2019 History of the Grand Chapter of Ohio *Marion Johnson*, Caroline #39, PM

On Friday, September 28, 2018, the 129th Annual Session of the Grand Chapter of Ohio opened at the Kalahari Convention Center at Sandusky with a piano prelude presented by *Judy Hornsby,* Dorcas #277, G Org. The Ohio Eastern Star Chorus, under the direction of *Pamela Sheetz,* Lyndon #361, with *Elaine Hammond*, Crescent #7, accompanying, shared several selections, as preparations were finalized for the “Make a Difference, Make it Happen” Drill, written and directed by *Lisa Scheider Jones*, Palestine #51. *Suzanne Murlin*, Celina #91, served as organist, with narration by *Joan Sexton*, Amelia #38, and *Ron Herman*, Guernsey #211. The drill opened with several people (children and grandchildren of the WGM and WGP) walking on the “beach” in the near east. The legend of the starfish was narrated and acted out, with the person tossing the starfish being the granddaughter of the WGP. The WMs unfolded cloth in the star point colors to form the star in the center of the floor, with the 2014 G Star Points, Ch and M taking positions at the points of the star and the altar. The DGMs, the Tides of Change, carried in banners, and when they put them together, they read “Make a Difference, Make it Happen.” In the west, the WPs and PPs of Districts 15, 16, 21 and 22 formed a giant star fish, and the PMs of those districts and the District Presidents outlined the star. The GRs (known as the Waves of Love) and their flag escorts entered from the west to outline the room, and listened to the narrated poem before all exited, with the flags posted in the east.

The 2014 GOs presented the flag, the Bible, and SP emblems as 2014 G Sen *Bill Taylor*, Brownsville #486 (PGP 2016) narrated.

The GPs and GAs gave a fun presentation to “Whistle While You Work” including whistles, buckets and bricks!

*Frank Clifton*, Olive Branch #251 (PGP 2007) introduced the GOs, reminding us that this is the 10th and final year of service for our G Sec, *Roberta David*, Dayton Victory #410 (PGM 1997.) She, as well as our WGM and WGP, received a standing ovation.

The GO drill used the beach theme, with buckets and trowels, and ice cream. The AREME projects were emphasized to remind everyone that OES is Charity.

Our WGM, *Sandi Herman*, Guernsey #211, and WGP, *David Sexton,* Amelia #38, emphasized Chapter Excellence, tying it to building with bricks and mortar. In the Circle of Knowledge, the mortar of knowledge makes the foundation strong. The membership committee and Star Polishers are available to all chapters who desire to become stronger. The AREME projects, which were to help within the chapters’ individual communities, reflected giving of over $41,600 and 10,000 volunteer hours. The GOs AREME project was to beautify the marble columns at the Mount Vernon Cemetery. On Saturday, she reminded us that when we build using bricks and mortar, we expect the building to last, just as we expect our friendships to last. Many of the reports explained how our Eastern Star Chapters and members have made a difference this year.

We were honored by the presence of *Glenda Winchester*, RWG C, PGM of SC and our own *F. Lon Lowry,* RWG S, George L. Behrens #504 (PGP 2012). Several GGCCMs and other distinguished guests supported them. After interesting remarks, and sharing that plans are being made for GGC to be in Myrtle Beach SC, *Glenda* and *Lon* together invited us to be “On the Shore in 2024.” The 51st Triennial will have the theme of “World Wide the Family of God Marches Together. In just one more month at the GGC session, we expect that *Glenda* and *Lon* will be elected RWG AGM and RWG AGP! The following will also begin their GGC appointments for the upcoming triennium: *Carol Jones,* Legacy #596 (Delta #539) (PGM 2001), Membership Committee; *Trevor Sproul*, Legacy #596 (Delta #539) (PGP 2011), Service Dog Committee; and *Melora Waltman*, Englewood #563, a Campfire Friend. We thank those completing their service: *Vivian Chrisopulus,* Brecksville #537 (PGM 1996), Ambassador to the Phillipines; *Jean Watters,* Dorcas #277 (PGM 2012), Eastern Star Journal and *Peg Reiterman,* Sterling #74 (PGM 2009), Regenerative Medicine. *Peg* was also appointed Chair of the Travel Committee for the upcoming Triennial!

