

IOWA GALAXY



MESSAGE FROM THE WORTHY GRAND MATRON

Submitted by: Sandy Meredith

Sisters and Brothers,

Our “Home Sweet Home” Grand Chapter session will soon be upon us! I look forward to greeting everyone. The year has just flown by!! I hope you have enjoyed the fun days and projects for this year.

There were 37 of us on our trip to Alaska! The weather cooperated, only one rough night at sea. I think everyone enjoyed their time on land and sea! Thank you to Tri State for making the arrangements.

The “Holy”steens conferred the Degrees at Algona in August. We finished our Fun Days at Altoona. Several of us attended the Iowa/Nebraska get together in Papillion. Sister Gloria had several fun things planned for us. Yes, your Worthy Grand Matron ended up being the murderer in the Murder Mystery!



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(cont'd from page 1)

Our All Iowa County Fair was held this last weekend on September 27th. Thank you to Terri and Deb for all of your planning. Thank you to all the Chapters and individuals who participated, either with a game, food, or just attending. It was a great time and we had a lot of fun!

I have Nevada and Missouri Grand Sessions yet to attend before my year is finished.

Thank you to everyone who has made this year memorable!

Sandy

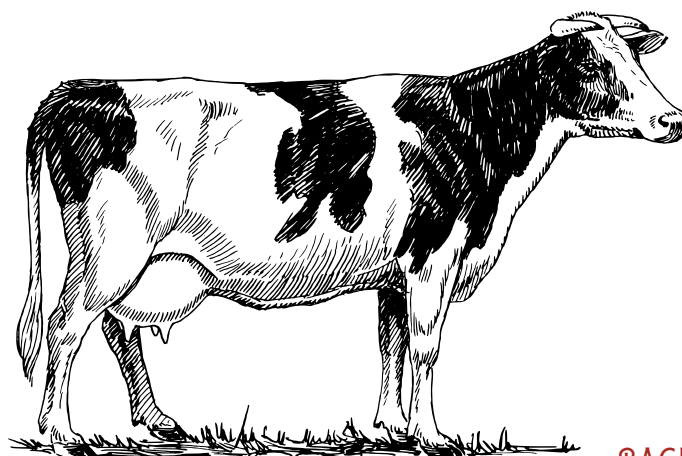
Grand Representatives Appointed:

Steve Lewis - Arizona

Marty Jacobs - Alberta

Larry Johnson - Vermont

Andrea Frier - South Dakota



MESSAGE FROM THE WORTHY GRAND PATRON

Submitted by: Bill Howie

Sisters and Brothers,

Greetings from a very dusty and very busy Northwest corner of Iowa. Harvest began here in earnest about 10 days ago and is progressing at a rapid pace. We have also been very busy traveling around the state to various chapters for fun days. It is interesting to see how each chapter comes up with different methods to welcome and entertain our Grand Officers. The games and other surprises sometimes make me wonder where some of these games come from but it is always fun and good fellowship is had by all.

Barb and I had the privilege of visiting Colorado Grand Chapter in September and plan on visiting South Dakota in October. We all use the same ritual but each Grand Jurisdiction has its own interpretation on some of the work. We also got to spend a little time with our Most Worthy Grand Matron and some other friends while in Colorado.

The County Fair was a great success. The last number I heard was right at 100 in attendance with lots of vendors of all kinds. The quilt auction brought in a nice sum for the projects. Four beautiful quilts found new homes.

As we rapidly rush towards Grand Chapter, preparations move forward. Sandy and I are looking forward to greeting each and every one of you. We hope to make this year's Grand Chapter an enjoyable experience for all.

Everyone told me that this year would go fast but I had no idea just how fast. As we move rapidly towards the end I will always remember the fellowship, friendship, and comradery that comes along with this job. I have met so many sisters and brothers that I would never have met or those I had met but never really talked to. It has been an experience I will cherish for the rest of my life.

