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Membership

I was at an investigation recently, meeting with a Candidate about joining an appendant body. The Candidate seemed like a fine gentleman and would make a great member without question. But he was upfront that he was in a new job and had a young family, both of which were his priorities. On top of that, he was still working on his Master Mason Proficiency at his home Lodge.

That puts me in mind of the old joke about what the Candidate discovered upon being brought to light in Masonry:



Mizpah Lodge #302 welcomes a new Brother (from Nebraska Masons Facebook page)

“the Worshipful Master, approaching from the East, with a Scottish Rite petition in his hand.”

The truth in that chestnut is that Brethren haven't even had a chance to prove up before a well-meaning member comes running up, flapping

a petition for a new appendant body. The new Brother hasn't even learned where the bathrooms are before some Masons extol the virtues of joining another Masonic body. It can be overwhelming for a new Brother.

Personally, I'm ambivalent about whether allowing a new Master Mason to join other bodies even before he has proven up is a good thing or not. If the York Rite or Shriners engage a Brother, I'm all for it!

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plan on it!

a RiteCare vision for the future

After several years of conversation, a Brother approached me about how to include the Scottish Rite Foundation in his estate planning. He and his wife created a charitable remainder trust, which will benefit his adult children throughout their lives. After they pass, the RiteCare program (through the Scottish Rite Foundation of Nebraska) will receive a percentage of the remainasets within the trust, along with other non-profits that are important to him and his wife.

It may be many decades before the seed he planted now bears fruit for non-profits, but many, many years from now, Nebraska children will receive speech therapy thanks to his generosity.

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Orient Calendar

Oct 27.....Friends of RiteCare Dinner & Auction (O)
 Nov 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 Wednesday Lunches (H)
 Nov 3-4all-Nebraska Fall Reunion (O)
 Nov 14..... Feast of Tishri (H)
 Dec 3 Holiday Concert (O)
 Dec 6, 13, 20, 27..... Wednesday Lunches (H)
 Dec 18Christmas Banquet (O)
 Jan 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 Wednesday Lunches (H)
 Jan 20.....Scottish Society of NE Robert Burns Dinner (O)
 Jan 26..... Scotch Tasting (O)
 Jan 27..... Robert Burns Celebration (L)
 Feb 1-3Annual Communication (Kearney, NE)
 Feb 7, 14, 21, 28 Wednesday Lunches (H)
 Mar 2Hastings Spring Reunion (H)
 Mar 6, 13, 20, 22 Wednesday Lunches (H)
 Mar 24-25Alliance Spring Reunion (A)
 Apr 18-20..... SR Conference (Kansas City, MO)
 Apr 3, 10, 17, 24..... Wednesday Lunches (H)

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

Lodge of Perfection meetings:

Alliance, 4th Friday of each month

Nov 24, Dec 22, Jan 26, Feb 23, Mar 22, Apr 26,
 May 24, June 28, July 26, Aug 23, Sept 27, Oct 25

Hastings, 1st Tuesday of each month

Nov 7, Dec 5, Jan 2, Feb 6, Mar 5, Apr 2
 May 7, June 4, July 2, Aug 6, Sept 3, Oct 8

Lincoln, 3rd Wednesday of each month

Nov 15, Dec 20, Jan 17, Feb 21, Mar 20, Apr 17
 May 22, June 19, July 17, Aug 21, Sept 18, Oct 16

Omaha, 3rd Monday of each month

Nov 13, Dec 18, Jan 15, Feb 19, Mar 18, Apr 15
 May 20, June 17, July 15, Aug 19, Sept 16, Oct 21

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

Art Stricker, 33° (Alliance) (308) 762-4324
 Phil Odom, 33° (Hastings) (402) 462-5813
 Bruce Wood, 33° (Lincoln)..... (402) 435-2144
 John Maxell, 33° (Omaha) (402) 342-1300



*Pete Lapaseotes, 32° KCCH, Art Stricker, 33°, John Ferguson, 33°,
 and Brent Van Patten, 33°*

The Valley has been busy the last few months, and it seemed summer past us by in the blink of an eye. We enjoyed a July picnic at Pete Lapaseotes lake, and we had a busy summer of reclamation and repair at the Alliance Masonic Center. Our September and October meetings were held in Alliance, and the November 17th meeting will be in Scottsbluff. In December, we are looking forward to a Christmas dinner and meeting on the 22nd, at the Runza in Scottsbluff. In January, the meeting will be on the 26th, with an informal dinner at the Scottsbluff Runza. Mark your calendars for the Spring Reunion, scheduled for March 24-25th at the Alliance Scottish Rite Masonic Center.

