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Official publication of the Scottish Rite bodies of the



Orient of Nebraska

January-February, 2022
Volume XII, Issue 1

Membership

On October 11, 2021, a statue of Susan LaFlesche Picotte was dedicated in front of the Scottish Rite on Centennial Mall in Lincoln, Nebraska. The news media made absolutely no mention of the Scottish Rite Masonic Center, either as the setting for the statue nor as the host for a reception held in the ballroom after the dedication. Nor did the news connect Dr. Picotte with the Masonic fraternity – she and her sister were founding members of Amethyst Chapter of the Eastern Star in Thurber County. Her son Caryl



Brother Caryl Picotte of Olive Branch Lodge #274 during World War I (Nebraska State Historical Society)

was a member of Olive Branch, and her younger son Pierre was initiated at Olive Branch Lodge #274. Her grandfather was fur trader and early Nebraska Masonic pioneer (and county name-sake) Peter Sarpy. Her brother-in-law Edward Farley, Sr. and nephews Edward Jr. and Caryl Farley were both Master Masons at Bancroft Lodge #145.

Of course, Dr. Susan LaFlesche Picotte's legacy was not her family's Freemasonry, so it is not surprising that the media did not make the connection. We sure didn't stand on the roofs

screaming the family connection. But that point aside, have Masons become so irrelevant that the Craft has absolutely no impact on a story that led the news cycle for the day across Nebraska?

I disagree. Masons are as relevant as ever!

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plan on it! giving the gift of voice

Many donors are shocked to learn about the cost of giving. Not the cost of fundraising - printing and postage - but the pre- and post-tax value of a donation.

By that, I mean that a donation of \$500 may actually have cost \$640. The donor had to earn \$640, pay an estimated 22% tax (\$140), for a net donation of \$500 to a non-profit.

But what if a donor could give the true amount of the gift, while saving on taxes? That would be a win-win for the donor and the philanthropy!

That is where the Qualified Charitable Distribution becomes an attractive option. Even with the increase in the standard deduction, the Qualified Charitable Distribution provision helps many donors save on your taxes.

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Orient Calendar

- Jan 22, 2022 Robert Burns Celebration (L)
- Jan 29, 2022 ... Scottish Society of Nebraska Burns Dinner (O)
- Jan 5, 12, 19, 26 Hastings Valley Lunch (H)
- Jan 6, 13, 20, 27 Lincoln Valley Lunch (L)
- Feb 3-5Grand Lodge Annual Communication (Kearney)
- Feb 2, 9, 16, 23..... Hastings Valley Lunch (H)
- Feb 3, 10, 17, 24 Lincoln Valley Lunch (L)
- Mar 5Hastings Spring Reunion (H)
- Mar 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 Hastings Valley Lunch (H)
- Mar 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 Lincoln Valley Lunch (L)
- Apr 7-9 Grand York Rite (Kearney, NE)
- Apr 8-9Alliance Spring Reunion (A)
- May 5, 6, 7..... Omaha Spring Reunion (O)
- Oct 15.....Hastings Fall Reunion (H)
- Nov 17, 18, 19..... Omaha Fall Reunion (O)

**Please check with your
Valley for most current updates
to Scottish Rite events**

Lodge of Perfection meetings:

Alliance, 4th Friday of each month

Jan 28, Feb 25, Mar 25, Apr 22, May 27, Jun 24

Hastings, 1st Tuesday of each month

Jan 4, Feb 1, Mar 1, Apr 5, May 3, Jun 7

Lincoln, 3rd Wednesday of each month

Jan 19, Feb 16, Mar 16, Apr 20, May 18, Jun 15

Omaha, 3rd Monday of each month

Jan 17, Feb 14, Mar 21, Apr 18, May 16, Jun 20

**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



Volunteers from local businesses who coordinated food donations to the United Way and then to Community Table

The Alliance Masonic Center has hosted Community Table for three years now, supporting their mission of addressing food insecurity in Box Butte County where 12.9% of residents face hunger. In the 11 Panhandle Counties, food insecurity affects an average of 12.97% of residents, and a staggering 17.28% of children. The Alliance Scottish Rite is proud that Community Table uses our kitchen to provide meals to any resident who needs them, without cost to families.

