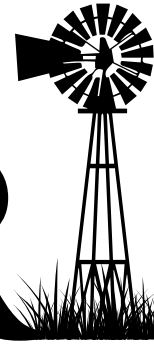


# THE STAPLETON ENTERPRISE

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THURSDAY, JANUARY 21, 2021

NO. 3

## Two families, a common bond

MARCIA HORA

Tragedies from each end of the state brought two families together to bring hope and encouragement to two children just before Christmas.

Melissa Anderson and her children, Rikie, 7, and Tye, 6, of Stapleton, sat by the side of Matt Schaeffer for a week in late August. Matt had been injured in an accident that would eventually take his life. A heavy chain broke and went through the window of a payloader and struck him in the head. He was attempting to pull out a stuck tractor.

Stapleton Fire & Rescue assisted at the scene and he was flown from Great Plains Regional Health in North Platte to Omaha. Matt never regained consciousness after the August 20 accident and his family donated his organs to help others.

At the same time, a Lincoln family was dealing with their own struggles and grief. Mario Herrera, 50, had been shot while helping serve an arrest warrant on August 26. The Lincoln Police Department investigator, who had served for many years, was fighting for his life and arrived at UNMC two days after Schaeffer.

"My kids wanted to do something for this "hero" who they knew nothing about at the time, other than he'd been injured," Melissa said. "They asked the hospital child support person who had been helping them with their loss for crayons and paper so they could make him a picture. They also shared snacks that had been sent to Matt's room with the officer standing watch outside Mario's room. As a mom, I was so proud of the kids. In their time of deep sorrow, they still cared about others. I know Matt would have been very proud of them too."

Rikie wrote on her picture, "thank you for keeping us safe." Tye's contained stickers of barns and a fire truck. Tye told the officer his dad was a hero too, because he donated his organs so someone else could live.

The Schaeffer kids offered the pictures to the officer stationed outside of Herrera's room and the pictures hung there until his September 7 death.

Touched by the kind action, the Herrera family and the Lincoln Police Department started making plans to help the Schaeffers at Christmas.

With the help of Melissa's friends, Amber Tatman and Jennifer Frey, the two families



COURTESY

Pictured at the Schaeffer residence west of Stapleton, l-r: Matt Franken, Mario's LPD partner; Tim Cronin, LPD investigator and Carrie's brother; Tim's wife, Jessica Cronin; Carrie Herrera, Melissa Anderson, and in front, Rikie and Tye Schaeffer. A special visit from the Lincoln residents brought gifts to the Schaeffer's at a time when they needed it the most. The two families were brought together through tragedy at the ICU unit at the University of Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha. Homemade drawings from the Schaeffer kids touched the hearts of the Herrera family and the Lincoln Police Department.

were able to reconnect at a surprise gathering at the Schaeffer residence west of Stapleton on December 15. Plans were made under the guise of a birthday party for Tye, who turned 6 on December 11.

Melissa said she tried to get out of the party several times, but her friends were relentless. "When Carrie Herrera and her family, along with Mario's partner on the police force, stepped out of the vehicle in my yard, I was shocked," Melissa said. "They came bearing all of these gifts for all of us. Rikie and Tye had been through a rough week and this was just the perfect way to help them. Out of two terrible tragedies a friendship was formed."

She went on to say the Herrera family had hand-picked the gifts and they meant so much to all of them. This was an unlikely friendship from two families who live over four hours apart. It started with sorrow, but led to hope for her family.

"There really are wonderful people out there and we were sure reminded of that."

Melissa and Matt were planning to marry in May, 2020, but the wedding was postponed due to the COVID-pandemic. Now

her days are spent not only being a mom, but also dad. The kind of dad Matt was for his kids.

She said Rikie and Tye still have good and bad days. She had to quit her job with Asera Care to spend more time with them and work on the ranch. Now she spends her time taking care of the cattle that Matt loved and the cow herd he was building.

Melissa wants to stay where they are and keep the kids in school at Stapleton and in the rural setting they have known all of their lives.

The pre-Christmas visit from the Lincoln residents helped a lot and the common bond that binds them will continue to comfort and encourage them in the days ahead.

## New board of trustee appointed

Voting on a new board of trustee to fill a vacancy and the nuisance ordinance were on the agenda at the regular Village of Stapleton board of trustees meeting held Wednesday, January 13, at the Stapleton Community Center.

