

Charity

Emergency Relief and General Welfare Fund – provides an emergency single monetary grant to members whose need is immediate and of a temporary nature.

Oriskany Pilgrimage Day – our Bazaar the profits of which are used for the benefit of our members and our projects.

Social Service Fund – provides a monthly grant to members who require ongoing financial assistance.

Educational Assistance Fund – provides grants to defray expenses of those in pursuit of a higher education.

Nursing Scholarship Fund - provides to affiliated and eligible individuals who are enrolled in nurses training programs.

Annual Walk-A-Thon - in support of our programs for special children and our youth.

Day Care Center – funds used to maintain the quality of the program and its facility. Also home to a Scottish Rite Children's Learning Center that helps dyslexic children.

Building Fund – provides a reserve to facilitate new construction that may be needed or require at our home in Oriskany.

Recreation and Cheer Funds – provides a monetary reserve for our sisters and brothers at the Home for monthly birthday cakes, craft supplies and monthly socials that include entertainment and refreshments

Gift Fund – contributions used to purchase items on the OES Home Wish List.

Youth Groups

The Order of the Eastern Star provides support to members of the **Constellation of Junior Stars** (ages 11 through 21), **Rainbow for Girls** (ages 11 through 21) and **Organization of Triangle, Inc.** (ages 11 through 21). The purpose of these youth groups is to train these fine young citizens to be leaders in the community and to be potential members and perhaps the future leaders in the Order of the Eastern Star. The Masons also sponsor **DeMolay for Boys** (ages 12 through 21).

Famous Members

• Clara Barton • Caroline Ingalls • Eva McGowan • Eleanor Roosevelt • Zora Neal Hurston • Nikki Giovanni • Maya Angelou • Laura Ingalls Wilder • Dale Evans • Rosa Lee Parks • Colleen Dewhurst • Rhoda Fox Graves • Everett M. Dirksen • Barbara Mandrell • President Harry S. Truman

Do I Qualify for Membership and How Does It Happen?

- Any female 18 years or older related to a Master Mason in good standing in his Masonic Lodge or in the event that such a Master Mason is deceased, if he was in good standing in such Lodge at the time of his death.
- Any female who is sponsored by a Master Mason who is a member of the Order of Eastern Star.
- A Master Mason in good standing in his Masonic Lodge.
- Every candidate shall be a resident of the State of New York for the six months immediately preceding the date of his or her petition for initiation, otherwise written permission of the Grand Matron of the jurisdiction in which the petitioner resides or resided shall be obtained prior to balloting on the petition.
- **The petitioner must have a belief in a Supreme Being.**

What procedure should I follow when I have decided that I would like to join a chapter?

The Chapter you intend to join will provide you with a Petition which you must fill out completely. It should be returned to the Chapter Secretary, as soon as possible, with the appropriate fees.

What happens after I submit my petition?

Your petition will be submitted to an Investigation Committee composed of members of the Chapter that you wish to join. Shortly thereafter the members of the Investigation Committee will contact you individually to set up a time and place for a meeting. This is done (1) To ask a few very simple questions, (2) To provide you an opportunity to meet some of the Chapter members, (3) To provide you an opportunity to ask and receive answers to any additional questions that you might have, and (4) To verify your Masonic affiliation. The information that the Investigation Committee receives will be reported to the Worthy Matron.

What will be the next step?

If all of the information is in order, the report of the Investigation Committee will be submitted to the Chapter members at a stated meeting and a vote will be taken. If favorable, you will have been elected to receive the Degrees of the Order of the Eastern Star. The Secretary will notify you of the results of the election and arrange for you to be initiated into the Order.

For more information or a petition for membership, contact:

ORDER OF EASTERN STAR



... WHAT'S THAT?

What is the Order of the Eastern Star

The Order of The Eastern Star is the largest Fraternal Organization in the world to which both women and men can belong. Its objects and purposes are the cultivation of charitable and fraternal practices and to maintain an institution(s) for its worthy members. The fundamental principle of membership is an obligation to aid and assist fellow members in time of need. Like other Masonic related organizations, the Order of the Eastern Star uses emblems and symbolism to teach moral lessons we use as a guide to make our lives more useful, both to ourselves and to others.

The Order of Eastern Star is a social order comprised of persons with spiritual values, but it is not a religion. Its appeal rests in the true beauty of the character-building lessons that are so sincerely portrayed in its ritualistic work. A deep fraternal bond exists between its members.

Our Values

We strive to live our lives by the beliefs of Charity, Truth and Loving Kindness along with certain core values as listed below:

Friendship: We are the largest fraternal organization in the world to which both women and men can belong. With Chapters in almost all 50 states and in 27 countries around the world, members can go anywhere and know that they can find friends and a helpful hand when they're in need.

Community Service: We encourage our members not only to help one another, but also to reach out to their communities. Members are active in many community-based projects for those requiring assistance.

Diversity: The members of our Order reflect the social, cultural, educational, ethnic, and religious diversity of the community around them. We value each other's strengths and opinions.

Patriotism: Members are taught an allegiance to preserve the good of their country and be good citizens. Special programs like VA Hospital Visitations and fundraising for the Wounded Warrior Program are examples of patriotism that part of being a member.

