ORDER
of the
EASTERN STAR
New Member’s Booklet
Welcome to The Order of the Eastern Star

As a new member, the initiation marks your first step in the work of the Order. You have begun the process of self-improvement, which is so much a part of the Order. The Order is concerned with the building of the member’s character; and that process must begin with the member.

Unlike the Master Mason’s Lodge, the Eastern Star members are not required to memorize ritual parts and learn its lessons by rote work – there is no exposure to a catechism; to be passed from mouth to ear and kept in memory. Much learning will still be done by “mental osmosis”, but that is to be expected. If a member decides to become an officer in the Chapter, the various offices do have a memory part to be learned, as already seen.

It is only important to teach about the Order, only briefly touching upon or quoting the ritual. It is better to understand the ‘whys’ of the Chapter, rather than the ritualistic ‘whats’. If a member knows the reasons behind any process, they can better understand that process. The Order is concerned with character building. The membership works to build better people. Each member is chosen in recognition of the qualities the Order seeks in its members.

However, each member is reminded that the essence of the Order must begin in the individual’s heart because, before a member can benefit from anything, they must be willing and ready to accept the benefits the Order has to offer. The process must be in the individual member’s heart; because if the individual’s intentions are good, they will be made better by any instruction. Conversely, if they have no inclination to accept ideas, they will not be able to see the value.

We make an impressive point upon the member’s entrance into the Chapter, asking the member to seek entrance, challenging and delaying that entrance, until it is granted. This is important because it impresses upon the member’s mind, that the Order is willing to accept the member- if they truly desire to be initiated.

The member discovers the form of the Chapter by the “Rite of Perambulation”. That is, walking from one point at the door clockwise directions making a travel from a beginning to a conclusion. This journey impresses the idea that the Order, as well as any learning process, is progressive. You must begin to arrive at knowledge. It teaches also that life is a progression for each of us to travel.

The center of the Chapter room has an altar. On it rests the Great Light of the Order. The altar is in the center of the Chapter to focus our lives in the Order on it. It also, with the Bible shows that ‘faith supports all of life itself’. The greatest light in the Order is the Holy Bible or “Volume of Sacred Law”. By the word “light” we speak of the attainment of knowledge; and, here the Bible gives us a great deal of knowledge. We cannot hold Chapter without the Bible being present and opened. We show by its presence that we are to regulate our lives by its teachings and that it regulates our conduct as well. We refer to it as a rule and guide of our faith.
When the public at large thinks of the Order, they usually think of the “Star” or the Masonic square and compass as our emblems of recognition. These usually have a positive effect; the symbols are impressive.

Despite the inferences used, the obligation has only two purposes – to bind the candidate to the Order and it protects the members against a breach of fidelity; the candidate having promised not to reveal things of a secret nature. The lecture speaks to each candidate, to impress the idea that the obligation is important and that the members of the Order would consider a violation of the promises to be a serious moral offense. If a member should knowingly violate the promises of secrecy, the Order could suspend or expel the member.

It is anticipated that the new member will probably witness many initiations. The member should carefully listen to the lessons, so as to bolster the member’s good resolve to be faithful to the Order. The lessons speak to a certain level of poverty and destitution. This is a reference to the belief that, in ancient times wealth served to adversely affect a person’s ability to work freely or to make proper decisions. The Order hopes that the lessons speak to the member, of the importance of relieving of want from others if one is willing to share their substance with them. In the initiation lessons, the presentations symbolize the attainment of the knowledge, which will soon make each member a better person. In presenting the lessons, the attempt is to teach moral ideas; particularly the element of integrity. The Order hopes to show the moral habits, which if impressed on a person, will help shape and reshape their character. It is hoped that by the use of these lessons, the member may better fit her/his own behavior into a society aimed at a better life for all – enjoying life to its fullest.

Our ritual is not easily traced to its origin in all of time. We know of the ritualistic work in the Order as early as 1850, but we credit the founder, Rob Morris and Robert Macoy as the ‘fathers’ of our modern ritual.

It should be appreciated that the member has the responsibilities of: 1) keeping secret what the member is asked to keep secret, 2) to conduct one’s self with proper decorum and, 3) try to learn about the Order as desired, and as much as possible. Here it is again…..