We regretted canceling the Fall Reunion, scheduled for November, but unfortunately there were not enough Candidates to make the effort worthwhile for Brethren coming in from across western Nebraska. The Spring Reunion is scheduled for April 8-9, 2022, so please talk to Brethren about continuing their Masonic journey as a 32° Scottish Rite Mason.

The Alliance Valley is working to host meetings around the Panhandle Counties, and Bridgeport hosted our October meeting. Thanks to Brent Van Patten for arranging our welcome in Bridgeport. And congratulations to Brent (pictured with Dan Wellendorf, 33°) for receiving his 33° in October in Omaha! The Valley is indebted to Brent for his leadership, support on Degrees, and Reunions.



If you are interested in hosting a meeting, serving as an officer, or on a Degree team at the Reunion, please reach out!

*~ Gene Gatti, 33°
General Secretary
(308) 762-4324
gene123@mail.com*



Left to Right: Greg Seiler, 32° KCCH, George White, 33° Nate Lowe, 32°, Alex Straatman, 32°, Bill Hohlen, 32°, and Dan Wellendorf, 33°

The Central Nebraska Scottish Rite at Hastings welcomed three new Brethren at a special Reunion on Tuesday, November 2, 2021. Dan Wellendorf, 33°, Deputy to the Supreme Council for Nebraska joined members to communicate the 18° Degrees on the Brethren. While the 4°, 14°, and 32° were conferred on stage for the new Brethren, Dan communicated the 18°, reading the overall theme and giving the obligation for the Class' assent. Afterward, Dan presented the new Brethren with their 32° Scottish Rite caps.

Alex Straatman had previously had the Scottish Rite Degrees through the 18° conferred in Hastings, but had not been able to complete his Scottish Rite journey due to his military obligations and Grand Lodge. As Deputy Grand Master, he will become Grand Master in 2022 as a 32° Scottish Rite Mason.

Both Nate Lowe and Alex Straatman are from Rob Morris #46 in Kearney, and Bill Hohlen is a member of Hastings Lodge #50 in Hastings.

Central Nebraska Scottish Rite Valley Celebrates Feast of Tishri

Scottish Rite Masons celebrated the Feast of Tishri on Tuesday, November 16th with a banquet, toasts, and a presentation by Dr. Dan Deffenbaugh, 32° KCCH.

The evening began with an invocation by Monte Malouf, 33°, and the young ladies of Job's Daughters Bethel #8 served a fantastic dinner of chicken fried steak, mashed potatoes and gravy, vegetables, and cake. George White, 33° welcomed Scottish Rite Masons, their ladies, guests and family to the Valley reminding members that the Feast of Tishri indicated a party, a celebration. All societies have archetype celebrations, celebrating times of the year: Springtime or the



harvest, for example. The Feast of Tishri is the archetype celebration of the harvest, borrowing from the Jewish festival of Sukkot which itself gave thanks for the harvest and the exodus from Egypt. As Masons, the Feast of Tishri celebrates with wine - the symbol of joy - and expresses thanks for health, for friendship, for democracy, and for fellowship.



Deputy to the Supreme Council Dan Wellendorf, 33° appointed Greg Seiler, 32° KCCH as Co-Personal Representative to the Central Nebraska Valley at Hastings. Greg will work with Personal Representative George White, 33° to make a smooth transition between Personal Representatives in the Central Nebraska Valley over the next few years.

Greg is grew up in Hastings, and is an avid hunter and outdoorsman. Greg joined Mid-West Lodge #317, and became a 32° Scottish Rite Mason in March, 1996. He received his 32° KCCH in 2019. He is a third generation Mason.



After the traditional toasts, members rose to offer their own toasts. M.W. Les Seiler, 33° toasted the military and first responders. Dan Waldron, 32° toasted friends and family, and George White toasted our RiteCare Clinicians.

Dan Deffenbaugh gave a presentation on Jewish festivals, including Passover,

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Lincoln Celebrates the Feast of Tishri

The Valley of Lincoln Scottish Rite celebrated the Feast of Tishri, the annual celebration of Thanksgiving described in the Book of Leviticus (23:39). The Feast, a spiritual re-dedication of King Solomon's Temple, represents the re-dedication of Masons to one another and their fraternity.