Please talk to potential Candidates, and explain how the Scottish Rite continues their Masonic journey, expands their circle of Masonic brethren and connections, and opens opportunities for Masonic involvement and leadership. We always need help with Degree work - no experience necessary - so please reach out to me if you'd like a part in the Degree, would like to be on the stage or sound crew. Or just come, sit on the side lines, and welcome our new Scottish Rite Brethren.

We had planned to have a Candidate go through at the all-state Reunion in Omaha, but unfortunately work relocated him to Texas. If you have potential Candidates, please let me know and perhaps we can all travel to Omaha together. I am looking forward to seeing great Degree work as well as welcoming the Grand Commanders for the Southern Jurisdiction (James D. Cole, 33°) and the Prince Hall Northern Jurisdiction (Melvin J. Bazemore, 33°).

I'm looking forward to the Reunion in Omaha, but I'll also tell any Mason that the Valley of Alliance puts on a Reunion every bit as good as Omaha or any other Valley you can name. Our Spring Reunion is March 24-25th. There's plenty of time to talk to Master Masons and encourage them to continue their own Masonic journey next Spring at our own Reunion.

~ Art Stricker, 33°
 General Secretary
 artstricker77@gmail.com



Hastings Hosts Walk for RiteCare at Libs Park

Saturday, July 29th did not start well for the annual Walk for RiteCare, with torrential rains across central Nebraska and a tornado felling tree limbs thirty miles away in Sutton, Nebraska.

The rain moved off by 9:30 am, and an hour's delay made all the difference as the sun came out and the weather was beautiful in Hastings by the time the Walk began at 11:30 am.

By the time the Walk began, around 100 RiteCare families and Scottish Rite Masons turned out at Libs Park in Hastings, raising more than \$4,000 for speech therapy services for children in Central Nebraska through the Hastings RiteCare Clinic.

RiteCare Clinicians Kris Althouse and Sydney Norton welcomed the families and lead the walk around Libs Park. By the time they were back, Richard Johnson, Greg Seiler, and Ron Nielsen were ready to serve grilled hamburgers, hot-dogs, chips, with Eileen's cookies and frosting.

Special Scoops Ice Cream parlor, which employs people with intellectual or developmental disabilities, was on-hand, serving ice cream for guests, which they donated to support the Walk.

Kris and Sydney drew raffle tickets for several gift baskets, donated by Hastings



[Top:] Clinician Kris Althouse is hugged by one of her patients, who are always so happy to see their Clinicians; [Bottom:] Bill Taylor's rocket launcher is always popular!

businesses and RiteCare families, which raised several hundred dollars for the RiteCare Clinic. Bill Taylor also brought his compressed air rocket launcher, and kids had a great time firing the rocket, as well as playing bean bag toss and other games supplied by the Clinic.

This is the third year the Walk has been hosted at Libs Park, which has been the perfect location for the walk with plenty of parking, a picnic pavilion, and a splash pad for the kids.



Finding Hannah's VOICE

UNMC Munroe-Meyer Institute's RiteCare Clinic in Hastings is teaching a 5-year-old girl the speech skills to match her outgoing personality – and highlighting the importance of speech therapy to central and western Nebraska.

Hannah Buntin arrives in Hastings, all smiles and energy. She's got her voice communicator in hand from the car ride – the one she keeps pressing on repeat to express her excitement at going to see the speech therapist she loves.

"Sydney. Sydney. Sydney."

Hannah is an outgoing 5-year-old, a bubbly kid whose brightness lights up the world around her – but also a young girl whose voice is too often trapped inside her. She has Childhood Apraxia of Speech, a neurological speech disorder in which her brain struggles to create motor plans for speech and can mask Hannah as a quiet kid she's not.

Hannah's attitude can't be contained when she flashes her bright smile and walks with a bop in her step. But her speech can. It's all inside the little ball of sunshine. Now, the task is to bring it out.

She came 250 miles from Ashby in Nebraska's Sandhills to Hastings one wintery Tuesday to press toward the goal everyone has rallied around: Finding Hannah's voice.

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Lincoln RiteCare Clinic Offers Additional Therapy Sessions for Families

~ by Holly Schlautman, M.S., CCC-SLP
RiteCare Clinician
holly.schlautman@unmc.edu



This summer, Holly Schlautman, speech-language pathologist at the RiteCare Clinic in Lincoln offered families the option to complete some additional therapy sessions once a month in the community.

These sessions were at Trago Splashpad in June, Antelope Park in July, and the UNL bowling alley in August. All of the activities were free for families to participate and UNL generously donated lanes for the event with a promise to offer more free lanes if RiteCare Lincoln wanted to come again. These sessions were used to support the child and the parents in the carryover some of their goals and target skills in a natural family-friendly setting. Holly encouraged other family members and siblings to

join as well!

