# PA Eastern Star Happenings



ISSUE 27 | SUMMER 2025

No one can dim the light that shines from within.

- Maya Angelou

#### FROM YOUR EDITOR

Dear Sisters and Brothers

I would like to extend my heartfelt apologies for the absence of the Winter and Spring 2025 issues. The past year, my daughter has faced a serious health challenge and I myself have had some concerning health issues which prevented me from fulfilling my responsibilities as your Editor. This was never my intention, and I deeply regret not being able to carry out the work entrusted to me.

Marcia and Mike, I offer my most sincerest apologies for falling short of your expectations. I was truly grateful for the confidence you placed in me, giving me the privilege of sharing the happenings, stories, and updates from across our Order. It is an honor to help shine a light on the many ways our members contribute to the meaningful work we all cherish.

I am honored to continue serving as your Editor under the leadership of Sister Joyce and Brother Dennis for the 2025–2026 term, and I am also very pleased to welcome Stephanie Renni as Co-Editor. I am confident that, together, we will continue to bring forward the very best of who we are and what we do.

Looking ahead, I encourage everyone to continue sending me your stories, photos, and articles. These contributions are the heart of our publication, and together, they ensure that our Order's accomplishments, celebrations, and milestones are preserved and shared.

Once again, please accept my deepest apologies and my heartfelt gratitude for your patience, understanding, and unwavering support. Your kindness and encouragement mean more than words can express, and I look forward to serving you with renewed dedication in the year ahead.

Fraternally,

Michelle

Michelle Riggi-Smith

#### PA FASTERN STAR HAPPENINGS

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## Is it Time to Consider Nursing Care?

As we age, everyday tasks become more difficult. Sometimes, they signal a greater need for daily care.

Have you noticed a loved one relying more and more on friends or family for help with personal care or mobility?

Is a loved one experiencing memory issues?

Do you worry about the physical safety or overall well-being of a loved one?

If any of these questions resonate with you, now may be the right time to explore nursing care options.

As a member of the Order of the Eastern Star in Pennsylvania, you and your eligible family members have priority for admission at the Masonic Villages.

Nursing care provides around-the-clock services and is ideal for those who need assistance with:

- Bathing, dressing and toileting
- Eating
- Ambulation and mobility
- Medication management
- Monitoring of vital signs



Residents receive three meals daily, housekeeping services, recreational opportunities, social events and spiritual care. Rooms offer attractive furnishings, and residents have access to shared living areas, amenities and a spacious dining room.

We encourage people

to plan ahead by joining our waiting list if they foresee needing nursing care in the future, including those diagnosed with conditions such as cancer, dementia, Parkinson's disease and other progressive conditions.

For more information about nursing care at the Masonic Village of your choice, contact:

### Masonic Village at Elizabethtown

717-361-4552

MVEadmissions@masonicvillages.org

#### Masonic Village at Warminster

215-672-2500

MVWadmissions@masonicvillages.org

#### Masonic Village at Sewickley

412-741-1400, ext. 43600

MVSadmissions@masonicvillages.org

# Message from the Worthy Grand Matron M. Joyce Camlin

Installation of Grand Officers is in the books and it was such a joy for me to have Brother George, PGP, install me as Worthy Grand Matron and to have our children participate in my installation ceremony.

The Grand Officers are off and running, spending time with our youth organizations at the Job's Daughters Family Picnic and the International Order of Rainbow for Girls' Grand Assembly. And we will soon be visiting the DeMolay Convention, as well. If you have never visited one of our youth



organization meetings or annual conventions, I urge you to do so to witness the excellent work they exhibit. We in the Order of the Eastern Star can take an example of the benefit of attending rehearsals and the guidance of our peers and mentors to improve our ritualistic work and to improve our social enjoyments.

My focus this year is on Sharing God's Light, sharing our lights from within with each other and those we meet along the way.

Together we share our lights with each other, forming new ideas and ways to make our chapters stronger and to support our Order. We work together to support our local charities, and to support each other when needed. We help each other with memory work and ritual work. We fill in as substitutes for our chapters when needed, and sometimes other chapters, too. We are all sharing our lights with each other.

Kindness is igniting a light in someone else for no other reason than to watch them glow. Think about it -- When you light another's candle, you lose nothing of your own, you just produce more light.

Our Order is struggling right now and some of our chapters are feeling our lights going dim. In some of those cases, it is the light of kindness that is dimming. Harsh words are blowing those candles out and we are losing members -- and, thereby, chapters. We need to do all that we can to rekindle those lights and set them aglow again. A kind word, a loving touch, a simple smile can go a long way toward rekindling someone's inner light and setting it glowing again.

My hope for the new year is that you will make a special effort, in your chapters and in your personal lives, to fan the flame of kindness. Take that split second to think about what you are about to say – and maybe you will decide not to say it.

Keep in mind: There's a stranger out there who still thinks of you because you were kind to them when they really needed it. Never stop being that person.

## MESSAGE FROM THE WORTHY GRAND PATRON

Oh, my Sisters and Brothers how the time is flying by. It was just Leadership Weekend and now Grand Chapter is already over. Along the way we had the Historic "Unity Among The Stars Session" with Deborah Grand Chapter on May 31st in Harrisburg. We shared each others special meetings to show we have little differences on the ritualistic work of our orders. What a glorious and fun day followed by a delicious meal that we shared together! Then it was time to start making sure all items need for Grand Chapter were ready to go. Last minute practices and packing for the Amazing Grace" God's Riches



at Christ's Expense" 130th Session. Friday evening experienced a Sunset Dinner Cruise aboard the Victorian Princess. Saturday evening it was the Amazing Encounters — On a Wild Safari! The decorations and wild animals were fantastic. What a great way to start off Sunday with an inspiring message for our Divine Service from The Honorable Reverend Dr. William Lewis "Rocky" Brown III, Deborah Grand Chapter Brother, all put together by Beverly J. McDowell. The Necrology was beautifully done and brought tears to many eyes from our Choir. Educational Scholarships and Golden Stars were recognized with proud participants. Grand Banquet was very uplifting and well done. With a busy schedule with meetings and all wonderful happenings it didn't take long until Wednesday came for Installation.

