge room was re-carpeted last in the early 1980s. And Frank would know, having been an active member since 1971! Before that, it is estimated the room was re-carpeted last with the building remodel in 1968.

After about 40 years, the carpet had begun to show its age with continuous wear. The Lodge room carpet was replaced in early October, and the risers for the Master and Warden's station were re-built in hard wood. For a brief time, members could see the original 1914 hardwood floor. Acoustics of the Lodge room and the wear and tear of events and rentals would render it impractical to simply leave the bare wood, as beautiful as it is.

So far, about \$15,800 has been raised toward the project, with donors contributing \$125 each toward the project. Donors will be recognized on a plaque in the Lodge room. If you are interested in supporting project, please consider a donation of \$125 to the Omaha Scottish Rite. (Donations can not be considered tax-deductible.)

20 Golf Teams Raise \$20,000 in 23rd Year for

## RiteCare Classic Golf BENEF



This year celebrated the 23rd year of the RiteCare Classic – the Scottish Rite golf benefit, which has grown into a major benefit for the RiteCare Speech and Language Clinics. This year's RiteCare Classic was held on September 30th at Pacific Springs Golf Course, raising nearly \$20,000 for the speech and language clinics.

Originally the golf benefit was scheduled for June 27th, but with COVID-19 and the pandemic, it was rescheduled for September 30th, to give Pacific Springs enough time to develop social distancing protocols for golfers.

RiteCare Classic committee chair Buzz Garlock, 32° KCCH welcomed 80 golfers, thanking sponsors and donors for incredible support during a difficult year. "The community really stepped up to sponsor the RiteCare Classic and support speech therapy for Nebraska children," Buzz said. "We are truly grateful for their generosity."

Buzz reminded players that the proceeds provide speech therapy, not just for children in Omaha, but across the state. Rural families who may not have immediate access to speech therapists can work with a clinician through telemedicine and receive the same level of services as a child right here in Omaha. These programs didn't stop just because COVID hit," he said. "We've still got to support our speech therapists and do what we can for Nebraska kids."

Flight winners were Schadd Gray, Don Venner, Nic Thelen, and Jeff Luna coming in 13 under par. The 2nd place teams at 12 under par were Virgil Johnson, Matt Johnson, Ward Reesman and Steve Sorenson tied with Gary Unger, Bryan Kaufman, Brian Kuntz, and Bob Allen.

The RiteCare Classic is indebted to members of Nebraska Student Speech-Language-Hearing Association (NSSLHA) who volunteered throughout the day on the golf course.

## The 2020 RiteCare Classic was generously sponsored by:

UNMC Munroe-Meyer Institute
Presenting Sponsor

The Kim Foundation and Larry and Kathy Courtnage Lunch Sponsor

RBC Wealth Management Golf Ball Sponsor

*NuMale*Beverage Cart Sponsor

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#### Hole Sponsors Albert Pike Lodge #333

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Rod Anderson, Bob Gilmore, 32°, Rick Gilmore, 33°, and Tom Gilmore

.....



M.W. Freddie Clopton, 33°, David Alati, Dan Alati, 32°, and Larry Jacobsen, 33°



Matt Johnson, 32°, Virgil Johnson, Ward Reesman, and Steve Sorenson

### RiteCare Parent Training Program

Hello! My name is Sara, I was fortunate enough to be given the opportunity to participate in the Rite-Care Parent Training program with my 3 year old son. He has a rare genetic condition which has presented an assortment of challenges for us. He has epilepsy, developmental delays and Autism Spectrum Disorder. We were re-

ceiving services through our school district when they put us in touch with Beth [Hughes, Speech Clinician], and the RiteCare Clinic.

Originally, we were planning for my son to do the RiteCare Preschool program. However, I wasn't sure my son was ready for that. He struggled to engage others, made very little eye contact, showed almost no interest in toys, didn't follow directions and never sat still.

After expressing my concerns, Beth offered for us to do the Parent Training Program. One of our first goals was simply for my son to engage with a toy for a minute - a single minute.



When I look back at that I can't even believe it. In the past few months my son has made so much progress! He is so much more engaged with others and even enjoys some toys and books.

He is now able to follow some simple directions and uses non-verbal skills to ask for help. He holds hands and is

able to make choices. These may seem like small things, but they are HUGE in our world and in his development. I am very proud to say that my son was able to start preschool this fall.

Earlier this year, I didn't think he was ready for an hour of preschool a week. Now he is in morning preschool 4 days a week, and is doing so well! We learned so much from the program and Beth is truly amazing! She is so patient, caring and genuine. I honestly cannot imagine where we would be if we hadn't had this opportunity. Thank you so much to the Scottish Rite Masons for making my son's progress possible!