Thank you to all
WGP Bill

Bill



MESSAGE FROM THE GRAND SECRETARY

Submitted by: Nancy Ramthum

Greetings from the Grand Secretary's Office,

As I am typing this article I realize this will be my last Galaxy article to the membership as your Grand Secretary. It has been a very rewarding seven years, and I have loved every minute of it. Thank you to the members for your love and support during my tenure, I will miss the contact with our Chapter Secretaries.

My days are busy in the office, preparing for Grand Chapter, registrations are coming in and I'm preparing the VIP Book for 2026 that will be going to print on Monday after Grand Chapter. If you have been asked to serve on a Committee for 2026 or maybe you have received a Grand Representative, please make sure you send me the VIP book information so I know the information printed is correct.

Following Grand Chapter I will continue to work in the Grand Chapter Office to facilitate the transition of my duties to the new Grand Secretary. That person is who you will direct your calls, emails and questions to. As we all know the only way we learn is to jump in with both feet.

I look forward to greeting you at Grand Chapter.

In Star love and friendship,

Nancy
Grand Secretary, PGM





ALL IOWA COUNTY FAIR



Those not coming to the All Iowa County Fair Saturday in Afton missed out on some crazy fun. Nearly one hundred fairgoers voted for winners of blue and red ribbons in “Holy”steen calling, husband and wife calling, and cattle and pig calling contests. They also chose the top two participants of our Pet Show from a wide variety of entrants and several flung a chicken for great distances for the blue ribbon.

We played fair games including ring toss, duck pond, tractor pull, spin art, plinko, water sponge throw (at a brave lady) and had our fortunes told. There were prized purchases of jellies, canned fruits and vegetables, fresh vegetables and various handcrafted and other items.

Of course there was food!! Hot dogs, chips, cookies, cotton candy and funnel cakes.

We about brought down the house with a very enthusiastic Quilt Auction of four handmade Quilts, two Barn Quilts, and a furry plush Highland Cow. We were visited by Abigail and Sammy the Service Dog and learned more about our OES Service Dog project.

We thank all of those who participated to make our fundraiser such a success.

All Iowa County Fair Committee
 Terri Murphy, Deb Jones,
 Darcey Swope, Karen Wood, Kris Roudybush
 and Larry Jones



ALL IOWA COUNTY FAIR





ALL IOWA COUNTY FAIR





PROJECTS



Every year we have different items for sale to support our Projects. Please take a moment to stop by the Project table to see what is for sale. Even if you do not wear the pins, you will be supporting our Projects.

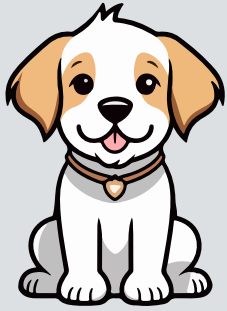
- Barn Pin and Note Cards will support our two Projects; Children's Cancer Connection and Holden Comprehensive Cancer Center.
- Cross pin and March Music support Estarl.
- Cream Can Pin and Worthy Grand Patron's Barn will support Youth.
- Our Challenge Coin and Snowflakes will support Grand Chapter.

The Snowflakes we will use as decorations at Grand Chapter. You will get your Snowflake after our session. Our Project Chairman has a form for you to fill out for the Snowflakes. Buy one in memory or honor of someone.

March music and notecards are all original art work by Kerri.

There will be a used Formal clothing booth at Grand Chapter as well as a table for leftover pins and whatnot. Make sure to check it out!





"DOGS" FOR SERVICE DOGS

Submitted by: Sandy Meredith, WGM



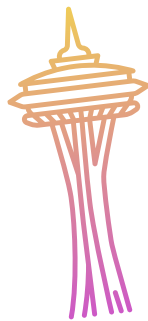
If you have been to any Eastern Star events, you have seen our "Dogs" for Service Dogs. This is a "fun"raiser between the Grand Officers this year. We will have our "Dogs" with us as we travel the State this year. Your vote is cash, so vote for your favorite "Dog". This will continue until Friday afternoon of Grand Chapter. The Service Dogs committee will tally the votes and announce the winner Saturday evening of Grand Chapter. The money will go to Iowa Service Dogs which helps provide service dogs to veterans and first responders.