The Senior G Warden of the G Lodge of OH, *Keith Newton,* shared an interesting talk asking “Who’s Packing your Parachute?” or more importantly, “Whose Parachute are you Packing?” He challenged us to consider who they are and how we can recognize them.

The G Sec reported that $251,990 was received in per capita, with $50,734 going to GGC. $125,995 went to the OES Home. Our membership at the beginning of the reporting year was 24, 437, and we had a loss of 1788 members, about 7%. 465 of our members are duals. We have had 9 chapters merge, and 3 consolidated, with 4 more in the merger process, with 189 current chapters. Of the 447 fifty year pins sent out, Legacy #596 presented fifteen. 710 other pins were purchased including 20 75-year pins and 6 80-year pins. She thanked her pages, both members of Dayton-Victory #410. *Marge Reynolds* has served as secretary 25 years and *Norma Holts* as treasurer 22 years. Health prevented them from attending, so their positions were being filled by *Jean Watters,* Dorcas #277 (PGM 2012*)* and *Peg Reiterman*, Sterling #74 (PGM 2009) and she hoped they behaved! She paid tribute to the memory of *Neva Moreland*, Manila #100 and *Joe Blazer*, Gallipolis #283, who were WGM and WGP 25 years ago and appointed her as their G W. She compared the statistics of the ten years she has been in office: in 2009, 42,946 members and 253 chapters, and now 24,437 members and 189 chapters. She closed with a wonderful reading sharing the themes of the years of her service, closing with “keep the Spirit of America in your heart.”

G Treas, *Gayle Sutherin*, George L. Behrens #504 (Lydia #83) (PGM 1995), reported that we have over 1.5 million in investments, $400,000 interest income, and received donations of $11,128 for youth, $2170 for the Ohio Masonic Home, and $18,214 for Benevolence needs. 23 ESTARL students were awarded $64,500 with approval for 23 students and $57,600 for 2019. Many other donations were made by the Charitable Foundation. She also reported that the audit shows a decrease in dues, donations and investments, with expenses remaining comparable, for an overall decrease in worth of about $20,000.

It was reported that requests for mergers were fewer this year. Seven chapters completed the merger process and one surrendered their charter. There were also 2 consolidations. One more merger is scheduled in October and three in the process. It is important that our remaining chapters strive to stay viable. The membership committee has both personal and online assistance.

*Marilyn Braatz,* Triune #344, stated that excellence is not an act, it is a habit. She presented 33 Excellent Chapter and 38 Outstanding Chapter awards and encouraged continued participation and improvement.

We were pleased to celebrate several membership milestones. ***Elaine Barth***, Tiffin #189, received her 70-year pin from *Gail Walsh*, Triune #344 (PGM 2014). *Roberta David*, Dayton-Victory #594 (PGM 1997) G Sec, presented a 65-year pin to ***Mary James***, Linden #348. ***Mary Lou Reiter****,* Cornelia #93, received her 60-year pin from *Betty Dawn Hardman,* Belpre #541 (PGM 2003). We enjoyed five 50-year pin presentations. Among them was ***Frank Clifton***, Olive Branch #251 (PGP 2007), whose pin was also presented by *Betty Dawn Hardman. Gail Walsh*, Triune #344*,*(PGM 2014)along with *Steve Farus*, Olive Branch #251 (PGP 2014) were privileged to present a 50-year pin to **Sandi Herman**, WGM, their 2014 G W. [At Triune #344’s inspection, ***Gail Walsh*,** PGM 2014, received her 50-year pin from *Bonnie Youngblood,* Day #479 (PGM 2006), *Janice Goerrs*, Western Reserve #71 (PGM 2010) and *Sandi Herman,* WGM, a multi-fraternal generational presentation!]

*Peg Reiterman*, Sterling #74 (PGM 2009) was pleased to announce that Ohio contributed over $102,000 to Regenerative Medicine during the last triennium.