Sister M. Joyce Camlin and I were ready for the next step to start our Grand Chapter life with our Grand Family. Thank you to Brother George M. Camlin, PGP and HelenBeth G. Vilcek, PGM, for installing all our Grand Officers for 2025-2026.

Sister Joyce and I are already on the road with the Grand Family. We wasted no time having an event scheduled with the Job's Daughter's Family Picnic in Biglerville. Many Masonic Bodies were in attendance from various Masonic ties. We are looking forward in July to be with the Youth at the Rainbow Grand Assembly in Altoona.

Hoping you enjoyed your Fourth of July Holiday and I hope you shared it with family and friends. And remember that we are looking forward to seeing you on the OES trails throughout the year as I wish for you that your Troubles be less and your Blessings be more and nothing but Happiness comes through your door.

Dennis J. Devine Worthy Grand Patron

#### Associate Grand Matron - Debbie A. Helm

Debbie A. Helm is a dedicated member of Old Bellaire Chapter #374 and a plural member of Gettysburg Chapter #392, both in Region 8A. She served as Worthy Matron of Old Bellaire (2022–2023) and Gettysburg (2016–2017), and continues to serve both chapters faithfully as their Chaplain—a role she has lovingly held for many years. At Gettysburg, Debbie has also

been the long-standing Chapter Representative for Service Dogs. Debbie most recently served as our Grand Conductress, a position that allowed her to travel, meet members across Pennsylvania, and create cherished memories.



Outside of OES, Debbie is active in her church, where she serves as an assisting minister, member of the church council, and chairperson of the Worship and Music Committee. She is also employed as a paraprofessional aide with the kindergarten classes at Mount Rock Elementary School in the Big Spring School District, a role she has enjoyed for the past five years.

Debbie treasures sharing her OES journey with her mother, Nancy Line. Family is always close to her heart—she is blessed with two children, Matthew and Megan, six grandchildren, one great-grandson, and her brother, Donald P. Line II.

For fun, Debbie enjoys working in her flower beds, mowing the yard, and watching the rabbits play in her backyard.

#### Grand Treasurer - Susan K. Fisher

Susan is a twenty-five-year member of Mount Union Chapter #280, Region 7A where she served as WM, Treasurer, and Star Point Martha. She had held several AGCCM appointments and served as Treasurer on Orpha Kemmler's Club Board. She has been



serving as Grand Treasurer for the past four years. Susan is a retired Master Sergeant and resides in Hopewell, PA. She attends the Stonerstown Church of the Brethren and is a Life member of the Bricktown Senior Center. Susan is "Nana" to ten grandchildren, 4 boys and 6 girls, ages ranging from 3 years to 24 years. Susan enjoys playing computer games, reading, jigsaw puzzles and RVing with the family.

#### Grand Secretary - Virginia L. Plyler, GGCCM

Sister Virginia L. (Gee Gee) Plyler, General Grand Chapter Committee Member, Grand Secretary, is a member of Signet Chapter No. 129, Region 14B. She

has served OES in various capacities including Grand Martha, District Deputy Grand Matron, Fraternal Correspondent, Eastern Chairman of the Barbara E. Adams Excellence Award Program and Regional Advisor for Regions 14B and 15. She has been Worthy Matron three times since her initiation in 1977. Gee Gee & Brother



Richard celebrated their 54th wedding anniversary in May. Their family includes the Texas clan: their older son, Scott, and three grandchildren, Emily, Evan and Jack - and the Virginia contingency: younger son, Sam and his wife, Susan. Brother Richard is also a member of Signet No. 129. Gee Gee loves to sew! Remember to always sew with Fidelity, Constance, Loyalty, Faith and Love - the threads that bind us.

#### Grand Conductress - Cathy A. Hoke

I have been a member of The Glen Chapter #425, Region 8B, for 25 years. I served as WM in 2009–10 and again in 2017–18. At Grand Chapter, I served as Grand Ruth in 2016–17 and DGM from 2022–24. My

AGCCM appointments include Caring and Sharing Central Chmn, Masonic Villages Central Chmn, Charity, 120th Sessions Housing, Caravan for Cancer, 127th Session Committee General Chmn, and Grand Page. I have held the offices of Chaplain and Warder and have substituted for many other offices. I retired from the insurance



industry in December 2020 after working for 45 years. My family includes my late mother, Rose, who served as Grand Ruth in 2004–05; my late father, George; and my late sister, Mona, who was also a member of Eastern Star. I am a proud aunt to my nephew Jeremy, his wife Jackie, and my great-nieces Lilly and Ella. I love to travel, do crafts, and decorate my house for all seasons. Being a member of Eastern Star has made me a better person by inspiring me to increase the amount of volunteer and charitable work I do. A fun fact about my OES membership is that it is owed to my sister, who said, "We need to join for our mother," who was DDGM at the time and I said, "Really!" The friendships I have made since then are very precious to me.

#### Grand Trustee - Lisa S. Weaver

Lisa is currently in her 5th year serving as Grand Trustee, and 44th year in Eastern Star. She currently serves as Associate Matron in State College Chapter No. 388 and as Martha in Lewistown Chapter No. 283. She has repeated twice as Worthy Matron of State College No.388. She served as Grand Electa (Sandra K. Berkey, PGM), Deputy Grand Matron (Jean D. Fey, PGM), and Grand Representative of Colorado in Pennsylvania (Rhonda

M. Johnson, PGM). As Grand Rep, Lisa attended Colorado's September 2006 Grand Chapter. She has also held several Grand Chapter Committee Appointments. Lisa and her husband, Ed Glantz, reside in Port Matilda. Ed is a past patron, and currently serving as secretary of their Chapter and is Past Master of the State College Lodge. They have three children, Candace, Justin, and Kirsten. Candace, Kirsten, and son-in-law, Fred, are active members of State College

Chapter. They have four small grandchildren, Dean, Leo, Evelyn, and Emmitt. Lisa is a Tax Attorney and CPA in State College. Her company, Lifestyle



Retirement Company, assists employers establish and operate retirement plans.

#### Grand Chaplain - Sue A. Moon

I joined Eastern Star about 35 years ago because that's what my family did. I was blessed to have my mother, grandmother, aunts, uncles and cousins involved in star. I originally joined Uniontown Chapter #263 and served as Worthy Matron twice. When that Chapter closed, I moved to Monesson Chapter #205 as my primary chapter and Martha V Paul #404 as my plural chapter.