The Candidate Must First Be Prepared in Their Heart

‘As a person thinketh, so they are’. But as the person purposes in their heart, so will their life be. The heart is the center of a person’s affections and desires. If they are clean within, their life will reflect that condition – but the reverse is also true. The Order is concerned with the building of character in life. Working toward this goal must begin with the individual’s heart, for if one’s heart is not ready, the Order cannot expect to make an impression on the mind. Therefore, each candidate who comes seeking light must be prepared in their heart.

The Significance of the Initiation
The initiation is largely about moral education, with an emphasis on integrity. Most of the great lessons of the Order of the Eastern Star are imparted by symbols that were carefully selected by
our Order forefathers. The symbols in the Chapter room refer to life, its tragedy and its ultimate triumph if we lead virtuous lives. In other words, the symbols deal with the spiritual part of life. A member should learn the work and keep him/herself in good standing, in order to find Chapters everywhere open to the member.

By studying the teachings of the Order of the Eastern Star, the member will find pleasant education, with emphasis on history, philosophy, and many other areas leading to countless treasures which each must discover for themselves. The intangibles of love, friendship, respect, opportunity, happy labour, and association are the rewards of a member who earns them.

The quality of work practiced in the Order recognizes that one person may have greater potential in life, service or reward than another; but we also believe that any person can aspire to any heights, no matter how great. Thus, the Order dignifies labour and the person who performs it. It also acknowledges that all are equal without regard to station.

The Reception

*The reception of the new candidate into the Chapter room is done by the Conductress, who stops the member just inside the door and tells of the significance of how and why she is receiving the new candidate into the Chapter. The candidate is received into the Chapter on a note of caution, as to personal integrity. This is done to symbolize the fact that the obligations that they will assume are solemn, and that there is a penalty if these are violated – symbolic, though the penalty may be. It also reminds the person that her/his every act has a consequence, either in the form of a reward or a penalty. “Man reapeth as he soweth”.*

Chapter Membership

You officially become a member after being initiated into the Order. Membership termination is accomplished in one of four ways – demit, suspension, expulsion or death.

You can apply for a demit (or transfer to another Chapter) if you are currently a paid-up member and in good standing. You can also hold a plural membership in more than one Chapter. Presently, a member is only allowed two memberships. This is sometimes done when one Chapter initiates a member, then they move to another area and want to join or start through the chairs in the new Chapter. You must be a member of a Chapter in order to become an officer of that Chapter. The Chapter Secretary attends to the proper handling of the paperwork.

You can be suspended for nonpayment of dues or “un-Masonic conduct”. If suspended for nonpayment of dues, you can apply for reinstatement at any time by paying back the dues for the year of nonpayment, plus the current year. If suspended for ‘un-Masonic conduct’, you may petition for reinstatement through the proper channels.

Entering or Retiring from a Chapter

First of all, a member should arrive before the Chapter opens, to join in the fellowship. If circumstances will not warrant this, you should inform the Sentinel, who will make the alarm
and inform the Warder that the member is properly vouched for and desires to enter. At either
time, you must sign the register that is situated in the anteroom.

If the Chapter is in the process of opening, the Sentinel will wait until being advised that
the Chapter has been opened. Afterward the Sentinel will appropriately knock on the door; the
Warder will respond with appropriate knocks, and then opens the door to receive the
notification.

When the Worthy Matron gives her permission to enter, the member approaches the West
line of march, standing behind the “Esther” star point and in front of the Associate Matron and
Associate Patron, salute the Worthy Matron using the sign; receives the appropriate response,
then is seated. (Any wraps, purses, etc. must be put down on the sideline or in the West before
giving the sign.)

**Conduct While in Chapter**

*Conduct while the Chapter is open is governed by old fashioned good manners and

good taste. A member should not engage in private conversations, or through any other action,

*disrupt the business of the Chapter. Discussions in the Chapter are always healthy signs and

promotes the interest of the Chapter – if properly conducted. If a member wishes to speak, they

*stand, and after being recognized, make their remarks, then sit. Members should observe the rules

of propriety and refrain from mentioning personalities or disturbing the peace and harmony of the

Chapter.*

**Subjects Not Proper for Discussion in Chapter**

Religion, partisan politics, and any subject which might disrupt the peace and harmony of the
Chapter should not be discussed in the Chapter, and there are very good reasons not to discuss
these items.