*Carol Gramm Wise*, Trinity #16, AGC, visited 36 Jurisdictions via their proceedings. She noted that in some jurisdictions the names of the GOs are announced prior to installation. In AR, guardian angels were assigned to pray for the WGM and WGP. MD performed 10 courtesy funeral services. OR permits raffles and auctions. NM shipped 19,000 care packets to military posts. In Nova Scotia and PEI, there were 381 members and visitors. Two PGMs ran for AGM. Election was by acclamation.

This was the tenth year for the ritual competition. There were 66 participants. Winners included Adah: *Ruth Ann Fox,* Racine #134; Ruth: *June Calderhall*, Medina #266; Esther: *Cathy Scarpelli*, Beaver Valley #530; Martha: *Julie Morrison*, Sharon #132; Electa: *Denise Gregory*, Worthington #287; Associate Patron: *John Pierce*, Amelia #338 and Chaplain: *Art Robinson*, Falls #245.

A new award called the Circle of Knowledge was given to those reaching a mastery level on a 50 question test given at GC. The seven recipients were: *Brooke Anderson*, Muskingham #485, *Marsha Kelly*, Olive Branch #251, *DuAnne Farus*, Olive Branch #251, *Dorothy Ballard,* Legacy #596, *Nancy McMillan,* E Palestine #381*, Debi Huffman, Triune #344* and *Traci Evans*, Bryan #248.

We had 1070 registered members, and 67 out of state guests. 1016 voting packets were distributed.

On Sunday, we enjoyed again the musical selections of the Ohio Eastern Star Chorus as a prelude to the “Beauties of Life” drill, written and directed by *Crissy Willeke*, Worthington #287. *Jan Foy*, Tiffin #189, shared her talents at the organ and the narration was given by the spouses of the incoming WGM and WGP, *Celia Lawson*, Medina #266 GR of CO, and *Mike Cholodewitsch*, Cornelia #93. The grandchildren of both couples also played a part in the drill, which included a focus on the youth groups and lovely musical selections. The Rainbow representative carried a Bible to the near East. A Job’s Daughter brought a cross and came from the west to stand beside the Bible. The WM-elects, in navy blue dresses, entered from the NW and formed a cross with the Bible in the center. All exited. The narration continued, focusing on families and gardens, and the *Lawson* grandchildren got the  grandchildren and they all visited the flower garden and picked flowers, taking them to the narrators, who had come down from the E. The WM-elects in blue dresses with lavender sashes, brought carnations to the audience! *Crissy* narrated the tribute to the military as the DeMolay representative carried the flag to the center of the room, and PMs of Region C and District 4 made an arc from the NW to the SW with the flags of the service areas. The GRs and their flag escorts entered from the NE and SE and processed to the center of the room, crisscrossed and proceeded to the SW and NW where the flags were posted in the W. The grandchildren and Youth formed the center of a star in the middle of the floor. The WM-elects entered from each corner and formed the points of the star, unrolling fabric in the point colors. The GRs returned without their flags, holding red carnations, encircling the star. The WP-elects and PPs from Region C and District 4 entered from the W and outlined it all. The participants exited to the music of “Celebrate.”

The emblem ceremony was performed by the officers of Tiffin #189, with the WGM-elect’s mother, *Mary Lou Reiter,* at the Bible. The narration was given by the WGM-elect’s son.

Following the long anticipated installation, we learned some of the secrets of WGM, *Kelly Cholodewitsch*, Cornelia #39, and WGP, *Dennis Lawson*, Medina #266. The Dragonflies, the GOs, wore blue jackets with iridescent skirts in peacock colored swirls. The GRs will be known as the Peacock Feathers. This year the Charity Directors will be included in the G Family. DGMs, in green dresses, will be known as the Sunflowers. The last WGM from District 5 was 80 years ago, *Jessie Peck,* Fostoria #94 (PGM 1938). The project for the OES Home will be their security system, with the intention of securing the entire campus, not just the new neighborhoods. In memory of her father, Nevin Reiter, *Kelly* is requesting donations to the Shrine Hospital Patient Transportation fund. *Dennis* asked each chapter to hand deliver a contribution to one of the Youth groups. The EMERALD projects will be something that beautifies the local area of the chapter, hopefully trees or flowers planted in the town or parks or zoos in the name of Eastern Star. Chapters were also encouraged to support the GGC project of Service Dogs. Thus began the year that looks for beauty in all of life and nature.