In addition to Worthy Matron and other various stations in my chapters, I have served as Deputy

Grand Matron, Grand Page and had several appointments. I was a member of Diana Michaels' Club Board and served on the 122nd Sessions Committee as Chairman of Pages.

I graduated from Brownsville Area High School and California University of Pennsylvania with a degree in secondary education. I taught for 33 years as a Physics teacher and am now blissfully retired. I married my wonderful husband Brian in 1988 and God blessed us with two children, Adam and

Elizabeth. Our family also includes two dogs and four cats.

When not doing something for Star or my church, I enjoy traveling with my husband and spending time with family and friends. On the rare occasions I have a moment to myself, I enjoy reading, painting and embroidery.

#### Grand Marshal - Nancy A. Fox

I am a proud member of Martha V. Paul Chapter #404. I first joined the former Emerald Chapter #135 in March 1986 and will celebrate 40 years of OES membership in March 2026. I served as Worthy Matron twice in Emerald Chapter and will complete my term as Worthy Matron of Martha V. Paul in May 2025.

Over the years, I have had numerous appointments. One of my favorites was serving as Western Chairman for Caring and Sharing for Sister Joanne Lauderman. I also had the privilege of serving on the Ties that

Bind Club Board for Sister Orpha Kemmler and later as her Grand Banquet Chairman. Currently, I serve as Vice President of the Lamplighter Club Board for Sister Joyce Camlin.

I have been married to my wonderful husband, Dave, for 46 years. We are the proud parents of three children—Alissa and her husband Brad, Jeff and his wife Ellen, and Katie and her husband Zach—and we are blessed with seven grandchildren: Brianna, Luke, Caleb, Micah, Silas, Riley, and Hadley.

Eastern Star offers opportunities for

excellent ritualistic work while also creating many fun times. I enjoyed a rewarding career as an elementary teacher for over 35 years before retiring, and Eastern Star allows me to use my "teacher personality" in different ways. At Leadership

Weekend, one of my OES sisters said, "When I see you in costume, I know something fun is about to happen!"



#### Grand Organist - Diane S. Runser

I was initiated into Level Green Chapter #533 in the fall

of 1974. In 1986, my chapter merged with Irwin Chapter #400, Region 5-A and my OES family was expanded! I served as WM in 1981-82, Golden Stars appointment 1983-84, DDGM 1984-85, Grand Choir Director in 1986-87, 1993-94 and 2015-16. I accompanied the Grand Choir for many years (the first time in 1982). I was Grand Representative Arkansas 2009-11, Grand



Page in 1997 and 2001, and Grand Organist in 2022-23. I am currently the Secretary of my Chapter. I have been the Music Deputy for Pennsylvania Rainbow Girls since 2003. I have been organist and director of music ministries at the First United Methodist Church of Irwin, PA, since 1986 I have been married to my husband, Fritz Runser for 47 years, even though my anniversary always falls during Grand Chapter. I have two daughters, Heather McLeod (husband Sean) and Megan Shuey (husband PJay), and one new grandson, Logan James Shuey born this past Valentine's Day. One of my hobbies is genealogy. For over 25 years I served as National Secretary of the Strong Family Association of America, Inc., and co-authored a published volume of family history. I look forward to traveling with my new OES family this year and making friends with brothers and sisters around the commonwealth.

#### Grand Adah - Julie A. Britten

Julie became a member of the Order of the Eastern

Star in 2006 upon discovering her family's deep-rooted Masonic connections. She felt compelled to carry on the tradition of service and sisterhood within the organization. Julie was initiated into Eastern Star with her mother, Sue Britten, and a few years later had the honor of going into the East as Worthy



Matron with her father, Richard Britten Sr., by her side as Worthy Patron. Her commitment to philanthropy and community engagement is reflected through the various positions she has head within Shiloh Chapter #153, serving as Worthy Matron four times, as AGCCM for Service Dogs from 2019-2021. She was appointed Grand Representative of British Columbia and The Yukon from 2/2022 thru 12/2023. Julie was Deputy Grand Matron for Region 1A in 2024/25, a dedicated member of M. Joyce Camlin's Lamplighter's Club Board and is now an Appointed Grand Officer, Grand Adah, for the ensuing year. Julie has been working at Erie Insurance for the last 13yrs, in the Enterprise Project Management Office. She enjoys playing with her two pups, spending time with family/friends, traveling, and is venturing more into her new woodworking hobby.

#### Grand Ruth - Terry L. Kamerzel

Terry is a member of Harrisburg Chapter #552, where she currently serves as Secretary. She has served as Worthy Matron twice, in 1989 and again in 2023, and as Deputy Grand Matron for Sister Emily McCarthy and Brother Donald Graver. Over the years, she has held every office except Marshal, Warder, and Sentinel, and has also served on several Chapter Committees. Growing up she remembers her mom's stories about the Rainbow Girls. Terry wasn't sure what this was, but knew she wanted to be one. That dream came true in June 1972 when she was initiated into Harrisburg Assembly #85,

IORG. Four years later, she became Worthy Advisor, officially beginning her fraternal Terry and her husband, Tom, have been married for 34 years and live in Grantville, where they share their home with and are staff to a 15-year-old kitty named Grayaffectionatelynicknamed "Puppy" the last of many cats that have found their way into their hearts. After 19 years in the banking industry, Terry began a new career as a Service Advisor in the Card Services Call Center at PSECU. She enjoyed 20 successful years there before retiring in April 2025. In her free time, Terry loves needlework. baking, doing and learning to guilt from her

mother. She also delights in watching the hummingbirds that return to her feeders every year. A devoted member of Shells Lutheran Church in Grantville, Terry serves on the Altar Guild, has sung in the choir, taught Sunday School, and served on the Church Council. This year, Terry is honored to serve Grand Chapter as Grand Ruth and hopes to fulfill this role in a way that reflects the dedication of the many sisters who have served before her.



#### Grand Esther - Kelli J. Messing

Kelli has been a proud member of OES since October 2004. She first served as Esther in her home chapter before beginning back-to-back journeys to the East, taking her husband, Ben, with her both times. Ben continues to serve

as Worthy Patron. A third-generation DGM, Kelli follows in the footsteps of her grandmother and mother, who both held the same honor. Fun fact: as first-time Worthy Matron and Patron, Kelli and Ben brought their firstborn, Sam, to their first Grand Chapter Session in 2011 when he was just six weeks old.



