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Sands through

The Hour-Glass



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State Survey...Deficiency Free

“The surveyors are here.” These are words that every administrator, director of nursing, and supervisor wait for on a daily basis. The waiting for those words is just part of a normal day for the management staff at every Assisted Living or Nursing Care Facility. You know you have trained your staff well, but you are still concerned and wonder, “What will the surveyors find this time?”

On December 17 and 18, 2014, The Nebraska Masonic Home received an unannounced visit from the State of Nebraska for a state survey for both the Assisted Living Facility and Nursing Care Facility. For someone who has never encountered a state survey, you can't possibly imagine all the minute details that the surveyors watch for as well as critique. They have access to all areas of the facility.

For any of you who have ever visited The Nebraska Masonic Home, you know that because of the employees from bottom to top, the management staff, and Board of Trustees our facility is top notch and is one of the best in the Midwest. Well . . . the state surveyors confirmed that fact by issuing a deficiency-free report for both the Assisted Living Facility and the Nursing Care Facility.

I would like to share with you a few of the many things that State Surveyors look for during the survey process. They leave no stone unturned so as to be sure that the residents in a facility are being well cared for in all aspects of their personal and medical lives.

Nursing is reviewed for patient care documentation,

resident personal and medical care, medication administration and storage, medical and restorative treatments, infection control, resident rights, resident service agreements and resident care plans. You can't just care for a resident medically you must follow all protocol in all medical procedures and document all phases of those procedures appropriately.



Mary Vrbka is happy to share the written results of the state survey with resident Laverne Perry.

Dietary serves excellent food as many of you know, but they must follow all the requirements in regard to the preparation of that delicious food. This includes proper temperature control, food service, sanitation, cleanliness, and menu preparation for a wide variety of resident dietary requirements. All of these areas must also be documented.

Housekeeping and laundry provide us with a clean, fresh, and odor-free

environment for the residents which includes the proper use and storage of chemicals in order to clean the facility and launder all resident clothing and other laundry for the whole facility. For example—a rug can be lifted anywhere in the facility and it must pass the white glove test.

The Activity Department is not just here to play BINGO with the residents . . . they must provide plentiful and appropriate activities for each resident's specific level of care and document all activities.

The Maintenance Department keeps our facility running in top notch shape both inside and outside. That is a huge job with a facility as large as ours.

This also re-quires that water and temperature testing be done and documented. Air temperature, air flow, and boiler and chiller readings are under constant surveillance to make our residents comfortable and the building run smoothly.

Surveyors interview residents, residents' family members, and employees to be sure that their comments about the care and the facility in general are in sync with what the surveyors see during the course of a survey. All of these people are interviewed at random.

These are just a few of the things the state surveyors review during their survey. The check off list on their clipboards is definitely long and intense. We have always known at The Nebraska Masonic Home that we give very personalized and loving care to our residents, that it is a beautiful and immaculate facility, and that it serves the best food for hundreds of miles, with activities that please

even the toughest critic . . . but now that is imprinted on paper that states The Nebraska Masonic Home is DEFICIENCY FREE! This is the highest rating given by the State of Nebraska Licensure Unit.

I hope you are thoroughly impressed! We are! The number of facilities that can brag about a deficiency-free survey are few and far between. Aren't you glad you are associated with an organization that puts their residents' care first?

Come and visit a resident for

Mary Vrbka ... is

Mary Vrbka
Administrator



and see yourself our door always open.

State Survey Results Exemplary



Sharing our facility-wide accomplishments with all of our interested and loyal readers is so important.

One such accomplishment happened the week before Christmas. A state survey team of three arrived at The Nebraska Masonic Home to do a full facility survey. What an incredibly proud moment

it was for every single employee to hear the results of this one and a half day survey.


The Nebraska Masonic Home received a deficiency-free rating for our Assisted Living areas and our Nursing Facility areas. This is an incredible achievement. Every single employee deserves credit for making this deficiency-free survey possible.

Employees working together as a team, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and doing their individual jobs with excellence in mind is how a deficiency-free survey is accomplished. Providing elder care and making sure each resident's environment is respected and their personal and medical needs are met while following all the licensure guidelines is what surveyors examine very carefully during

the survey process.

