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### **Rotary met**

NORFOLK The Norfolk Rotary Club met last Tuesday with a program presented by Scott Asmus and Meghann Buresh with the Dept. of Labor. They discussed the Registered Apprenticeship program, a nation-wide training program where an individual can earn wages while learning a skilled profession.

Norfolk Rotary meets every Tuesday noon at Black Cow-Fat Pig Pub and Steak. Visitors are welcome.



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GARY PERKINS: 2017 AKSARBEN KING

# Perkins, wife share commitment to children

By MICHAEL KELLY

WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

Long before his 30-year stint as the leader of Children's Hospital & Medical Center, Gary Perkins was admitted as a patient himself.

When he was 9, doctors at Children's treated a kidney problem over three days. He still has the bill — \$93.

Growing up strong north of Omaha in Missouri Valley, Iowa, he baled hay as a teenager, went to college and grew to 6-feet-5. In the decades since, he has stood tall in numerous civic and charitable leadership roles, many involving children.

For his accomplishments and for his dedication to youth and to the future of the community and the region, Perkins was crowned Saturday night as the 121st king of Aksarben.

"I've never been a real high-profile person in the community," he said, "so I was shocked when I was asked. I was more than blown away."

Perkins was invited last spring to accept the honor, and did so after checking with his wife, Carol. The names of new royalty in the mythical kingdom of Quivira are kept secret until revealed at the annual fundraiser for scholarships, the Aksarben coronation ball.

Carol Perkins shares her husband's dedication to serving youth. A former elementary school music teacher, she long has served as a lay biblical discipleship counselor, and this year again counseled young people in her eighth trip to Africa.

"We both believe that every person has a lot of value," she said, "and no one person is better than another."

Carol grew up in Beatrice, Nebraska, and met Gary when both attended Midland Lutheran College in Fremont, Nebraska, now called Midland University.

She saw right away, she said,

that he was a leader — bright and decisive, with a big heart. They married in November 1971, while she was still in college.

Gary had graduated in 1970 and signed up for the Army Reserve. A son of a flower shop and greenhouse owner, he planned a career as a certified public accountant.

He first worked in accounting at Children's Hospital in 1975, and then became a hospital administrator in Harlan, Iowa, at age 29. He returned to Children's as a vice president and rose to president and CEO at 37.

Under his 1985-2015 leadership, patient volumes quadrupled. And Children's moved from the north tower of Methodist Hospital to its free-standing location across the street at 84th Street and West Dodge Road.

That corner is now iconic, especially at night, because of the five bronzed figures of children and 24 colorful, lighted umbrellas visible in a glass-enclosed stairwell.

The hospital, with running water in the lobby and lots of exterior light, soft colors and curved walls, is said to have a calming effect — good for kids and their families.

A sense of calmness, and engaging as many people as possible in plans, also has marked Perkins' leadership style. Upon

his retirement, he received praise for raising the status of Children's to that of an academic medical center.

If he's not a household name, Perkins nonetheless is widely known in the nonprofit community.

He has served as board chair or president of the Nebraska Hospital Association, Midland University, Cooper Village, the Nebraska chapter of the National Safety Council, the Nebraska Kidney Association and Kiwanis

and Rotary Clubs.

He was a driving force in the creation of Project Harmony, a community collaboration against child abuse and neglect. He also served as board chair.

Gary and Carol have served as honorary co-chairs for numerous charity fundraisers, including for the Make-A-Wish Foundation, the Salvation Army, JDRF (juvenile diabetes) and the Child Saving Institute.

In retirement, he continues to volunteer on civic boards, and she continues her mission work in Botswana and South Africa on behalf of the nonprofit, non-denominational Fresh Start for All Nations.

The couple, who worship at Steadfast Bible Fellowship, have lived for 25 years in an area called The Farm, southwest of 222nd Street and West Center Road. They raised two children there and often see wildlife in the backyard.

