



Sands through

The Hour-Glass



1300 Avenue D • Plattsmouth, NE 68048 • (402) 296-7300

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www.thenebraskamasonichome.org


Meet our New Executive Director - MARY VRBKA



I am very proud to have been selected as Executive Director of The Nebraska Masonic Home. I wish to thank the Board of Trustees for their confidence and trust in me to carry on the mission of The Home as well as thank everyone that sent well wishes my way.

It has now been two months since I became the Executive Director and with the help and support of my wonderful staff the transition has been going very well. The last 11 plus years of working with Mary Stapp prepared me to follow her in this position.

The Nebraska Masonic Home celebrates 113 years of operation this year. With our new certification as a Continuing Care Retirement Community we continue to be home to Masons and their eligible female relatives. We have 29 Independent Apartments, 20 beds in the Assisted Living Center, 58 beds in Nursing Care and 14 private rooms in the Alzheimer's/Dementia Special Care Unit.

The Home takes great pride in the superior care that is given to residents throughout The Home. We invite you to call and schedule a visit to see our beautiful Masonic Home first hand. We look forward to hearing from you. 



Administrative Assistant / Admissions Coordinator - CHRIS ABBOTT




Dear Friends:

My name is Chris Abbott, and I have been the Administrative Assistant at The Nebraska Masonic Home for 25 years. It is now my pleasure to be able to further expand my job duties and relationship with you as The Home's

new Admissions Coordinator.

I am a familiar face to many of you, and I look forward to meeting many more of you. Please pick up the phone and call me so that I can assist you with discovering what our amazing Masonic Home can do to enhance your future care needs, the future of a family member, or the future of someone in our Masonic Family.

This wonderful facility has been a place of employment to me, a place where family members have made their home, and a place that I look forward to having available to me in my later years. Through your donations and support this facility will be able to serve your family, friends, and members of our Masonic family for years to come. We should all be proud to call this exceptional facility "Our Masonic Home."

Call me to talk about The Masonic Home, to schedule a visit for you and your family members, or to discuss how to encourage your lodge and chapter to come for a visit. I look forward to meeting many more of you in the months to come. It is never too soon to plan ahead. 

2015 Employee of the Year - JANICE JENSEN



Congratulations to Janice Jensen our 2015 Employee of the Year. Janice not only was honored as Employee of the Year, but she also celebrated 25 years of employment at The Nebraska Masonic Home and received her 11th Perfect Attendance Award. What a special year for Janice professionally and how nice to be honored by your peers and the Management Team with an Employee of the Year Award.

Janice started as a Nursing Assistant in June of 1990 and then became certified as a Medication Aide in 2000. She has worked the night shift for many years and has always been very willing to work extra shifts when needed. Janice is a role model for her peers and especially new staff.

This is another success story of a happy and long career at The Nebraska Masonic Home.

Thank you, Janice, for your dedication to our Masonic Home residents. 🕒



Resident Happenings



“This Home is a Godsend, there are none its equal!” Meet Resident DON GRAZIER

Don Grazier, a Christmas Day baby in 1932, comes from a long line of ties to Masonry, and he is proud that Masonry and especially the DeMolay program are continuing into the next generations.



A native of Kansas City, Kansas, Don attended the schools there and graduated from Wyandotte High School in 1950, one year ahead of his high school sweetheart Barbara. The two were

married in August, 1952. On a return trip to Wyandotte High School in 2000 for Don’s 50th Reunion they were so pleased to see how well the school had been maintained.

Don, who had joined DeMolay in Kansas City while attending Wyandotte High School, enlisted in the Navy in early 1951. As a Navy submarine radioman for the next 22 years of his service, he and Barbara lived in many locations. The ports were interesting to the young couple and included several ports on the East Coast, three years in France, and the last year and a half of his service at the Pentagon.

When Don announced his intention to retire from the Navy in 1972, he got a call from the Admiral asking him to reconsider. “But I am following an order from a higher power” Don protested, and the Admiral answered “I completely understand . . . I’m married too.” Don and Barbara remained with their two sons and a daughter in Virginia after Don’s retirement. His family has now grown to include seven grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

In 1978 they decided to move back to the Midwest with the intention of going to Kansas City, but stopped in Omaha . . . which landed Don a job offer in the civilian financial field which he just couldn’t refuse. And the rest, as they say, is history.

After all those years of moving around, Don joined Papillion Lodge No. 39 in 1980 just after moving

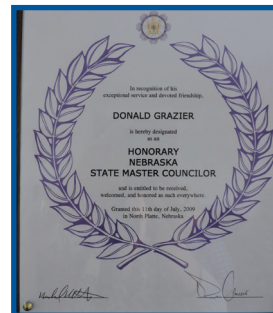
to Omaha and served as Papillion’s Worshipful Master in 1986. Don’s love of Masonry soon found him with memberships in the Scottish Rite, Tangier Shrine, York Rite and National Sojourners. Don accepted so many offices and jobs for the Masonic bodies that after retirement he wondered how he did all of this while still working.



The Masonic ties were strong and continued. Both Don’s and Barbara’s fathers had been long-time Masons, and Don is proud to note that his two grandsons are sixth generation Masons. The DeMolay interest continues to be very strong as well . . . the younger Graziers have produced a state DeMolay leader.

Don’s dear wife, Barbara, passed away in 2002, just weeks before the celebration of the couple’s 50th wedding anniversary. He then decided it was time for retirement at the age of 70.

Don moved to The Nebraska Masonic Home in August of 2014. He particularly enjoys the visits from the children of the Masonic-Eastern Star Home for Children in Fremont when they bring their 4-H animals or their band to entertain the residents.