SUBMITTED BY: KERRI MEREDITH

We kicked off our Alaska adventure on August 9th, departing from Des Moines early that morning. Our first stop was Seattle, where we had the afternoon to explore the city. The bus ride into downtown was surprisingly memorable—our driver doubled as a tour guide, sharing fascinating bits of Seattle’s history as we passed landmarks. The Space Needle and the waterfront pier were definite highlights. Mom and I, however, took a brisk walk to the Asian market so I could get some Japanese treats I have been craving since leaving Japan. Seattle was absolutely charming!



August 10th

We finally boarded the ship—and it felt so good to settle into our rooms at last! As we set sail, we were on the lookout for whales. At one point, we think we may have spotted a pod of orcas in the distance, but it was hard to be sure. Still, the excitement of possibly seeing them definitely kicked off the cruise on a high note!



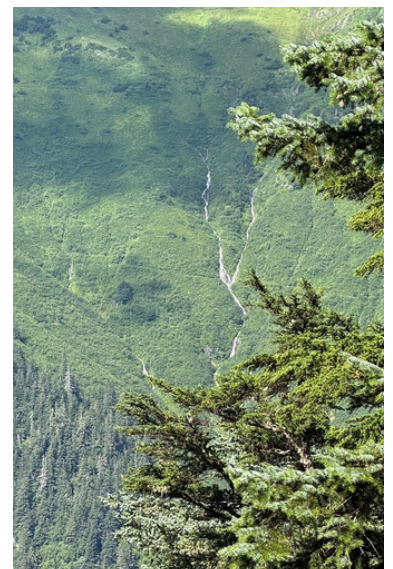
August 11th

This day was all about getting to know the ship. We explored the endless food options, checked out the entertainment, and browsed through the shops.

One of the highlights was the series of showcases focused on Alaska: everything from whales and dog sledding to wildlife spotting tips and the state's fascinating history. But wow—what a **ROUGH** sea day! By the end of it, we were more than ready to reach Juneau.

August 12th

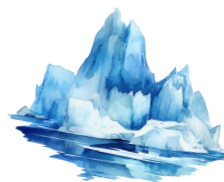
We finally arrived at our first port—Juneau! Mom and I took the Goldbelt Tram up to the top of Mount Roberts, and the views from up there were absolutely breathtaking. We grabbed some delicious fish and chips at the mountaintop restaurant, then wandered around to check out the nearby trail and totem poles. It was a bit too muddy for hiking, so we passed on the trail, but still enjoyed soaking in the atmosphere. Later, we did a bit of shopping in town before heading back. Juneau was a beautiful start to our Alaskan adventures!



August 13th

We were back at sea today, but thankfully the waters were much calmer than our last sea day. This time, we were headed toward the stunning Dawes Glacier. A lot of us woke up early to stake out spots in the Crow's Nest for whale watching as we sailed through the passage.

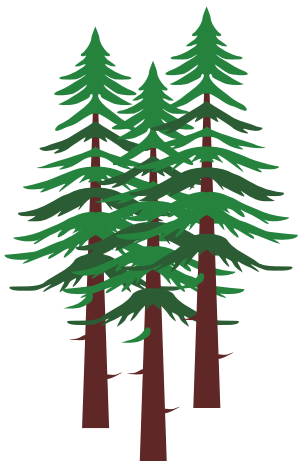
The air was getting noticeably chillier, but even from the patio of our room, the views were incredible. Watching the glacier come into view was truly awe-inspiring. The surrounding mountains were just as breathtaking, towering around us as we made our way deeper into the fjord. It was one of those moments that really made the whole trip feel magical.