**Anniversary wishes** are offered to the following chapters for celebrating big milestone years, with a Visitation by the WGM and WGP and several other special activities:

75 years: Olivet #538

100 years: Kingston #411, Labelle #414, Ida #416, Chillicothe #419

125 years: Crystal #18, Valley #19, Findlay #23, Beallsville #24, Delphos #26, Royal #29.

Those present at **Olivet #538**’s 75th were honored to see the 75-year pin presentation for *Virginia Shafer.* She was not a charter member, but had been initiated into Diamond #84. When it merged, she demitted to Olivet. They also heard the minutes of one of the initial meetings read by the WP, which was done at each of their meetings. **Labelle #414** had 18 members and 31 guests at their G Visitation in honor of their 100th year. PGMs *Carol Jones*, *Marilyn Giey* and *Sue Kerns* were present, along with *Margi Wheeler*, AGM and *Cindy Chadwell*, AGC. Three GRs were also present, *Meghan Miller,* MD, *Barb* Stuart, MI, and *Marlene Wolfe*, Ontario. All enjoyed the potato, salad and soup bar before the meeting, and *Clara McClure’s* homemade pies after the interesting evening. **Royal #29** was thrilled to celebrate their 125th year. Their WM, *Winnie Gregory*, received her 50-year pin. She has served as WM 7 times, once more than her mother, *Dorothy Dellinger*. Winnie’s daughter, *Patti Havens*, will serve her 9th term in 2020. Another daughter, *Nola Humphrey*, has served twice, and her granddaughter, *Amber Hammond*, has served 4 times. Yes, this is a Family Affair with 21 consecutive WMs from the same family! Other family members hold supporting roles. Daughter, *Cathy Bond*, is AM. *Amber’s* husband *Jason* has been WP 4 times. Grandson *Richard Burson* has also been WP 4 years. Grandson *David Morris* is a brand new member! Sec *Gail Allen* reported that the chapter has 63 members (including 2 duals.) 13 are Winnie and her family, 16 live out of town/state, 23 who maintain their membership but don’t attend, and 11 others come regularly. **Beallsville #24** shared highlights from their minutes. They got a snowy start at their institution. The train bringing the WGP was delayed until 10:00 p.m., so the evening events had to wait including the dinner planned at the hotel! The Chapter joined the Masons in cornerstone laying ceremonies for their new elementary, and then new high schools. They served as mother chapter to Woodsfield and Shadyside chapters. They mentioned highlights of their 50, 75 and 100th celebrations, all with large attendance and the presence of special guests. They were the first chapter in OH to become involved in the “I Care” program under the leadership of *Wayne Shirbish.* They recognized distinguished chapter members, among them *Richard Wilson*, MW G Master in 1985 and WGP in 1998.

The GC was saddened by several deaths, and took time to remember and celebrate the lives of these special members. ***Maxine Jeffers***, Worthington #287 (Robert Morris #372) (PGM 1994), died on March 3, 2019. She served the GC 25 years ago with *Raymond Hendricks*, Palestine #51 (May Elliott #355) using the theme “Light of God.” Her 25-year celebration became a memorial service, along with the Visitation for *Crissy Willeke*, Drill Director. ***Kenneth Scott****,* Worthington #287 (PGP 2009) died on March 11, 2019. He served with *Peg Reiterman*, Sterling #74, and will be remembered for chairing the Ritual Competition. ***James Dale***, Ellbrook #408 (Dennison #436) (PGP 1988) died on March 26, 2019. He served with *Arlene Johnson*, Anna Dean #595 (Jeannette #212). That was the last year that *Wroena Dusthimer* Knox #236 (PGM 1973)served as GS and we had over 121,000 members. ***Marjorie Karth***, Ashland #92, died on August 15, 2019. She served as WGM in 1985 with *Robert Brown*, Pleiades #298. A notable brother, ***Charles Starkey***, Royal #29, died April 26, 2019. He served as an officer every year from 1978 to 2008, including 20 years as WP.