Charity: As an organization, we raise funds for aid to our members in need, scholarships for students regardless of age or membership status, as well as other charities that improve not only our own well being but that of all human-kind. We also fund and operate a Nursing Home and Independent and Assisted Living facility in Oriskany, NY.

Brief History of the Order

In truth, the origin of our organization is shrouded in mystery, much as the origin of Masonry, itself. The Order of the Eastern Star, founded on Masonry and for the benefit of the female relatives of Master Masons, was known by other names in Europe before it came to America. In these organizations Masons prepared instructive and enlightening lessons and charges that were given to their female relatives.

About 1780 there appeared in France an organization called "Adoptive Masonry," under the sanction and warrant of a regularly constituted Masonic Lodge, whose Worshipful Master was the presiding officer, assisted by a woman designated as "President" or "Mistress." A printed ritual of the work was issued in 1787. Some think the five degrees were introduced in this country by French officers who assisted our country in its struggle for liberty. However, no authentic history substantiates this. It is highly probable that knowledge of the French organization may have filtered through and helped to create and bring into use some of the lectures used in this country as the basis for the formation of the Eastern Star. The Lessons and Charges were collected and published by the Masonic Supreme Council in 1793 in Boston under the title, "Thesaurus."

It remained for one, Dr. Robert Morris, of Kentucky, to give form to the organization known as the Order of the Eastern Star. He initially communicated a regular course of lectures in November 1850 at Colliersville, TN, as evidenced by his written statement:

"At Colliersville, likewise, I conferred the degrees of the Eastern Star and Good Samaritan. Both of these I had received some years before. The restrictions under which the Eastern Star was communicated to me were that it should only be given to Master Masons, their wives, widows, sisters and daughters, and only when five or more ladies of the classes named were present."

In 1854 he wrote in The American Freemason: "First in the array of Adoptive Degrees, highest in the ranks of brilliant and impressive thought, comes THE EASTERN STAR, with its fixed points of Jephthah's Daughter, Ruth, Esther, Martha and Electa. Those who would have heard our lectures in different sections of the United States are aware that we value it both for what it has done and for its future promise. We have personally communicated The Eastern Star to more than three thousand ladies, the wives, daughters, sisters and widows of Master Masons. The degree is never communicated from man-to-man – to impart it at all requires the consent and presence of five or more ladies who must be, if unmarried, at least 18 years of age. This degree is of French extraction . . . It is properly conferred in a regular organization styled a Constellation ..."

The term "constellation" was later replaced with "families" and still later by "chapter."

Robert Morris "communicated" the degrees of the Eastern Star in New York City for the first time in April of 1854 and continued to promote the American Adoptive

Rite that included the degrees of the Eastern Star until 1865. At that time he transferred to Robert Macoy the titles and prerogatives which he had assumed.

Robert Macoy continued to communicate the Eastern Star Degrees and immediately prepared a Manual of Eastern Star Degrees in a more simplified form. He coined the term "Order of the Eastern Star." In this manual were the symbols, scriptural illustrations, lectures and rules for government. Also, in 1865, the Grand Lodge, F & AM, planned a Masonic Fair for the purpose of increasing an already established fund for the erection of a Masonic Hall in New York City.

To assist the Brothers, the ladies in the families of master Masons organized the "Ladies Masonic Fair Association." Many of these ladies were holders of Adoptive Rite Certificates and, as they worked with Brother Macoy, they pleaded with him to change his manual into an Eastern Star Ritual that would provide a permanent organization in which their works of Charity and Benevolence might be extended.

In October 1868 the manuscript for the Macoy "Chapter System Ritual" was presented to a group of Adoptive sisters in New York City who called themselves the Alpha Sisters. Alpha Chapter No. 1 was organized December 28, 1868.

By 1870 the need to form an umbrella organization for chapters that had been constituted throughout the state became apparent. A convention of delegates met on November 3, 1870 to organize the Grand Chapter Order of the Eastern Star of the State of New York. A Constitution and General Regulations were adopted. In 1884 the Grand Matron was made the executive officer of the Grand Chapter.

By 1874 there were more than 600 chapters in the U.S. and Grand Chapters had also been formed in a number of other states. A Supreme or General Grand Chapter seemed to be a possibility. The Grand Chapter of Indiana sent an invitation to all state Grand Chapters to meet in Indianapolis November 15, 1876. The Grand Chapters of California, Illinois, Indiana, Missouri and New Jersey sent delegates and, thus, the General Grand Chapter was formed. New Jersey later withdrew from General Grand Chapter.

There are now 55 Grand Jurisdictions, including Scotland, Australia, the Canadian Provinces and all of the states of the United States, with the exception of New Jersey and New York. New York State has maintained its status as an independent sovereign Grand Jurisdiction since its organization.

An Eastern Star Home has been in existence since 1898, the first home being established in Waterville, New York. It was voted to add an infirmary in 1913. A newer and larger home and infirmary were dedicated in Oriskany in 1916. Since that time, new wings and new buildings have been added at the Oriskany campus to keep pace with need, and substantial renovations of existing buildings have taken place. The present chapel with its beautiful stained glass windows was dedicated in 1936.