The Village will have the attorney send letters again to Bob Burns and Scott Salisbury in regards to cleaning up their property on main street. Burns had removed junk vehicles, but junk items remain in the back of the business that once housed the Stapleton Meat Market. Scott Salisbury had attended last month's meeting and said he would begin working on clearing junk items from the property. As of yet, no work has started. A roll-off was placed at the old café building owned by Scott and Bea Gaites. Chairman Dan Beckius said he would speak to the Village helping remove the building.

Sheriff Sean Carson was present and said the Logan County attorney was not able to get a contract between the county and village worked on prior to the meeting. A contract will be brought to the February meeting.

The Logan County attorney will have to resubmit paperwork on the condemnation of Lots 11 & 12, Block 14 and Lots 5 & 6, Block 17 in the Village of Stapleton.

A livestock application to have chickens in the village limits was submitted by the Cocos. The village clerk will send the necessary paperwork to the Cocos for them to fill out to proceed with the

livestock permit.

Marcia Hora was present to request permission to serve alcohol at the Saturday, February 13 fundraiser for the Stapleton Golf Association at the community center. Permission was granted.

Three applications were received for the board vacancy. Wayne Hora and Larry Vasquez both filed for re-election and were elected to the board at the November 3 general election. Bryan Rooney did not seek re-election.

The board voted to appoint Anita Harwager to a four-year term on the village board.

The clerk reported a person asked about restitution funds being paid back to them rather than into the restitution fund account. They felt the money had been taken from them personally. The board stated the money had been taken from all village patrons collectively.

A patron requested permission to walk in the community center.

A patron is working to pay their dumpster fees and get current on their bill.

Slaughter house road has been worked on and looks good. A culvert has been installed and the road has been built up.

Twelve new dumpsters will be ordered and 10 picnic tables at a cost of \$5,248.70 have been ordered.

The board approved the village clerk attending clerk school from March 14 through 19 at Kearney.

The next regular board meeting will be Wednesday, February 10, at 7:30 p.m. at the Stapleton Community Center.

## Ferocious winds spark fires

Stapleton Fire & Rescue was kept busy last week as they were called out several times during adverse weather conditions.

Fierce winds, gusting to over 65 miles per hour, continued throughout Thursday and Friday, January 14 and 15, and fire danger was high.

Stapleton Fire Chief Frank Kramer said last Thursday could be deemed a "fire cluster" as the volunteer firemen were called out several times in a short period of time.

Arnold Fire & Rescue called Stapleton for mutual aid on Wednesday, January 13, as a grass fire had started approxi-



LOGAN COUNTY SHERIFF OFFICE

Stapleton Fire & Rescue were called by Arnold Fire & Rescue to assist with a fire at the Craig Halstead residence. Firemen were able to contain the fire inspite of extremely wind gusts at the time of the call on Thursday, January 14.

See Fires  
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### -- News Briefs --

#### Vet's Club Chili Cook-off Contest

The Vet's Club has announced their 2021 Chili Cook-off contest will be held Saturday, January 23.

Entries need to be in by 6:00 p.m. and judging will be held at 6:30 p.m.

Public tasting will be at 7:00 p.m.

There will be two divisions: hot and mild, and Karaoke and card games will be enjoyed.

#### Stapleton Area Chamber Membership Drive

The Stapleton Area Chamber of Commerce membership drive and dinner will be held Monday, February 1, at the Stapleton Community Center. The meal will be served at 6:30 p.m. and the meeting will follow.

Membership dues are \$40.00 per year and may be given to Chamber treasurer, Cindy Frey.

### Weather

DATE	HI	LOW	MT
9	34	27	T
10	37	23	T
11	38	18	0
12	49	17	0
13	54	22	0
14	58	33	0
15	41	26	0

A trace of snow was recorded on January 9 and 10. The anemometer is under-reporting, but extreme winds were recorded on January 14 and 15.

#### Risk Dial

The West Central District Health Department's risk dial is now at 3.46 which is down from last week's 3.62.

### McPherson Co. News



- Over The Hills
- Graphic Files
- "I Had A Dream"
- Between The Lines

### Notices

- Iron Horse Steakhouse Notice Of Liquor License Renewal
- Village Of Stapleton Accepting Bids
- Village of Gandy 1 & 6 Year Street Notice
- McPherson County Commissioners Board Proceedings
- Stapleton Golf Assn. Annual Meeting
- McPherson County Six Month Report

Be An Informed Citizen  
Read The Notices!

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