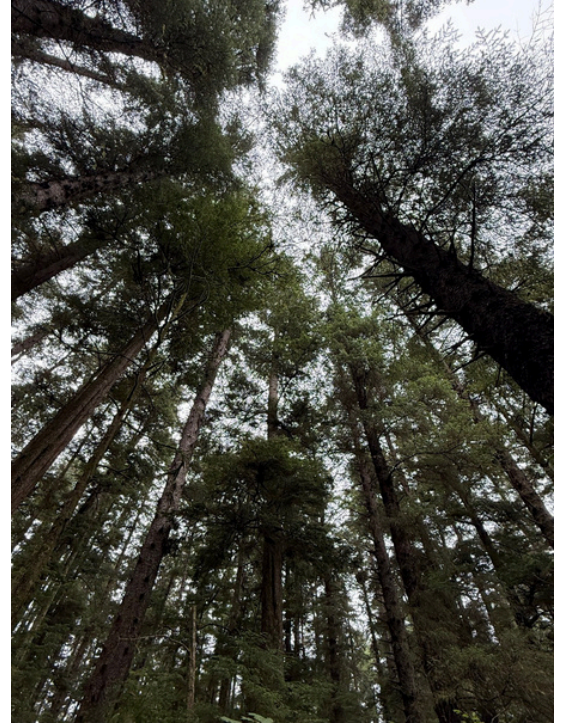


August 14th

Today we arrived in Sitka! We had booked a ghost tour of the town, which turned out to be a fascinating way to explore its Russian history. We visited a number of historical sites and learned a lot about Sitka's past—some of it spooky, some of it just really interesting.

After the tour we headed to Sitka National Historical Park to walk the totem pole trail. The scenery was absolutely stunning, with towering trees, coastal views, and beautifully carved totem poles lining the path. It was a pretty long hike, but totally worth it—and we made it all the way! This might have been my favorite part of the entire trip—there was something really special about the combination of nature, culture, and history all in one place. Also, mom can spot a cow anywhere!





August 15th

Today we arrived in Ketchikan, and I finally got to see the show I had been looking forward to since we booked the trip: The Great Alaskan Lumberjack Show! Mom had been teasing me about it the whole time, but I was fully committed.

Was it touristy? Absolutely. Was it a shameless excuse to watch some strong, flannel-wearing lumberjacks saw and chop their way through wood? You bet. But it was genuinely a great show—fun, fast-paced, and even included a bit of lumberjack history for good measure. 10/10, no regrets. I'd totally see it again.

After the show, we strolled down historic Creek Street. It was near the end of the salmon run, but we managed to spot a few fish fighting their way upstream—and even saw a sea lion lurking nearby. Finally, some real Alaskan wildlife!





August 16th

We arrived late in Victoria, Canada—after 9 PM—and with such a short window of time before needing to be back on board, we decided to stay on the ship. It was a bit disappointing not to explore, but we'll just have to say: *Next time, Victoria!*

August 17th

We returned to Seattle, ready to make our way home. The trip came with its fair share of travel hassles but looking back, it was all worth it.

From breathtaking glaciers to charming towns, towering forests to close (or hopeful) encounters with whales, this journey was unforgettable. If I had the money, I'd move to Alaska in a heartbeat—to be surrounded by the mountains, the orca pods, the endless trees, and the deep sense of history that runs through every part of it.



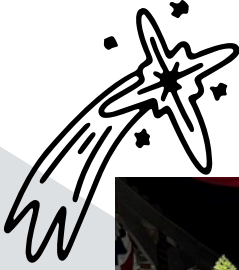
CHAPTER NEWS

Recently members of Oelwein Chapter No. 45, Order of the Eastern Star, presented an ESTARL grant to Mitchell Malven. He is the grandson of Maynard residents Mr. and Mrs. George Malven. This is the third year that Mitchell has received the grant. He is from North Liberty and plans to graduate from the ministry in May, 2026. The Eastern Star Training Awards for Religious Leadership (ESTARL) is a grant program that was established to encourage and assist those preparing for full-time Christian service. Awards are made **ONLY** to students in Iowa preparing for leadership in religious service such as minister, missionary, director of church music, church youth leadership, religious education and other types of full-time religious service. Anyone interested in finding out more about ESTARL should contact Diane King.