Their son, David Perkins, is a portfolio manager with Weitz Investment Management, and has three children with wife Courtney. Daughter Kristin Buttermore, a registered dietitian, has three children with husband Daniel. All six of Gary and Carol's grandchildren are age 10 or

younger.

The Perkinses are pleased that the main focus of Aksarben's work today is raising money for scholarships, often for students from low-income families, with a goal of \$1 million a year.

The king, a native Iowan, said he is glad to be honored on the 150th anniversary of Nebraska's statehood, and to represent Aksarben.

In his youth, his family attended the old Aksarben "member shows" featuring nationally known entertainers. The Aksarben Thoroughbred racetrack ran until 1995, and the land was sold off. Today it's the site of a lively retail-business-entertainment-education center called Aksarben Village.

Aksarben is Nebraska spelled backward, but it continually looks forward. What hasn't changed is the philanthropy of Aksarben.

"As times have changed, it appropriately changed its focus," Perkins said. "What I see now is a commitment to really assisting youth and creating the next generation — not just for the community but for the world."

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BRENDAN SULLIVAN/THE WORLD-HERALD

**Gary Perkins and his wife, Carol, met in college and have been married 45 years. Perkins was recognized for his leadership and charitable efforts in the community when he was crowned Saturday night as king during the 2017 Aksarben Coronation & Scholarship Ball.**

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### THIS WEEKEND

- Lincoln Area Retired School Personnel book sale this weekend at Lancaster Event Center at 84th & Havelock Ave., in conjunction with 15th annual Fall Fling Flea Market & Antique Show, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday. Paperbacks, books on most any topics, music, tapes, CDs, DVDs, videos, records, and puzzles for sale.
- Nebraska Dyslexia Association fall celebration 9 to 11 a.m. Saturday in Upper Fellowship Hall of St. Mark's Methodist Church, 8550 Pioneers Blvd.
- Under way: St. Teresa Thrift Shop's 2017 Christmas Boutique opened Thursday, continues through Sunday at St. Teresa's Church, 735 S. 36th St. Remaining hours 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.
- Under way: "From the Great Plains: Native American Art" now on display

through Nov. 26 at St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, 2325 S. 24th St. Art exhibition curated by Dean Settle of Metro Gallery.

- Under way: Boo at the Zoo, Lincoln's largest trick-or-treat event, opened Thursday, continues through Monday, 5:30 to 8 p.m. nightly, at Lincoln Children's Zoo, 27th and B streets. Over 40 trick-or-treat booths, candy, coupons and more. Buy admission tickets, treat bags and meal tickets at LincolnZoo.org
- Under way: "Cinderella (the musical)" opened Thursday evening in the Lincoln East High School auditorium, 1000 S. 70th St., presented by the Lincoln East Fine Arts Department. Remaining performance 7 p.m. Saturday. Tickets \$7. Info.: contact Shelly at sself@lps.org or call (402) 436-1302.
- Writers' Night 7 to 9 p.m. Saturday at Gratitude Café & Bakery, 1551 N. Cotner Blvd.
- Under way: The rock musical "Heathers" opened Thursday, continues through next weekend in McDonald Theatre, 51st & Huntington. Remaining shows 7:30 p.m. Oct. 28 and Nov. 2-4 with 2 p.m. matinees Oct. 29 and Nov. 5. Admission \$17.50 for adults, \$12 for seniors and students, buy at theatre.nebrwesleyan.edu or call (402) 465-2384.
- Under way: Theatrical production, "Nebraska: Nice" opened Thursday, continues through this weekend in the Lab Theatre in the Temple Building, 12th and R streets. Remaining shows 7:30 p.m. Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday. Tickets (\$7) may be purchased at www.unltheatretickets.com or at the door an hour before the show in the Lab Theatre's third-floor lobby (cash only; seats subject to availability).