When we meet in a Chapter, we are all on a common level and are not subject to the classes and
distinctions of the outside world. Each member is entitled to her/his own beliefs and may follow
his/her own convictions. By “Chapter”, it is implied that formal gatherings of the membership -
in general – are to be free of such discussion, in the interest of simple ‘good judgment’.

Our objective is to untie people and not to divide them. These subjects create honest differences
of opinion that might well cause friction between members. There will also be subjects
concerning the Chapter’s business that should be discussed. These discussions should be kept
within the bounds of propriety and everyone should show a tolerance for the opinion of the
other.

Every Worthy Matron wants harmony in her Chapter, and once a matter has been put to a vote
in the Chapter, and a decision made, the decision should be accepted by all members, regardless
of how they voted.

We try to teach every member to be a good citizen and to perform her/his civic duties. We do
not try to keep anyone from expressing her/his opinion or from serving her city, country,
province in an honorable manner. Anyone who serves in political office should not act politically
as a member, or in the name of the Order of the Eastern Star in exercising her/his rights – such as showing affiliation with any Chapter in her campaign advertising.

The Officers of a Chapter

The Worthy Matron, Worthy Patron, Associate Matron, Associate Patron, Conductress and Associate Conductress, Treasurer and Secretary are elected by the membership each November (in most chapters). The Worthy Matron appoints the Warder, Sentinel, Chaplain, Marshal and Organist and the 5 Star Points.

Laws of the Order

Every Chapter is governed by the Grand Chapter in its jurisdiction, and must adhere to the Rules and Regulations of the Grand Chapter – the Constitution and By-Laws. These Rules and Regulations are discussed at every Grand Chapter meeting, and amendments or alterations are made if passed by the required vote. All members in Saskatchewan are entitled to vote if present at the Grand Chapter session in April.

Termination of Membership

Termination of membership may be accomplished in one of four ways: demit, suspension, expulsion or death. A member can demit for the purpose of joining another Chapter. They can be suspended for nonpayment of dues or for un-Masonic Conduct. They can be expelled for serious violation of the laws of the Order.

The Lecture

At the end of the ritualistic ceremony of initiation and instruction, the candidate is reminded of the meaning and importance of the initiation, and its lessons; and is admonished to practice the lessons of integrity in their daily life. The Lecture sums up those lessons. It may be delivered by the Worthy Patron or by the Associate Patron.

The Origin of Our Ritual

Where and when did the ritual work originate? The Eastern Star ritual is patterned after the Masonic “work”. The origin of the Master Mason’s ritual cannot be traced much beyond the years or the 18th century- or around 1700. The father of the English Ritual was undoubtedly one William Preston. That Ritual has been refined and polished without being basically changed in character in nearly two centuries since Preston first used it in London. Essentially, the Master Masons have been using ritualistic work in the “Craft” since 1700, and it was credited to have been started by William Preston.

Prior to this, the Master Mason’s ritual was a continuation of the practices and customs of the day-to-day work of the Operative Freemason. The emphasis gradually shifted from the practical to the moral and spiritual values as the Accepted members began to outnumber the Operative members in the Chapters.

In early Speculative Masonry, there may have been but one degree and a Master’s part. After a few years, three degrees were used. Around 1813, the United Grand Chapter of England declared the “Ancient Craft, the Order of three degrees and no more…”
The Eastern Star was formulated by Master Masons; there should be no doubt that the Master Mason’s Lodge was the inspiration for the original and modern Ritual of the Eastern Star. That is an interesting history, by itself.

The Candidate’s First Step

After being initiated, the new member should have impressed upon her/his mind the three qualities that every member should possess if he is to attain full benefit and enjoyment of the Order of the Eastern Star. These are Obedience, Humility and Industriousness. The member should obey those who are appointed to teach her/him so they can learn what is required before progressing further. They must have a sense of humility so as to not develop a belief that the new member knows more than those who are assigned to teach her/him. Finally the member must also develop a spirit of industry, because the Order of the Eastern Star requires those who want to know more about the Order to spend time learning by going through material available.

