

Excelsior Echo

The Official Publication of the Excelsior Grand Chapter, Order of the Eastern Star, TN Jurisdiction, Prince Hall Affiliate

Excelsior Echo
2014-15 Edition



**Grand Worthy
Matron**

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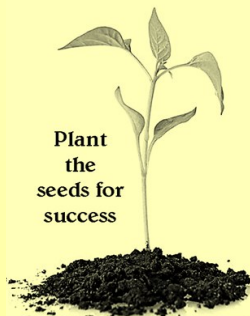


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Publicist for
the next
edition.**

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Plant
the
seeds for
success

Investing in the Future

The year has gone by in a blur, and it's again time for our Grand Convening, a fellowship, learning and festivities, and in the midst of the activity of the day we should give rise to the future of our Beloved Order. Though oftentimes it



requires a great deal of energy and attention to simply sustaining our local Chapters, we cannot lose sight of the greater good of sustaining our Grand Chapter. Keeping our beautiful Order requires that we actively plan and "Invest in the Future" of our Jurisdiction and the Order of the Eastern Star. Investing in future growth of Excelsior Grand Chapter, Tennessee Jurisdiction means we have to first "set our sights higher than ever before." In ascribing to this frame of mind we must do three things...do more, give more and think bigger than before.

Early planning is the first step in taking deliberate action. Our carefully thought out plans should then translate to timely action based on "continuous improvement," in a spirit desirous of aiming higher and doing better each year. Our prepared plans to translate to coordinated action (Ecclesiastes 11:6 ESV) that enables us to "do more." Operating expenses of Grand Chapter, necessary to provide guidance and support to local chapters, continue to increase each year. Not to mention the ever-increasing cost of higher education that necessitate our scholarship levels to increase to make college education possible for deserving young students and help keep Historically Black Colleges & Universities (HBCU's) up and running.

The work of benevolence and support of our youth are among our highest calling in the Order and as a body of Christians we should endeavor to give in a spirit of faith. Keeping in mind that "the gift is in the giving." And, in our giving it is an act of obedience to God's word (Hebrews 13:16 ESV). This also means we must "think bigger" than before, that our efforts and giving keep pace with increasing operating and tuition expense. As Excelsior Grand Chapter reconvenes for this Grand Communication—let us reflect on our efforts to provide support needed to keep our Grand Chapter operating at the current standard and allows us to provide the "Ways & Means" to make educational dreams come true for deserving young students. Let us be ever-mindful of the fundamentals of our Order, remembering always that benevolence is at the heart of all we do.

Rubye B. Meeks
Grand Worthy Matron

Naomi Chapter Recognized for Outstanding Service

Honored Grand Deputy Sis. Dorothy Jones recently recognized Naomi chapter #265, Worthy Matron Josie Banks, Past Worthy Matron Sis. Sarah Skinner for their benevolent activity and community service. In March they hosted a Palm Sunday Service, performing its ceremony and invited spiritual male chorus from Beech Grove Church. In May they sponsored a 50-state pageant and hosted a community cook out that was free and open to the public. As well as their scholarship banquet in Kenton, Tennessee and during which they awarded 13 recipients and has been renamed the William Edmonds and Robenia Bailey Scholarship Banquet. This Chapter has done an exception job and should be proud of their outstanding efforts.



Pictured with scholarship recipients is Bro. Gilford Yarborough, District Deputy Grand Master, District 2 & 7 and Bro. Sylvester Bingham, District Lecturer, District 2 & 7

Excelsior Recognizes Time Served..for Benevolence



Pictured is Sis Julia Bosley, with Sis. Elnora Mallory WM, Star in the East #148 and Sis. Cassandra Osborne DO GM District #4

Certificate being presented to Sis Julia Bosley, earned the designation of Honorary Past Worthy Matron for her many years of dedicated service to Star in the East Chapter #148. Pictured are members that were present. Star in the East #148 Elnora Mallory WM Bill Mallory WP Cassandra Osborne DO GM District #4

It is *Lincoln Jessimine Chapter #52 Welcomes Newly Installed Patron*

exciting to announce that Worshipful Master of Lincoln Lodge #19, Bro. Clarence Brown has been installed as Patron for their adoptive O.E.S. Chapter. When Past Patron Alan Holman found that he was no longer able to serve, Bro. Clarence Brown, WM graciously agreed to take on that role. It is such a blessing when chapters and lodges work closely together. Worthy Matron Georgia Walter and members of Chapter #52 look forward to wonderful working relationship. Bro. Brown states that he is humbled and anxious to fulfill this position. Associate Matron Shondra Gillard and #52 Associate Conductress, Nicole Martin, participated in Bro.



Brown's installation ceremony on January 12, 2015.