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### Calendar –

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- Last weekend: "The Hundred Dresses" opened last weekend at Lincoln Community Playhouse, 2500 S. 56th St. Remaining shows 7:30 p.m. Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday. Tickets (\$15) may be reserved at lincolnplayhouse.com or call the box office weekdays between 11 a.m. and 5 p.m.
- "All Souls" theme of 10 a.m. Sunday service at Unitarian Church of Lincoln, 6300 A St. A look at different traditions with different names, and a time to remember those who have died in the last year. Worship leader: Oscar Sinclair Music: UCL Adult Choir.
- Trunk or Treat, a free community event for trick-or-treaters of all ages, 1 to 3 p.m. Sunday at Independence House, 5500 S. Coddington Ave. Treats, games, face-painting, and hayrack rides, rain or shine.
- Annual Pepsi Scholars Senior Prom, 2 to 4 p.m. Sunday at University of Nebraska East Campus Union.
- Enchanted Forest, 2 to 6 p.m. Sunday at Southern Heights Food Forest, southeast corner of 40th & Old Cheney Road. Trunk or Treat, Nature Explore Activities, concert, games. Suggested donation of \$10/family (not required, but appreciated).
- Widowed Persons Service (WPS) Friendship Group meets 2 to 4 p.m. every Sunday at Calvert Recreation Center, 4500 Stockwell St. (Fall session took effect Sept. 10.)
- Lincoln-Lancaster County Genealogical Society (LLCGS) offers free assistance with genealogy and family history from 2-4 p.m. most Sundays at Wait Library, 6701 S. 14th St. For information on Sunday topics, see www.llcgs.info or call Bob McQuistan, (402) 483-6158. Open to anyone interested in genealogy.
- Halloween Block Party 4 to 6 p.m. Sunday in east parking lot of First-Plymouth Church, 20th and D streets. Games, activities, food, candy, and a dance party. Kids in costumes welcome, parents, too. Open to the community.
- Halloween Carnival and Trunk or Treat 5 to 8 p.m. Sunday at St. Mark's United Methodist Church, 8550 Pioneers Blvd. Carnival 5 to 8 p.m. in east parking lot & Family Life Center, tickets 4 for \$1, pizza dinner \$3 per person. Trunk or Treat 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. in east parking lot, \$1 per child. Haunted house 6 to 8 p.m. in bus barn, \$2 per person. (In case of inclement weather, Trunk or Treat will be moved inside.) Funds to help raise money for holiday food basket ministry.
- Free Trunk 'N Treat fun 6 to 8 p.m. Sunday at Aldersgate United Methodist

Church, 84th and South streets. Decorated trunks for trick-or-treaters, fun for all. Lincoln Fire & Rescue and Lincoln Police Department to join in the fun.

- Final rounds of the UNL Glenn Korff School of Music Concerto Competitions start at 6 p.m. in Westbrook Recital Hall, continue Monday at 6 p.m. Free admission.
- Coro di Flauti performs a concert of Halloween classics 7 p.m. Sunday at the Church of the Holy Trinity Episcopal, 6001 A St. Free to the public. The volunteer flute choir ensemble, directed by John Mills, uses a combination of the standard C flute, piccolo, alto, bass and contrabass flutes.

### MONDAY

- Sunrise Toastmasters Club weekly meeting begins at 6:30 a.m. Gianna's Java and Gelato, 2241 O St. For information, 402-416-4342.
- Executive Club of Lincoln weekly noon luncheon meeting at The Nebraska Club, 20th floor of US Bank, 12th and M streets.
- Monday Night Big Band 7 to 9:30 p.m. at Cottonwood Café Bistro & Bar, 440 S. 11th St. \$5 general admission, \$3 for musicians sitting in with the Monday Night Big Band.
- All Things New, a special worship event commemorating the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation, 7:30 p.m. at Southwood Lutheran Church. Service celebrates the common witness to the Gospel through praise, worship and music by musicians from area congregations. Bishop Brian Maas to share the message, "All Things New." Offering to help Family Services support the expanded Lincoln Health 360 center. Display of hundreds of quilts for World Relief to be shared.