But why did these sessions come about?

More times than you could count, a child worked on a specific goal or target in the clinic room, and as soon as their feet hit the hallway, and the word, or target sound was prompted again, and the child COULDN'T produce it correctly. The carryover of what the child was learning, wasn't sticking as quickly as the therapist or the families were hoping. That's why communication homework and parental involvement is so crucial to quick and effective intervention. And it makes sense to bring the therapy outside of the clinic room from time to time to work on generalizing and carrying over language and speech skills.



To prepare for the community sessions, parents were asked to think about how the child typically communicates outside of the clinic room, what words their child might want to say in these settings, and what cues or strategies the clinician and the parents can do to support their child with their communication.

Holly and the parents planned out opportunities and targets the week before for each community session. At the outing, each child attended a 15-minute mini-session with Holly and the family to help in facilitating the child's goals. Families were welcome to stay after the mini-session to keep practicing the skills from the session and just have fun!

Holly is planning to bring these monthly outings to the clinic again next summer with hopes of adding additional locations in different months of the year.

Central Nebraska Valley at Hastings Grant Supports a Communication Board for Children at Crosier Park



Hastings Scottish Rite Masons and RiteCare Clinicians at the dedication of the Communication Board at Crosier Park

This past May, the Hastings, Nebraska community celebrated its inclusive playground at Crosier Park, which enables children of all abilities to engage physically and socially in a supportive environment. It includes slides, swings, climbing features, interactive spinners, and roller tables, accessible ramps, and interactive music features. Hastings RiteCare Clinicians Sydney Norton and Kris Althouse secured a \$3,000 grant from the Hastings Community Foundation for a communication board. Children with speech-language disorders can point to images which inform their caregivers that they want to "go potty," or "I'm hurt," or "I made a new friend." Children who are non-verbal can use this to communicate their needs and wants during play. The sign recognizes the Hastings RiteCare Clinic, the UNMC Munroe-Meyer Institute, and the Hastings Community Foundation.



Brethren recognized with their double-eagle jewels.

Omaha Recognizes 50-Year Members and Double-Eagle Recipients

September's Lodge dinner was a wonderful evening recognizing our 50-year members, our new perpetual members, and the first Double-Eagle program recipients.

After an excellent roast beef dinner served by the Culinary Masters, Venerable Master John Hardy, 32° KCCH recognized our 50-year members. This year, the Valley was proud to present pins to members who joined in 1973:

- Dr. Larry A. Duff, 32° KCCH
- Greg W. Carlson, 32° KCCH
- Howard R. Fouts, 32°
- Benjamin C. Whitbeck, 32°
- Bradley A. Waite, 32°
- James P. Ryan, 32°

Additionally, the Valley recognized our fifty year Brethren who were not able to attend.

- David A. Shroads, 32°
- Charles A. Tomlinson, 32°
- James L. Lindahl, 32°
- Norman D. Rowell, 32°
- Charles V. A. Rogers, 32°
- Don P. Hudgell, Jr., 32°
- James R. Goll, 32°
- Bruce C. Blazek, 32°
- Kenneth E. Fridrich, 32°

Brother Cullen F. Pilker, 32° passed away in September, but was fortunately also able to receive his 50-year certificate before he passed.



Larry Duff, 32° KCCH and Dan Wellendorf, 33°



Bradley Waite, 32° and Dan Wellendorf, 33°

John Hardy then presented a certificate and Perpetual Membership to Scott Karpf, 32° who purchased a life membership.

Last, the Valley was proud to recognize Double-Eagle recipients. The Double-Eagle program is a new program that awards points to members for attending events, serving as an officer or on committees, donating to Valley fundraisers, and other types of engagement and participation. As members accrue points, they earn a medallion they can wear with a ribbon, with various colors representing the number of points they've earned.

1914 SOCIETY DONORS

THROUGH JUNE 30, 2024

- Ed Anderson, 32°
- Kyle Beckner, 32° KCCH
- Tom Brummett, 33°
- Greg Carlson, 32° KCCH
- the Culinary Masters
- Carl Diamond, 32°
- Micah Evans, 33°
- Wally Farley, 32°
- Alan Gardner, 32°
- Rick Gilmore, 33°
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- Ralph Joos, Jr., 33°
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- Matthew Schell, 32°
- Carl Simmons, 32° KCCH
- Leland Terry, 33°
- John Williamson, 32°
- Steven Zimmerman, 32° KCCH

1914 Society donations of \$250 or more for the 2023-2024 year will be recognized on the Omaha section of the Nebraska Scottish Rite Journal through the May-June, 2024 edition. 1914 Society donations support the upkeep of the historical Scottish Rite through the Building Fund. (Donations can not be considered tax-deductible for tax purposes.)

