



Kiwaniis

Hastings • Nebraska

Astonisher

A newsletter of the Hastings Kiwanis Club
hastingskiwanis.org
myclub@hastingskiwanis.org
facebook.com/hastingskiwanis

"If we had no winter the spring would not be so pleasant."

*~ Anne Bradstreet, English Poet who came to the Colonies in 1630
and was the first writer in the North American Colonies to be published*

March 2025

If you have items you wish to be included in the Astonisher, you can send them to
marge.ormsby@hastingskiwanis.org OR Astonisher@hastingskiwanis.org

Inclement weather policy ~ If HPS is closed on a given Thursday, there is no Kiwanis meeting that day. It will also be displayed on the Channel 10-11 scrolling closing information.



Upcoming Meetings & Events ~ March

YWCA, 2525 W. 2nd St. ~ \$13.00 per meal

Catering by Emma Baker (meals subject to change)

Mon. 3 - Tax Sale - Adams and Hall counties ~ these positions are filled, THANK YOU!

Thur. 6 - Skatepark Local Project, Mike Howie & Russanne Hoff

Pancake Day Final Prep, Jim Krebsbch & Kathy Schultz

Monday, March 10 ~ Noon-??? ~ PANCAKE DAY SET UP

Tuesday, March 11 ~ 7 to 7 ~ PANCAKE DAY

Wed. 12 - Board Meeting, YWCA Conference Room ~ All members welcome

Thur. 13 - NO MEETING ~ Recovery!

Thur. 20 - The Lark, Mickayla VanNatter

Thur. 27 - Watch your email



THIS IS OUR MAIN FUNDRAISER

to fund all our projects and grant requests for the year.

*** Please sign up on the website or
at the meetings ***

Tuesday, March 11 ~ 7 to 7 ~ All Hands on Deck

2-hour shifts beginning 6:45 a.m.

Grill Cooks / Serving Line

Ticket Takers

Table Workers

Clean up at 7:00 p.m.

Set up Monday, March 10 ~ Noon 'til done

Set up grills ~ wipe down tables and chairs ~

organize and cover serving tables ~ set out syrup

~ and whatever else Jim & Kathy need done!



SKATEPARK KICKOFF ON PANCAKE DAY!

Committed to raise \$200,000 ~ \$50,000 from the Club

Things are rolling along, people! Plans are coming together.

The skate park committee met with Jeff and three veteran skateboarders to go over the proposed design and get their input for the project. They had been contacting Jeff in the past advocating for an improved skate park experience. They are all in their 20's and have been to skate parks all over Nebraska, as well as other states as far as California.

Built in 2003, ours is very outdated, and has some hazards. They see this as a great need for the 'tween/middle school age group, and are very willing to participate as much as we need them.

The men offered wonderful insight as to what elements would make Hastings a destination place for skateboarders from across the state. They told us of elements they liked in various other parks, and elements that were not as useful or fun, or the right size. They offered a good layout for a beginner's area, with a good flow for the features for advanced skateboarders.

Jeff will take these ideas to the design company for an updated proposal. They even had thoughts as to promotional and fundraising opportunities. You could tell

they've been hoping for this for a long time! They will be a great resource to be sure we "get it right" for the skateboarding community.

In case you're unfamiliar with skateboarding, you can find a demo on YouTube by searching "All I Need Skateboard Demo at Red Alert 2021." The one with green lettering has more variety than the one below it. (You don't need to "subscribe.")

This is doable! This Club raised \$75,000 in 2010 for the Kiwanis International ELIMINATE Project to eliminate maternal and neonatal tetanus worldwide. We raised \$80,000 in 2019/2020 for our local Musical Playground project for elementary students.

This will, again, be a local project to benefit our middle school youth to get them outdoors and off their devices.

HUGE shout-out to Russanne Hoff, Kathy Schultz, Mike Howie, and Jim Krebsbach for their many hours (mostly on weekends) already devoted to this project.

OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS NEEDED 2025-2026!

We are still in need of a Vice President.

This is a four year commitment as you advance from Vice President to President-Elect, then President, and Immediate Past President.

Four 2-year term Board Members. These positions have been filled! Thank you to Kathy Hohensee for re-upping, and Heather Bolte, Greg Schultz, and Mike Howie for joining the roster.

*** * * VOLUNTEER POSITIONS * * ***

If you are unable to attend Thursday noon meetings to sign up for volunteer opportunities, you can do so on the website.