Bob and Jennifer Kruse prepared a fantastic dinner for guests as they enjoyed the Celtic music of the High Street Band, accompanied by Irish dancing. The Chair for the Feast of Tishri was Dennis Hecht, 32°, while Edward Bennett, 32° KCCH served as Master of Ceremonies. The traditional toasts were given by members, followed by a talk given by Rev. Oscar Lewis, 32° of the Unitarian Church of Lincoln.

Oscar spoke about the tension between the universal truths of Freemasonry - regardless of what brings us to Masonry, we make the same commitments and take

... continued below



Photos: Rev. Oscar Sinclair, 32° speaking; High Street Band dancer; Gary Olsen, 32° giving a toast at the Feast of Tishri



SCOTTISH RITE AND RITECARE CLINIC HOST TRUNK OR TREAT HALLOWEEN

The Valley of Lincoln hosted a Trunk or Treat Halloween event for RiteCare kids on Friday, October 8th at the Scottish Rite.

Following UNMC guidelines, this was a socially distanced event, so families drove through the parking lot and participated in games right from their cars. Children also got Halloween candy from Scottish Rite Masons, RiteCare Clinicians, and UNL Nebraska Student Speech-Language-Hearing Association (NSSLHA) students who also hosted games for the children.

About twenty cars came through the parking lot during the evening. Joni and Ed Bennett, 32° KCCH, Linda and Bruce Wood, 33°, Edward Boone, 32°, Nick Furchert, 32°, and Micah Evans, 33° hosted decorated cars along with RiteCare Clinicians Holly Schlautman and Suzie Budzinski, and the NSSLHA students.

It is important to have events suitable for children of all abilities, that include kids with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Trunk or treat is a fun event made to welcome all our RiteCare kids, and the excitement on their faces and the kids' smiles are priceless," RiteCare Clinician Holly Schlautman said.

Feast of Tishri, continued

the same journey and sit together "on the level," regardless of our race, creed, or background. Yet, Oscar warned, we often confuse the particulars for the universals - when we say "this happened to me, so this is how the world works," for example. It is within this tension that learning occurs, Oscar said.

And the solution to this tension, engraved on the Scottish Rite building is "Know Thyself." This reflects the genius of Masonry - we need not think alike to remain committed to those universal truths, and we can come together in our differences to be thankful for being part of this great organization. Thus, we join in this celebration of thanks for civic and Masonic life, as well as thanks for our individual lives.



Cannon Kinchelov, 32°, Fritz McMullin, 32°, A.J. Johnson, 33°, Matt Vandergriff, 32° KCCH, and Chris Carter, 32° in the Twenty-First Degree

Omaha Valley Welcomes New 32° Scottish Rite Brethren During Fall, 2021 Reunion

The Omaha Valley welcomed new 32° Scottish Rite Masons in the 274th Reunion this past November 18, 19, and 20th. The Valley conferred fourteen Degrees, beginning with 4°, 7°, 8°, and 9°-10° on Thursday, the 13°, 14°, and 15° on Friday, and completing the 18°, 21°, 25°, 29°, 30°, 31°, and 32° on Saturday. On Friday evening, Jim Wolfe, 33° conferred the Order of the Turtle on new members, and the Reunion concluded on Saturday evening, with a reception to welcome new members, their ladies, and cast members and Brethren.

“While still collecting my thoughts and experiences after going through the degrees during this Fall Reunion, I find myself with a different outlook on myself and the continuing journey I have taken. The brotherly love and acceptance shown from all the Brethren was astounding! What a fantastic few days, and some I will never forget. I look forward to assisting new brothers on their path when they join the Scottish Rite.”

~Tony Hebert, 32°

Omaha Marks the Feast of Tishri



The Omaha Valley celebrated the Feast of Tishri on October 18th, with a fantastic dinner of everything bagel-encrusted salmon, rice pilaf, and vegetables served by the Culinary Masters. David Norton, 32°, Wise Master of the Chapter of Rose Croix, led the officers in the traditional toasts to the Scottish Rite, the Grand Command James Cole, 33°, Deputy to the Supreme Council Dan Wellendorf, 33°, the Grand Lodge of Nebraska, and to departed Brethren.



Afterward, Mike Stuhr, 32° KCCH called on Terry Nelson, 32° to help present framed patents to several new 32° Scottish Rite Masons who joined in the past Reunion. Terry signed petitions for Jeffrey Myers, Stephen Strauss, and Douglas Rasmussen, all members of North Bend Lodge #119.