Kelli and Ben married in 2006 and, since moving back to Pennsylvania in 2007, he has been her constant partner in service. Ben, along with their children, Sam (14) and Sarah (12), keep the home running while Kelli attends meetings, participates in Lamplighter activities, and travels across the state. They are great hosts for those who need a place to stay while in Southeastern PA.

Outside of OES, Kelli works full time at Phoenixville Hospital as a Rehab Liaison, a new role as of April 2025. She holds a master's degree in Occupational Therapy and is passionate about serving the aging population. Kelli enjoys baking, reading, and spending time with their corgi, Brownie.

Kelli is honored to serve as Grand Esther, proudly representing Region 14A in the 2025–2026 Grand Family and looks forward to getting our many Brothers and Sisters.

#### Grand Martha - Kathy D. Davis

In 2008, Kathy was initiated into William E. Gelston Chapter # 435, Region 5A, Greensburg. She has served her chapter in many offices including WM

in 2014 and 2018. She also served PA OES as DGM in 2017 for Emily D. McCarthy, PGM and DGM in 2018 for Sandra K. Burkey, PGM. Becoming a member of The Ties That Bind Club Board as "Pin Chair" for Orpha G. Kemmler, PGM led to the 126th Session Committee, Out of State Entertainment. She has



also held various AGCCM positions and is also a member of the Order of the Amaranth and Past Bethel Guardian Job's Daughters.

Kathy was married to Brother Darrel A. Davis, PP (Past Commander Duquesne Commandery #72 KT and Past Master of Wilson Joppa - now Omni #509) for 47 years. Becoming a Widow in October 2021 and a Blue Slipper recipient, has led to many supportive and new friends.

Kathy & Darrel have one daughter, Kaitlin MJD 08-09, Bethel #3 Greensburg and a member of OES. Kathy is now retired after working 47 years as a Medical Technologist at Excela-Independence Health System. She currently is serving as Trustee and long-term substitute Organist in her chapter, and Secretary of The Lamplighter Club Board for M. Joyce Camlin, WGM 2025-2026.

After retiring, playing the piano has become a "Joyful Noise."

#### Grand Electa - Pristeen (Teena) D. Zimmerman

Hello everyone! My name is Pristeen D. Zimmerman, but I go by Teena. I have been a member of Lewisburg Chapter #394 since 1993 and am a Majority Member of the IORG. I have been married to my husband, Rob, since 2002, and we have a 16-year-old son, Curtis, and a German Shepherd named Whisper. When we meet, be sure to ask about them—I always have a story or two about their latest exploits!

I have worked at the Lycoming County Domestic Relations Office since 1998 and have served as Fiscal Data Supervisor since 2002. My experiences in OES have been truly amazing and wonderful. I have held many chapter positions, mostly line offices, and have served—

and currently serving—as WM for the 6th time. I was AGCCM in 2005–06 for Magical Dreams for March of Dimes and again for the Charity Committee last year. I have also served as Grand Page four times and was honored to be DGM from 2019–21 and 2021-22, a time in which I learned about myself and our beautiful Order. I enjoy spending time with family and friends, especially around a backyard fire pit making mountain pies and

burnt marshmallows. I am thrilled to serve as Grand Electa for Sister Joyce and Brother Dennis and look forward to making new friends and lasting memories.



#### Grand Warder - Connie K. Jones

I joined OES in 1989 and was a member of Ulysses Chapter #95 until 2010, where I was Warder, Martha, and Worthy Matron 3 times and District Deputy once. I took a demit for personal reasons and rejoined Knoxville Chapter #329 in 2016, where I have served as Worthy Matron, Esther and Deputy Grand Matron for three years thru Covid. I became a plural member of Ulysses Chapter #95 in 2024 where I serve as Esther. I have been a page and held numerous Appointed Grand Chapter Committees over the years. I am now serving on the Lamplighters Club Board.

I have been married to my husband David for 56 years, who is also a member of OES, we have two children, 4

grandchildren, 2 great grandchildren, whom we enjoy spending time with. I attend church at Gold Church in Gold Pa. I love to quilt, sew, garden, canning, and reading. My husband and I love to travel, tent camping, and riding on our motorcycle.



#### Grand Sentinel - Tim S. Jordan

Tim was initiated into Warren Chapter #56 in 2008, before transferring En Mass to Youngsville Chapter #478 (1A), where he served as Worthy Patron in 2012-2013, and again in 2014-2022. He is also a member of Joseph Warren Lodge #726 (Warren, PA), where he served as Worshipful Master in 2008 and 2011, and of Stillwater Lodge # 547 (Youngsville, PA) where he held the same office in 2017. Over the years, Tim has held numerous Chapter appointments and served on many lodge committees, as well as AGCCM in 2021 for VA-Liant Warriors and Veteran's Outreach in 2019.

Tim served 13.5 years in the U.S. Marine Corps and was honorably discharged shortly after Desert Storm. His service dog, Jazmine Star is an eight-year-old Fox Red Pointer Labrador Retriever. If

you would like to hear about her story, Tim will gladly share the impact she has had on his life.

Some of Tim's hobbies throughout the years has been serving as a little league umpire for baseball and softball, American Legion umpire, and 29 years as a PIAA Basketball Official. He has recently served as part of the local VFW honor quard for the past 2 years. He



enjoys camping & riding four-wheelers. Tim lives in Tiona, PA with his wife Linda. Married for 44 years they have 2 children: their son Michael and his wife Michelle, along with grandchildren, Deanna and Nick, who live in Sheffield PA, and their daughter Heather resides in Phoenix AZ.