Ongoing service projects include:

- **Hearts & Hands Against Hunger – dates and times TBA**
- **Meals on Wheels – every Friday, 11:15 a.m. – 2 routes, approx. 30-40 min.**

HEARTS & HANDS AGAINST HUNGER

PEACE Center, 622 N. Lincoln, South side
(former Middle School manual arts bldg)

****Please arrive 30 minutes prior
to the scheduled start time****



**~~~ Regular Monday packing is suspended for March ...
except for March 24 from 2:00 – 3:30 p.m. ~~~**

Sunday, March 23 ~ 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Webster County Junior Leaders

24 Jr./Sr. high school students

Monday, March 24 ~ 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.

12 GSV Residents

Joining regular Monday packing group

Wednesday, March 26 ~ 4:00 – 5:30 p.m.

Archway Corvette Club ~ 30 people

Saturday, March 29 ~ 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

St. Paul Lutheran, Minden

20-30, 5th-8th Graders + Adults

Hearts & Hands Against Hunger, P O Box 1293, Hastings NE 68902-1293 * 402-460-8627



MEALS ON WHEELS – This is quick and easy!

We have two (2) routes on Fridays for this service project.

Two volunteers from Kiwanis are needed.

**Sign-up sheets are available at Thursday noon meetings
or sign up on the website.**

**Meals are picked up at 11:15 at the Senior Action office, 212 W. 3rd St.
(block east of the Post Office ~ 3rd & Minnesota) and delivery usually takes 30-40
minutes. They have the routes set up for the most efficient delivery.**

March 7 – George Howard – *Need 1*

March 14 – Marge Ormsby – *Need 1*

March 21 – *Need 2*

March 28 – *Need 2*

**Marge Ormsby is the Club Coordinator. Please notify me by text or call if you cannot
make it or will be late. 402-469-3296**

AKTION CLUB LEADERSHIP NEEDED ~ Marge's input

Most of you are probably unfamiliar with the special needs community and are leery of getting involved. My older sister Gail was a charter member of the original Aktion Club back in 2005. She lives in Grand Island now and would not be able to participate.

Some of her friends are fairly high functioning and can hold down factory jobs. Others, like Gail, need some guidance and interaction, but can do simple tasks independently. They are very engaged and want to participate. Attention spans are short.

Of course there are others who have minimal to no communication skills or dexterity and need one-on-one assistance. As well as those who have mobility issues. Some of them, all of the above.

It will probably take at least a committee of three to make all necessary arrangements for each meeting in order to not overwhelm any one person. You can coordinate with the participating agencies to determine the best time for the Aktion meeting, as well as day or days of the week.

Previously our group met two Mondays a month at noon. Some current clubs in the District only meet once a month, and at differing times of the day. It would not have to be at noon. The biggest consideration would be transportation for these folks. Also, each agency would need to provide staff to assist their participants.

These folks do not carry the daily stresses of work, and political events, and bills, and deadlines, and responsibilities that we do. That makes them a happy group of people eager to be of service. There is no



shortage of volunteers to be a club officer! They benefit from having a variety of community interaction.

We have had inquiries from one or more of the agencies to regenerate this club. I recently ran into two of the previous participants

who asked me, "When are you going to start Aktion Club again?" The interest is out there, and John Boltz really wants this to happen during his term as District Governor.

There are no special qualifications ... just empathy, an open mind, understanding, a willingness to be amazed, and patience. You will perhaps need to step out of your comfort zone, but once you are comfortable, you will be rewarded. And guys! ... it's not just a female opportunity. Most of the caretakers and day program facilitators are women, and the boys/men need some male role models. Y'all think about it ...

(In answer to your question, no, I do not wish to be a regular part of this leadership. I have spent my 75 years living with, growing up around, and interacting with this community. I also have guardianship responsibilities since 2015 for Gail, and visit her in Grand Island three afternoons a week. I have thought long and hard about this. My time commitment must remain focused on her. I would be glad to be a resource and offer up ideas, but I'm kind of tapped out as far as direct engagement beyond my sister.)

ICYMI ~ February 2025

February 6 – History of Civil Rights, Dr. Michael Butler, visiting professor at Hastings College

Dr. Butler is a Professor of History at Flagler College in St. Augustine, Florida, specializing in Southern cultural history, with an emphasis on the Black freedom struggle. He earned a PhD in history from the University of Mississippi.

History was always a passion of his, not a career goal. He feels that by understanding history, life is more meaningful in the way he understands the present.

