

# Keystone luncheon to honor Rusk, remember Russell

David Rusk, who helped establish the VA Coffeehaus and the Veterans Freedom Music Festival, has been chosen as this year's Keystone Award recipient.

Rusk will receive the coveted award during a luncheon scheduled from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Thursday, May 16 at the Country Club of Lincoln, 3200 S. 24<sup>th</sup> St. The Keystone Award recognizes an individual, couple or group who has provided a lasting legacy that enhances the quality of life for older adults in the community.

The family of the late Maurice Russell, a longtime community service leader, pharmacist and former Seniors Foundation board president, will accept the Seniors Foundation Remembers Award in his memory. The Remembers Award recognizes an individual who made an impact on the lives of older adults in Lincoln.

Guest speaker for the luncheon will be Dale Johnson, KFOR Radio's news director and the host of "Lincoln Live."

The Keystone Award luncheon is an annual fundraiser hosted by the Seniors Foundation, a 501c3 in Lincoln that supports special projects for Aging Partners.

Ticket info.

Luncheon tickets are priced at \$65 per person, \$600 per table of 10, and may be ordered on the Seniors Foundation website at [www.seniorsfoundation.org](http://www.seniorsfoundation.org). Look for the Events tab and for Keystone Reservations, which will direct you to the form. For more details, call the Seniors Foundation at (402) 441-6179 or email [seniorsfoundation@seniorsfoundation.org](mailto:seniorsfoundation@seniorsfoundation.org).

Past recipients of the Keystone Award, originally called the Community Service Award, include Helen Boosalis, Gil Savery, Lela Shanks, Jerry Joyce, Joe Hampton, Harland Johnson, R. David Wilcox, Dayle Williamson, Dorothy Applebee, and Coleen Seng.

Winners' bios

**David Rusk** is a long-time Lincoln resident. In his professional life, he was a staff member of KFOR radio. After his retirement, Dave helped to establish the VA Coffeehaus, which promotes the health and wellbeing of veterans through music. On the third Friday every month, the VA

Coffeehaus meets in the auditorium at Victory Park, the Veterans Administration medical campus on South 70<sup>th</sup> St.

Since the VA Coffeehaus began in 2011, Rusk has scheduled volunteer music groups and solo musicians monthly to entertain those in attendance. He also spearheaded a huge fundraising initiative to provide new state-of-the-art sound systems for the VA Auditorium.

In 2010, Rusk helped to establish the Veterans Freedom Music Festival, a yearly event each June to honor Veterans. As a member of the local band "Three Chords and a Cloud of Dust," Rusk provides entertainment almost weekly for retirement communities and assisted living and memory care facilities in and around Lincoln.

**Maurice Russell** passed away on December 26, 2018 at age 90. A pharmacist for over 60 years, his community service included: Seniors Foundation Board of Directors, where he also served as president, Family Service Board of Directors, United Way Foundation of Lincoln and Lancaster County Board of Directors, president of St. Paul United Methodist Men, Crime Commission-Region II, American Red Cross, Lincoln Council on Alcoholism and Drugs, Bryan College of Health Sciences, and the St. Paul United Methodist Church Council.

Maurice lived in an orphanage in Oklahoma from age 5 to 12 because his mother was too ill to care for him. From age 12, he lived on his own working many jobs such as washing dishes or working at Pepsi Cola (until they discovered he was under 14). He graduated from high school at age 17 and entered the U.S. Army. He graduated from pharmacy school at the University of Nebraska and got his license in 1954. He worked at Smith Pharmacy from 1953-1959, at which time he bought the store located at 22<sup>nd</sup> and Vine. After the city bought the land for a project, he joined Eli Lilly and Company as the second black pharmaceutical sales representative and worked there for 27 ½ years until retiring in 1999. After retirement, he continued to work at Russ's Pharmacy and later at Clinic with a Heart.

His widow Marcia Russell and daughter Carla Steadman will accept the Seniors Foundation Remembers Award.

###