The view from his third floor apartment in The Home’s 1952 Wing provides Don with a beautiful view and the walls of that same apartment afford him wonderful memories with photos of a life well lived and a family that loves him.

In closing, Don notes “This Home is a God send – there are none its equal.”

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SHELLY MULLINS . . . Director of Nursing

Well, it wasn't exactly "love at first sight" but it was close. So that when Shelly Mullins sat down to an interview for this article – just a few days before Valentine's Day – it seemed appropriate to discuss her meeting with John Mullins, a boy her own age from Sidney, Iowa.

It was 1985 at the well-known Sidney Rodeo when Shelly, a high school sophomore at Auburn, Nebraska, met John. Their courtship continued for a few years until graduation day, 1987, when Auburn High School and Sidney High School held commencement exercises at the same hour on the same day.

Marriage followed shortly thereafter and the two settled into life together in Sidney. They had two children, a girl and a boy, and eventually five grandchildren.

Shelly attended cosmetology school in Shenandoah and operated her own beauty shop in Sidney for five years. She then decided to direct her attention to



nursing school at Iowa Western. Shelly earned her LPN degree and then went on to obtain her RN. John worked in the pumping business and today owns Midwest Pumping and Pit Cleaning in Sidney.

After living in Sidney for several years they moved to a five-acre parcel of land close to town where they love to spend time with the grandchildren four wheeling and hunting.

A few years back, John and their six-year old granddaughter sat quietly as an eight-point buck silently approached . . . John brought down the buck with a well-placed arrow. The granddaughter claimed it as her own, and the buck's head and antlers are still a prized possession on her bedroom wall.



In 2013 a good friend of Shelly's urged her to seek employment at The Nebraska Masonic Home. Shelly was hired as the Assisted Living Coordinator and was soon promoted to Assistant Director of Nursing. We have been pleased to have her as our Director of Nursing since June 2014.

She supervises a staff of 63 including 12 nurses. Shelly says, "I expect our nursing staff to treat our residents exactly as they would want their own families to be treated." "We love all the residents."

Outside of their jobs, John and Shelly delight in the antics of their rat terrier Bella (who actually accompanies John on many of his jobs) and vacationing at a time share resort, something they have just started to enjoy. Last year there was a family vacation at the Wisconsin Dells which was a lot of fun.

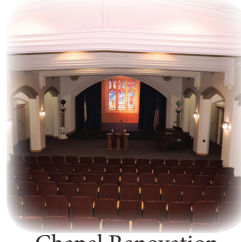
And, yes, the two high school sweethearts still attend the event that brought them together over thirty years ago – the Sidney Rodeo.



Thank you, Shelly, for sharing the story of your life . . . and for your service to the residents at The Nebraska Masonic Home. 🏠



Landscaping



Chapel Renovation



60 New Beds

How Would We Do This, Without You??

Dear Friends,

It is budget time! A process I never truly appreciated until taking this job. I used to view it as an unwelcomed task. But, here at The Home I have come to appreciate it as a time to reflect on the year's progress and a time to plan for the future. Counting on the continued generosity of donors who understand the financial needs associated with caring for members of the Masonic Family is a heartfelt experience and takes a leap of faith.

Planning how to best communicate with our donors about the needs of our residents and how we use your gifts falls in my arena. At the administrative level planning for the necessary upkeep of our facility is equally as important as planning for the needs of our residents. Over the years The Nebraska Masonic Home has been blessed with the on-going support of people like you who care about the residents and appreciate the history of the extraordinary care given to those who reside here.

Ways you can help:

- Becoming a Caring Club member is one way of showing your support for The Home and the residents who are no longer able to cover their costs.
- Making a General Fund gift helps with the day-to-day operational costs of The Home.
- Making a Bequest in your will is a generous way to remember your love of Masonry.
- Making a recurring monthly donation via your bank or credit card is an easy way to budget your support.

Each of the photos surrounding this page represent the results of gifts by individuals or groups of individuals who have responded to the needs of The Nebraska Masonic Home over the last three years. **If you have been one of those donors, THANK YOU!** I hope you can feel pride in the outcome of your giving.

If you've not been a donor yet, I hope you will seriously look at the good your gift can bring about to those members of The Masonic Family who choose to make this their home. As you plan your monthly budget, please remember The Nebraska Masonic Home. We will be here if you need us.

P.S. As you enjoy this Easter Holiday with your family and friends, please remember your gifts make it possible for more members of the Masonic Family to live in a safe and loving environment.

Jo Peters

Jo Peters
Foundation Director



Gazebo



Walking Paths



Patio Furniture



Handicap-Accessible Van



Rehab Room



Tree Replacement





A Caring Testimonial . . .

"I choose to give to The Nebraska Masonic Home because my grandmother received loving and excellent care towards the end of her days. Our family has been part of the Masonic Family for three generations. I am continuing to support my roots in Nebraska. I am in the process of joining the Anchorage 6 Eastern Star Chapter."

---Keri Rheinfrank,
Anchorage, AK

CHARITABLE GIVING

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

Through the years, 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 given 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 Jo Peters, Foundation Director, (402)296-7334 to learn how easily this can be done.



Save the Date

2016 Caring Club Dinner

Plan to Join Us

The Nebraska Masonic Home
Sunday, September 25, 2016

Address Corrections

Please contact Lisa Davis in The Foundation Office at (402)296-7336 or ldavis@nemh.net with corrections or updates to your mailing address and e-mail. Thank you for your help.



THE NEBRASKA MASONIC HOME

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Christmas Tree Plea . . .

Christmas is definitely a special time at The Masonic Home . . . there is a tree in every day room. Sadly 5 of our trees need to be replaced. If you would be interested in helping us purchase a new tree, we would welcome your help. Please label your gift accordingly.