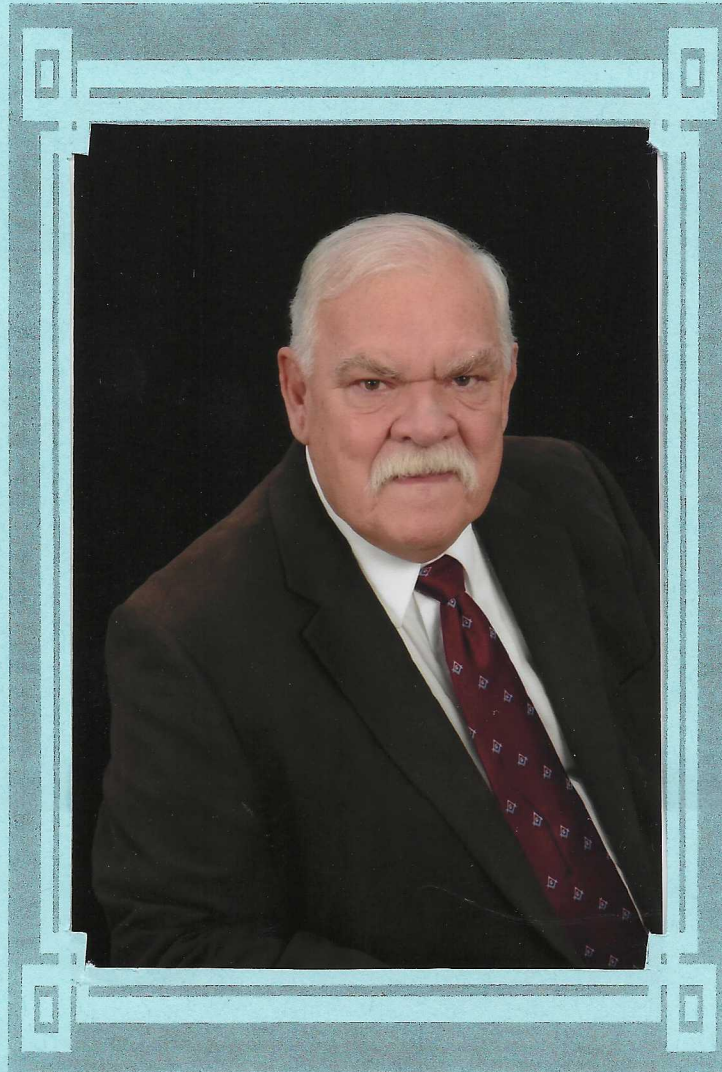




*"Honoring the past to challenge the future"*



## Darrel Draper

Darrel is a graduate of PHS – 1966. While in high school, he was a 4 year member of Concert Choir and Football. He was Captain of Debate Team, in Lettermen club, Spanish, and Thespians for 2 years. He had the lead in All School Musicals - *The Music Man* and *Annie Get Your Gun*, and *The Curious Savage* and had the lead in junior class play - *The Mouse That Roared*. His student theatrical career continued with being the Student director of senior class play. Darrel was also the president of his senior class.

At the University of Nebraska, Omaha Darrel received a BS in Criminal Justice .

Darrel had a very impressive military career starting with entering the US Army in 1967 where he later graduated from US army officer candidate school. He was the youngest military intelligence corps commissioned officer. At the age of 22 he was promoted to Captain.

Darrel served as Provincial Military Intelligence Advisor Vietnam and earned the Bronze Star Medal. Later he Joined Nebraska Army National Guard where he was promoted to Major and appointed Inspector General of 67<sup>th</sup> Mechanized infantry Brigade NEARNG.

Surprisingly, he then entered US Navy Officer Candidate School/ Commissioned Ensign USN and served in combat zones of Lebanon, Liberia and Desert Storm. He was promoted to Lieutenant Commander USN. Darrel is perhaps the only person in America to have earned the rank of Army Major AND Navy Lieutenant Commander. He retired from US Strategic Command 1997, with 30 years total military service with a career total of 26 personal and unit commendation medals.

Currently Darrel is an active member of 2<sup>nd</sup> Unitarian Church of Omaha. He is a National Unitarians Speakers Bureau Member serving as guest minister in Nebraska, South Dakota, Kansas and Iowa.

Darrel is best known locally for being a Historical Speaker with the Speakers Bureau of Humanities Nebraska, Humanities Iowa, South Dakota Humanities Council, Omaha Visitors Bureau, Lincoln Visitors Bureau and Sarpy County Visitors Bureau. He was the lead Speaker with Missouri and Illinois Humanities Councils' Chautauqua 2004.

And he is an author. He has written and performed 6- 1 hour educational character re-enactments of people who have impacted Nebraska and national history. His portrayal of George Drouillard of the Lewis and Clark Expedition was selected by the National Park Service to tour the nation during the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial from 2003-2006. He performs for schools, libraries, festivals, state and national conventions, and business corporations, traveling an average of 20,000 miles per year and performing for an average of 15,000 audience members per year. He has performed in 15 states and given command performances for Governor Ben Nelson, Governor Mike Johanns, and the Past President of Mexico.

Darrel is the most requested speaker of the more than 100 scholars and speakers of Humanities Nebraska and of the 46 speakers of Humanities Iowa. He was written and published *A Prairie Sailor*, a collection of his poetry and prose which has sold 4,000 copies. He gives free speeches to high school and middle school English classes on writing and poetry. His total audience is estimated at 400,000 people of which about 250,000 are school students.

He was the featured author and the cover story of *Fine Lines*, and International Literary Journal in 2009. Darrel has been a featured speaker at the annual Fine Lines Writers Camp in Omaha for the past 5 years.

Darrel's wife, JoAnne Draper has been active in the community as: a CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) volunteer to help troubled or neglected youth; an officer in OTOC (Omaha Together One Community) working on social justice issues for Omaha minorities: a past officer of League of Women Voters: has served as Second Unitarian Church Board Chair Twice, Treasurer for 8 years, and Church Committee worker for 16 years. She is a customer service executive for AT&T and has been inducted into the AT&T Gold Club for top performing employees.

Darrel plans to retire from historical re-enacting this December. This will conclude a twenty-two year run as an endutainer.