James Carter Receives 32° KCCH in Special Investiture Ceremony

Dan Wellendorf, 33° and John Maxell, 33° visited Brother James Carter to communicate the obligations and invest Jim as a 32° Knight Commander of the Court of Honour, in recognition of his service to the Scottish Rite. Jim served as Eminent Commander of Kadosh in 2020, has been a member of the 25th Degree team, Past Master at Papillion Lodge #39, and High Priest at York Rite Chapter #61. Due to health, Jim was not able to join the KCCH Honorees in Lincoln on October 22nd.



KNIGHTS OF ST. ANDREW CHAIN GANG

Knights of St. Andrew met on Saturday, October 16th to clean up garbage along Highway 36, collecting 17 bags of trash. A sign recognizes the Omaha Scottish Rite along the stretch of Highway 36.

The clean-up crew included Alan Boulter, 32°, Carl Simmons, 32°, Dan Alati, 32°, Bob Pelletier, 32° KCCH, George McMullin, 32°, and Terry Nelson, 32°.

The Chain Gang meets twice a year to pick up trash along Highway 36.



2021 33° Inspectors General Honorary Charles V. Sederstrom, III, Dan Wellendorf, 33°, Deputy to the Supreme Council for Nebraska, Gary Unger, 33°, and Walt Keast, 33°

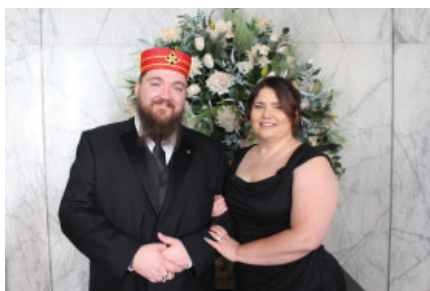
2021 Honors Brethren Invested with 32° KCCH and Coroneted 33° Inspectors General Honorary

Fifteen Brethren from across Nebraska were invested with the 32° Knight Commander of the Court of Honour on Friday, October 22nd at the Valley of Lincoln. M.W. James Brown, 33° served as Grand Commander and led a beautiful investiture ceremony in the large Lodge room, followed by a first rate banquet downstairs in the Lincoln Scottish Rite ballroom.

On Saturday, October 23rd, six Brethren were coroneted 33° Inspectors General Honorary in Omaha, with seven Brethren coming from the four Valleys of South Dakota. Ed Nolte, 33° served as Grand Commander for the Degree.

After the 33° Coronation, Dan Wellendorf, 33°, Deputy to the Supreme Council for Nebraska and SGIG Jeffrey D. Larson, 33° of South Dakota presented patents to the newly coroneted Inspectors General Honorary.

Speaking for the newly coroneted 33° Brethren, Chuck Sederstrom III concluded the evening with some remarks, thanking everyone for flawless Degree work that evening, reminding members that recruiting new Masons to our ranks is a critical mission for all of us, and commending the Brethren for wonderful Brotherhood in the Alliance, Hastings, Lincoln, and Omaha Valleys.



Top: Tommy Yung, 32° KCCH from Kimball (Valley of Alliance) and his wife Autumn; Bruce Wood, 33°, Edward Bennett, 32° KCCH from the Valley of Lincoln, and Dan Wellendorf, 33°; John Maxell, 33°, John Hardy, 32° KCCH from the Valley of Omaha, and Dan Wellendorf, 33°



Sculpture Honoring Native American Doctor Susan LaFlesche Picotte Unveiled in Lincoln

The Lincoln Scottish Rite served as the backdrop on Monday, October 11th - Indigenous People's Day - for the unveiling of a statue honoring Dr. Susan LaFlesche Picotte.

Dr. Picotte was the first Native American woman to become a medical doctor. She served native and non-natives in Thurston County and the Omaha Reservation, advocating for school hygiene, food sanitation, and efforts to combat tuberculosis. Dr. Picotte served on the health board of the town of Walthill and helped build the hospital on the Omaha Reservation. Her grandfather was Masonic pioneer and county namesake Peter Sarpy, and Dr. Picotte was also a founding member of the Eastern Star in Thurston County.