## Jurisprudence & Law - Donald C. Graver

I have enjoyed every minute that I have been a member of the Order of the Eastern Star. I received my 25 year pin this year and it seems like it was just yesterday that I joined. I served as Worthy Patron, Marshal, Chaplain, and Associate

Patron in our Chapter, Robert Fulton # 446 in Quarryville, Pa. Then Emily McCarthy, PGM asked me to serve with her as Associate Grand Patron and Worthy Grand Patron

(2017-18) what an honor and great experience that was for me. Many

new friends and new places we traveled across this GREAT State. What great memories were made with our Grand Family. The last three years as Grand Trustee was just as exciting, serving on the BOD with a Great Group of Sisters and Brothers. This year

2024/25 found me traveling with Marcia Holland, WGM and Mike Byers, WGP and the Grand Family, including my wife, Sidney Graver, Grand Warder was an awesome

time as well. I am looking forward to supporting M. Joyce Camlin and Dennis Devine and another Grand Family in 2025-2026 as they serve the PA OES Grand Chapter as WGM and WGP.

My current hobby is making wooden card holders for Hand &Foot, but I enjoy wood working crafts of all sorts, and playing cards with friends keeps me moving along.

Always---Remember your obligation and have FUN!!

Blast from the past! If it ain't Red it doesn't go in the shed.

With Star Love. Donald C. Graver.

#### Jurisprudence & Law - Cheryl D. Wilson

Hi, I am Cheryl D. Wilson, PGM and am currently serving on the J&L Committee for 2025-2026. I served Grand Chapter as Worthy Grand Matron in 2011-2012

and have been serving in various capacities since my "retirement." Prior to serving as WGM, it was my honor to serve on Ann Berger's Club Board and Session Committee and also Beverly Small's Club Board and her Grand Martha. Over my 50+ years in Star, I served as an Appointed Grand Chapter Committee Member numerous times. The Masonic Family

has been a part of my life since I was 13 years old. I joined the International Order of the Rainbow for Girls and served Allentown Assembly #40 as Worthy Advisor and then as Mother Advisor after my majority.

Warren and I have been married 48 years and have two wonderful daughters, Bridget & Stacey, that have served their subordinate chapters as Worthy Matron

and Stacey served the Grand Chapter of Idaho as Grand Esther and currently on the Board of Grand Trustees. One of the proudest titles I have is "Grams" to four grandchildren. They are my "Stars" that shine brightly for me. As we look forward to the future and retirement, I see many cruise ships on the horizon for Warren and me. It is my hope that this year we can let our

light shine to show our communities that Eastern Star does more than go to meetings. I know that I continue to "Believe in Miracles" and will let God's love shine through me.

A young woman went to her mother and told her about her life and how things were so hard for her. She did not know how she was going to make it and wanted to give up. She was tired of fighting and struggling.

Her mother took her to the kitchen. She filled three pots with water. In the first she placed carrots, in the second she placed eggs, and in the last she placed ground coffee beans.

She let them sit and boil without saying a word. In about twenty minutes she turned off the burners. She fished the carrots out and placed them in a bowl. She pulled the eggs out and placed them in a bowl. Then she ladled the coffee out and placed it in a bowl.

Turning to her daughter, she asked, "Tell me, what do you see?" "Carrots, eggs, and coffee," she replied.

She brought her closer and asked her to feel the carrots. She did and noted that they were soft and mushy. She then asked her to take an egg and break it. After pulling off the shell, she observed the hardened egg. Finally, she asked her to sip the coffee.

The daughter smiled as she tasted

its deep flavor and inhaled its rich aroma. The daughter then asked, "What's the point, mother?"

Her mother explained that each of these objects had faced the same adversity - boiling water - but each reacted differently. The carrot went in strong, hard and unrelenting. However, after being subjected to the boiling water, it became weak. The egg had been fragile. Its thin, outer shell had protected its liquid interior, but after sitting through the boiling water, its inside became hardened.

The ground coffee beans were unique, however. After they were in the boiling water they had changed the water.

"Which are you?" she asked her daughter. "When adversity knocks on your door, how do you respond? Are you a carrot, an egg, or a coffee bean?"

Think of this: Which am I? Am I the carrot that seems strong? But with pain and adversity, do I wilt and lose my strength? Am I the egg that starts with a malleable heart, but changes with the heat? Did I have a fluid spirit but, after a death, a breakup, a financial hardship or some other trial, have I become

hardened and stiff? Does my shell look the same, but on the inside am I bitter and tough with a stiff spirit and a hardened heart? Or am I like the coffee bean? The bean actually changes the hot water - the very circumstance that brings the adversity, the pain, the hardship – into something quite wonderful. When the water gets hot, it releases its fragrance and flavor. If you are like the bean, when things are at their worst, you get better and change the situation around you for the better.

When the hours are the darkest and trials are their greatest do you elevate to another level? How do you handle adversity?

ARE YOU A CARROT, AN EGG, OR A COFFEE BEAN?

(Somehow, wake up and smell the coffee takes on a whole new meaning)





## What's Happening at Masonic Villages

#### **MASONIC VILLAGE AT DALLAS**

Current and future residents had the chance to get to know one another during a spring cocktail party featuring drinks, food and music.

In the fall, residents and the local community gathered for an Oktoberfest celebration, including a bake sale, quilt raffle and seasonal food. The Meadows nursing and rehabilitation center and CIP Rehabilitation



were also on-site to highlight their services.

#### **MASONIC VILLAGE AT ELIZABETHTOWN**



The annual campus campfire was an unforgettable evening with sizzling hot dogs, live music and memories made under the stars. A team of staff and resident

volunteers helped make the night extra special, serving up food, dancing and smiles.

At the second annual centenarian party, staff and families celebrated 20 residents age 100 and older living on campus. Staff spotlighted each centenarian and some of their lifetime accomplishments: raising families, professional achievements, military service, volunteer work and more.

A testament to the care provided, Masonic Village at Elizabethtown was named #2 again on Newsweek and Statista's "Best Nursing Homes 2026" list in the 150+ beds category for Pennsylvania.

#### **MASONIC VILLAGE AT LAFAYETTE HILL**

A multipurpose room was transformed into a shuffleboard court as residents participated in some friendly competition against residents of Brightview Senior Living.

Several residents recently provided entertainment or activities for their fellow residents. **Bettianne Boggess** led a beginner crochet class, instructing her



neighbors in a new hobby they can use to make items for themselves or gifts for family and friends. Steve Gill and his band, Circle of Syn (as in synthetic sound), which was formed in the 1960s, put on a special concert. John Barkley, a music and theater buff, led a fun singalong.