He is originally from LA ... Lower Alabama. The most frequent question he gets asked is "how did a white guy from Alabama who studied in Mississippi specialize in civil rights?" He wanted to understand Southern history, and you can't understand Southern, or American, history without learning about American Black history.

One needs to understand the role of black Americans in our country's development. He has learned three things:

1. There is a huge difference between historical fact and nostalgia. Real history can be unpleasant.



2. History is more complex than we admit. Black history did not just start in 1954 with Brown vs. the Board of Education, and did not end in 1968 with the death of Martin Luther King, Jr. Saying the movement was over in 1968, is saying that we are as far as we can get.
3. He was taught to think critically about the subjects he thought he knew, and to recognize bias in historical documents.

History teaches empathy. Understanding the experiences of other people and learning about the violence they endured helps in relating to people and understanding their predicaments.

Studying civil rights has helped him explain to his students how they can be part of future improvements. They must organize, vote, and educate. Man doesn't make the movement; the movement makes the man. It's the organizers who improve life for all. He teaches his students they can use the institution to make change.

He tries to engage students with what it means to be critical thinkers and informed citizens who use the informed past to inform the present.

The Confederate monuments were erected before the Civil War was even over, the purpose being to direct

nostalgia. There is a continuing contention that putting up those monuments was a deliberate attempt to reshape history about the Civil War and Reconstruction.

Should we commemorate treason and those who took up weapons against the United States? Or commemorate and celebrate those who were loyal to the United States. A monument doesn't give a topic meaning, and taking it down doesn't change history.

The Civil War was not actually about slavery. It was about states' rights and government intrusion into the states regarding slavery and tariffs.

February 13 – Geocaching, Dick Klope and Marc Rowan

Geo=earth Cache=something hidden



Dick has been geocaching since 2003 and has found roughly 13,000 caches. The closest one has been in Chautauqua Park in Hastings. There are 327 in and around Hastings.

There are guidelines for creating a cache. For example, not near a school, not near a railroad, cannot be buried without permission. Dick is the state reviewer for placement of geocaches and reporting finds.

There are over 3 million containers out and can be found worldwide. They can be of varying sizes. Containers were originally ammo cans, but they have gradually gotten smaller over time. He has seen some people use the small black film containers for those of you who remember actual film in cameras. Icebreaker (the mints) containers have been used. There are even tiny micro containers out there.

Each container must have a login paper where finders sign that they have found it. The smallest ones only have room for initials.

GPS coordinates are used to indicate placement. For example, N 40° 35.255 W 098° 24.765 will put you at Chautauqua Park. Those coordinates will give you the exact location of the cache. You can download a GPS app to use at no cost, or you can use something like a Garmin.

If you place a cache, you list it on geocaching.com, along with any other notes and hints that you want to provide. There is a rating system for difficulty and terrain, as well as information about the size of the container so that people searching will know what they're looking for.

Dick's goal when he started was to put one in every town in Clay county. Marc said he tried to put them in places to showcase Hastings.

Once you have found the coordinates, you still need to locate the container. It could be high in a tree, or low under a brick, or behind a fence ... just about anywhere. Once found, you then go back to geocaching.com to report that you found it. This can be verified, so no cheating!

You don't actually take the container, you just sign the log book inside and then replace it ... hopefully in the exact same location so the coordinates still work for the next person.

There are different kinds of caches. When starting out, go with a traditional cache with easy terrain. Additional kinds are:

- Multi-cache, where you go to multiple stages that lead you to the final location to sign the logbook
- Mystery cache, where you have to solve a puzzle
- Letterbox uses clues posted online rather than GPS
- Cache In Cache Out, where you trade "treasures," take something out and put something in for the next cacher
- Webcam cache, there are none in Nebraska
- Virtual cache, where you discover a location rather than a container, with instructions on how to verify the find
- Challenge cache, requires the player to fulfill a goal before logging the cache as found
- Cache In Trash Out, environmental initiative to pick up trash around the geocache location
- Trackable, where there is a coded moveable item in the cache that can travel to another cache. You can track the movement of your cache on the computer and follow it across the country or around the world.

You can reach Dick at RHKlope@gmail.com

February 20 – Crossroads Mission Avenue, Daniel Buller

Daniel was born in Costa Rica and then was adopted by people from South Dakota. He grew up in Thermopolis, Wyoming and went to college at CCC in Cheyenne. In 2012 he was called to Clay Center, Nebraska to be a pastor and became involved with the Crossroads Center in 2014 as a case manager. He is now Executive Director.

