

Golden Wheel Awards



The Golden Wheel Awards were developed to honor those who exemplify Rotary's principle motto, *Service Above Self*.



Ashland, Nebraska Honors **Bette McCoy**

Bette McCoy makes sure that kids in Ashland don't go hungry. Since 2014, she and other volunteers have opened the Kid's Cupboard

every week to area families. Bette involves and engages area churches with a competition to see which area church can gather the most donations each month. Kid's Cupboard also started a scholarship fund for Ashland-Greenwood seniors who have used the Cupboard's pantry.



Aurora Honors **Taylor Willis**

Taylor Willis and her husband, Andrew, are the first couple you call when you need help in the Aurora community. Besides volunteering

her time to serve on the local museum board, she is on the golf course board and helps with church activities. Taylor has served on the Chamber Small Business Committee and assisted with the Leadership Tomorrow program. She has donated their trailer to serve as a stage for concerts, community events and groundbreakings. Taylor is someone who helps make Aurora a great place to live and we want to recognize her efforts with a Golden Wheel nomination.



Beatrice Honors **Officer Zach Lauenstein**

Officer Zach Lauenstein is the school resource officer at Beatrice High School. He and his canine partner, Toro, are an integral part of

BHS. Together they are creating a positive and safe learning environment for Beatrice youth. He was also instrumental in opening the Beatrice Mini-Mart whose mission is to bridge the food insecurity gap for in need students in Beatrice. Officer Lauenstein is a shining light in our community.



Bellevue/Papillion Honors **Brian Fox**

Brian Fox exemplifies Servant Leadership. After working at Boys Town for 12 years, tragedy led him to purchase the family business from

his parents, Cornhusker Auto Wash. In 2022, the family donated over \$190,000 in cash, services, and sponsorships to their community. Each month they designate four gas pumps at their Shell Gas Station to donate a percentage of all sales to a local nonprofit. They partner with churches in surrounding communities to help support them in hard times, and support RISE, a program that prepares incarcerated individuals for re-integration back into the community. No matter the need, Brian is always there with a solution and a heart to help.



Blair Honors **Ryan Greenwood**

Ryan, a service advisor for Woodhouse Auto Group in Blair, is in his third year as president of The Blair Little League program. Under his leadership the

program has grown to include 294 participants each year. Ryan volunteers countless hours year round seeing to field improvements, scheduling, uniform ordering, pictures and scheduling and hiring of umpires to name a few. Ryan also coaches an in-house team along with running the sister program to Little League the Blair Grizzlies. He often assisted by his wife Wendy, daughter Addison (13), and son Drew (11), a participant in little league. Blair is lucky to have such a community servant.

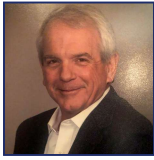


Columbus Morning Honors **Scott Zwick**

Scott Zwick has served as Cubmaster, Webelos Leader, Scoutmaster and District Chair of the Boy Scouts of America, trained leaders through

"Wood Badge" program, and received the highest council volunteer award, "the Silver Beaver." Sons, Nathan and Justin, have both achieved the rank of Eagle Scout. Scott shared: "I've made friends with people whose focus is on family, God, and the outdoors. And, let's not forget the FUN! Scout leaders never have to grow up!"

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Columbus Noon Honors **Dr. Ron Ernst**

Dr. Ron Ernst served the Columbus community for 34 years as a general surgeon. His service includes developing a mentoring program for

first-year medical students, serving on the governing board of the College of Surgeons, and as Past President of the Nebraska Chapter. Since retiring, he has become deeply involved with Habitat for Humanity of Columbus as member of their Board of Directors and as a volunteer on each build site.



Centennial Club Council Bluffs Honors **Roger Riffle**

Roger Riffle leads the Omaha area chapter of Sleep In Heavenly Peace. SHHP's motto is "In our town, no child has to sleep on the floor."

Roger coordinates volunteer efforts to build individual single and bunk beds in "build" workshops then delivers, assembles and "makes up" those beds with donated new mattresses, sheets, pillows, and quilts. Since 2018 over 2,000 beds have been delivered, including over 500 in 2023.



Council Bluffs Noon Honors **Erin Trescott**

Erin Trescott is a true community champion who is always there to do whatever is needed in our community.

Erin is a founding board member of the Iowa Community Housing Alliance, a graduate of Leadership Council Bluffs, and more importantly a community advocate. The first one to show up to support a non-profit or sponsor an event, Erin's dedication to our community makes it a better place for everyone that calls it home.