Submitted by Diane King

Left to Right- Bill Stocks, Irene Stocks, Hayden Malven, Mitchell Malven, Mary Davis, Harvey Davis, Diane King





Aspasia members Charlotte Deitrich's daughter, Jane Luetje, sang the National Anthem at the Iowa State Fair on Friday morning, August 8, 2025. Sister Jane has also sung at the opening of professional games such as the Milwaukee Brewers and Indiana Fever.

Submitted by: Lisa Phillips



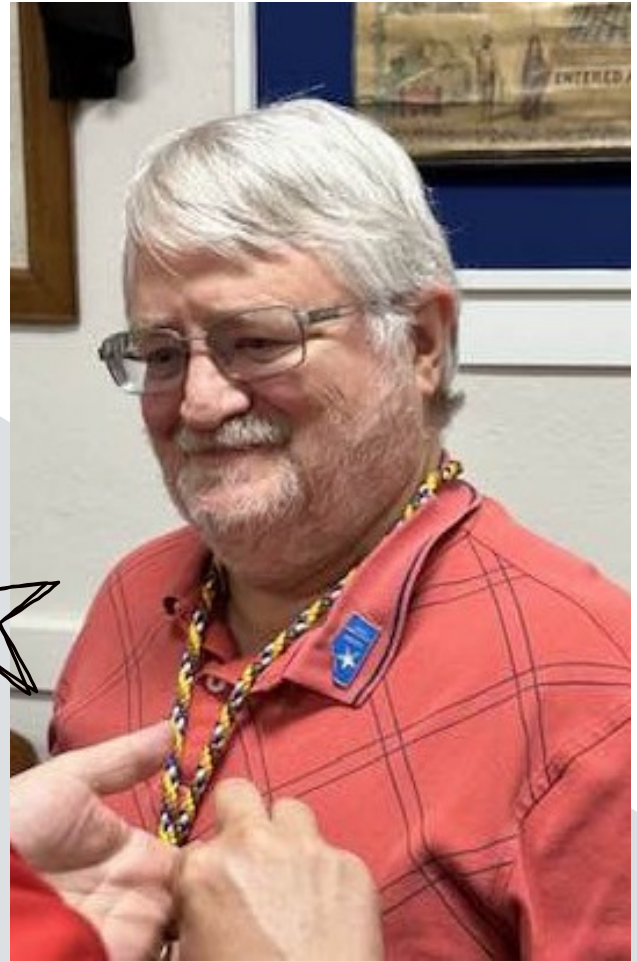
September 14th picnic for Polk City Chapter and Operative Lodge #308 - 36 people and 2 super canines enjoyed this annual event. At the picnic, Brother Allan Tedrow presented handmade boxes to Grand Esther Joyce Sloniger; 50-year members Jean Koss and Robin McKenzie. Robin McKenzie's husband Larry was surprised with a Quilt of Valor.

Submitted by Janice Halverson



Brother Marty Jacobs received an appointment as Grand Representative to Alberta. Congratulations Marty!

Submitted by Janice Halverson



Polk City Chapter presented 50-year pins to Sisters Peggy Black, Robin McKenzie and Jean Koss. We are so proud of each of these sisters.

Sisters Karen Lundien and her daughter Kelli Johnson were unable to attend our meeting, and we hope to be able to present their certificates and pins to them at their homes. Congratulations!



Submitted by Janice Halverson

Larry and Marilyn Culver were hosts at their farm for Linden Chapter, O.E.S.'s 50 - year pot luck picnic, Saturday Sept. 13, 2025. Twenty five were in attendance from OES Exodus Chapter -Exira, Masonic - Orange Lodge in Guthrie Center, Panora Masonic Lodge and OES Linden Chapter.