This survey result has to be one of the proudest moments in my 41-year career at The Nebraska Masonic Home. It was such a rewarding moment because all of the employees made it happen. I know how dedicated and hard working all of our employees are and being told by the state surveyors that you have a perfect facility is so rewarding for everyone. My special thank you is extended to each employee for your commitment to The Home and our residents. Being able to share this proud accomplishment with our dear residents and their families is a feeling that words can not explain. I try to imagine how pleased residents and families are to know they have selected such a fine facility for their loved one's care. I know all of our residents and families share in our feeling of pride.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, employees, and residents I also thank you, our loyal supporters, for the part you play in making it possible for The Nebraska Masonic Home to be a truly-respected health care facility. Your support, both personally and monetarily, helps us to be a facility that is a leader in the health care industry.

I look forward to assisting you, your family members and friends. Call me anytime to schedule an appointment for a visit or just to talk about the services The Nebraska Masonic Home offers. 

Mary C. Stapp

Mary C. Stapp
Executive Director

Meet Steve Inserra, Our Environmental Supervisor

Have you ever eaten emu? Well, our Steve Inserra has eaten three of them!

The emu is a flightless bird, originating in Australia, that is eight feet tall and can cause quite a stir when it wants to...but more on the emus later.

Steve Inserra was born 49 years ago in Omaha, just south of Elmwood Park. He attended the local grade schools until his family moved to Cedar Creek in 1980 and he became a student at Louisville High School. He is a member of the Class of 1984. After graduating, he moved on to a few years at UNO where he pursued some interests in the fine arts department.

Steve, who supervises the 12 employees in our housekeeping and laundry departments, is quite a guy.

He has camped out on the floor of the Grand Canyon.

He worked for 22 years in the credit card department of one of Omaha's largest employers.

A member of the Rosebud Reservation Sioux tribe, he takes part in local powwows and has served on the Omaha Indian Community Council.



He paints when the mood strikes him and one of his watercolors hangs on the wall of his office at The Home. He dabbles in small plants in the 3,000 square foot

greenhouse on his property.

He ends each workweek on Friday afternoons by visiting with some of the special residents he has befriended, and he starts each work week on Monday morning with a smile, a whistle on his lips, and a greeting for the other employees he meets along the way.

Quite a guy indeed.

Steve owns 45 acres of land along the Missouri River south and east of Plattsmouth. His neighbors are the deer, wild turkeys, coyotes and foxes in the area, and the greenhouse offers plenty of opportunities to work with his plants.

Well, back to the emus. After a little luck at the casino, Steve decided to raise emus. He went to the Fremont area and bought six chicks which were less than a foot tall. Emus eat plants mostly, so there would not be a huge expense in feeding them as they grew . . . and grow they did!

When the six emus were full grown, they decided they had outgrown Steve's property. There was an "emu stampede" of sorts and they broke down the fences and headed for open territory.

There wasn't much for Steve to do but wait for the phone calls of emu sightings (one made it the ten or so miles to Plattsmouth), and he found out when they were cornered they had no intention of returning home peacefully.

An emu has dark meat on its legs, Steve discovered, but not much meat anywhere else. The meat tasted "goosy, like a goose" Steve recalls when remembering the end of the Great Emu Hunt.

This year, Steve may just take up chickens. "Lots of fresh eggs," he says.

MEMO TO CHICKENS: Stay home.

We know you join us in wishing the best for Steve Inserra, a valued and most thoughtful member of our Nebraska Masonic Home family. He is proud to be a member of our staff and calls The Home "an amazing place to work".

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... “It’s not home, but it’s the next best thing” ...

Meet Peggy Pearson

“Come with me. I have to show you something,” Peggy Pearson said, and with that she led the way to her room in the Spencer Wing of the The Nebraska Masonic Home.

She was particularly proud of two items hanging on the walls of her room. One is her collection of cups and saucers that hangs on the north wall. It includes 18 sets of each, as well as two additional cups and a few bells, neatly arranged in a handsome rack. Directly across the room is a beautiful three-generation family picture taken on the occasion of Peggy’s 50th wedding anniversary to Rex Pearson.

Proud indeed, and rightly so. They are two of her most treasured belongings.