The Emblems of the Order

The member should study all of the Emblems of the Order, for each is important and should be thoroughly understood by the member. For example, the lamb is usually an emblem of innocence. The emblem suggests truth to the mind. The “Broken Column” is an emblem of tragedy, with an associated lesson.

Jewelry of the Order

The jewelry of the Order is worn by the members in the form of rings and other jewelry emblems. Any member may use the Eastern Star symbol in the form of Jewelry for personal adornment as there is no law that forbids their use.

Form of a Chapter

Most Chapter rooms are adapted Masonic Lodges. Thus, the form of a Chapter – from Masonic lore – is an oblong square or rectangle. The Chapter room is said to symbolically extend from East to West and between North and South. The East in a Chapter does not necessarily man the actual point of the compass. The East in the Chapter is the station of the Worthy Matron - from which she dispenses light, in the form of knowledge and leadership, to all the members. The other points, West, South and North, are located in proper relation to the station of the Worthy Matron; each with an officer stationed there.

The Rite of Perambulation

Perambulation means to walk around some central point or object. In the Order, the act is performed in a clockwise manner, patterned after the movement of the sun as it is seen from the earth moving from East to West by way of the South. The candidate’s journey around the altar enables the members to observe that he is properly prepared. The Labyrinth is ‘woven’ in a clockwise manner.

Perambulation is much older than initiation, even into Ancient Mysteries, for it goes back to the time of the cave man, who undoubtedly worshipped the sun and reproduced its light and heat.
with fire on his own crude stone altars, around which he marched in humble adoration and worshipful imitation of the journey of the sun across the sky. Perambulation should teach the member that the Order of the Eastern Star is a progressive science and that the person may gather truth as he progresses. It also teaches that life is a progressive journey through which each must travel toward her ultimate destiny.

The Altar

The center of the Chapter room is the altar; upon it rest the Great Light in the Order. The Altar is symbolic of many things. Its location in the center of the Chapter symbolizes the place which God has in the Order and which He should have in every person’s life. It is also a symbol of worship and faith.

The candidate approaches the altar in search of light and also assumes her/his obligations there. In the presence of God and the members, he/she offers her/himself to the service of the Supreme Architect of the Universe and to mankind in general. The altar is the point on which life in our Order is focused. The principles for which the Great Light stands should serve to guide everyone’s thoughts and actions both in the Chapter and abroad in the world. The altar supporting the Great Light should remind each member who stands before it that ‘faith supports life itself’.

When the Bible is open, it is forbidden for a member to walk between the Bible and the East. An exception is during an Initiation.

The Great Light of the Order of the Eastern Star

The Great Light of the Order of the Eastern Star is the Bible; the Volume of the Sacred Law. It is an indispensable part of the Chapter. No Chapter may stand officially open unless the Holy Bible is opened upon its altar. The open Bible signifies that we should regulate our conduct according to its teachings, because it is the rule and guild of our faith.

The Obligation

The Obligation is the heart of the Order, for when it is assumed by the candidate, they have solemnly bound themselves to the Order of the Eastern Star and assumed certain duties, which are theirs for the rest of their life. The taking of the Obligation is visible and audible evidence of the candidate’s sincerity of purpose.

In addition to the vow of secrecy, the obligation has other important points, which bind each member. Obedience, assistance and the protection of one another are pledged by each member to all others, binding them by a tie which should last their lifetime. Again, the Obligation has a two-fold purpose. In addition to binding the candidate to the Order of the Eastern Star and its duties, it also protects the Order against someone revealing its secrets that deal with its modes of recognition and symbolic instruction. The candidate should understand that the great truths, which the Order teaches, are not secret but the manner in which the Order of the Eastern Star teaches these truths is considered secret.

Penalties for Violation of the Obligation

The penalties incurred for willful violation of your Order Obligation will not be of a physical nature. The short speech the Worthy Patron makes explains this. Listen carefully the next time an initiation is performed.
The member who violates the Obligation will subject him/herself to Order discipline that could include the loss of membership in the Chapter and the Order, either by suspension or expulsion. They will also be subject to the scorn and contempt of all good members. The Obligation is voluntarily assumed, and every means possible is used to impress the new member with the solemnity and the necessity for faithful performance of them.