Nebraska RiteCare Clinic Welcomes Susan Fager, Ph.D., CCC-SLP as New Nebraska RiteCare Director

Susan Fager, PhD, joined the UNMC Munroe-Meyer Institute as Director of the MMI Department of Speech-Language Pathology this past July.



Susan Fager, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, Director of the Scottish Rite RiteCare Speech and Language Clinic

Dr. Fager received her Bachelor, Masters, and Doctorate in Speech-Pathology from the University of Nebraska at Lincoln. Susan holds a certificate of clinical competence in speech-language pathology. Dr. Fager has spent nearly 25 years at Omaha's Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital, serving in a number of roles — most recently as director of the communication center in their research institute.

In recent years, Dr. Fager also has developed her clinical research portfolio, which includes development of a head-tracking system to allow individuals with severe physical impairment the ability to control a cursor on a computer screen. Another research project seeks to fully understand barriers that patients, families, and health care professionals face when supporting augmentative alternative communication (AAC) for non-verbal patients.

“It is evident that Dr. Fager is well-qualified for this position. She has the passion and commitment not only to maintain, but to improve on the ways our Rite Care program is making a meaningful difference in the lives of the youth and the families that we serve.”
 ~ Daniel J. Wellendorf, 33° SGIG in Nebraska

“She is the perfect leader for this position, and I deeply believe that she will expertly and with great care lead the department for many, many years to come, said MMI Director Karoly Mirnics, MD, PhD, when announcing Dr. Fager’s acceptance of the position.

Dr. Fager said she’s excited to be part of the team at MMI, with its strong regional and national presence.

“I’ve been so impressed with how the speech-language pathology department has expanded and grown,” she said. “Along with its strong clinical programming, I’m excited about the department’s interest in growing services across the state, teaching the next generation of speech-language pathologists and developing the clinical research program.”

In 2021, Dr. Fager was recognized for her clinical and research work in augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) by being named a fellow by the American Speech Language Hearing Association.

Over the years, Dr. Fager has focused on building strong partnerships with clients, families, academia and industry to support her clinical research program in AAC.

At MMI, Dr. Fager said she hopes to support efforts that are already underway within the department. She also would like to see expansion of the clinical

research program. Dr. Fager said she was impressed with the faculty and staff as well as with the culture at MMI.

“The needs of the clients and families they serve is at the core of the work underway at MMI,” she said. “I’m excited to have the opportunity to contribute to MMI’s meaningful mission.”

MAKING NEWS



Cody Carlow, 32° KCCH receives his Past Master jewel from Nick Furchert, 32° at the Lincoln Scottish Rite in September. Cody served as Venerable Master in 2022.



Calling in the pros: Sean Reed, 32° and his daughter Reiley (above) keep the 1926 Kilgen & Sons organ in great working order. Here, Reiley is adjusting a tuning stopper in a wooden flute pipe, which was stuck.



Scott Oglesby, 33° designed and crafted a beautiful stained glass window, illuminating the 2nd floor lounge in the north window.



Finding Hannah's Voice

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This article was written by Jeffrey Robb for UNMC. The original can be read online at <https://www.unmc.edu/news-room/2023/04/05/finding-hannahs-voice/>

The Buntin family's journey starts at 2 a.m. to get to Hastings. So Hannah is raring to go when she arrives!

Hannah communicates a lot – it just comes out in different ways. She knows more about operating her touchscreen communicator than the adults who come across it. She mixes in sign language. Hannah has mastered the skill of flashing her smile to express what she's thinking.

When they get to the clinic's door, Norton steps out to greet Hannah and her family – grandmother Caleta Lewis, mom Ame Buntin and sister Ashly.

Today, Norton has something special planned for Hannah – an exercise with Bluey, a cartoon character that Hannah adores.

Norton diagnosed Hannah last spring after the Buntins had

met frustration elsewhere throughout Hannah's young life. Norton offered the game plan for Hannah's care – one visit to Hastings per week and two virtual sessions to train Hannah in the basics of speech.

On the surface, Norton plays with Hannah throughout her appointment. But it's also an intense speech therapy session. Today, Norton will use blue tape to stick toy figures, including Bluey, on a mirror wall in the therapy room. If Hannah follows direction – and sounds out the words correctly and completely – she can take down the toys from the wall.