We recognize beauty in the faithful membership of our sisters and brothers and were delighted to have these **Membership presentations:** Glenwood #303 opens their May meeting, conducts business quickly, and closes by 8:15 so they can have an open meeting to present membership pins. Friends and relatives are invited to join this recognition time. This has provided a wonderful opportunity to introduce Eastern Star to non-members. ***Elizabeth “Betty” Whitaker*,** Seven Hills #589, received her 65-yr pin at Inspection. She was initiated in Scotland in 1954 and immigrated to the US shortly after, under the protest of her father, who was a Mason. He agreed that she could go, telling her if she ever needed assistance or was in trouble, to contact the Eastern Star. She demitted to Pleasant Ridge #378 in 1956, served as Esther, and then in 1962 as WM. In 1964 she was sec to the COA, but actually was Co-Chair, except a woman was not allowed to be COA. She served in that same capacity for 4 other COA’s in Cincinnati. In 1964 she published a history book of each of the 579 chapters in OH for the Diamond Jubilee in order to help defray GC expenses. She assisted *Marjorie Karth*, Ashland #92 (PGM 1985) when she was working on the book for the 100th Anniversary. She served 16 years as Sec of her chapter when she had to retire due to the 10-year law that was instituted. In 1968 she chaired the G Banquet, the first dinner held in the new Cincinnati Convention Center, serving 1592 guests. She served 27 years as President of the Hamilton Co OES Home until they joined with the OMH, and then 7 years as Chair of the M Health Care Division of the OMH, before retiring due to age limits! In 1995 her chapter consolidated, and she continues to remain a vital member. The River #517 was delighted to present a 75-year pin to ***Peggy Smith,*** who is the daughter of *Zella Watkins*, (PGM 1948). ***Montine Grugel*** received her 70-year pin in chapter and her daughter, *Cathy Negrey*, came from Oklahoma to share the special evening. ***Dorothy Plsek*** received her 65-year pin from Dorcas #277 over lunch with several members. ***Joanne Szalkowski***, Triune #344, received her 60-year pin at her home. *Carole Histed,* Warpole # 366, P G Org, Browning resident, frequent Triune visitor, and member of Jo’s church, presented her pin. Jo served tea and pastries to all present, including her daughter. ***Edward Ross*,** Olive Branch #251 (Dresden #260), received his 70 year pin in his home, presented during a visit by *Frank Clifton,* PGP 2007, *Steve Farus,* PGP 2014, and *Darla Revennaugh*, DGM #16, all from Olive Branch #251. Seven members of Olive Branch #251 also surprised *Ada Spillman* for her 100th birthday with a party at her home at the Oaks of Bethesda. She shared about her travels, her work at Bethesda Hospital and her many activities for her big birthday! She was initiated into Victoria #31 which merged with Olive Branch in 2012. *Valerie Norman* entertained by singing “Old Time Religion” and “Grandma’s Feather Bed.”