Crossroads was founded 42 years ago in Hastings and is now located at the former Sunnyside Nursing Home on 14th Street, just east of McDonald's. Additional locations are in Grand Island and Kearney.

Hastings has 112 beds for men, women and children. There are 250 beds total across the Tri-Cities. Hastings usually has a population of around 70, but the recent bitter temperatures has brought it up to 88.

Some of their guests come from the hospital after being released with nowhere to go, or following release from incarceration.

The fastest growing demographic is 55 and older. Some nursing homes have shut down in recent years because they have become unprofitable. This has required additional services and personnel at Crossroads to help with meds, dressing and personal care etc.

It expanded to Kearney in Buffalo county in 2012 with 42 beds. They now have 15 apartments and can house around 100 people.

In about 2018 they started looking at Hall county and found they have a large need for homeless housing. They are now accommodating 50 guests there.

Crossroads continues to "follow the need." They are looking further in Central Nebraska where no services currently are available. They started tracking calls from Lexington in Dawson county and had over 100 inquiries in 2024. The Plum Creek Care Center had closed there and they were hoping to use that, but the city council said it was too close to the high school. They have found a smaller facility with 11 efficiency apartments. They applied for a grant to renovate the apartments and have been awarded \$1.5 million.

They are continuing to look around Western Nebraska as well and were contacted by Holdrege to find a solution for its needs.

The name was changed to Crossroads Mission Avenue a few years ago to better reflect their holistic approach to helping people. "Avenue" means a way forward; a way to approach a problem. They first try to build relationships with their guests to learn how to offer solutions for them.

Within 3 days after checking in, the individuals meet with a case manager to determine what brought them to this situation, what is their past. Part of its program is to lead their guests to Christ to help them redirect their lives and instill core values.

Crossroads provides a four-phase program to help people get back on their feet. They do not just arrive and sit around. Throughout their stay, guests are required to spend 2 hours of community service daily. They must



also attend AA, NA, Recovery meetings, or counseling as appropriate, and outpatient treatment as necessary.

Phase 1, Personal Resilience includes life skills classes.

Phase 2,

Employment has them begin a job search working with employment agencies. They must be employed with the same employer for 30 days and begin paying off debt.

Phase 3, Employment and Finance requires them to maintain employment, continue paying off debt, and begin saving \$1,000.

Phase 4, Leadership has them attend leadership skills classes and acquire a leadership duty within Crossroads Mission Avenue, while continuing to save money.

There is initially no cost to live there. However, once they gain employment, they begin paying a small program fee. They find the guests take better care of the residence when they have some buy-in. Helping with shelter maintenance and other duties gives them a purpose in life and an opportunity to give back.

The Crossroads Thrift Store is now located on South Elm in the old Jack and Jill building. It provides about half of the Crossroads operating budget.

Some Hastings stats for 2024:

- Total check-ins: 694, including 23 veterans, 138 elderly, and 44 families with 71 children.
- Average number of guests: 103
- Average length of stay: 48 days
- 84 individuals received access to mental health care
- 53% moved on to sustainable housing situations
- 101 got a job while in the four-phase recovery program
- 221 individuals learned how to make a budget for financial resilience
- Meals provided: 102,471
- Food waste recovery organization-wide: enough to fill 36 semi trucks (foods rescued from Sam's, Walmart, etc and distributed through food pantries)
- Provided over \$75,000 of goods to people in poverty
- Cost of services: \$6.21/day per person

Further information at www.crossroadsmisson.com.

Email: info@crossroadsmisson.com.

Facebook: [@crossroadsmissonavenue](https://www.facebook.com/crossroadsmissonavenue)

February 27 – Check Presentation



Jim Heyen, representative of the Archway Corvette Club, presented a check for \$200 to President-Elect Mike Johnson for Hearts and Hands Against Hunger

February 27 – Climbing Africa's Mt. Kilimanjaro, Jeff Karloff



Jeff has a PhD in electrical engineering (much to the surprise of his friends) and lives in Council Bluffs. He and his wife Julie took this 8-day climb in late October/early November 2024. They followed that with a 4-day safari.

Jeff is an experienced hiker, and Julie is a marathon runner, so they felt this would be an interesting extension of those skills. Approximately 25,000 people attempt the climb each year. Only about 17,000 (2/3) are successful, with altitude sickness being what prevents them from reaching the summit.