Norton gets down on the floor at eye level with Hannah so the little one can see every vocal movement and facial stretch, and the mirror is there to offer a complete view. To overcome Hannah's apraxia, Norton is teaching her brain the very mechanics of speech, the physical moves to sound out a word.

Having seen – and heard – Hannah's progress, the Buntins believe the road ahead has opened for Hannah.

The words are adding up, and becoming phrases. Hannah speaks some “ghost words” – words that Hannah hadn't practiced before that just come out but maybe don't become regulars.

Norton said she knew from the moment she met Hannah that she would need to “be on my A-game to get this kiddo some help.” Norton said she's proud to see Hannah's progress and grateful to be part of her journey.

“She's come an extremely long way,” Norton said. Hannah is finding her voice. She's learning the tools to use it.

Membership, continued

On the other hand, have we even given a Brother an opportunity to find his place within his Blue Lodge before recruiting him for another body?

Should we put in place a moratorium of a year between being declared Proficient as a Master Mason and joining another organization? Or does this simply cause a new Brother to see a long road between himself and the organization he is eager to be part of, and cause him to walk away from Masonry before even proving up?

If determining the answer to whether Brethren should wait a year before joining other bodies or could join any organization right away, I would incline toward having them wait. Mostly on the principle of “stopping to smell the roses.” If a Brother is truly interested in Masonry, he should enjoy the



Dustin Kirkhart, 32°, who joined in the Fall, 2022 Reunion, received his Scottish Rite patent from John Hardy, 32° KCCH this past May.

journey from Entered Apprentice to Fellow Craft to Master Mason.

If we are talking about a moratorium on joining other bodies for a year after being raised, maybe we should explore the other side of the coin: thrusting a Brother into a position of leadership right after he is raised. Brethren become a Deacon, Warden, or sometimes Secretary

shortly after they were raised. I don't suggest they don't have the ability to lead - many not only do, but come to Masonry well-equipped with leadership chops and hit the ground running. Regardless of their abilities, we aren't giving a Brother the Masonic experience he deserves. Give a Brother an opportunity to experience the fraternity or Lodge events before telling him he is in charge of the Lodge fundraiser, picnic, or placing him in a position of senior Lodge leadership.

We are all eager to get new Brethren involved, and it is easy to think we are recognizing their abilities by installing them in an office or inviting them to petition another body. But if we are to create a healthy Mason in a healthy Lodge, we need to look at the new Brothers' experience, and let them take some time to absorb it all first.

Giving the Gift of VOICE

... continued from page 1

The holiday season is on us, and like yourself, I am looking forward to visiting family and seeing relatives I haven't seen in quite a while. I'm looking forward to the joy of Christmas and Hanukkah, gathering together around great food, stories, and laughter. I wish all of my Masonic Brethren and their families a wonderful holiday season.

While you are sitting with family and loved ones, I ask you to consider a holiday-season charitable contribution to benefit your Valley's Scottish Rite Foundation or your favorite philanthropies.

Whether you choose to make a year-end gift, make a tax-free distribution from your IRA (if you are 70 1/2 or older) or include the Scottish Rite in your estate plan, you are making a gift whose impact is wide and far-reaching.

If you read the story about little Hannah on page 3 or our RiteCare kids in previous *Scottish Rite Journals*, you can see that their lives have been immeasurably changed for the better. We may all be long gone before someone sits in the shade of the tree we plant today, but children *will* benefit from that gift.

I derive great satisfaction knowing that a part of my own estate is earmarked for our Scottish Rite philanthropies.



A year-end gift or a planned gift makes a huge impact for a Nebraska child receiving speech therapy.

There is a powerful tool at your disposal to help Brethren who choose to include the Scottish Rite in their own estate plans. Visit www.freewill.com/scottish-rite. This free website helps you draft a binding last will and testament, walking through your beneficiaries, assets, gifts and bequests, funeral arrangements, and other provisions. You should consult your own attorney or financial consultant, particularly for more detailed or challenging estate plans.

The Scottish Rite philanthropies have been blessed by the generosity of so many Brethren who took time to plant seeds. Please consider joining them as you gather with your loved ones. You can always call me at (402) 342-1300 or e-mail me at micah@SRNE.org to discuss these options and how they can benefit our RiteCare Clinics and your Scottish Rite Valley's philanthropies. **As always, THANK YOU for being a Brother and a Scottish Rite Mason.**

SCOTTISH RITE JOURNAL[®] OF FREEMASONRY ♦ SOUTHERN JURISDICTION ♦ USA

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Micah I. Evans, 33°

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SGIG Circle Donors (\$300+) to the Scottish Rite Foundation of Nebraska: Sept. 1, 2022 - Sept. 30, 2023

Name	Valley
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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.**