Imagine the beauty these GOs witnessed in their events! *Carol Gramm Wise*, Trinity #16 GC and *Cindy Chadwell*, Grove City #502 AGC were honored by New Hope #590 on “Fat Tuesday.” With a Mardi Gras theme, they wore lovely masks during the incoming and outgoing march! One was used in New Orleans the previous day! In addition to the official greetings from their groups, the ACs announced their name as “Cindy’s Storytellers!” They wore plaid vests and had written a song to honor their leader. *Cindy* shared some of the duties of the AC in the Chapter room and anteroom, and both GOs presented token gifts to their counterparts. It was good to have tables reserved for the two groups during the fellowship so they could become better acquainted. Falls #245 also had an honor night for these two LGOs. A chicken dinner with the members preceded the meeting. Both *Carol* and *Cindy* were given honorary memberships, presented by *William Murphy*, G Sen. *Joan Robinson,* C, and *Gloria Tilden*, AC, shared biographies of the two honorees. District 18 also honored these two LGOs with a dinner at the Masonic Home. In addition to the warm welcome extended to the ladies and their spouses, the LO groups extended gifts to their counterparts and *Carol* and *Cindy* each had an opportunity to share information about themselves and their plans. Attendees also learned many details about the lives of the two through the game that was played following dinner. *Jill Riddle,* G E, who serves as C of Sterling #74, closed the evening with special remarks for each one and an appropriate poem. Goshen #382 honored the AGC, *Cindy,* who met with the ACs prior to the meeting and learned that their name is “Cindy’s Queen Bees.” Nine others traveled from her District, and the second vehicle got lost, arriving just as the meeting started! *Marie Williams* (PGM 1987) presented *Cindy* with an honorary membership. *Jill Riddle*, Sterling #74 GE, enjoyed every meeting she attended, realizing that our members have a very special feeling about our fraternity. She especially enjoyed the reception for *Jennifer Maynard*, Miami #107 GR of TN. The TN atmosphere was obvious with a Chattanooga Choo-Choo prop, authentic train whistles, and entertainment by “Pinnie Mearl” who wore a flowered hat complete with the very visible price tag. Refreshments were Moon Pies for everyone to take home, and giant Moon Pies cut in wedges for the social hour. The GOs and many others participated in “A Trip on Noah’s Ark”, the theme for the Charities Extravaganza held at the OES Home. It was well planned by the State Charities Directors, *Richard* and *Barb Metzler*, The River #517, who encouraged all the attendees to wear animal costumes! The GOs also enjoyed “Star-lebrity Family Feud” as entertainment during their G Visitation at the OES Home. Team “Dennis the Menace” was the eventual winner over Team “KC and the Sunshine Band.” They also enjoyed visiting with the residents at the Browning Home and the Ohio Masonic Home. At the latter, District 18 provided a luncheon for the GOs, and a tea for the residents and the District to welcome the GOs. We were reminded again that the District Officers and GOs have good taste as their traveling outfits are the same! The beach theme decorations and food were delightful, and the musical entertainment enjoyed by all.

**Travel** is a special opportunity to witness the beauty of nature.The GC Trip was to Mackinac Island, Frankenmuth, the Soo Locks and the Castle Farms. Three busloads enjoyed shopping in Frankenmuth and lunch at the Bavarian Inn before heading north to the Upper Peninsula. All hotel rooms had lake views, and the fire pit by the lake was a great gathering place! Lunch at the Grand Hotel, a dinner cruise through the Locks, the tour of Castle Farms, The Museum Ship Valley Camp in Sault Ste. Marie and the Mushroom houses and Venetian Festival in Charlevoix were all highlights.

*Meghan Miller,* Bolivar #368, travelled with her parents, *Machelle* and *Jed Miller*, to the GC of MD. The session opened with their G Banquet and Meghan learned that they knew more about candy buckeyes than the real ones she brought, so she handwrote a warning not to eat them on her favors! MD has no drills and a GR can be either a male or female. Many are GR more than once. The officers campaign and only the AGM and AGP are automatically moved forward. The MW G Master challenged the OES to get 100 new members and he would shave his head. He challenged the Youth Groups to get 40 new members and he would shave his mustache! The G Marshal used a baton for her presentations and declarations. All waved mini American flags as the GOs retired prior to Installation in honor of their theme of Stars and Stripes Forever. She enjoyed meeting her counterpart, *Susan Troxell.*

*Marlene Wolf*, Toronto #215, GR of Ontario, reported that all the banquets were themed, including suggested attire, and were tasty and had lots of food, as well as an open bar. Many toasts were offered during the meal, including one to “The Office of the President of the US.” At the opening the Ps and As formed the letter H for the WGM and then a U for the WGP. That was followed by an hour glass. Ten flags were individually presented, with a tribute for each one. All 32 GCCM had matching gowns! District Deputies are not appointed, but are chosen by their districts from a list of members who have passed a proficiency test on the Constitution and Bylaws and an oral exam by the WGM, WGP, PGM or PGP. GR are introduced in two groups: A – K and L – Z. The GW can be a man or a woman and is an appointed O. The AC runs for office, and once elected, begins the G Line. The spouse of the WGM and WGP can choose to be either a GO or a GR. There was a large poster outside the Chapter room saying “Position open for G Trustee – see G Sec.” Ontario has 81 active chapters, and 530 voted during GC. The WGM project of Wounded Warriors received $68,000, and the project continues another year.

