



# Kiwaniis

Hastings • Nebraska

## Astonisher

A newsletter of the Hastings Kiwanis Club  
[hastingskiwanis.org](http://hastingskiwanis.org)  
[myclub@hastingskiwanis.org](mailto:myclub@hastingskiwanis.org)  
[facebook.com/hastingskiwanis](https://facebook.com/hastingskiwanis)

*"Children are gifts too ~ handle them with care."*

March 2026

If you have items you wish to be included in the Astonisher, you can send them to  
[george.howard@hastingskiwanis.org](mailto:george.howard@hastingskiwanis.org) OR [Astonisher@hastingskiwanis.org](mailto: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 ~ February



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

Thur. 5 - Pancake Day final preparations

Thur. 12 - No meeting, due to 2 days after Pancake Day

Wed. 18 - Board Meeting, YWCA Conference Room - All Members welcome

Thur. 19 - Pancake Day Analysis and Recap

Thur. 26 -

### MARCH:

MONDAY 2ND: COUNTY RE TAX DAY—Enough signed up

MONDAY 9TH: SET UP DAY FOR PANCAKE DAY

TUESDAY 10TH: PANCAKE DAY—ALL HANDS ON DECK

SUNDAY 22TH: AURORA, NE CHARTER PARTY, Time/Site tba

### MAY:

THURSDAY 28TH: ANNUAL MEETING



## SKATEPARK NEWS

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

**Total Club Donations to Date: \$48,186.84 (94.08%)**

\* Member Matching grant pledge ..... \$10,000 (received)

**Total General Public Pledges/Donations to date: \$128,902.53 (86%)**

\* Visitors Bureau commitment, \$50,000 Coming

\* Lions Club pledge ..... \$ 5,000 Coming

### Skatepark Giving Levels

\$10,000 - Big logo on sign

\$7,500 - Small logo on sign

\$5,000 - Name on sign

\$2,500

\$1,000

\$500

\$250

All donors at \$125 and above:

- Listed in newspaper ad
- Status newsletter at end of project

Kiwanis Skatepark Fellows giving \$1,000 or more  
- Name on sign

\$50,000 to put your name on the Pump Track

## \*\*\* 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\*\***

**Monday packing has resumed ~ 2:00-3:30 p.m.**

**Thursday, March 19 ~ 4:00 – 5:30 pm**

**Archway Corvette Club**

**POSSIBLY PACKING 10 MILLIONTH MEAL**

**Wednesday, April 1 ~ 3:00 – 4:00 pm**  
**Hastings High School**  
**National Honor Society-80 members**  
**NEED MANY KIWANIAN-NO FOOLIN**

**Sunday, February 15 2-4 pm**  
**Webster County Junior Leaders**

**Wednesday, February 18 10 am-Noon**  
**Deshler Schools**

**Wednesday, February 25 9-11 am**  
**Sandy Creek High School**

**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. 3<sup>rd</sup> St.  
(east of the Post Office ~ 3<sup>rd</sup> & Minnesota) and delivery usually takes 30-40 minutes.  
They have the routes set up for the most efficient delivery.**

**March 6 – Need 1**  
**March 13 –**  
**March 20 – Need 1**  
**March 27 – George Howard, Need 1**

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

## ICYMI ~ February 2026

### February 5 - Gabe Harman of Eileen's Colossal Cookies

Gabe Harman was the speaker. His brother Tony was on his way to Omaha for an Eric Church concert, so he wasn't able to attend the meeting.

Eileen Harman started Eileen's Colossal Cookies in 1982 out of her home on the corner of 14<sup>th</sup> & Baltimore, across the street from Lib's Park. She sold her cookies out of convenience stores and at concession stands, such as the one at Lib's Pool. She often delivered cookies dressed as the Cookie Monster or wearing other costumes, which she borrowed from The Costume Shop.

In 1983, Eileen opened her first store at 2<sup>nd</sup> & Lincoln (where Paul's Cigar Bar is now). In 1986 the store moved to its location on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, where it remained for 38 years. The store moved to Cimarron Plaza in 2024, and although they left the downtown area, people have commented that they appreciate the ease of parking at the new location.

Eileen expanded her business in 1989 by opening a location in Grand Island, and then added another store in Kearney in 1991. Her first franchise location opened in Cheyenne, Wyoming, in 1994. Stores are currently operating in 28 locations in 9 states—the Hastings, Grand Island and Kearney stores are still owned by the family and all others are franchises.