But we start this resident’s story almost 91 years ago with her birth in a Sioux City hospital. Her family lived on a farm across the river near Dakota City in Nebraska. She attended the local schools and Salem Lutheran Church in the area.

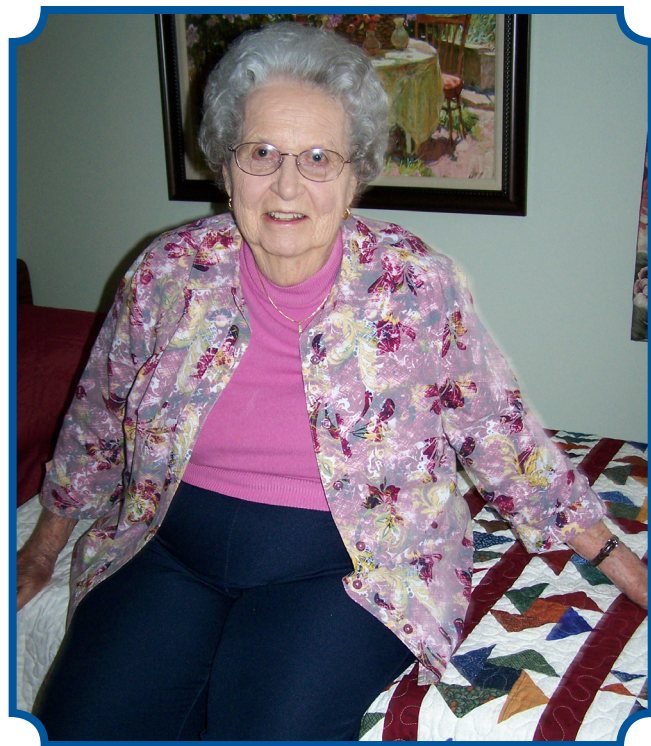
As time went on, she was attracted to Rex Pearson, four years older, who came from a farm in the area as well. In the fall of her senior year at South Sioux City High School, in 1941, Rex and Peggy drove to Lincoln to see a Nebraska football game—and eloped. Their marriage remained a secret though, as married girls were not allowed to graduate from her high school in those days.

Peggy did graduate with her class in 1942, and the secret was out. She promptly began a 25-year career as the church secretary at Salem Lutheran, and Rex kept working the farm 2 miles west of Dakota City. They continued to live in the farm house long after Rex gave up farming. They leased out the farm land.

Along the way, Rex became affiliated with Omadi Lodge No. 5 and later the Abu Bekr Shrine in Sioux City. They joined Laura Chapter No. 301 in Sioux City where Peggy served as Worthy Matron. Rex was active in the Shrine clowns, the ritual work, and eventually became the Shrine Potentate, a position which he proudly served in 1980.

It was during Rex’s year as Potentate that the Shrine made a gift to Peggy of the distinctive cup and saucer rack. The cups and saucers represent places they traveled to during their very busy year. The Shrine sponsored a cruise in the Caribbean during Rex’s year, and they later followed it up with an Alaskan cruise and extensive road travel around the country.

Rex and Peggy have 3 children, a son in the fencing business in Omaha, a daughter in real estate in St. Louis and a daughter in Colorado whose husband is retired from the armed services. When the daughters and their families visit Peggy at The Home they enjoy the guest room available for visiting families.



Peggy is pictured here with another one of her treasures, one of the quilts she lovingly made.

The beautiful family portrait in her room, taken more than 23 years ago, bears testimony to the importance of family in Peggy’s life.

Rex passed away at age 75 in 1995. The Pearsons had long known of The Nebraska Masonic Home, of course, but Peggy did not see it until she came to visit Mary Stapp. She moved in last year.

“They’re so very nice to me here,” she says. “It’s not home, but it’s the next best thing.”

She loves her card games and plays every time she is asked. Peggy finished her game of bridge just before she walked to the Hultman Day Room to talk about her life. “Oh, I lost again,” she said with a smile about her just completed game of bridge, “but that’s okay.”

Then we walked to her room to look at her treasures. ☒

It's not just about the money!!!



Dear Friends,

Have you ever felt as if your mailbox is overrun with letters from non-profits begging for money? There are days I have!