### TUESDAY

- Lincoln Sunrise Kiwanis Club meets at 6:30 a.m. in the Flanagan Room at Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital, 5401 South St. Guest speaker: Bob Ripley, Capitol HVAC administrator.
- American Red Cross Bloodmobile visit, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Don Love Building, 3800 S. 48th St. Appointment: visit redcrossblood.org or call 1-800-733-2767.
- American Red Cross Bloodmobile visit, 11:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. at American Red Cross Capital City Chapter, 220 Oakcreek Drive. Appointment: visit redcrossblood.org or call 1-800-733-2767.
- Grace Lutheran Church, 2225 Washington St., hosts Trunk or Treat event, 5 to 7 p.m. Kids' games and activities in the church's east parking lot. Donated canned goods/non-perishables accepted for the food pantry.
- Waverly businesses will be open on

Halloween from 5 to 7 p.m. New this year: "Trunk or Treat" ... a local car club to line up on North 142nd Street from Lancashire to Kenilworth to hand out treats. Added bonus: Waverly Care Center residents handing out treats from 4 to 5 p.m. The "Safe Halloween" event is sponsored by Waverly Chamber of Commerce. Info.: call Bea Kellogg, WCC secretary, (402) 786-5111.

- Capital City Kiwanis Club weekly dinner meeting 6 p.m. at the Cotner Center, 1540 N. Cotner Blvd.
- Free give-away 6 to 8 p.m. every Tuesday at Calvary United Methodist Church, South 11th and Garfield streets. Free clothing (all sizes) and household items. No income eligibility requirements.
- Dance to the music of the C.J. Honnor Quartet, 7 to 9 p.m. at Auld Pavilion in Antelope Park, 3140 Sumner St. Ballroom and other varieties of dance.
- Lincoln Continentals men's a cappella chorus weekly rehearsal, 7 to 9 p.m. at Northeast United Church of Christ Social Hall, 6200 Adams St. New singers, guests welcome.
- Lincolnshire Chorus weekly rehearsal, 7 to 9 p.m. at Vine Congregational UCC, 1800 Twin Ridge Rd.

### WEDNESDAY

- Lincoln Sunrise Optimist Club breakfast meeting 7 a.m. at Perkins, 48th & O streets.
- Husker Hoops Preview begins at 5:30 p.m. at Pinnacle Bank Arena.
- Lincoln Gateway Sertoma Club breakfast meeting 7:30 a.m. at Tabitha, 48th and J streets. Program: business meeting.
- Lincoln Northeast Kiwanis Club weekly noon luncheon meeting at Golden Corral, 3940 N. 27th St. Program: Nebraska 150 ... recap of statewide events.
- SouthPointe Kiwanis Club noon luncheon meeting at Williamsburg Hy-Vee, 40th & Duxhall Dr.
- Lincoln East Rotary Club noon luncheon meeting at Valentino's Grand Italian Buffet, 70th & Van Dorn. Guest speaker: David Smith. Topic: One Book One Lincoln.
- English language volunteer tutor orientation, 1:30 or 5:30 p.m., at Lincoln Literacy, Ninth and G streets. Tutors needed for English Language Learners and native speakers of English working on increasing their literacy skills. Register at www.lincolnliteracy.org. Contact Victoria Welles at vwelles@lincolnliteracy.org or 402-476-7323.

### THURSDAY

- Lincoln Northeast Sertoma Club breakfast meeting 7 a.m. in Hy-Vee Club Room, 5020 O St. Guest speaker:

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Ann Hunter-Pirtle. Topic: Stand for Schools.