Her son Tony returned to Hastings to join the business in 2007, and son Gabe came back to Hastings in 2009 to help out. They have worked hard to expand the business, adding a dough production facility in Hastings that produces the tubs of cookie dough that many organizations sell as a fund raiser.

There are currently 13 different types of cookies available at Eileen's. The original 7 are made from Eileen's mother's recipes. The stores make an average of 3,000 cookies per day. The most popular cookies are the frosted sugar cookies. The biggest

sellers of the non-frosted cookies are chocolate chip (#1) and monster oatmeal (#2). The largest store is in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and does more than a million dollars in business each year. The Hastings store ranks #10, but it is located in the smallest town of all of the locations.

Eileen retired in 2018 and is currently living at the Kensington in the memory care unit. She enjoyed seeing the PowerPoint that Gabe put together about the history of the business.

An interesting side note: Gabe mentioned after the meeting that the owner of the franchise in Edmond, Oklahoma, owns horses and named one of his race horses "Makin' the Dough"!



**February 12 - New Member Molly Johnson Inducted**



**Molly has recently started as the new Ag Society Fairgrounds manager. Congratulations!**

**February 12 - Heidi Davis discussing Oral Health**

Heidi coordinates "South Heartland Smiles" through the South Heartland District Health Department. The Oral Health program is aimed at pre-school and day care kids. Central Community College handles programs for the schools.

Kids get oral screenings, topical fluoride and/or dental sealants. Their organization works with public health hygienists providing education and prevention services, but their program is not meant to replace dentist check ups.

South Heartland Smiles serves 10 day care sites every 6 months in Adams, Clay, Nuckolls and Webster counties. It also takes appointments for monthly preventative screenings at South Heartland district Health.



**February 19th Marty Stange on Soil Health and our Nitrate Legacy**



Marty retired from the City of Hastings. Nitrates displace oxygen in the blood. The goal is to have nitrates be no more than 10 parts per million (ppm). The present cost of nitrate management for the city is about \$2 Million per year. The problem is a strain of bacteria in the soil is taking the uranium off rocks in the ground and then it enters water in the aquifer. Hastings HUB 1 is a coalition of farmers in the counties near us which use farming practices to lower the nitrate buildup. HUB 2 will be around the Holdrege area. Marty is a proponent of fertilization where the farmer fertilizes through the pivots when the plants are growing, since excess water forces the nitrates down to the groundwater. A soil health conference was held on the 18th focused on practical, research-based strategies to improve soil health and regenerative agricultural systems. The conference tried to support both profitability and long-term soil resilience. Topics included regenerative practices, grazing cover crops, soybean management, reducing input costs. Incorporating biochar and hands on soil health testing.

## **February 26th—Stephanie Ourada CFO & VP Finance for Hastings College**



Stephanie started at HC in 2019 and besides being the CFO, she is also in charge of Human Resources, Housing, Dining and Financial Aid. Hastings College was founded in 1882 by Presbyterians and this year they have slightly over 900 students. The most popular majors are Business, various Sciences and Teacher Education. In 2020, Rich Lloyd became President. Since then, Hastings College has gone from financial losses to having a surplus the last 2 years. Open next Fall will be a new large, 4 story dormitory with 322 individual bedrooms. Fuhr Hall will be demolished soon as the Music Department has moved to the Gray Center. There are an additional 250 bedrooms in the fairly new Village apartments and those are in the process of renovation.

## 2025-2026 Hastings Kiwanis Leadership

### Officers

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

**Immediate Past President** ~ Frank Koch  
franklink@hastingskiwanis.org

**President-Elect** ~ Russanne Hoff  
russanneh@hastingskiwanis.org

**Vice President** ~ Marge Ormsby  
marge.ormsby@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)

Heather Bolte (2)  
heather.bolte@hastingskiwanis.org

Kathy Hohensee (2)  
katherineh@hastingskiwanis.org

Mike Howie (2)  
mikeh@hastingskiwanis.org

Greg Schultz (2)  
gregs@hastingskiwanis.org

John Boltz (1)  
johnb@hastingskiwanis.org

Brandon McDermott (1)  
brandon.mcdermott@hastingskiwanisd.org

Casey Mohler (1)  
casey.mohler@hastingskiwanis.org

Dale Musgrave (1)  
dalem@hastingskiwanis.org

### **MARCH BIRTHDAYS**

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