Crete Honors **Janet Jeffries**

Janet Jeffries has long been a trusted source for Crete's historical information, records, and memorabilia which she has accomplished largely on her own time and with an enthusiastic

spirit of generosity. Her community service includes helping curate the Crete Heritage Society Museum and the town's first homestead, coordinating tours, making sure the property is ready for local students during annual Pioneer Day activities, and giving presentations to groups and organizations. In an increasingly digital age, Janet is part of the community's social fabric as a consistent knowledge base to ensure this area's local history and cultural heritage stay relevant.



David City Honors **Tiffany Jhade**

Tiffany Jhade is the President of "Christmas on the Bricks" for David City. No one loves Christmas more than Tiffany. "Christmas on the Bricks"

is in outgrowth of the Hallmark channel's Christmas visit to David City in 2019, and it has become a kickoff for the Christmas season in David City involving many community organizations and volunteers. Tiffany is also very involved with the David City High School booster club and serves as the head of the post prom committee. She is the mother of two and is married to Greg Jahde.



Fairbury Honors **Mick Suey**

Mick Suey, a teacher for 30 years, is being honored by Fairbury Rotary for his tremendous commitment to our community, its history, its veterans and its children. As a board member

for the Fairbury Museum Board for 15 years, Suey created a military room, helped Rotary in a tank painting and signage project, helped organize the annual car show, and was instrumental in creating a new Jefferson County Veterans Memorial. Rotary was one of many donors to the memorial, which was unveiled on Memorial weekend. Fairbury Rotary appreciates the many ways Suey has given of himself to our community!



Falls City Honors **Christina Wertenberger**

By day, Christina Wertenberger is a devoted art teacher. She volunteers around the clock to promote art appreciation in Southeast Nebraska.

She is a founding member of the Richardson County Arts and Humanities Council and is the curator of the Stalder Art Gallery in Falls City which sponsored an impressive concert event this June. Thanks largely to her efforts, Falls City was recognized as an official "City of Art" in 2019. Most recently, Christina helped lead a community-wide project which resulted in downtown Falls City being certified as a Creative Arts District by the Nebraska Arts Council.

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Fremont Honors **Terry McClain**

Terry McClain serves as an outstanding example of a person who is seeking to make Fremont a great place. Even though he's

retired from a 41-year career at Valmont, he continues to serve our city in many ways as a board member of many organizations and as someone who believes in the value of education exemplified in his efforts with Wayne State College and Creighton University. The Fremont Rotary Club is pleased to recognize him with the Rotary Golden Wheel award.



Geneva Honors **LaDonna Pendleton**

LaDonna Pendleton is a Drop-Off Coordinator for Operation Christmas Child. She coordinates volunteers, orders and prepares

supplies, and shares info regarding OCC for weeks before National Collection Week. She then works with volunteers to receive and pray over shoebox gifts from donors during the week event. LaDonna is responsible for record keeping of all gifts, shoeboxes, and shipping cartons, plus delivering them to a central drop-off location.



Glenwood Honors **Jeff Mitts**

Jeff Mitts has worked tirelessly, usually behind the scenes, to enliven the arts and entertainment venues here in SW Iowa. He chairs

committees which bring amazing shows to our Davies Amphitheater and the Mills Masquers Theater. The Masquers provide at least three performances a year. At the Davies, they perform over a dozen dynamic shows throughout the summer season. Jeff's efforts bring a lot of added value to our community.



Hebron Honors **Rita Luongo**

Rita Luongo is the Development Director for Thayer County Health Services in Hebron, Nebraska, managing the hospital's fundraising

efforts for nearly 20 years. Her love of philanthropy is evident in her volunteer work with nonprofits throughout Thayer County. She serves as a council member for the City of Hebron and as chair of the Hebron Community Fund (HCF). Her role with HCF includes supervising the hospital and community's local Hometown Interns through Nebraska Community Foundation. Rita was selected because of her continued efforts in bettering our county, community, and tireless advocacy for youth outreach through the internship program.



Lincoln 14 Honors **Lyn Leach**

Lyn Leach leads the Roughriders Motorcycle Riding Group, an organization raising \$45,000 annually through events and sponsorships. The

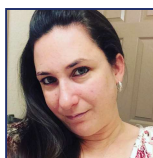
group picks a dozen families experiencing hardship and visits their home with a heart-warming donation leading up to the holidays and supports local nonprofits such as Make-A-Wish, Center for People in Need, and Autism Family Networks. To him, the "Golden Wheel" symbolizes the motorcycles used to deliver donations.