Memphis Deputy Grand Matron, Sharon Franklin, commends Associate Deputy, Sis. Maranda Lester, Beautiful Star #4 WM, Sis. Erika Johnson and member Sis. Tara Harris, along with Eunice #46 WM, Sis. Nicole Brown-Sanchez and PM 291 Sis. Essie Patterson for assisting.



Chattanooga On the Move...



Fundraising Event pictured : l-r, Nakia Jackson, Dana Tillison, Prince Torrence PWM, Autrey Whatley WM, Tonya McClain, Gail Roberson and Beverly Jackson Not pictured, but participated, Valencia Hambrick, Taura Brady PWM



Sis Matilda Powell WM. Ruth#44

Memphis District 'Takes to the Air'

Memphis Radio Station KQPN Welcomes Members of Order of the Eastern Star. What a wonderful way to share information about the Order of the Eastern Star than by means of radio airwaves.

The Memphis and surrounding area listening audience was graced with the alluring voice of Deputy Grand Matron Sharon Franklin (PWM Etta M. Selmon Chapter #291) on Tuesday June 9, 2015 for the radio broadcast on KQPN radio. "Real Talk", a program hosted by Bro. Jennings Bernard provided the platform for sharing information about the Order. Sis. Crystal Brown,

Past Worthy Matron of Beautiful Star Chapter#4 and Sis. Kimberly Shropshire, Worthy Matron of Braden Chapter 115 also participated in the broadcast.

For more than one hour these ladies were interviewed by the host. Deputy Franklin led off with an overview of what the Order of the Eastern Star is as an organization. She stated in part, that the O.E.S. is a "free-will" organization and is a school for the practice of self-control, good virtues and good graces with a mission to render service. The theory of the O.E.S. is founded upon the Holy Bible and is made up of female members (at least age 18) who are specified relatives of Master Masons. In addition, an overview of the requirements for becoming a member of the O.E.S. was provided.

When asked about the way the Tennessee Jurisdiction Grand Chapter was structured, the following officers were given: Rubye B. Meeks, Grand Worthy Matron; Cedric Bailey, Grand Worthy Patron; Elizabeth Cross, Grand Associate Matron; Edward Leak, Grand Associate Patron. In addition, each District in the Tennessee Jurisdiction has a District Deputy Grand Matron who answers directly to the Grand Matron and serves as a liaison between the chapters and the Grand East.

Sis. Shropshire and Sis. Brown talked about a number of activities that the members of the Order of the Eastern Star in Memphis are involved in. The partial list includes assisting with volunteering for and contributing to the following: Breast Cancer Awareness, Domestic Violence and Battered Women, Thanksgiving Basket Outreach, Voter Registration, NAACP, Angel Tree, MIFA, St. Jude, Homeless and Clothing Drives and much, much more.

During the broadcast, there was also, a brief conversation about the Sunbeams. This is the female youth division affiliated with the O.E.S. It was mentioned that a relationship with one of the cancer awareness agencies is currently planning to work with these young ladies. It was brought out that there are character building, volunteer and social opportunities made available to both young ladies and young men affiliated the O.E.S. and Masonic organizations including a yearly ACT test preparatory session.

Following the discussion, the telephone lines were opened for the public to call in and ask questions pertaining to the O.E.S. One caller wanted to know if the O.E.S. is a religion. It was explained that while it is not a religion, per se', it can be considered an extension of religion. Another caller wanted to know how the community gets information about what the Order of the Eastern Star is doing. The response to this was that much information is already being disseminated via social media and flyers. However, a concerted effort will be made to get more information out into the community by way of the newspaper, radio and television. After questions and comments from callers were addressed, the broadcast ended. The e-mail address for the Memphis O.E.S. District was provided so that questions following the broadcast can be sent there. askstr2@aol.com



Pictured: Sis. Kimberly Shropshire, Middle: Deputy Sharon Franklin: Rear: Sis. Crystal Brown

Memphis District Awards and Recognition Day

February 28, 2015 became a "red-letter" day in Memphis. Even though it was cold outside the warmth and fellowship inside took the bite out of the wintery weather.. The District was privileged to have as WREG-TV Newscaster, April Thompson serve as gracious Mistress of Ceremonies. She was flanked by renown presenters who assisted with the presentations. Included Internist Chris Johnson who is also author of "Dying to Live." Also, present was Mrs. Carolyn Whitney, President of the Memphis Chapter of Sisters Network Breast Cancer Survivor Group. Thanks to Worthy Matron, Karen Camper, State Representative Ramesh Akbari joined the group along with Memphis Councilwoman Wanda Halbert. Associate Deputy, Maranda Lester, was also a presenter. Worthy Matron Wanda Crenshaw provided a soul stirring solo. To top it all off, Jazz Saxaphonist and recording artist, Michael Townsend opened the program by singing the Lord's Prayer and then serenaded musically throughout the entire program. Past Grand Worthy Matron Sis. Carrie T. Herron's presence made it even better.