"The statue of Dr. Picotte recognizes that she used her education and position to serve her people and non-Native peoples equally. She would be proud that Indigenous People's Day followed her lead to create an inclusive future for all peoples," said Taylor Keen, 32° who is a member of the Omaha tribe.



Friends of Rite Care

DINNER AND AUCTION

Nearly \$60,000 Raised for Speech Therapy at the 12th Annual Friends of RiteCare Dinner & Auction

The Friends of Scottish Rite Dinner and Auction continues to grow, serving as one of the Valley of Omaha's major fundraisers of the year. This year, the Friends Dinner was held on Friday, October 29th, welcoming 140 guests. Dinner guests enjoyed a hosted wine tasting and fine Scotch tasting, bid on extraordinary silent and live auction items, including a weekend at the Biltmore Estate in Asheville, North Carolina, a Savannah experience for two, an interactive Beatles concert experience, fine bourbons, jewelry, sports packages, and other items donated by area businesses and members.

The evening was a benefit for the Scottish Rite Foundation of Omaha's principal philanthropy, the RiteCare Speech and Language Clinic at the UNMC Munroe-Meyer Institute.

Our emcee for the evening was Carol Schrader, anchor from KETV-7. Carol recognized Laurie Ackermann, Executive Director for the Ollie Webb Center, to recognize Ollie Webb for more than 50 years of programs, advocacy, and support for those with intellectual and developmental disabilities. In her remarks, Laurie recognized Scottish Rite Masons for supporting speech therapy services for Nebraska children through the UNMC Munroe-Meyer Institute, many of whom also receive services through the Ollie Webb Center.

Guests heard from Amanda Fink, a Munroe-Meyer mom whose daughter had received services, including speech therapy, through the Munroe-Meyer Institute. Her daughter Josie saw specialists for pediatric feeding and swallowing services, which can lead to speaking disorders. Amanda spoke movingly about



Josie progressing from non-verbal to an ability to say words and to be understood. Thanks to therapy at the Munroe-Meyer Institute's RiteCare Clinic, Josie continues to make strides in her ability to communicate and learn.

The Scottish Rite is indebted to the Nebraska Student Speech-Language Hearing Association (NSSLHA) students at the University of Nebraska at Omaha who volunteered for the evening, setting up, serving hors d'oeuvres and dinner, and cleaning up afterward. NSSLHA students have been involved for many years as volunteers, and continue to be recognized on the website, program, and invitation for their contributions.

Our event chairs were Jamie Watson and Sara Walker, who contributed numerous hours to selecting the menu, approaching donors for auction items, and decorating the dining room. The Scottish Rite is indebted to Jamie and Sara for their work for the Friends Dinner.

The evening raised more than \$60,000 for speech therapy, including approximately \$8,000 for a special appeal directly for RiteCare speech therapy and 3 \$2,000 scholarships for undergraduate students at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. The donors will be recognized by having the scholarships given in their name for the 2022-2023 year. Additionally, an anonymous donors matched up to \$2,000 in the special appeal donations for the RiteCare Clinic!

Next year's dinner will be on Friday, October 28, 2022 at the Scottish Rite. Plan to join us for another great Dinner and Auction!



Carol Schrader, longtime KETV-7 news anchor, served as emcee for the evening.



Event Co-Chair Jamie Watson and husband Patrick Watson, 32°



Ollie Webb Executive Director Laurie Ackermann (far right) and the Board members



Friends of RiteCare guests, including Clinicians Jeena Kouris, Leslie Van Winkle, Amy Nordness, MMI Board Member Mary McHale, and Korey Stading



Several of our NSSLHA volunteers at the Friends of RiteCare Dinner



Scottish Rite Masons Tour RiteCare Clinic at the Munroe-Meyer Institute

After a half-century at 44th and Dewey Streets, the UNMC Munroe-Meyer Institute moved to a state-of-the-art building at 69th and Pine on the Ak-Sar-Ben campus. Dedicated on June 8th, the 220,000 square foot building was entirely designed to serve people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Spaces, textures, lights, colors were all specially designed to provide a calming and welcoming atmosphere to children. Alcoves throughout the building were made to provide a place for children with behavioral issues who needed a space to calm down.