- Lincoln Center Sertoma Club breakfast meeting 7 a.m. at The Cornhusker, a Marriott hotel, 333 S. 13th St.
- Cornhusker Kiwanis Club weekly luncheon meeting 11:30 a.m. at The Venue Restaurant, South 70th & Pioneers Blvd. Info.: [www.cornhuskerkiwanis.org](http://www.cornhuskerkiwanis.org)
- League of Women Voters Lincoln-Lancaster County Lunch & Learn, noon to 1 p.m. at the Graduate Hotel, 141 N. Ninth St. Cost: \$14 members; \$16 non-members; includes speaker and buffet lunch. Program: "Press Freedom in Today's Society," by UNL journalism professor John Bender. Public welcome. Reservations due Monday; call (402) 475-1411

or email [lwv-ne@inebraska.com](mailto:lwv-ne@inebraska.com).

- SMART (Self-Management and Recovery Training) meets at 6:30 p.m. at Parallels, 4706 S. 48th St. Free support group for people who have any addictive behavior.

## ■ FRIDAY

- Lincoln Center Kiwanis Club weekly noon luncheon meeting on 20th floor of U.S. Bank, 13th and M streets.
- Lincoln South Rotary Club weekly noon luncheon at The Venue Restaurant, 70th & Pioneers Blvd. Guest speakers: Dave Livingston and Joe Roberts. Topic: Rotary Foundation Million Dollar Dinner.
- FirstTier Toastmasters Club meets noon to 1 p.m. at Saint Paul United

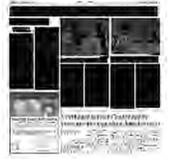
Methodist Church, 12th and M streets. For more information, visit <http://5949.toastmastersclubs.org>

- Almost Full Moon Guided Hike, 7 to 8:30 p.m. at Pioneers Park Nature Center. Enjoy the nighttime sights and sounds under a nearly-full moon. Open to all, may not be suitable for young children. All children must be accompanied by an adult. \$8 per person. Register by Wednesday; call (402) 441-7895.
- The 2017-2018 Nebraska Repertory Theatre season continues with "The Serpent" opening at 7:30 p.m. at 12th & R streets. Additional performances Nov. 5, 10-12, and 16-19, with 2 p.m. matinees Nov. 5, 12 and 19. Admission: \$24 (\$12 for students and OLLI members). Tickets at Lied Center Box Office

weekdays 11:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. and at [liedcenter.org](http://liedcenter.org)

## ■ NEXT WEEKEND

- Free breakfast for the community, 8 to 10 a.m. next Saturday at Northeast United Church of Christ, 6200 Adams St. Pancakes, eggs, sausage, coffee, juice.
- Fifth annual Prairie Run starts 9 a.m. next Saturday at Pioneers Park. Help support the care and management of the tallgrass prairie at the center. One-mile and 5K routes. All runners get a participation gift. \$10 for ages 12 and under; \$20 for 13 and up. Register at [getmerregistered.com](http://getmerregistered.com) (search: Prairie Run).



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# Surrounded by food and friends

## Rotary honors Nebraskan of the Year Tony Messineo

BY TIM BRUSNAHAN  
 Lincoln Rotary Club #14

In case you missed it earlier this month, there was a big Italian party in downtown Lincoln over the lunch hour at the Embassy Suites. There were songs, speeches and some Italian-styled food was served to a room full of people.

Tony Messineo was right at home.

Anthony O. Messineo Jr., the owner of Valentino's Restaurants, was honored by his fellow Rotarians, and others, as the 2017 Nebraskan of the Year Award winner at the 30th annual luncheon celebration presented by Lincoln Rotary Club #14.

Part of the Italian-flavored festivities included Rotarian Tom Westfall serenading Messineo with the famed Neapolitan song 'O Sole Mio,' much to the delight of the five-decade-long Italian restaurateur and philanthropist.

The event was emceed by Rotarian Rod Bates and the speakers included Rotary Club 14 President and Lancaster County Commissioner Jennifer Brinkman, Rotary District 5650 Governor Tom Cardwell, Lincoln Mayor Chris Beutler, Nebraska Lt. Governor Mike Foley and the award presenter was Rotarian, former

Nebraska Secretary of State and a former Nebraskan of the Year recipient, Allen Beermann. He conveyed a message to Messineo with a style, panache and articulated complimentary known only to Beermann.