First—I hope you don't view the mail you get from The Nebraska Masonic Home Foundation as such. But, if after reading the rest of my article you feel that way—call me and I will kindly remove your name from our mailing list. Second—in defense of the fundraising profession, I hope you will allow me to share some insights into the purpose of fundraising and our use of direct mail as a tool to help The Nebraska Masonic Home.

In today's world, non-profits, such as The Home, are striving to meet a need—a need that would otherwise be going unmet. **Our mission is to provide a home and care for elderly Masons** and their eligible female relatives who are unable to provide it for themselves. Because Masons promised to help care for their brethren in need, The Nebraska Masonic Home has been here 112 years doing just that.

Each month your Nebraska Masonic Home needs approximately \$300,000 to meet its financial obligations involved with providing personal and medical care for our 90+ residents. Half of whom are relying on the generosity of people like you who know and understand the wonderful care each resident receives here.

My job as the Foundation Director is **to help you**, our constituents, *see and feel* the needs of those elderly members of the Masonic family who need your help. If I'm doing my job right, **you will learn** of on-going and new **opportunities for you** to invest in The Masonic Home and the care given to those residents who reside here.

By ***making a gift*** to The Nebraska Masonic Home Foundation you are doing more than just giving us some of your hard-earned money, ***you are investing in the life of a fellow Mason or his family member*** that truly needs your help. You are taking the fruits of your labor, your wages—and using it to help improve the lives of others.

Hoping you read our letters,

Jo Peters

Jo Peters, Foundation Director



P.S. *The fact is—that every little bit helps. And little by little, we'll get the job done, if each of us does our part!*

P.P.S. *My number: 402.296.7334*

Charitable Giving

A charitable gift in your will could easily be the most important— and lasting— gift you ever make!



Through the centuries, legacies and bequests have played a vital part in the success of The Nebraska Masonic Home. Every department of The Home has benefitted from gifts in the wills of family, friends and supporters.

A gift in your will can help The Home continue to be an option for Masons and their eligible female relatives for many years to come.

Contact your attorney or call The Foundation Office to learn how easily this can be done.

Address Corrections



Please contact Kasey in The Foundation office at (402)-296-7336 with corrections or updates to your mailing address. With your help we have reduced mailing costs associated with incorrect addresses this past year. Thank you for your help.

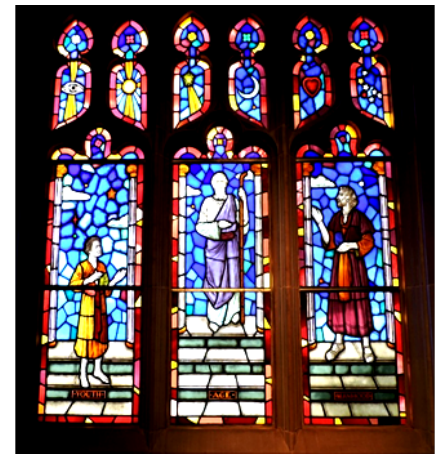
A Legacy of the



Looking for a way to help?

Just a reminder that we are seeking donations for the renovation of the Chapel of The Nebraska Masonic Home, the one area of The Home that has not been updated since its construction 60+ years ago.

The plan includes plaster repair, replacement of the original stage drapes, woodwork repair and installation of a new sound system.



The stained glass windows were totally restored in the 1980's with a generous gift from Liberty Chapter No. 273.

Today's renovation is projected to cost \$35,000. A gift from you will help make this renovation of the 'historic heart' of The Home possible.

Save the Date

This year's Caring Club dinner will be Sunday, September 27, 2015 at The Nebraska Masonic Home.

A Caring Testimonial . . .

"While our uncle, Jim Gray, was a resident at The Nebraska Masonic Home we learned first hand how truly wonderful the care given the residents is. Jim's immediate family was located in Maryland, so my two brothers and I took turns making monthly trips to visit Uncle Jim. On one occasion, we were thrilled to learn that arrangements had been made by the staff for the Grand Master to make the presentation of the Gold Jordan Medal to Jim. I was extremely impressed that they cared enough to pull that event together to honor Jim. Our uncle was very near and dear to us and we were thrilled for him to be honored this way. The wonderful care they gave to Jim was very fitting for such a wonderful man."

*Richard Hitz and his daughter Doris Lewis
Lincoln, NE*