They chose Habari Adventures as their tour operator. They drove to Chicago then flew to Ethiopia, then to Tanzania. Kilimanjaro is located on the northeastern border of Tanzania and is the highest peak in Africa at 19,341 ft above sea level. On the other side of the peak is Kenya.

There are several routes to Uhuru Peak; they chose the Lemosho Route because it was a more gradual ascent. Their mountain guides and porters were from the Chagga tribe, native to the slopes of Kilimanjaro. The group consisted of Jeff and Julie, two guides (one in training), one chef, one waiter, and six porters. They

were prescribed Diamox to help alleviate altitude sickness. The effects of altitude sickness can be felt by 8,000 ft.

They were up at 7:00 a.m. each day, provided with breakfast, and out on the trek by 8:00 a.m. Everyone but the guides and them carried all equipment, supplies, tents, etc. Jeff and Julie had backpacks to just hold water and a jacket.

They would hike 4 to 7 hours each day, covering 3-6 miles or so. The guides kept them at a slow steady pace for gradual acclimation to the reduced oxygen as they climbed. The system was to hike high and then camp lower. The guides would use a pulse-ox each evening to check their oxygen level.

The first 4 days were a comfortable 60 to 70° and the nights were warm for sleeping. The food was fabulous and they felt good. By the fifth day they were at 13,000 ft and it was getting much colder and more difficult to sleep. They had lost their appetite but the guides said they absolutely must eat if they were to have energy for the climb the next day.

They started the final climb to the summit on Day 6 at 11:00 p.m. By this time the temperature was ranging from 23 to 32°. It was a 3 hour, 3-mile hike to 15,330 feet. This was at a much slower pace, almost half steps, and they were beginning to have some altitude sickness hallucinations. Jeff could swear there were people walking alongside him.

He knew the porters were carrying oxygen so he asked if they could have a little. The guide told them that if they got oxygen, they would immediately have to turn around and go back before reaching the peak. So they powered through without it and reached Uhuru Peak at 8:30 a.m. on Day 7. The temperature was 10-32°. There was a volcanic crater at the top with glaciers.

They were only at the summit for about 15 minutes, took some photos, and started back down. On Day 8 it



was another final 5 hours to base camp. They went to their hotel to sleep and prepare for the safari the next day.

Their Masai tribe guides arrived at 6:00 a.m. to take them to the Serengeti. They spent three nights there and then went on for the last night to the Ngorongoro Conservation Area, a volcanic crater that is home to much African wildlife.

Even though the Safari was unique, and they were able to see the "Big Five" (lion, leopard, elephant, rhino, and Cape buffalo), Jeff says the climb of Mt. Kilimanjaro will be the highlight memory of their trip. But they probably won't do it again.

Our own Neil Grothen shared that "back in the day" he was part of a group to climb Kilimanjaro. However, he did not make it to the peak before altitude sickness took hold and he and another had to turn back.



Mike, Jim, Jeff and Helen Karloff

2024-2025 Hastings Kiwanis Leadership

Officers

President ~ Frank Koch
franklink@hastingskiwanis.org

Immediate Past President ~ Michelle Musgrave
michelle.musgrave@hastingskiwanis.org

President-Elect ~ Mike E. Johnson (Dr. Mike)
michaelj@hastingskiwanis.org

Vice President ~ Russanne Hoff
russanneh@hastingskiwanis.org

Treasurer ~ Jim Krebsbach
jimk@hastingskiwanis.org

Secretary ~ David Kempf
davek@hastingskiwanis.org

Assistant Secretary ~ Susan Price
susanp@hastingskiwanis.org

Board of Directors (# of years)

John Boltz (2)
johnb@hastingskiwanis.org

Brandon McDermott (2)
brandon.mcdermott@hastingskiwanisd.org

Casey Mohler (2)
casey.mohler@hastingskiwanis.org

Dale Musgrave (2)
dalem@hastingskiwanis.org

Kathy Hohensee (1)
katherineh@hastingskiwanis.org

George Howard (1)
georgeh@hastingskiwanis.org

Taylor Musgrave (1)
taylor.musgrave@hastingskiwanis.org

Marge Ormsby (1)
marge.ormsby@hastingskiwanis.org

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

7 Kathy Schultz
9 Marge Ormsby
11 Cheryl Burr
21 Brandon McDermott

April 1 Gaynor Watson



May your Troubles be Less
And your
Blessings be More
And Nothing but
H*A*P*P*I*N*E*S*S
Come through Your
DOOR