Prior to the nominated winners, Deputy Grand Matron Sis. Sharon Franklin made the following presentations:

Recognition to District Matron Sis. Cecelia Showers

Recognition to Administrative Matron and Patron Council Matron, Sis. LaTashja Mosby

Steadfast Award to Sis. Ina Luellen

Humanitarian Award to Sis. Deanna Peppers

Outstanding Act/Event-----Sis. Erika Johnson (4) for bringing new life into Esther Day with a full skit production with costumes, etc.

Deputy Grand Matron Franklin and Deputy Grand Master, Charles Beasley presented an award of Appreciation to Choir Coordinator, Sis. Chandra McKinner.

Nominated Winners:

Worthy Patron of the Year-----Bro. Mose Davis (233)

Worthy Matron of the Year---- Sis. Shelia Snow (118)

Chapter of the Year----- Adah Chapter #2-----Sis. Wanda Crenshaw, Worthy Matron

O.E.S. Member of the Year----- Sis. Kimberly Shropshire (215)

The winner of the Sunbeam Essay Contest was Delaney Hale. The topic was:

What is your opinion on the lack of youth morals and values in the African American community based on the actions in today's society?

The committee worked diligently to set the criteria and rubrics, arrange for the meal and serve, as well as, beautify the room. Hats off to Sis. Monica Helton, Sis. Letarsha Brown, Sis. Deborah Bobo, Bro. Edward Leak, Sis. Betty Cox, Sis. Carmen Moore, Sis. Patricia Burdette, Sis. Essie Patterson, Sis. Cheryl Porter, Sis. Mary Strong, Sis. Melissa-Rivera Jackson, Sis. Tara Harris, Sis. Erika Johnson, Sis. Chandra and others for a job well done. Also, Bro. Jennings Bernard was thanked for making the announcements on his radio show.

After Deputy Grand Master Beasley gave his remarks, he called all of the Master Masons in the building to join him. A number of those present were members of Charles F. Williams Lodge #86 (Rev. Ernest Gillespie, Chief Floyd Bonner, Bro. Ron Willis, Prosecutor Rick Henderson) and their presence was truly appreciated.

Following the introduction of those men who joined him, Deputy Beasley made a surprise presentation to Deputy Grand Matron, Sharon Franklin. The mirrored plaque is simply beautiful and expresses sentiment of appreciation on behalf of the Memphis District Masons, P.H.A.

So touching and what a wonderful surprise.

For this day especially, Deputy Grand Matron Sharon Franklin says "MEMPHIS DISTRICT YOU ARE THE BEST AND WE TRULY THANK YOU FOR ALL OF YOUR HARDWORK!"

And in the Spirit of Benevolence...



Pictured (left to right): Sis. Diane Cotton, Sis. Patricia Sanders, Sis. Cynthia Johnson, Sis. Eva Drain , HPGWM, Sis. Darneasha C. Pickett, Sis. Demetra Pickett, Sis. Mary Haliburton



Sis. Eva Drain assisting a young lady with a coat.

Bright Ray #136 (Henning, TN) presented a coat drive on Dec. 13, 2014 at Holly Grove Baptist Church. Other churches and businesses in the community heard about this endeavor and wanted to contribute. With their contributions Bright Ray collected approximately one hundred coats. This event impacted many adults and children. Families left with scarves and gloves as well. God blesses us so that we may be a blessing to others.



Sis. Demetra Pickett and Sis. Reese



Sis. Darneasha C. Pickett with a young lady who received warm coats for her and her children.

Glimpses of Doing Good Unto Others.

On November 29, 2014 members of St. Mary's Chapter #5 braved the cold to provide support and assistance to Manna Café, The Mission of Manna Café is to creatively and compassionately restore hope and dignity to the broken and poor. The key vehicles through which we accomplish this mission include food, shelter, and community—three of the most basic but vital needs of every person



Masonic order donates toys to Byrns Darden Elementary



CLARKSVILLE, Tenn. – Once again on Tuesday, December 9th, the Masonic order along with their co-workers came together at Byrns Darden Elementary School in Clarksville to make Christmas brighter for those less fortunate.

This toy drive started in 2011 with 7 ladies who are official Clowns and also the female counterpart to the Shriners. Because this group of ladies was so small, the Chairperson of this project, Martha Smith, suggested to solicited support from any Masonic member in Clarksville and Nashville to make this event a joint toy drive in order to get toys for as many children as possible.



This toy drive has grown from a little over 200 toys in 2011 to over 460 toys in 2014. Toys were donated by members of the following groups from Clarksville and Nashville: Hella Court, Masons, Order of the Eastern Star, Golden Circle, Heroines of Jericho, Ladies of the Circle of Perfection, Guild, and the Priorate. Generous donations also came from the Regional Network Enterprise Center of Fort Campbell, KY. Andy Lyons, the Principal of the school, shows his sincere appreciation for the donation each year. Members of these groups were present for the presentation of the toys.