#### **MASONIC VILLAGE AT SEWICKLEY**

Residents gathered along the Ohio River for delicious food and great company! Staff served up smoked brisket, grilled cedar plank salmon and marinated grilled chicken, while



residents enjoyed the beautiful weather and fun music.

In recognition of the high quality services provided, Masonic Village at Sewickley was named #5 on Newsweek and Statista's "Best Nursing Homes 2026" list in the 100-149 beds category for Pennsylvania (up from 15 in 2025).

#### **MASONIC VILLAGE AT WARMINSTER**

Resident, staff and donors gathered for a ribbon-cutting for their new pavilion, which has been enjoyed throughout the warm fall weather.

Music royalty graced the campus when "The King" stopped in for a concert! Residents enjoyed singing along to their favorite Elvis songs.









#### CHAPTER / REGIONAL NEWS & EVENTS

## Doylestown Day with the Dogs - Jeanette A. Marschall-Galante, AGCCM Service Dogs Region 14B

On Monday, July 21, 2025, I had the pleasure of attending "A Day with the Dogs" at the Susquehanna Service Dog training facility in Grantville, PA. The event had a tremendous turnout, and it was wonderful

to see so many OES friends from across Pennsylvania, including quite a few from Region 14B. Attendees brought dog toy donations, and I'm proud to say the collection grew into quite an impressive pile!

We enjoyed a fascinating tour of the facility, followed by a meet-and-greet with the dogs—though, of course, the puppies stole the show. It was inspiring to learn how each dog's natural interests and skills help determine the type of

service work they are best suited for. Susquehanna Service Dogs trains several types of service animals, including guide dogs for the blind, hearing dogs, mobility assistance dogs, medical alert and medical assistance dogs, and psychiatric service dogs.

Training begins at birth. By nine weeks, puppies are placed with volunteer raisers who teach them manners, basic cues, and take them into the community for socialization. After 15–18 months, the dogs enter advanced training, where their strengths guide trainers in determining their ideal area of service.

From there, each dog is carefully matched with a candidate, and training continues with specialized skills tailored to that individual's needs. This process ensures the dog can truly empower their partner to live more independently and confidently.

I left the event deeply impressed by the facility and the incredible work being done at Susquehanna Service Dogs. As a Physical Therapist, I have seen

firsthand how these partnerships can foster greater independence, confidence, and quality of life for individuals with disabilities.

Thank you, Susquehanna Service Dogs, for the remarkable impact you make every day!



Freeland Chapter #323 participated in a "Comfort Bags for Kids" program. Items were collected and placed in handmade fabric bags to be given to children and/or their siblings when they are transported to the hospital by ambulance, The bags include stuffed animals, coloring books and crayons, Play

Doh, slippers, small toys and games. 44 bags were given to Skippack Emergency Services in Montgomery County, PA. The ambulance workers were overwhelmed with the contributions and heartily accepted them. It is so rewarding to realize how this small gesture will help to make a child a little less frightened in a scary situation.

Ports Service



**Tunkhannock Chapter #74** welcomed two new members at their meeting last night. Although we've had husband and wife members, this is the first time we've had a couple join & go through initiation together! Please help us welcome our newest members. Patrick & Lisa O'Brien!





#### CHAPTER / REGIONAL NEWS & EVENTS

#### Lykens Glen Chapter #425 Serves Community

Rain, excessive heat or shine, the members of the Glen Chapter Number 425 served the community during the 2025 Lykens Summer Concerts in the Park during July and August.

Attended by many area residents and those who drove from out of town to enjoy the music, OES members made baked goods, fudge and cut fruit to sell during the Wednesday night concerts.

Concert goers would visit the stand multiple times during the evening to enjoy the tasty treats supplied by The Glen Chapter members.



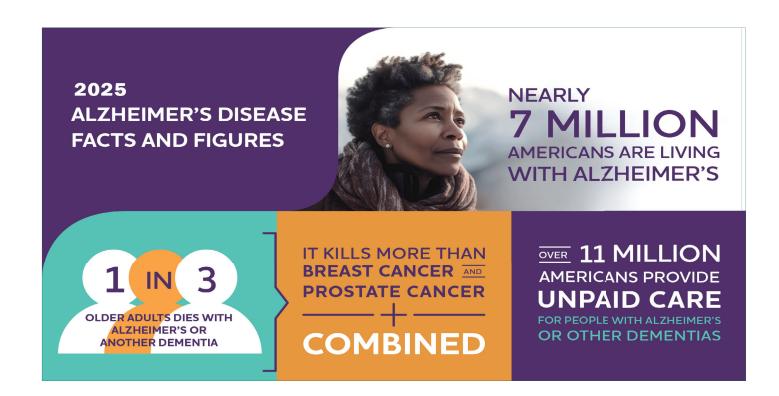
Glenn Chapter members (L-R) Michelle Rice, Judy Bowman PM, and Linda Crabb PM

### Alzheimer's Awareness

Greetings from the General Grand Chapter's Alzheimer's Committee!

I'm privileged to share with you some facts and helpful information on treatment from this Committee, and the goal of a cure of this disease. This column will continue in future issues so stay tuned for more interesting news!

Linda Watson, PGM, GGCA-Alzheimer's



## MESSAGE FROM THE PAST WORTHY GRAND MATRON

Sisters and Brothers.

It is a bittersweet task to write my final note to you as your Worthy Grand Matron. Thank you for the confidence you placed in me to fulfill this role.

I appreciate every member of the Grand Chapter of Pennsylvania who has provided a suggestion or an encouraging word, participated in our Charity projects, attended itinerary events this year and my Honor Days the last four years, and supported their home Chapter in any way. The Grand Chapter of Pennsylvania only exists if we have strong Subordinate



Chapters and members willing to accept the challenges of committee appointments and offices in their own Chapter. This is where the "work" of our Order takes place. May our beloved Order flourish well into the future.

The role of Worthy Grand Matron has been a true learning and humbling experience. I hope I have upheld our Constitution and Law and fulfilled my obligations as Worthy Grand Matron to the satisfaction of the members.

And now, one last time; I would be remiss if I failed to remind you all of this. Be a Leap Frog. L.E.A.P. F.R.O.G. Live Everyday At Peace. Fully Rely On God.

Saved By God's Amazing Grace,

Marcia

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all they ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy path. Proverbs 3:586

## MESSAGE FROM THE PAST WORTHY GRAND PATRON

Hello Sisters and Brothers.

