



Kiwanis

Hastings • Nebraska

Astonisher

A newsletter of the Hastings Kiwanis Club

hastingskiwanis.org

myclub@hastingskiwanis.org

facebook.com/hastingskiwanis

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

AUGUST, 2026

If you have items you wish to be included in the Astonisher, you can send them to
george.howard@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 ~ August



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

Thur. 6 - SKIP A MEAL-NO DONATIONS-TourNEW 4 story 1882 Dorm at Hastings College 803 E 9th St, Enter East doors-Spouses & Others Welcome-Come Early-Tour Begins at Noon

Wed. 12 - Board Meeting, YWCA Conference Room - All Members Welcome

Thur. 13 - Germans from Russia migration - Becky Matticks

Thur. 20 - Hastings College Jackson Scholars Program Rachael Broadwell

Thur. 27 - Hastings Zoning and Creative District - Kevin Kubo & Ember Batelaan

AUGUST:

4th: National Night Out Crosier Park 5:30-7:30

7-8th: District Convention, Council Bluffs, Mid-America Center

8th: Hastings Kiwanis Golf Scramble, Elks Golf Course, 9 am Shotgun Start

25th: Virtual Kiwanis Club Leadership Training for Officers & Committee Chairs



SKATEPARK NEWS

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

Total Club Donations to Date: \$58,164.77 (116.3%)

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

Total General Public Pledges/Donations to date: \$147,666.46 (98.4%)

* 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/annex bldg)

****Please arrive 30 minutes prior to the scheduled start time for setting up****

Monday packing will resume in the Fall ~ 2:00-3:30 p.m.

Wednesday, September 30, 8:30–10:30
St Cecilia High School

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

Friday, October 9th, 7-8:30 pm
Christian Church Regional Assembly

Friday, November 20th, 6:30-8 pm
Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students

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.
(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.

August	7 – Need 2
August	14 – Need 2
August	21 – Russanne Hoff
August	28 – George Howard

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 ~ JULY, 2026:



July 2nd, Laurie Parr - HPS Senior Educator of the Year

Laurie has served HPS for 32 years. She became a school counselor at Alcott in 2022. Alcott needed a solution for chronic absenteeism during and after Covid. At Alcott, 24% are English learners, 42% are Hispanic, 67% are reduced lunch and 20% are Special Education.

In 2022, Alcott had 39% chronic absenteeism, 121 students missing more than 17 days. Laurie developed a program which gave incentives to classes to have high attendance—extra Phys Ed classes as she teamed with a PE teacher who gave up a planning period to accommodate the students. She also used disco dance parties and ice cream socials as other incentives. By 2025, chronic absenteeism was down to 9% of the students.

JULY 9th, Christine Niemeyer - Composing Music

Here is some of the information from Christine. Her website: <https://christineniemeyer.com/about> and FB page: https://www.facebook.com/ManyCrownsMusic/directory_links. She is the daughter of Jim and Lynn Kaiser. She said her father passed away 2 years ago. Dave Kempf had him as a band teacher at Longfellow many years ago. She sang 2 songs for us. Her second one, touched me significantly as it is a song about childhood cancer. In particular was a young girl that passed away due to DIPG which is the same battle Dave's 9 year old cousin lost some years ago. Here is the Youtube of that song: <https://youtu.be/eDnZVQrv8B4?si=xfUFRldw9-BiTKtm>.

July 16th, Ellie Friend - Hastings Public Schools Educator of the Year



Ellie's daughter, Alex, was also at the Kiwanis meeting and Tim Jacobi is Ellie Friend's cousin. Ellie has been with HPS 25 years in the resources area and her last 12 years have been with Special Education. She has the same students from 8:15 to 1:15 daily for the entire year. The hours include meals for the students. Some of the students have mental illness issues or autism. Besides normal education classes, they also have instruction in personal skills and etiquette. They have phys ed classes daily and the most she has ever had is 21 students. Most of the students have had truancy issues since kindergarten and many have never played a board game, so they do that to learn different skills.

JULY 23RD, Family Foundation Services and Joshua's House - Gianna Konen



Gianna is a Hastings native and with her husband they have twins of their own and 3 foster kids. Hastings Foundation Services tries to ensure a safe environment when placing foster kids. The entity does drug testing of the foster parents before any kids are placed. She has done this for 10 years and recently started Joshua's House, which is based on the same concept as Miriam's Hope, which our former member, Luke, started and expanded in Kansas. Gianna also said Luke had an entity buy Miriam's Hope, so Luke has now started a similar organization in Columbus, NE. Family Foundation has an office at 235 N St Joseph where they help by providing some clothes to families and doing some laundry. They work with the NE Dept of Health and Human Services trying to cover 3 main items for families: food, clothing and housing.

JULY 30th, Community Redevelopment Authority - Randy Chick, Director



Randy's focus today wasn't about the CRA's history, but the main discussion was on their large project involving the redevelopment of the old Hastings middle school into apartment units.

The CRA acquired the property in 2022 by buying the delinquent tax certificates on the property as the former owners hadn't paid their real estate taxes for several years. The CRA will be taking bids beginning August 11 from entities for the redevelopment of the property and will close the bidding process on December 1st.

The building has over 35,000 sq ft on each of 3 floors and a 12,000 sq foot basement. The entire building will have new windows. Some old classrooms had 900 sq ft, which is a good size for a studio apartment. One plan has 4 studio apartments, 48 1 bedroom apartments and 16 2 bedroom apartments. The building will have a new main entrance (designer's rendering below) in the Northwest corner so that there is good access from the 96 parking spaces North of the building. The old gym in the basement could have a pickle ball court and fitness area. The basement could possibly house a food court, too. The auditorium will probably be turned into some kind of a deck with a common area for all dwellers.

The entire project is estimated to have a \$15.2 Million cost, supported by \$2.4 Million of owner's equity, a \$7.5 Million loan and some grants and financing, one of which is a \$1.8 Million Tax-Increment Financing loan by the CRA, which will be paid by real estate tax collections over slightly over a decade, since the real estate tax assessed value is estimated to increase to \$9,000,000 from \$275,000.



Northwest Entrance



Deck



Typical Apartment

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)
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John Boltz (1)
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Brandon McDermott (1)
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Casey Mohler (1)
casey.mohler@hastingskiwanis.org

Dale Musgrave (1)
dalem@hastingskiwanis.org

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

1 JOYCE MANGERS
5 MIKE HOWIE
9 RUSSANNE HOFF
16 KATHRYN "KAT" BOLTZ
25 CASEY MOHLER
27 DAVE KEMPF
29 MARK MOUL
29 SUSAN PRICE
30 ROGER WRIGHT
31 TIM JACOBI