Lincoln East Honors **Dennis Buckley**

Dennis Buckley worked for the Lincoln Journal Star for 28 years, during which time he wrote articles for the Neighborhood Extra about the Lincoln

Rotary Club's activities. Dennis won many awards for his writing. Although Dennis retired in February 2018 following a 44-year career in journalism, he continues to write features and enjoys keeping the creative juices flowing.



Lincoln Giving Spirits Evening Club Honors **Shannon Crellin**

Shannon Crellin founded The Lincoln Tree of Hope in 2018, an organization dedicated to promote community building and provide people with tools

to become self-sufficient. They accomplish this goal by helping to provide information about where people can find resources. Shannon also serves in other groups such as Lincoln Giving Spirits Evening Rotary Club, Anderson Ford, and Autism Family Network.



Lincoln South Honors **Elton Edmond**

Elton Edmond is a true mentor and community leader. Following 30 plus years of coaching, mentoring, and leading youth through local

organizations such as the YMCA, Cub Scouts of America, and Church activities, Elton embarked on his passion of helping youth by starting Mentoring Plus. Elton has founded the organization which provides programs to mentor underserved youth in the community to help them develop social, emotional, and professional skills.

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Nebraska City Honors **Keitha Thomson**

Keitha Thomson, along with her husband, Dean, and family, have led a life of service. She worked as a school nurse and later opened The

Book Clinic store housed in a former medical office. Keitha and Dean have done mission work in India and Jamaica for many years. Since its inception, Keitha has led the Nebraska City Food Pantry. She sings with the Belles-A-Peelin' Women's Barbershop Chorus and is active in the First United Methodist Church. Keitha is also a founder of the local Blue Star Mothers recognizing local veterans.



Norfolk Honors **Ron Stauffer**

Ron Stauffer is a true example of Service Above Self. Ron has served on numerous boards that include the YMCA, Northeast Community

College Foundation Trustee, Chamber of Commerce Visitors Council, and so many more. He has led many fundraising efforts for the local Salvation Army building, United Way, and Norfolk Vets Home Memorial. Ron and his wife Connie are also financial sponsors for families of Ukraine in our local community.



Omaha Downtown Honors **Michelle Grossman**

Michelle is the current President and CEO of CHAD (Combined Health Agencies Drive), a state-wide organization that raises funds for

many of Nebraska's leading health agencies. Michelle began with CHAD over 25 years ago and has been the organization's President and CEO since 2006. She epitomizes the Rotary Motto of "Service Above Self" with her dedicated vision to help some of the largest health organization in the State and Country including: the Alzheimer's Association, the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, the American Lung Association, Susan G Komen, and many others.



Millard-Omaha Honors **Kim Kalina**

Kim Kalina, Director of Quality Improvement at Region 6 Behavioral Healthcare has served the Omaha community for over 20 years. As a

social worker and clinician, Kim advocates for children and families and works to improve systems, processes, and programs through data analysis and continuous quality improvement frameworks. Kim was raised in western Nebraska and now resides in Millard with her husband and children.



Omaha Morning Honors **Ernie Hemmer**

Over the past 7 years Ernie Hemmer has made in impact on so many families in the Millard community as the Cub Scout Leader of Pack 492.

He has been instrumental in leading the Pack's growth and contributions to many charitable causes around town. He continues to grow these Cub Scouts into future leaders by putting "Service Above Self" at the forefront of the Pack's mission. His leadership of Pack 492 will leave an impact for years to come.



Omaha Night Honors **Lisa Test**

Lisa Test has been acting as a court appointed volunteer guardian and conservator for more than 20 years for underserved individuals in the

Omaha area who have no one to help them. Lisa helps with medical decision making, securing appropriate housing, and making sure all their basic needs are being met. Throughout the years, Lisa says she has grown close to these individuals and considers them her family.



Omaha Suburban Honors **Anne Carroll**

Anne Carroll has served as a Habitat for Humanity volunteer for 34 years, originally leading international home building teams and now providing

Habitat office grunt work. She created and maintains a Habitat archive and schedules food deliveries to work sites volunteers. At Crossroads Connection Prison Ministry, Anne organizes sponsors, attends parole hearings, and has personally sponsored an inmate for 12 years.