On October 30, Dr. Amy Nordness, Director of the RiteCare Speech and Language Clinic and Associate Director for the Munroe-Meyer Institute led 18 Scottish Rite Masons and their ladies on a tour of the new MMI building. They saw the new recreation therapy pool and splash pad, the RiteCare Clinic preschool, kitchens and living space to help young men and women learn skills for independent living, and clinical spaces for the departments which include applied behavior analysis, the Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders, Occupational Therapy, Pediatric Feeding, Physical Therapy, Recreational Therapy, and the RiteCare Speech and Language Clinic.

In addition to Nebraska Scottish Rite Masons annual support of \$750,000



for RiteCare speech pathology, Scottish Rite Masons made a \$100,000 pledge toward the cost of the new Munroe-Meyer Institute, as well donated as around \$500,000 toward an endowed professorship in Speech-Language Pathology at the University of Nebraska Medical Center.



End of an Era: Frank Kroupa, 33° Finishes Final Term as Chairman of Scottish Rite Cathedral Board

Few Brethren have been as active in the Omaha Scottish Rite as Frank Kroupa, 33° who received his 50 year pin this past September. He is Director-emeritus for the Reunion Stage Crew, having joined in 1972. Frank is past Venerable Master for the Omaha Consistory (1990), ran the sound board at Reunions for years, instituted the Spring and Fall Outings in the 1980s, and served on the Scottish Rite Cathedral Board since the early 2000s, becoming Chairman in 2010.

As Board Chair and Chair of the House and Grounds Committee, Frank oversaw the renovations in the theater (new chairs, sound room, new lighting) the Grand Cross Room, the refurbishment of the 1926 Kilgen & Sons organ, and innumerable projects throughout the building. With a booming voice and outgoing personality you just can't say 'no' to, Frank has led numerous fundraisers to support new theater seating, Lodge room re-carpeting, and the mural and garden project outside the building.

All great things must come to an end, and Frank reached the end of his term on the Cathedral Board in December, 2021. Without a Lodge meeting in December, November was the final month for Frank to speak as Chairman, and his remarks were met with a resounding standing ovation by the Brethren. But the Valley is not done with Brother Kroupa, and there will be plenty of fundraisers and projects for him, and his long institutional knowledge will always be treasured in the Valley.



Photo credit: Wade Ridout, 32° KCCH

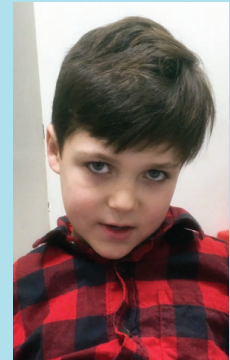
Let There Be LIGHT

The Omaha Scottish Rite had LED uplighting installed on the East patio and North sides, beautifully illuminating the historic building at night. The lighting can be controlled by an app through a cell phone, and the colors can be changed to reflect holidays, seasons, a disease awareness month, or whatever comes to mind. National Electric Co. installed the lighting in November, as part of a group of exterior projects which include tuck point work on the bricks and cleaning the limestone facade.



GRAYSON'S STORY

The immediate words that come to mind when I think of the UNMC Munroe-Meyer Institute's RiteCare Clinic and our speech pathologist Paul Laikko are overwhelming gratitude. Before this opportunity was given to us, we had been to 6 therapists for our son, and paid thousands of dollars in out-of-pocket speech with no progress.



After 4 years of fighting for him to talk, we were evaluated by Paul at the Munroe-Meyer Institute. Within seconds, we heard a word that forever changed our world for the best. *Apraxia*. Childhood Apraxia of Speech is a speech disorder where a child's brain knows what it wants to say, but has a hard time instructing the muscles to cooperate. Having a name for our son's speech difficulties gave us access to help and has given us hope!

Programs like RiteCare are incredibly invaluable because it is giving parents access to specialized services that insurance has denied for kids like Grayson.

The staff at RiteCare has become family in a sense. Without doubt, Paul's experience and genuine care has helped change countless lives and without this generously funded program kids like Grayson would not have had the opportunity to find their voice.

Thank you Scottish Rite Masons who make this possible!

*Ann Mann
Grayson's mom*

Making News. . .



Congratulations to Cody Carlow, 32° KCCH, who was recently promoted to Captain in the Air National Guard at a ceremony hosted at the Lincoln Scottish Rite. As Logistics Readiness Officer, Cody is responsible for making sure that equipment, material, and personnel are ready for any contingency, whenever or wherever they are deployed. Cody makes sure that everything gets where it needs to go, exactly when it needs to get there. Cody has been a Scottish Rite Mason since October, 2009, and has been a Past Master of Highland Lodge #194, and is currently Lodge Secretary.