*Tracie Evans,* Bryan #248, WM and GR of RI, shared a detailed report of her trip to the GC. RI is smaller geographically than District 7, but has 10 times the population. There are just 6 chapters and 604 members, down from 3000 members and 23 chapters in 1993. 81 members and 83 visitors were in attendance. There is concern they may have to relinquish their GC Charter. WGM and WGP were a husband and wife team. The G Marshal and G Cs all carried batons, except when attending at the altar. 8 flags were individually presented. All 6 of the WMs were invited to the E to share their chapter’s charitable reports. If present, someone from the charity was given the opportunity to extend her thanks. During introductions, each group was welcomed and then someone from the group responded. Masonic titles were not given during the introductions of OES dignitaries. Copies of the reports were provided to the members, and not read in their entirety. Elections included the nomination for each GO through AGC by someone from their chapter and seconded by a member of their chapter. Those not previously in line were asked to make as 3-minute speech explaining why they should be elected. Only one person was nominated per office, so the G Sec cast a single ballot for all positions at once. Each person was then asked if they accepted, and responded with a simple, “I do.” At the memorial service, the draping of the altar included lifting the Bible and handing it to the G Ch, then the Cs flipped the altar cloth to reveal its purple side, and the open Bible was replaced on the altar. The RI G Rainbow Assembly presented an interesting ceremony on the history and tenants of Rainbow and the SPs spoke about our lessons and the similarities to Rainbow. The Installation was done with family and non-members present. The JPGM jewel was the jewel worn by the WGM in 1906, which was returned to RI by a member of MA who found it in an antique mall in FL!

*Lois Terkhorn*, South Point #404, was thrilled to return to Bolivia a second time for their GC session. She went from the cool mountainous region of La Paz to the flat, warm, palm tree area of Santa Cruz! Attendance was 360, about 60 more than 2018. Sessions were in Spanish, but G Pages explained what was going on. At the banquets and entertainment many wore traditional outfits from their area of Bolivia. They traded pins for many items. She was also privileged to do some touring following GC and loved visiting the Incan area. Because her Aunt taught school in the La Paz area she has special connections there.

*Jennifer Maynard*, Miami #107, was unable to attend the GC of TN since it was at Easter time, but she visited Sevierville #138 instead! She reported an evening of Star love and hospitality by WM *Colleen Coates* and enjoyed the organist playing “The Tennessee Waltz” as she was presented and “seated by way of the East.” From the GC program she noted the themes and scriptures, music and symbols, one of which matched our WGM’s, the peacock!

*Vickie Echelbarger*, Fostoria 394, GR of AZ, was thrilled to meet her counterpart, *Anita Wulf.* AZ has 33 chapters in 15 districts. Instead of DGM there are District Instructors. The GM used her baton in make proclamations. Both the GC and ACG were involved in ALL the introductions! The GOs wore three different gowns on just the first day! There were three printed program booklets: Annual Reports, Proposed Legislation and Sessions Booklet. Members campaign for office and enter the GL as AGC. She was pleased to carry OH’s flag in the cavalcade of flags, escorted by *Anita*. Having RWGAP *Lon Lowry* and *Barbara* present was an added delight! During the memorial ceremony, a wreath was placed on the Altar with the Bible on top of the wreath. All the GO wore white gowns for this session, participating in the memorial service, and placing a yellow rose on the wreath as a special reading was given. AZ does a great deal of charitable work, including over a dozen scholarships presented to the three youth groups.

