



Kiwaniis

Hastings • Nebraska

Astonisher

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

"Whatever many may

June 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



Upcoming Meetings & Events ~ June

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

Catering by Emma Baker *(meals subject to change)*

Thur. 5 - Career Services at Hastings College, Carissa Uhrmacher

Sat. 7 - State Elementary Track Meet, HHS Track

Organizational meeting at 9:00 a.m. ~ come & pitch in wherever you can

Wed. 11 - Board Meeting, YWCA Conference Room ~ All members welcome

Thur. 12 - HPS Educator of the Year, Karen Valdes

Thur. 19 - *Check your email - This will be a short meeting due to activity following at 1:00*

Thur. 26 - *Check your email*

GOLF SCRAMBLE ~ Saturday, August 9 ~ Elks Golf Course

*Hole sponsors needed by July 31 * Team Registration & Hole Sponsor form on website
Contact Greg Schultz 402-469-6897*



SKATEPARK NEWS

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

Total Club Donations to date: \$7,561.50 (15.12%)

Total General Public Donations to date: \$5,628 (2.81%)

The HPRD elementary track meet concessions net profit ~ \$201.83

A NEW "ASTONISHER" NEWSLETTER REPORTER IS NEEDED.

Format as you wish. Make it your own.

I will provide my template as a starter.

Marge

***** 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****

Wednesday, June 11 ~ CPI Employees

2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

20 Adults

Friday, June 20 ~ Sertoma 8-Man Football

9:00 – 10:30 a.m.

60 Players and Coaches

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.

June 6 – Neil Grothen – Marge Ormsby

June 13 – Heather Bolte – George Howard

June 20 – Heather Bolte – *Need 1*

June 27 – *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

ICYMI ~ May 2025

May 1 – Prairie Loft Center for Outdoor & Agricultural Learning, Megan Arrington-Williams

Megan started as executive director at Prairie Loft in June of 2023. It is located west of town on DLD Road across from the former Regional Center (now a youth treatment facility) to the south. There are 8.3 acres where the barn and other buildings are located, plus 63 acres of land management. She has one assistant plus summer part-time volunteer help.

It is a non-profit organization supported by grants and donations. The area was previously used by the Regional Center for farming and occupational therapy for the residents. The seed was planted in 2000 to restore the facility for public use and education. It gained its non-profit status in 2005 as a 501c3.

Its first executive director was Amy Sandeen for 15 years. The educational program began in 2007. From 2008 to 2017, there were 56,000 visitors. In 2023, there were 90,000 visitors and they hope to reach 100,000 in 2025. They have worked to remove the barriers for visitors and provide more community impact. This year will be the Flatwater Music Festival's 18th year.

Research shows that children aged 10 and under spend 8 hours a day on a screen device, and outside unstructured play time under 6 minutes per day. They want to get children "away from the blue and into the sunlight."

Prairie Loft's goal is to have them learn where their heritage comes from and learn to play outside. At its

camp and festivals, they start with "Welcome! Now go out and play." They offer adult programming in addition to children's activities.

People are feeling more isolated these days and are spending more time indoors, not communicating person to person. They strive to support community well-being and offer connection experiences.

The iconic Loft Barn on the west side of the property will partially stay as original for learning purposes. There has been a renovation of the remaining portion to add restrooms, temperature controlled meeting rooms etc. It will include a commercial kitchen.

There are 15 summer offerings for this summer, including teaching how to tend a garden and then cook the food. Megan says that whether the events are indoors or outdoors, they will go on rain or shine. Weather is their guest of honor.

Future goals are to evolve sustained gifts, structural endowments, and estate gifts; expand scholarships; and to enrich experiences even further. You can reach Megan at megan@prairieloft.org.



May 8 – Ukraine Rotary Exchange Student, Sophie Kostenko



Sophie (Sofia in Ukraine) had a very nice slide presentation... you could see her art and design strengths.