Dan Wellendorf, 33°, Deputy to the Supreme Council, Al Sesemann, Jr., 32° KCCH, and Frank Kroupa, 33°

Al Sesemann, Jr. Receives KCCH in Special Investiture Ceremony

On November 15, 2021, Al Sesemann, Jr. was invested a Knight Commander of the Court of Honour in a special ceremony at the Omaha Scottish Rite Lodge dinner.

Dan Wellendorf, 33°, Deputy to the Supreme Council, was given special dispensation by the Supreme Council to invest Al Sesemann with the KCCH outside the normal ceremony, held in Lincoln in October. He read a modified version of the ceremony, written by Arturo deHoyos, 33° G.C., Grand Archivist of the House of the Temple, and presented Al with his KCCH red cap and a framed patent.

Al has been active behind-the-scenes with the Scottish Rite, volunteering to paint, repair items, and build shelving. He rebuilt the Culinary Master's closet in the kitchen, helped hang the new basement door, and hung the Reunion photos, among numerous projects he has tackled over the years.



Central Nebraska Feast of Tishri, continued from page 3

Sukkot, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur. Speaking about Passover, Dan spoke about the historical, agricultural, and theological significance of the holiday. He has a wonderful gift of making new or difficult concepts easily understandable for his audiences.

Phil Odom, 33° then spoke about the

RiteCare Clinic, with Kris Althouse and Sydney Norton each seeing 20-25 kids per week for therapy or assessments. Hastings' Clinicians are distinguished for their expertise in feeding and swallowing (Kris) and Apraxia (Sydney), often consulting with the other RiteCare Clinics to work with children via teletherapy. Members

went home after a great evening of food and fellowship, truly grateful for the fraternity of the Central Nebraska Scottish Rite.

Photos: (p 3) Robin Koozer, 32° KCCH proposes the first toast; the young ladies of Bethel #8; (above) Dan Deffenbaugh speaks about Jewish holidays; Richard Johnson, 32° KCCH with Selah Fehrenholtz, granddaughter of James Hardy, 32°.

Robert Burns Celebration

A great evening celebrating the life and works of Scotland's favorite son, the Plowman Poet and Freemason, Robbie Burns

Saturday, January 22, 2022
at the Lincoln Scottish Rite
332 Centennial Mall South
Lincoln, Nebraska

\$40/person - visit scottishritelincoln.org/events for reservations or more information

Recognizing Excellence in RiteCare Speech Therapy

Hastings RiteCare Speech and Language Clinician Sydney Norton was recognized by Apraxia Kids, an organization providing sup-



port for families affected by Childhood Apraxia of Speech (CAS), for completing specialized training and knowledge in treating Apraxia. Sydney's therapy approach is a child-led, play-based therapy focusing on principles of motor learning, which helps children create targeted words and sounds, and then focus on new, more complex targeted sounds once the first set has been mastered.



Snapchat Speech Therapy

How about this fun speech activity?

Lincoln RiteCare Speech-Language Pathologist Holly Schlautman was brainstorming with one little boy's mom about how to motivate her son to practice his speech sounds at home, especially his first and last name.

Holly thought of asking what times of day she and her child were together and sitting that he could practice. The bathtub, at meal time, reading, and then she thought of how she and her own daughter often used the Snapchat filters on her own phone together.

Snapchat is a social media app whose main feature is that followers of a page can access a short video, photo, or message for a very limited time, before it becomes inaccessible to recipients.

After asking her client's mom if Snapchat would be motivating, it was a resounding 'yes' from both the client and his mom. She stated how he loved looking



Miss Holly showing off a Snapchat photo filter

at his face with the different filters and it would be a perfect activity to practice his first and last name.

Snapchat has the features to download or share pictures and videos, so Holly stated it would be beneficial for them to save the best practiced examples on the mother's phone for him to review and see again and again.



This was a great idea that was tailored for this client, but in sharing it with other families that week, it turned out to be motivating to other preschoolers and their families too!

Holly took example pictures to show other parents. Here is the picture of Holly and her daughter that spurred the idea.