As my year comes to an end, I want to thank each of you for your trust, your support and the unwavering dedication to the principles that make our Order so special – charity, truth and loving kindness. Traveling around the state, visiting the Chapters, going to charity events and much more, it has been one of the most meaningful experiences of my life. No matter where I went across this great state, I was always greeted with love, kindness, smiles and great fellowship. Thank you to everyone who supported my Special



Project – "Blessing Bags". As I said many times, our members are such giving, loving, and caring people, and I thank you for your acts of kindness that changed the lives of those in need.

Though my year is ending as Worthy Grand Patron, my commitment to this beautiful Order remains the same. I look forward to continuing our work together in new ways, always guided by the light we share.

I thank each of you for allowing me the privilege to serve and I will always carry each of you in my heart. I look forward to seeing many of you at the 130th Session Amazing Grace "God's Riches at Christ's Expense", in Erie, PA.

And remember - Be Happy. Everywhere you go, take a smile with you.

With sincere appreciation and love,

Mike Byers Worth Grand Patron

So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you. Matthew 7:12

#### CHAPTER / REGIONAL NEWS & EVENTS 2024-2025

#### 51st Triennial

The loss of Subordinate Chapters in our Pennsylvania Grand Chapter is disheartening. Perhaps we need to take a lesson from Sao Paulo Brazil as they are chartering THREE new Chapters in their Jurisdiction! How wonderful!



Virginia L. Plyler, Past Grand Matron and Grand Secretary Ivette Leite, Worthy Grand Electa (2021-2024), Past Grand Matron of Brazil Marcia H. Holland, Worthy Grand Matron

HelenBeth G. Vilcek, Ambassador to New York (2021-2024) and Past Grand Matron

At the 51st Triennial Session of the General Grand Chapter in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina this past October, the Grand Chapter of Pennsylvania was honored to present three cloth Signets that were being stored at the Grand Chapter Office from PA Chapters that have closed. This was a considerable cash savings to those newly formed Chapters and an item that was easily transported back to Brazil with their delegates.

#### Proud To Be A STAR

Sister Agnes (Nan) Ledoux, Past Matron reached the young age of 102 on November 1, 2024. She was initiated June 26, 1944 into Springdale Chapter #453 which transferred en masse to Kittanning #277. Nan has 80 years as a Sister in our Order. She still resides in her own home with family help.

On November 4, 2024 members of Kittanning Chapter and the Worthy Grand Matron, Sister Marcia H. Holland, had the privilege of visiting Sister Nan and presenting her with her 80 year pin. A wonderful time of fellowship that provided an opportunity to reminisce about her many memories from Star and the wonderful friends and adventures she has had over the years.

Congratulations, Sister Nan.









Front: Agnes (Nan) Ledoux PM, Mary Lloyd, PM Middle: Marcia H. Holland, WGM, Susan H. Burk, WM Back: Margaret (Peggy) A. McKillop, PM, Margaret (Peg) A. Johnson, PM Patricia A. Longwell, PM

#### CHAPTER / REGIONAL NEWS & EVENTS 2024-2025

#### Elizabethtown Chapter #407

The official visit of the Grand Officers of the Grand Chapter of Pennsylvania happened on November 7, 2024 at Brossman Ballroom at Masonic Village of Elizabethtown.

The meeting had a ritual opening and introductions. It was the first meeting for our new members. After the meeting we had a surprise visit with the WGM and WGP mascots. It was a fun time for all. Shown is the Grand family with Terry Dunbar, WM and Donald Woodburn, WP.

In Star Service, Sandra R DePue, PM Neshaminy Chapter #374 Elizabethtown Chapter #407





Bird Chapter #460, Birdsboro was honored by Grand Family visit at our November 12, 2024 meeting. We started the evening with "Dinner in the Dark" where if you were brave enough you got to eat your dinner blindfolded. Being our Worthy Matron, Christine Lyon, is legally blind; she thought that we would enjoy experiencing her point of view. Sister

Marsha H. Holland WGM and Brother Michael E. Byers WGP took the plunge and tried walking blindfolded using a white cane to see if they could "walk a straight line" without knocking into anything. We then had a regular meeting with the Worthy Matron's greetings pertaining to service dogs history. It was an honor to get to meet Grand Family and enjoy learning about the challenges of being visually impaired.

Karin J. Pell, PM Bird Chapter #460, Region 13A





#### Masonic Village at Lafayette Hill

A Grand Officer visitation for the Health Care residents at Lafayette Hill. In attendance was Ruth Darnell PM, a 62 year member, along with Barbra Bernecker PM of Priscilla Chapter #64. What a way to celebrate St. Patrick's Day - looking for a "pot of gold"!





#### CHAPTER / REGIONAL NEWS & EVENTS 2024-2025

#### Neshaminy Chapter #374 Entertains Grand Officers

In September, Neshaminy Chapter #374 entertained Grand Officers with a special visit to the Garden of Reflection 9/11 Memorial in Lower Makefield Township, Bucks County. The Garden of Reflection, Pennsylvania's official memorial, honors the 2,973 lives lost in the



September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, with special recognition of the 18 victims from Bucks County. Following the visit, members and guests attended a patriotic luncheon at the Woodside Masonic Hall, where they learned more about the memorial's history and significance. The day served as a meaningful tribute of remembrance, and the committee is to be congratulated for planning such a thoughtful and memorable event.

#### Associate Grand Patron, Honor Day

Associate Grand Patron, Dennis J Devine, dressed as Saint Patrick on his honor day and was escorted to his seat by his sister, Vicki, and brother, Jacob Benscoter, dressed as leprechauns and other guests were also escorted to their seats.



#### Long Range Planning Corner

First the LRPC would like to say Happy New Year, and we appreciate the feedback on our last survey.

One common feedback as to what keeps people away is criticism and unpleasantness. We know it is easy to criticize and judge others, but we want to remind you that everyone is going through something you don't know about or can't see. Remember as we move forward in 2025 that kindness is like snow, it beautifies everything it covers.

We also wanted to share some tips for memorization as we get closer to asking for officers for the 2025-2026 year. Whether you are new or have been away for a few years. Here are some helpful tips others have shared that we thought might help someone in need.