~ Sara Alyce RiteCare Mom



#### Dan Wellendorf

 $\dots$  continued from page 3

Dan Wellendorf was raised a Master Mason in Springfield Lodge #112 in 1991, where he served as Worshipful Master in 1996, Secretary (1998-2004), and Treasurer (2005-present). He serves as Treasurer of Albert Pike Lodge #333 of Nebraska, and is also a member of George W. Lininger Lodge #268 in Omaha. Brother Wellendorf received his Scottish Rite degrees in 1991. He received his KCCH in 2003 and 33° I.G.H. in 2009. Dan was the Eminent Commander of the Omaha Consistory in 2009 and has been active in Degree work and the Stage Crew since 1999.

Dan is a member of the York Rite Chapter/Council/Commandery in Omaha, Tangier Shrine, and the Royal Order of Scotland.

#### Membership, continued

Even as COVID and the elections have unveiled so much ugliness in society, George Washington so beautifully expresses those high ideals that Freemasonry espouses.

The very same Brethren I have had heated debates about the state of our nation are the same Brethren who are the first to extend the hand of friendship, open their wallets in charity, and work the hardest at Brotherhood.

At the recent banquet after the Omaha Valley Fall Reunion, Grand Commander of the Supreme Council, James D. Cole, 33°, took time to visit Brethren throughout the day, shake hands, take pictures, ask how everyone was doing,



and chat as if he had nothing else to do!

The kindness, courtesy, and help is never so evident as it is at the Reunions, when Brethren leap in to help one another. The strife of the outside world, the bitterness, the divisions are nowhere evident. They are put aside in the Lodge, if only for the evening. The laughter, jokes

and Brotherhood are a much-needed remedy for the strife of the normal world.

There are hundreds of reasons to be a Freemason, but if I'm being honest, the most important reason is the friendship. Men with whom I would never associate otherwise take time to clap me on the shoulder and remind me that inside these hallowed halls we are not just friends, but Brothers.

This means something to me, particularly now. We often forget that valued lesson, and it is important that we remember Brotherhood to give members reasons to come back when COVID is just a memory.

# Giving the Gift of

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We talk a lot about philanthropy in the Scottish Rite. In part, that stems from the lessons of the Eighth Degree (Intendant of the Building), but also because Scottish Rite Masons have made a long-term commitment to our communities, dating back a century - or in more practical terms, dating back to 1975 for our RiteCare Clinics in Nebraska.

This is no small commitment, and we have been successful as much to the careful foresight of our leaders in years past as to the profound generosity of our current members.

The uncertainty of this year - the economy, the pandemic, the elections, have thrown into stark relief the need for planning. Our commitment to our Teacher of the Year programs in Central Nebraska Valley at Hastings and the Lincoln Valley, our Omaha scholarships, and RiteCare has not wavered. To maintain that commitment, the Scottish Rite Foundation of Nebraska Board has undertaken a Capital Campaign to raise \$7 million dollars over three to five years, to both endow Rite-Care for the long term and to fund certain projects in the Alliance, Hastings, Lincoln, and Omaha Valleys.

A combination of Scottish Rite Brethren and Hartsook Company will be calling on Brethren across Nebraska, as



well as outside Foundations and philanthropists, to talk about making significant gifts to support our RiteCare and Valley philanthropies.

If you have read the Scottish Rite Journal over the last decade, you've read about the incredible speech language therapy Scottish Rite Masons in Nebraska fund. Untold thousands of families have benefited from speech therapy, and the commitment simply can not waver even in these challenging times.

That is why I am asking you to think about how you can create a culture of philanthropy for yourself and for your Valley.

Whether you can make a charitable distribution from your Individual Retirement Account or 401(k), put aside money in your estate plan for the Scottish Rite, or simply make an outright donation of cash, you are making a positive impact on our ability to help children speak. As always, thank you for considering the Scottish Rite Foundation in your philanthropic giving, and thank you for being a Scottish Rite Mason.

# Micah I. Evans, 33° Orient Development Director (402) 342-1300 micah@SRNE.org

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

June 00, non
Name Valley
John AdamAlliance
Kenneth BeebeLincoln
T.J. BrumfieldOmaha
Micheal Buchardt Lincoln
Gary BunnellOmaha
William CookLincoln
William CraigOmaha
William CraigOmaha John FergusonCEPTEDAlliance
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Donald Shiu, JrOmaha
Charles SohmOmaha
Michael StuhrOmaha
Gary UngerOmaha
Dale WhitefootHastings
Thanks to the generosity of Scottish Rite

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



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

The Scottish Rite Journal is published bi-monthly by the Supreme Council, 33°, Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, Southern Jurisdiction, USA. The Orient of Nebraska insert is prepared for members of the Alliance, Hastings, Lincoln, and Omaha Valleys, and is mailed to all current Scottish Rite Freemasons in Nebraska's Valleys. For submissions or articles, please contact Micah Evans at micah@SRNE.org or call (402) 342-1300. Whenever possible, please include a high-resolution photo with your submission. All submissions must be received at least 45 days before the date of publication, which occurs at the beginning of odd-numbered months. (Submissions for the March-April, 2021 Scottish Rite Journal must be received no later than mid-January for consideration.)