Membership, continued

It doesn't take a lot of digging to find that members of George Lininger Lodge #268 have partnered with Magdalene House to provide supplies for victims of sex trafficking, addiction, or abuse. Other Lodges work to raise funds for the Skoda-Thurber Foundation, shaping the lives of youth involved in athletics. Florence Lodge #281 has made a significant donation to Project Reset, supporting youth involved with the courts for minor crimes through skilled trade training and mentoring. Lodges and Masons have worked with Youth Emergency Services, providing food and shelter to homeless youth.

Across the state, Masons participate in bell ringing for the Salvation Army, serve at homeless shelters, provide scholarships, host events to honor first responders, or throw their Lodges open to organizations



Masons serving Thanksgiving dinner

like Community Table in Alliance.

I can't speculate why we don't get the media attention we used to. Maybe we don't try too hard? Maybe we simply "do that which it is right to do" without the need for attention or recognition?

While I am the first to make light of the eponymous Lodge meeting with the hour-long debate over a \$23 bill, I

also think that we should take our relevance seriously, with respect to how we promote membership. Prospective members crave being part of something bigger, and Freemasonry offers that on numerous levels. Of course there is the world-wide fraternity of Freemasonry. But the relevance of hands-on philanthropy should be a major selling point, whether it is simply asking members to open their wallets or whether it is rolling up their sleeves to serve food or clean up along the Highway.

Like Dr. Picotte, Masons are not about getting attention for good deeds. We do these things, as Albert Pike wrote, "because it is right, and therefore ought to be done." But if we are truly to help grow the fraternity, it does not hurt to share our relevance as a significant philanthropic organization to help promote and grow our membership.

Giving the Gift of VOICE

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That is where the Qualified Charitable Distribution becomes an attractive option. Even with the increase in the standard deduction, the Qualified Charitable Distribution provision helps many donors save on your taxes.



There are some limits to how good of a deal the Qualified Charitable Distribution can be: you cannot give more than \$100,000 in any one year. You can, however, split your donation among several charities. Contact your

attorney, CPA, or financial planner to see how this donation will affect your financial situation.

You need to be at least 70 1/2 and have money in an individual retirement account (IRA). Anyone who has received a statement saying you need to satisfy your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) by year's end is a candidate for this strategy. All you need to do is direct your account custodian to make a direct donation to the Scottish Rite Foundations (or your favorite Masonic philanthropies).

The amount you donate reduces the amount you need to take to satisfy your Required Minimum Distribution. The amount donated will not be included in your Adjusted Gross Income (AGI), and therefore you are not taxed on this amount.

Since your donation reduces your AGI, which is used to determine how much of your Social Security is taxed. It can even affect how much your Medicare premiums will be in the following year.

Whether you make a distribution from your IRA or a traditional donation, please consider the Scottish Rite Foundation of Nebraska. The 101-Club (\$101) or SGIG Circle (\$300+) directly support RiteCare Speech and Language Therapy for children across Nebraska. Your donation will have a double impact, with a matching gift up for each donation, up to \$25,000 from an anonymous Brother. As of Thanksgiving week, the Scottish Rite has raised \$10,000 toward that goal!

If you are interested in supporting the 101-Club or SGIG Circle, or even making a \$1,000/year pledge for five years as a Rose Croix Society donor, please reach out to Micah Evans, 33° at micah@SRNE.org or (402) 502-6511 to discuss options which are right for you or how you can make a gift for a long-term impact on speech therapy for Nebraska children.

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, 2022

Name	Valley
Charles Bukin.....	Lincoln
William Cook, Jr.....	Lincoln
Schadd Gray.....	Omaha
Peter Hartwig.....	Lincoln
Charles Hastings.....	Hastings
James Heinke.....	Lincoln
Virgil Johnson.....	Omaha
Terry Nelson.....	Omaha
Robert Pelletier.....	Omaha
Michael Roe.....	Lincoln
Charles Sederstrom, Jr.....	SGIG Emeritus
Donald Shiu, Jr.....	Omaha
Carl Simmons.....	Omaha
Ron Stites.....	Omaha
Michael Stuhr.....	Omaha
James Turpen.....	Omaha

*Thanks to the generosity of Scottish Rite Masons, 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, 2022 Scottish Rite Journal must be received no later than mid-January for consideration.)