She lives in Cherkasy, Ukraine, a town of nearly 270,000. Her home is right by a river, which is where she spends her summer. Both of her parents work.

Her local Rotary district back home is number 2232. Her biggest dream has been to go to the United States. She would watch videos and learn as much as she could, never thinking that she would actually get to come here.

Grades 1 through 7 were all in one building. For grades 8 and 9, she was in another building. This is when she joined the Rotary Club as a volunteer. They were able to choose some of their classes; she learned French. Other languages were also available. There were no sports in school and PE was just singing and games.

Her volunteering included sorting clothes for refugees, weaving nets for the military at the front lines, visiting temporary shelters for children "from difficult

families," and visiting a nursing home. The nursing home visits were her favorite volunteer activity; she liked visiting with the grandmas.

In 2022 her parents said she and her older sister could travel somewhere during the summer. Her sister chose France; Sophie never really was interested in going to France. In 2023, she chose Rome. She liked the ice cream in Italy, but not Italy itself so much.

Sophie explained that they live in apartments, called flats, not in houses. There were bombings in her city in the years and months prior to her coming here. She recalls that on September 21, 2023 they heard explosions in the night. In the morning her friend texted, wondering if they would have to go to school. It turns out the school was not damaged, so they went on to algebra. They received air alerts all through the day. *[NOTE: Cherkasy was one of the recent large air attacks by Russia on April 28th, as well as Kyiv and Kharkiv. And again May 26 and 27.]*

She flew here from Poland on August 6th, 2024. Some of the culture shock she experienced was that you can wear shoes in the house, pickles are already cut in the jar, and chips are different. She was amazed at the size of Walmart and all the different things and types of food you could buy there.

She attended Adams Central while she was here. Extracurricular activities were FFA Club, varsity choir, track, and she was in "Little Shop of Horrors." She took three art classes and worked in the greenhouse.

Before going back to Ukraine, she will stay in the United States for a special 28-day tour around America

offered by Rotary, visiting many states. She will be in Washington D.C. for July 4th.

When she gets back home she will take an exam to enter college. She wants to study art.

May 15 – Catholic Social Services, Miranda Schumacher

Notes from Kathy Schultz in my absence



Miranda was formerly with TeamMates but started working at CSS last November.

The mission of CSS is to perform works of mercy in response to the call of God. They help out families in need—those perhaps struggling to pay bills, people new to the community and looking for work, etc. Their **family support**

services aid people who have lost their job, have an unexpected bill they can't pay, etc. Their case worker works with people to help them avoid needing to call for help every month.

CSS provides food boxes, which contain nonperishable items as well as refrigerated items and bread. One of the most used services is the **free sack lunches**, which are handed out daily Monday through Friday from noon to 4:00 p.m. The number of lunches handed out increases dramatically in the summer months when children are on vacation and not getting meals at school.

CSS only has a few paid employees--most of the work is done by volunteers. Those who work at CSS try to help their clients maintain their dignity. There is no judgment when someone comes in needing help. They

want everyone to be seen as a person, and they know many of the people who come in by name.

St. Joseph Gift & Thrift is their thrift store that is stocked with donations from the community. Donated items are sorted and priced in the back room, and then sold in the store to raise money for their work. People who come in for help may receive a voucher to use at the thrift store to purchase clothing and other items they need. Miranda noted that even stained and torn clothing is accepted, as these items can be baled and sold to a company that recycles the material as another way to earn money.

CSS is currently operating with an interim director. A new director has been hired and will be coming June 1st. His wife will be the thrift store manager.

In addition to the family support services and free daily sack lunches they also provide:

- Clothing and household items
- Food market
- Personal care items and homeless kits
- Diapers
- Furniture assistance

Catholic Social Services is located at 333 West 2nd Street in Hastings They can be reached at 402-463-2112, cssshope.org.

May 22 – New Member Induction, Sheena Irish

Sheena was sponsored by Karen Kempf, Tim Jacobi and George Howard.

George and President Frank Koch installed her and George reviewed the Objects of Kiwanis.