Those in attendance were Larry & Mary Railsback, Penny & Dean Wetzel, Glenn & Connie Esbeck, Pat Mullenger, Ron and Kathy Mullenger, Dana and Joan Schafer, Jeff Smith, Dick & Eileen Ellis, Dottie Hill & Kent Turner, Gary Rees, Virginia Armstrong, Shirley Hughes, Frank & Joyce Keeran, Jim & Mary Jo Laughery, and Larry and Marilyn Culver.

Larry Railsback was presented his 50 year pin and certificate from Worthy Matron Marilyn Culver. Mary Jo gave Larry's history from Gleaner's Chapter and Orange Lodge.

Various dignitaries present were introduced along with Ron Mullenger, the current Grand Junior Warden of the Grand Masons of Iowa and Dana Shaffer, Grand Sentinel of the Grand Chapter of Iowa, OES.

Submitted by: Mary Jo Laughery



CHILDREN'S CANCER CONNECTION INFORMATIONAL MEETING HELD

By Connie S. Esbeck, Member of the Service Dog Committee,
Worthy Matron Exodus Chapter Exira, PGM

Exodus Chapter #313, Exira, hosted an informal informational meeting for prospective new members at the Masonic Hall on September 19th .

After Worthy Matron Connie Esbeck welcomed our guests and members, Joan Shaffer introduced our speaker from the Children's Cancer Connection, a nonprofit organization based in Johnston, Iowa. It serves families affected by cancer that are diagnosed, treated and/or living in the State of Iowa.

Through donations from organizations such as our Grand Chapter and individual donors, CCC offers free educational resources, support outings, camp programs and other services to more than 300 families annually.

When a family signs up for CCC, they receive a Welcome Box that includes information about CCC's free services and fun items like a blanket, water bottle, distraction toy and a Louie LionHeart stuffed animal.

The CCC offers many support programs and outings such as family outings, teen hangouts and lock-ins where teens can have fun with friends. They can bring homework, play video or board games, shoot hoops, watch movies or just talk.

(cont'd on page 25)

(cont'd from page 24)

CCC holds a variety of camps where childhood cancer survivors and their families have a secure environment to connect, grow and create lifelong memories. Camp Heart Connection programs include camps for everyone in the family: Oncology, Sibling, Family, Day and Teen Camps.

Often times, cancer survivors come back to volunteer at the camps. Picture is Dana and Joan Shaffer driving home after an OES meeting somewhere in the state. Their conversational skit was a rendition of OES 101 to give prospective members of what Eastern Star is and some of the many things we do as an organization. Following the humorous skit, Joan presented the CCC representative with two quilts she had made for the kids.

The Worthy Matron closed by thanking everyone again for coming and reading a poem: "The Gift of Friendship."

Following the program, the group enjoyed root beer floats furnished and served by Ron and Kathy Mullenger and Pat Mullenger.



A FEW GOOD SHOTS



A FEW GOOD SHOTS



FRIENDLY REMINDERS

Grand Chapter will be held November 13-16, 2025 at the Holiday Inn/Airport in Des Moines. We look forward to hosting you at the "Home Sweet Home" session!

Planning to Attend Grand Chapter?

There will be a formal dress exchange held near the Chapter room during Grand Chapter. If you have any gently used formals you no longer need, please consider bringing them to share with others. It's a great way to recycle elegance and help fellow members find something special to wear!

There will also be a table for the pins and any leftover items at Grand Chapter. Be sure to have a look if you need pins, music, postcards, or anything of that variety!

Remember the donations for the dogs will end on Friday November 14th at Grand Chapter so make sure to vote for your favorites by then.

NOTES FROM THE GALAXY COMMITTEE

Thank you to everyone who contributed articles for the Galaxy over the past year! We hope you enjoyed reading the newsletter!

The next issue will be handled by the new Committee Members for 2026, so please wait for details about future deadlines and submission guidelines from them. Thank you!

Galaxy Committee Members: Kerri Meredith, Victoria Means, and Janelle Miller