- Word association; pie; present introduce and escort/
  - C and H Charity & Hospitality
- Learning the speeches one sentence at a time.
   And add on as you go.
- Practice out loud in the car, while you're getting ready, while cooking or getting your morning coffee.
- · Do it in front of a mirror.

Memorization is muscle memory just like singing the lyrics to your favorite song or saying the Pledge of Allegiance. It takes time. Just remember to keep trying and if you need help there is a Sister or Brother in your local chapter that can help you.

May the Road
rise up to meet you.
May the wind be ever
at your back.
May the sun shine warm
upon your face,
and rains fall soft
upon your fields.
And until we meet again,
may God hold you
in the palm of His hand.

#### 2024-25 EDUCATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

We, the Educational Scholarship and ESTARL Committee of the Grand Chapter of Pennsylvania, Order of the Eastern Star, Inc., are pleased to report awarding 114 total scholarships this past June 2025, 12 of which were named scholarships. Each awardee received \$3,000 for the 2026-27 academic year, making the total amount awarded \$342,000. Sixty-one Chapters proudly sponsored 112 of these accomplished students. Two other students were each sponsored by the International Order of the Rainbow for Girls and Job's Daughters International.

Madison Albert (#425) Marcella Amendola (#198) Renee Asmondy (#22) Sarah Bailey (#336) Carissa Bateman (#221) Brooke Bean (#64) Tyler Bergstresser (#460) Erica Binkley (#99) Alayna Bishop (#15) Kaitlynne Borosky (#1) Damian Branas (#471) Skylar Brown (#471) Elizabeth Bruner (#221) Benjamin Burke (#277) Luke Campbell<sup>11</sup> (#404) Rachael Carr<sup>3</sup> (#424) Brianna Conniff (#216) Sophia Dando (#394) Riley Davison (#164) Estella De Jesus<sup>9</sup> (#67) Shane Dodson (#471) Adelena Donovan (#212) Lauren Dunckley (#327) Samantha Earl (#64) Isaac Earnest<sup>7</sup> (#446) Ryan Ehmann (#439) Alex Empet (#67) Aletha Farrington (#267) Mason Ferguson (#392) Michael Fisher (#483) Evan Freil (#404) Ethan Fringer (#360) Lillian Fringer (#360) Paula Geary (#74) Ashley Geesey<sup>10</sup> (#407) Jessica Gentile (#129) Emily Gierczynski (#324)

Alexis Girard (#12) Kara Girard (#12) Randall Gohn Jr. (#360) Kylie Goss (#446) Erin Gossard<sup>4</sup> (#392) Brandon Hile (#394) Kaley Hileman (#471) Joshua Hiles (#44) Tyler Hillson (#74) Emma Holderbaum (#229) Brady Hoot (#266) Eleni Houck (#163) Allison Howell (#459) Alexander Irwin<sup>2</sup> (#324) Miranda Johns (#439) Elena Kacprowicz (#324) Evangelia Karagiannis (#449) Marissa Kauffman (#509) Tiffani Keen<sup>1</sup> (#323) Ryleigh Kelley (#205) Travis Kennett (#205) Logan Kimma (#251) Avery King (#235) Samantha Krahling (#509) Jenna Kuntz (#324) Benjamin Kurtyka (#164) Kylie Jo Kurtyka (#164) Samantha Kurtyka (#164) Caitlyn Lauver (#552) Grace Legg (#58) Rachel Leo (#164) Kate Lipscomb (#356) Preston Little (#138) Payge Lytle (#548) Keeley Malloy (#129)

Olivia McGowan (#316) Owen Mendham (#129) Logan Monroe (#339) Zoe Moyer (#283) Samantha Munson (#74) Mary Neinikoff (#8) Maisie Neuber (#76) Nicholas Oruska (#83) Ella Paule (#267) James Paule (#425) Aidan Perry (#198) Sophia Pino<sup>6</sup> (#64) Anna Plank (#73) Garrett Rader (#439) Ryan Ridenour (#125) Cheyenne Ruch (#439) Makenzie Rupp<sup>8</sup> (#471) Erin Scanga (#164)

Haley Schantzenbach (#298) Taylor Schmauch (#435) Jonathan Shaffer (#8) Victoria Shinn<sup>12</sup> Stacie Sicher<sup>5</sup> (#251) Mason Spangler (#425) Martin Stoner (#446) Molly Suppo (#164) Cameron Swantek (#22) Madeleine Teska (#279) Bailey Vennie (#67) Bryan Wagner (#251) Holly Walsh (#277) Jillian Warner<sup>2</sup> (#324) Elizabeth Welliver (#282) Alexandria Williams (#267)

Maggie Woodring<sup>13</sup> Ty Yerger (#460) Kayla Young (#212) Gabrielle Ziesemer (#8)

Nathan Gierczynski (#324)

Madison Mark (#552)

Tanner Martin (#247)

Elizabeth Mason (#164)

<sup>1</sup> Helen E. Meadows Memorial Scholarship 2 Edna Grendola Naeser Memorial Scholarship 3 Jean Anderson Scholarship

<sup>4</sup> Queen Esther Memorial Scholarship

<sup>5</sup> Beryl L. Hogue Scholarship 6 Lois Marie Smith Scholarship 7 Larry H. Bingeman, PP Scholarship 8 Lois H. Summers, PGM Scholarship

<sup>9</sup> Margaret M. Finley, PGM Scholarship 10 Evelyn M. Kostenbauder, PGM Scholarship

<sup>11</sup> Fenstermacher Scholarship

<sup>12</sup> Youth - International order of the Rainbow for Girls

### GRAND CHAPTER - JUNE 2025

















































































## Volunteers Make a Difference

Volunteer Appreciation Week each spring is a chance to recognize and thank all the individuals who selflessly give their time to assist our staff and support our residents, including those who volunteer with Masonic Village Hospice.

Masonic Village at Elizabethtown residents and staff collaborated on a medieval celebration with food and entertainment that rivaled the Pennsylvania Renaissance Faire.

The Mummers All-Stars were the special guests at the Masonic Village at Lafayette Hill resident volunteer recognition luncheon.

For volunteer opportunities, including for youth age 13 and older, visit www.masonicvillages.org/volunteer or www.masonicvillagehospice.org/volunteer/.

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