Karen, Sheena, George, Frank

May 22 – Housing Development Corp., Alyssa Heagy



Alyssa has been executive director of the Hastings Housing Development Corporation for 4 weeks. However, she does have 10 years of experience as the director of a non-profit. She spends 50% of her time in Hastings with an office in the Chamber of Commerce building, and 50% in Grand Island.

The HDC was founded in 1993 and is a 501c3 non-profit. It exists to promote affordable housing opportunities and improve quality of life. It serves the Central Nebraska counties of Adams, Clay, Hall, Nuckolls, and Webster.

Comprehensive Housing Support

- LIHTC (local income housing tax credit) Rental – Long-Term affordable rental option
- Lease-to-Own housing – currently have five left
- Owner-occupied Rehab to preserve housing safety and stability – usually accessibility modifications like a ramp
- Down Payment Assistance for first-time home buyers – currently on hold due to a federal freeze
- Home Buyer and Tenant Education

Some Stats ~ Since 1993 they have:

- Built 72 homes
- Purchased and rehabbed 102 homes
- Provided nearly \$700,000 in disaster assistance
- Invested \$1.7 million in homeless youth shelter development (The HDC owns the building where the Maryland Center is located.)
- Generated \$10 million in home loans

- Increased the local property tax base from construction by \$5.3 million

Its Rentwise Tenant Education Program teaches how to be a good tenant; 156 have received completion certificates. It has decreased eviction recidivism.

Anyone can attend the First-Time Homebuyer Education class. It has been completed by 602 individuals.

There is a shortage of safe, decent housing in Hastings. Statistics about vacant houses do not reflect that many are not habitable. It has been shown that stable housing is the foundation for youth for health, education, and employment. Home ownership provides long-term financial stability

They want to expand their lease-to-own homes by building new to rent, and then every 5 years the tenant can purchase the home if they are ready. Under this program, \$50 of each month's rent goes into an escrow account for purchase later.

Income qualifications for their programs are set by the Department of Housing and Urban Development. That amount keeps fluctuating.

When asked about current construction of affordable housing, she replied that "affordable" is relative. Affordable for whom? Affordable is different from "attainable." Hastings is currently short 694 affordable units. There are currently seven in the works.

She also pointed out that housing and building costs don't match up with HUD guidelines. The market rate for a home is higher than is attainable by most families.

Alyssa can be reached at AlyssaH@hdcne.org; office 402-461-8407; cell 509-280-9029.

May 29 – Donation to the Boy Scouts

Tim Jacobi received a \$500 donation for the Boy Scouts. He indicated the funds would be used to help those who can't afford memberships.



May 29 – The Current Situation in Israel, Pastor Darrell Sutton



Pastor Sutton was born in Cleveland, Ohio and began his ministry when he was a teenager. He spent 7 years in the Marine Corps and is a veteran of the first Gulf War, 1991. He served as a Marine Security Guard at two American consulates in the Middle East.

Upon discharge in 1994 he returned to the Middle East and lived with an Iraqi family while he studied Arabic and the Quran. He completed his pastoral ministries in the six seminaries of the Southern Baptist Convention, receiving a Doctor of Ministry from Knox Theological Seminary in Florida.

He has published numerous articles in classical journals on Greek and Latin scholars, and is the classics editor for *The Quarterly Review* in London, England.

Pastor Sutton is an expert on the sects of radical Islam and Islamic theory of law. He spent 16 months in Saudi Arabia and 16 months in Istanbul, Turkey.

In order to understand the situation between the Jewish in Israel and the Muslims in Saudi Arabia, Pastor Sutton took us back to the beginning of the writing of the Quran by Muhammad in the year 610. In 20 minutes he brought us up to the history of radicalization and the birth of Hamas and Hezbollah. He also reminded us that a TV news announcer's job is to keep people watching. We don't always get the full story.

Pastor Sutton's presentation was a class in history and the history of religion in the Middle East. It was fascinating and a lot to take in. The following is my takeaway from what he said. The issue is related to culture.