The Officers of a Subordinate Chapter

The Worthy Matron

The presiding officer of the Chapter is called “Worthy”, honoring an old English tradition of addressing one being worthy of respect. Since she is chosen by the members, they deem her to have sufficient wisdom, integrity and Order knowledge to govern the Chapter properly. Following Masonic concepts, the Worthy Matron’s station is in the East. In the world of nature, the sun rises in the East to shed light and luster on the earth. In like manner, it is the province of the Matron to be the source of Order knowledge for her members as they “approach the East in search of light”.

The Worthy Patron

The Worthy Patron’s station is also in the East. It is his duty to aid the Worthy Matron, as needed, to preside over the conferring of the Degrees of initiation, to obligate the new members, and to oversee the quality of the Chapter ritualistic work.

The Associate Matron

The Associate Matron’s station is in the West. It is her duty to assist the Worthy Matron and look after the Chapter in her absence.

The Associate Patron

The Associate Patron’s station is in the West beside the Associate Matron. He also assists the Worthy Patron and acts in his place during his absence.

The Conductress

The Conductress’ station is in the South. She assists the Associate Matron, she looks after the candidates, she introduces members and visitors and attends to the Altar.

The Associate Conductress

The Associate Conductress’ station is in the North. She assists the conductress and prepares the candidates for their initiation.

The Secretary

The Secretary keeps proper record of the proceedings of the meetings, conducts its correspondence and receives all monies and pays it to the treasurer.

The Treasurer

The Treasurer receives all monies from the secretary and pays the bills of the Chapter.
The Marshal
The Marshal’s station is in front of and to the left of the Worthy Patron. He/She marshals all processions and looks after the flag of our country.

The Chaplain
The Chaplain’s station is in front of and to the right of the Worthy Matron. He/She leads the Chapter in its devotions and invokes the blessings of our Father upon our work.

The Organist
The Organist provides appropriate music either by playing the instrument or by preparing music that is suitable for the Chapter room.

The Star Points
The Star Points are located in a horseshoe around the altar. They deliver the lectures to the new candidates and regularly remind us of our signs and passes at each meeting.

Adah Ruth Esther Martha Electa

The Warder
The Warder’s station is inside of the chapter room. He/She acts as the inner guard and works with the Sentinel to ensure that no one enters or leaves without permission of the Worthy Matron.

The Sentinel
As with the Masonic “Tyler”, the Sentinel guards the avenues approaching the Chapter. A Chapter is said to be ‘secure’ when the necessary precautions have been taken to guard against intrusion by unauthorized persons. If a Member comes to Chapter late and wants in, the Sentinel sees that they are properly qualified, and then vouches for her/him as qualified to enter. It is the duty of the Sentinel to inform the Warder when a qualified member wishes to enter the Chapter. The Warder acts as the ‘inner guard’.

When to Rise and When to Be Seated

The gavel in the hands of the Worthy Matron of a Chapter is one of the symbols of authority by which she governs. When the gavel is sounded once in the East at the beginning of Chapter, the members must come to order. Two raps call the officers to their feet and three raps mean that all present must stand. If everyone is standing, one rap seats everyone in the Chapter. A light tap of the gavel is sometimes used as a means of “punctuation”.

If the Worthy Matron addresses a member by name, they arise, face the East and listen to her instructions. If a member wishes to speak, they arise and wait until the Worthy Matron recognizes them; and then addresses remarks to her – not to another member.
In short, 1 rap = calls the chapter to order, seats the Chapter when standing, completes the opening and closing and each order of business.
   2 raps = calls up the officers
   3 raps = calls up the entire Chapter

Reverent Attitude
1) Clasp hands loosely, one hand palm up, with other palm laid over it, and held at waist level.
2) Assumed during devotionals in the Opening and Closing, all Obligations and when the Conductress or Chaplain enter the Labyrinth and continue until they leave the Labyrinth.

Attitude of Prayer
1) Assume the Reverent Attitude and face the altar.
2) Bow the head as Chaplain kneels.
3) Hold during prayer.
4) Give Prayer response “so may it ever be”.
5) Drop hands to side.