Omaha West Honors **Elizabeth Rudden**

Elizabeth, a graduate of Creighton University, worked in public accounting for a short time before she left to pursue a career in

education. Her teaching career began at Omaha South in 2005 teaching business courses and serving as the co-sponsor of FBLA. In 2015, she started her new adventure teaching business at Skutt Catholic and serving as the FBLA sponsor. Elizabeth has brought the executive team from FBLA annually to an Omaha West meeting for the past 7 years allowing the FBLA students to see how a business/service group meeting is conducted and helps that team earn points for their state competition every April.

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Pawnee City Honors **Kellie Wiers**

Kellie Wiers actively serves her community in many ways: as a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) for children in the juvenile court

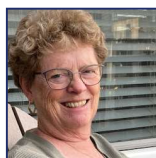
system, a board member on the Pawnee City Assisted Living board, and she serves on the First United Presbyterian Investment Committee. In the past, Kellie has been a TeamMates mentor and on the Safe Haven Animal Rescue Effort (SHARE) board.



Plattsmouth Honors **Dr. William Rishel**

Dr. William Rishel, who was born and raised in Plattsmouth Nebraska, has been a veterinarian in Plattsmouth since 1973. We feel he is worthy of

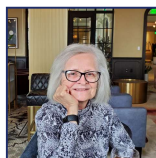
the Golden Wheel award because of his lifelong dedication to the community of Plattsmouth. His community involvement has included, amongst other things: the Optimist Club, 4-H, Horse Clubs, Bible Study groups, the Boy Scouts, as a volunteer in local schools, mission trips, as teacher at Iowa Western, and as a speaker to many veterinary colleges across the United States.



Red Oak Honors **Lois Trinity**

Lois Trinity was a volunteer at Christ's Cupboard food pantry in Red Oak for more than twenty years. She was instrumental in the

expansion project that resulted in a move to a larger location and the inclusion of a clothing room. Lois was part of creating a Bible study group at a local church, where she also played organ and piano. A member of the Montgomery County Memorial Hospital Auxiliary, Lois acted as treasurer for many years.



Seward Honors **Donna "Nino" Sommerfeld**

Donna Sommerfeld has been a registered RN and a great supporter in the Seward Community. Along with her husband Russ, she has

been a long-time supporter of Rotary and volunteer for many of the local Rotary events and projects. A quiet and humble servant, Nino prefers background roles. Whether it's standing in the cold with her husband at a Rotary food gathering for local pantries, inviting Rotaract Club members into her home for meals, or cheering youngster competing in the kite contest, Nino Sommerfeld exemplifies serving encouraging and enabling others to serve.



Shenandoah Honors **Bill Hillman**

Bill Hillman has made a huge impact on SW Iowa with his vision to take an abandoned rail line and turn it into The Wabash Trace which runs from

Council Bluffs to the Missouri border. His dedication to seeing his vision become a reality has had a major economic impact on our region by also increasing tourism. The Wabash Trace is just one of many projects he has worked on over the years for our community.



Wayne Rotary Honors **Dr. Laura Dendinger**

Dr. Laura Dendinger is a Professor of Business at Wayne State College. She has provided leadership to many community organizations in

Northeast Nebraska throughout her career. Her work with the community has included Haven House, Wakefield Community Foundation, Coleridge Community Educational Foundation, Northeast Nebraska Child Advocacy Center, and the Wayne United Way. Dr. Dendinger helps "Create Hope in the World."



Western Douglas County Honors **Cyndi Borden**

Cyndi has been the Leader of The King's Garden since 2012. After the flood of 2019, Cyndi helped form the Douglas County Long

Term Recovery Group, she managed millions of dollars and over 5,900 volunteers. The Kings Garden actively contributes to the community through events like 4th Friday Fire, Annual Fish Fry and Carnival, Bible Studies, Mobile Pantry deliveries, and more. Their Thriving Kids Program included an annual camp for those who otherwise may not have had the opportunity. These programs and outreaches are the direct result of Cyndi's vision and leadership and creative ways to improve the quality of life for those in need. She personally assures those in need have access to medical care, food, shelter, and most important, love.



York Honors **Scott Koch**

Scott Koch's passion for service and York is truly evident in all that he does. Besides being involved in many organizations in York, he served for 18 years as principal of

York High School, working with Tom Osborne to help start one of the first TeamMate programs in the state. He was instrumental in founding, and continues leading, our Leadership York Program and our local York Boys Baseball Association. Scott demonstrates the Rotarian motto of service above self.