The Islamic belief is that the Quran is the literal word of God as revealed to Muhammad over the course of many years. It did not establish a new religion but confirms the original belief in one God as taught by Abraham. It occasionally refers to other Biblical prophets such as Moses and Jesus, and events. Rather than being a chronology of history, the Quran is a guide for social and ethical behavior. "Islam" means submission to the will of God. "Muslim" means one who submits.

Some of it is about different beliefs and different interpretations of the events leading up to and during the time of Jesus. Muslims feel that their way is the only way, and those who do not follow their beliefs or step outside of the boundaries should be killed.

When Muhammad began disclosing his Revelations he told the people they had three choices: convert, believe, or lose their life. Thus began his following.

Christians find many of their social arrangements unacceptable or downright appalling. Such as that women's heads should be covered beginning at age 8. That is also an acceptable age to become engaged, with marriage possible by age 10. The husband could be of any age. He personally witnessed a wedding between a 52-year-old man and a 12-year-old girl. Women have no autonomous place in their culture. Polygamy is a means to maintain and continue their culture.

The culture is totally different in the Middle East. For a woman, a mere accusation of adultery can be cause for beheading, no proof required. Beheadings are advertised as a social event to occur publicly in the streets of the village.

Females who dare to dissent against the will of the Muslim religion may be publicly stoned or hanged or otherwise killed by any male in their family. That is their society's rules, not ours. One must understand and accept those differences.

Pastor Sutton states that as one studies history, it is clear that every culture has religion as its base. None are based on atheism. Our own Founding Fathers declared that ours should be "one nation under God."

The Arab-Israeli conflict is about ownership of land and self-determination. The Jews of Israel and Arab Muslims both claim a historical right to the land of Palestine. Many empire changes and name changes have occurred over thousands of years creating a complex history of the region. The Jews established Israel/Palestine as its homeland following the Holocaust. That region had been controlled by many different Muslim empires over the previous centuries. In addition, the Jewish people have rejected Muslim teachings, which is why they are not welcome in Palestine.

There are many cultural challenges when the people of Arab countries come to the United States, Canada or the UK. That's why they tend to congregate in a specific area and establish their own court systems.

Pastor Sutton's summary was that if we don't understand a people and its culture, compromise is difficult if not impossible.

Pastor Sutton ministers in South Central Nebraska (Red Cloud, Hebron) and North Central Kansas (Hays). He can be heard each Sunday morning on KRVN 880 AM rural radio from 9:30 to 10:00 a.m. Or go to "Revival Tabernacle in the Great Plains" at iTunes.

May 29th Annual Meeting ~ Election of Officers and Board Members for 2025-26

President Frank Koch read the proposed roster for 2025-26 that begins October 1:

Frank Koch, Immediate Past President
Dr. Mike E. Johnson, President
Russanne Hoff, President-Elect
Marge Ormsby, Vice President

Jim Krebsbach, Treasurer
David Kempf, Secretary

Board members: 1 year:

John Boltz
Brandon McDermott
Casey Mohler
Dale Musgrave

Board members, 2 years:

Heather Bolte
Kathy Hohensee
Mike Howie
Greg Schultz

Motion by Kathy Schultz to accept the proposed roster as presented, second by Dale Musgrave. Motion passed.
Congratulations!

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

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

4 Tom Musgrave
15 Frank Koch
27 Jim Lewis
28 Caleb Hahne
30 Mike E. Johnson (Dr.)



Candy Quiz

Name the following types of candy:

1. A famous swashbuckling trio of old
2. Favorite day of the week for working people
3. A subdued laugh
4. Indian burial ground
5. Galaxy
6. Red planet
7. A sweet sign of affection
8. Can't hold on to anything
9. A famous author
10. A happy nut
11. Famous New York Street
12. Famous former baseball star
13. Twin letters
14. Home of the movie stars
15. Superman's "reporter" name
16. A well-behaved man

Answers next month