Flag Presentation and Grand Honors

Grand Honors are given to: 1) The Country’s Flag; 2) to any person that passes THROUGH the Labyrinth for introduction.
Grand Honors are given in one motion by crossing the arms over the breast, the left over the right, with hands open and with a slight bow.

What is the Labyrinth and what does it signify
The Labyrinth is the part of the floor enclosed by the imaginary line joining the Star Point chairs. It is meant to symbolize the labyrinth of human life.

The Chapter Prayer

No Chapter can be opened, stay open, or be closed without prayer- which is offered by the Worthy Matron or Chaplain. The prayer should be used so as to avoid offense or sectarianism in the Chapter. At the end of the prayer, each member responds with the words “so may it ever be”.

The Rights of a Member
The initiated member can vote and hold office. The member is entitled to Order charity, and may receive voluntary assistance from a member as an individual. The member is entitled to receive an Order burial ceremony and can attend the funeral of a member. The member can attend a Chapter. She/he is entitled to appropriate instruction on the information and ritual of the Order. The basic rights of a member are Relief, Chapter Visitation and Order Burial Ceremony.

Right to Burial Ceremony
The Eastern Star Burial ceremony is always conducted at the request of the member, before their death, or by their immediate family. The choice belongs to the family and not to the Chapter. These Rites can be held in the church (with the permission of the clergy) or at the graveside.
Chapter Attendance

There is no minimum attendance requirement; nor is there a penalty for not attending. However, every member has a moral obligation to be loyal to the Chapter that gave her/him the “Light” of the Order and all the benefits that come from it. This should be an inducement to attend Chapter as often as possible and to join in the fellowship, which makes up the Order of the Eastern Star.

Origin of the Grand Chapter

The modern Order of the Eastern Star as we know it, owes it structure to the national office, the General Grand Chapter. That office is located in Washington D.C. The General Grand Chapter is the supreme governing body of the Order – internationally. The General Grand Chapter under our present system of the Order was organized in 1876. The various provinces, states and territories have a local Grand Chapter; deriving its power from the General Grand Chapter. Every Grand Chapter has a certain jurisdiction or area to cover. Every Chapter today was granted a charter or ‘warrant’ from a Grand Chapter.

The function of the Grand Chapter is that of a local legislative, judicial and executive body when it is in session. The Worthy Grand Matron retains all of these powers between sessions of the Grand Chapter. When not in session, the Grand Chapter officers continue to support the needs of the Chapters, often making various local Chapter appearances, officially and casually.

The Grand Chapter is legislative in making the laws governing the subordinate Chapters and every member in its jurisdiction. It is judicial by sitting in judgment on all appeals made to it. Finally, it is executive in that it determines the local policies of the Chapters and sees that they are executed.

It should be mentioned that New York, New Jersey and Scotland are not a part of the General Grand Chapter system. During the formative years, these Jurisdictions decided to remain independent; using a slightly different Ritual and their own set of Laws. However, the General Grand Chapter has a harmonious relationship with these two states and exchange Grand Representatives with each other.

The Responsibility to Examine Visitors

This responsibility belongs to the Chapter itself and is delegated by the Worthy Matron to a committee of members who are to satisfy themselves that the visitor is a member in good standing and a member of a regular Chapter. The Worthy Matron may call upon any member of the Chapter to serve on the examining committee.

Chapter Visitation

Visitation of another Chapter is a privilege, but also a right that may be refused if there is an objection by a member of the Chapter you are visiting. Visitation of other Chapters is a right you acquire when you can prove yourself to be a member in good standing. In order to visit another Chapter, for the first time, you should learn the appropriate memory work; and carry
your paid-up dues card with you at ALL times. It is the responsibility of the Chapter’s Associate Matron to satisfy herself that every visitor is a member, in good standing, in a regular Chapter.

You can gain visitation rights to another Chapter by two ways. First, by being vouched for by a member of the Chapter you are visiting or by a visiting member who has sat in Chapter with you within the last year; or second, by undergoing ‘strict trial or due examination’. Undergoing examination usually consists of showing your dues card, then the Worthy Matron appoints a committee to examine you. After the examination, the committee will vouch for you in open chapter.