Beermann also conveyed that prior to the luncheon, Messineo had received blessings, not only from Lincoln Diocese Bishop James Conley, but also from Pope Francis in Rome.

### Humbled

Messineo received the award saying he was humbled and very grateful to his family, friends and Valentino's staff and employees. Sitting at his side on the dais was his bride of 54 years, Carmen Messineo.

"I can remember back 15 years ago when I was introduced to Rotary by Dave Livingston that 'service to others is a noble cause,'" said Messineo, who bought the first Valentino's restaurant location near 35th and Holdrege in 1972 and later expanded with his second location near 70th and Van Dorn streets in 1974. There are now 35 restaurant locations with 20 "To Go" locations spanning four states.

### Impressive awards

Messineo's marveled accomplishments across

the years include the Restaurateur of the Year (1990, 2011) Cor Christi Award (1997), the Lincoln Chamber of Commerce Award (1993), the Rotary Salute to Business Award (2001), the Lincoln/Lancaster County Homeless Coalition Award (2002), the Chamber of Commerce Burnham Yates Citizenship Award (2002), the Child Welfare League of America's Corporate Advocate of the Year Award (2003), the Rotarian of the Year Award (2009) and the Benemerenti Medal (bestowed by Pope Benedict XVI in 2009).

Messineo's benevolence and kind acts of sharing are evident through his chari-

ties which include Lincoln Children's Museum, the Boy Scouts of America, the

Make a Wish Foundation, Pius X High School, FFA, Lincoln Public Schools, St. Jude's Children's Hospital, the Salvation Army, Sacred Heart School in Omaha, Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital and the Nebraska TeamMates Mentoring Program. He is also responsible for the creation of the "High Five Club" which recognizes grade school students who demonstrate outstanding effort in the classroom and school activities with a free pizza and recognition by Valentino's Restaurants.

Now, *that's Amore...*



COURTESY PHOTO

Tom Westfall serenades Tony Messineo with his version of "O Sole Mio."



COURTESY PHOTO

**Rotary member and former Nebraskan of the Year Allen Beermann pays tribute to the 2017 Nebraskan of the Year, Tony Messineo, during a recent luncheon at Embassy Suites, 1040 P St.**



## hometown QUIZ

Hometown Quiz appears each week on our puzzle page.

**This week's questions:**

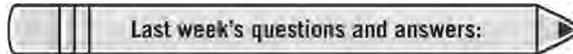
**Q:** How many Teacher of the Month awards have been presented since Lincoln East Rotary Club and U.S. Bank started the recognition program in December 2001?

**Q:** How many public high schools in Lincoln have more than 2,000 students?

**Q:** With the recent addition of a new vehicle, how many bloodmobiles are now in the Nebraska Community Blood Bank fleet?

**Q:** In what year was Star City Sports founded?

Answers to the questions above will appear in next week's Hometown Quiz column and on our website — [www.NeighborhoodExtra.com](http://www.NeighborhoodExtra.com)



**Q:** How many people does the YMCA of Lincoln serve in an average year?

**A:** Over 82,000, with facilities in all quadrants of Lincoln.

**Q:** What was football coach Tim Aylward's career coaching record at Lincoln Pius High School?

**A:** He compiled a 204-113 record over 31 years as head coach of the Thunderbolts. He retired as football coach following the 2015 season and continues to serve full time as athletic director and physical education instructor.

**Q:** Which high school team did Lincoln Pius X defeat in the Thunderbolts' very first homecoming football game?

**A:** Lincoln Pius X defeated Omaha St. Joseph 7-0 in 1956.

# NEIGHBORHOOD EXTRA

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## STAR CITY SPORTS



Rotarians honor 2017 Nebraskan  
of the Year, Tony Messineo.  
Article and photos on PAGE 10.