So, in summary, as a visitor you will be asked to either: 1) show a current receipt for dues; 2) have a sister or brother, who has sat in Chapter with you during the past year vouch for you; 3) be examined by the Examining committee (give the signs and passes of the Star Points and give the required secret work) 4) sign the register under the heading for “visitors”.

When arriving late for a Chapter meeting, you should inform the Sentinel that you desire to enter. He/She will verify your membership, then give the alarm at the door. When you enter, you will approach the west line of march behind Esther, give the sign and wait for the response by the Worthy Matron. If entering, take your seat; if retiring, wait for the Warder to open the door. If ill, or in an emergency, you may leave without giving the salutation sign using the preparation room door (without raps).

The Responsibility of Balloting

Chapter members usually vote on ‘business items’, by raising the right hand. The election of officers must be by written ballot. The elected officers are the Worthy Matron, Worthy Patron, Associate Matron, Associate Patron, Conductress and Associate Conductress, Treasurer and Secretary. The Worthy Matron then appoints the Star Points, Marshal, Warder, Chaplain, Sentinel and Organist.

Only members of the individual Chapter voting have a right to ballot. No member present can be excused from balloting on any question before the Chapter. A member can be permitted to retire from the Chapter to avoid casting their ballot. If you know of some reason to indicate a petitioner is unworthy, it is unwise to hesitate to use the black cube to protect the Chapter from undesirable members. The secrecy of the ballot is guaranteed by Order Law. No member has to disclose how they voted and no member may inquire into how another member voted on a petition.

If you do not know of anything unfavourable against the petitioner, then you should accept the word of the investigating committee and cast a favourable ballot. However, if you know of some reason to indicate the petitioner is unworthy, do not hesitate to use the black cube to protect the Chapter from undesirable members. As the ballot box is passed, examine your own motives and hope that the ballot you are about to cast will do justice to the candidate, to the Order of the Eastern Star, and to yourself. Only by doing so, will we be able to continue building a membership of worthy brothers and sisters. If in doubt, vote in favour of the Chapter and the Order of the Eastern Star.
The Right to Secrecy of the ballot is guaranteed by Order Law, and custom allows each member to have perfect freedom in balloting on petitioners. No member has to disclose how he voted, and no member should inquire into how another member voted on a particular candidate.

It is an ‘unclear ballot’, when three or more cubes are placed in the ballot box indicating that at least three individuals saw fit that this applicant should not be a member of the Order.

The Responsibility of Signing a Petition for Membership

Before endorsing the petition of anyone for initiation, you should take the time to discuss the Order with the applicant. You should know why she/he wishes to become a member, what they expect, and what may be reasonably expected of her/him. The Investigating committee should explain much of this to him/her, but you should be satisfied with their understanding and know that they are of good moral character, and the signing of the petition should be a source of great pleasure for you.

The Financial Responsibilities of a Member

These are twofold: 1) in the area of mandatory support, or Chapter dues; 2) in the area of voluntary support, or of the Chapter charities and distressed members. Every member has a responsibility to support her/his Chapter by paying her/his dues. In paying dues, the Member carries her/his share of the expense imposed by the Chapter. In voluntary support, the member must determine the extent of her/his participation, measuring the need against her ability.

Not being able to pay dues can be handled without embarrassment. No Chapter desires to suspend a member if he/she is unable to continue payment of dues if this is due to circumstances beyond their control. In most cases, the other members in the Chapter know nothing about the situation. A distressed member should inform the Worthy Matron or the Secretary of their situation; one of these officers will take care of the situation so no record is shown on the books, and no debt is accumulated. This is no Order Charity, but rather, brotherly or sisterly love.

The Responsibilities of a Member

Every member has a moral responsibility to the Chapter that gave him/her light and all the benefits that come with it. The constant responsibility of a member is ‘to preserve the reputation of the Order unsullied’. Leading a good life is the best means of carrying through our individual responsibility to the individual Chapter and the Order. The conduct of each member is strictly her/his own responsibility – they should choose the course that which will bring credit to her/himself and honor to the Order. The responsibilities of a member are very few: She/he must 1) keep secret everything entrusted to her/him, 2) conduct her/himself with proper decorum, and 3) try to learn as much about the Order as possible. The dignity and worth of the individual should be emphasized. Members should fee free to invent, create and achieve, and by doing so, express their own genius and individuality.
All Chapters are designed to encourage the development of individuals and to allow the person to assume as many responsibilities as they want to be, if they work hard. The Order emphasizes that as an adult, the member is ready to accept the responsibility of life, not only for her/himself, but for their family and all of society. When the member assumes the duties and privileges of their membership in the Order, they are taught that they are responsible for their own destiny.

The themes of the Order are education and achievement. The more a person learns through the pursuit of knowledge, the more they achieve. Through the member’s participation, they obtain knowledge and apply this knowledge to the building of their character; improving the society in which they live.

The Responsibility to Investigate Petitioners

Investigating petitioners is the responsibility of every member of the Chapter and should not be taken lightly if your Chapter is to be protected against undesirable members. Serving on the Investigating Committee should be regarded as a mark of special trust by those selected. Only those who can be counted on to make a complete and impartial inquiry into the petitioner’s character and determine her worthiness to become a member should be selected. In Investigating Committee does not relieve you of the responsibility to scrutinize those who seek to enter the Chapter. Come time to ballot, a serious decision may need to be made.

Subordinate Chapter  Grand Chapter  General Grand Chapter

The “Appendant” Rites of Masonry

If one is not otherwise informed, the Masonic Lodge is the foundation for the various “Masonic” orders, the Master Mason’s Lodge – “Blue” Lodge (color representing loyalty and fidelity) is for adult men only. In addition, there is a long list of “affiliated” organizations; a few are discussed here:

❖ You have probably heard of the “Shrine”, the “Scottish Rite” or the “York Rite”. These are often mistakenly called ‘higher degrees’ of the ‘Craft’; a misnomer if you are taught to believe them to be superior. In the Masonic concept, the 3rd Degree is the “highest” level; all else is considered to be ‘lateral’ or ‘appendant’.

❖ The “York Rite” and “Scottish Rite” are ‘male-only’ advanced degrees imparting further knowledge about the Masonic Order. They are another stepping stone in building one’s own spiritual Temple. One must be a “Blue Lodge” member to qualify for either of those degrees.
The “Scottish Rite” initiation is performed at an area Temple – or “Valley”. The initiation takes about two days to perform. Members have the option to continue on to attain their 32nd degree.

The “York Rite” is quite similar, having names for their ‘degrees’, versus a numbering system. The “York Rite” is broken into three separate organizations, the Chapter, Council and the Commandery; with the ultimate title of “Sir Knight” emulating the Knights Templar.

The Shrine is a ‘male-only’ fun-loving organization properly called the Ancient Arabic Order, Nobles of the Mystic Shrine, and its Temples usually carry Arabic names. Each temple is governed by a Potentate, who takes his orders from the Imperial Potentate or National leader.

The “Shriners” are the most visible part of the Masonic family, because of their common participation in public parades. Their charitable or philanthropic work is for crippled or burned children. The Shrine Temples typically have a local club that would be happy to put you to work.

The “Shrine” also has two affiliated ‘ladies-only’ organizations; the “Daughters of the Nile” and the “Ladies Oriental Shrine”. These two groups typically perform support charity functions, with their own organization and ‘fun’ groups, such as a belly-dancing club.

“Amaranth” – This is a surviving (co-ed) body of the early days of the Eastern Star. It has similar ritual to that of the Eastern Star, noted for the titles of “Lady” and “Sir Knight”, as well as a more ‘military’ approach to ‘court’ ritual.

“DeMolay” – a Masonic organization for younger boys.

“Job’s Daughters” and “Rainbow Girls” – organizations for young girls.

All these form the family of the Order, and all work toward essentially the same goals for the people involved.

GIVE TO THE ORDER THE BEST YOU HAVE, AND THE BEST WILL COME BACK TO YOU!

EASTERN STAR OFFICERS – BADGES OF OFFICE

Worthy Matron  Worthy Patron  Associate Matron  Associate Patron
Portions of this booklet were taken from various Jurisdictions and incorporated to suit the needs of the Grand Chapter of Saskatchewan.

It now remains the product of the 2007 Membership Committee

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