Many of our chapter Secs and Treas traveled to Mount Vernon for training and fellowship, led by *Evelyn Hardesty,* Beacon #593 (PGM 2016), along with the G Sec and G Treas.

Our **Chapters and Districts** celebrated life in a wide variety of activities.At Ida #416, two candidates, *Maryellen Scott* and *Lidia Oca*ñ*a Alfaro*, received the obligation in English (Maryellen) and in Spanish (Lidia). The WP gave the obligation in English and the Jr PP gave it in Spanish. The AC, *Carol Stapleton*, carried the Spanish Ritual and allowed Lidia to read the passage in Spanish as it was given in English by the Star Points. The WM welcomed both new members, using both English and Spanish. *Lidia* is a recent immigrant from Chile and Peru. She became interested in the Order as she attended fundraisers for the Mt. Washington Water Tower, held at Yeatman Lodge. Her affiliation was traced through the G Lodge of Chile, and the Ritual and Secret Work were obtained from Bolivia through our G Sec. Grove City #502had 41 of their members present to welcome Beacon #593 into their fold. *Carrie Varian*, WM, had the members of Beacon presented in the W. In a lovely ceremony, the officers of Grove City joined them. The other members of the chapter also came to form a circle around the entire chapter room. The circle was completed as the WM joined it. WP, *Fred Ford* asked *Bill Taylor,* Brownsville #486 (PGP 2016) to preside, as he went to the altar and led the entire membership in renewing the obligation, the “tie that binds” us all together regardless of our name or place of meeting. After the newest members signed the record book, *Bill* placed the cancellation sticker on Beacon’s charter. *Ron Hardesty* shared a summary of some of the members that made Beacon such a warm and loving group. Glenwood #303 is a small chapter with dues still $18, but they are active in their community. They provide small, decorated Christmas trees to the nursing homes in Knox County. A group of them gather regularly and make greeting cards for their members. Bryan #248 sends books to support the USO’s United Through Reading program. The military personnel record themselves reading a book to their children. Then the book and recording are sent to the children so they can hear the voice of their parent reading to them. The chapter also sponsored a trip to the Toledo Museum of Art to see an exhibit of 150,000 native plants and flowers from NW OH. They enjoy a Sock Hop and Ice Cream Social with the larger Masonic community. The members of The River #517 attend many social events together: 5 plays, 2 museums, a spa day, Christmas in July at the Park, bowling, and, of course, eating together. Several of them serve on the Youth Boards and many attend the youth meetings regularly. They serve refreshments for the Lodge on their awards night. Like several chapters, they send out emails to let their members know what is happening. They are especially proud of the fact that they have had no loss in membership for three years in a row!! Falls #245 stays busy serving dinners for 5 Masonic bodies. They join with Stow Lodge for the July 4th parade. 36 members attended a Rubber Ducks Baseball game, several attended the TNT Playhouse, and several of their members are active participants with the Rainbow assembly. Muskingham #485 has a unique officer situation: two first time officers also have mothers serving! *Taylor Wilkins* is Chaplain and her mother, *Jodi Wilkins*, is PM and C, and *Dakota Gregory* is Ruth and her mother*, Sherry Angelo*, is PM and Adah. Clermont #135 has served pan-fried chicken using a family recipe batter for their Masonic Inspection dinner since 1986! It draws from lodges outside their district! They are proud of their 38 50-year members and especially pleased that *Nola Camery*, a 72-year member, still comes regularly to meetings. For their shut ins, they made gift bags with socks, gloves, hand made scarves, tea towels, lip balm, lotions, soaps, snacks, gum, tissue packets, and a picture of the chapter officers. Greenwood #159 is proud of their 4 members who received their Robert Morris Jewels for attaining 300 points for signing petitions: *Steve Cooper, Linda Cotrell, Robyn Moellenberg* and *Jeremy Sharninghouse*. In addition, *Karen Schwab* received her third triennium bar for additional points attained. They also enjoy an annual picnic with Wood County Lodge. District 20 continues to draw a buddy chapter who serves their refreshments and cleans up on the night of Installation and Inspection to allow the chapter members the opportunity to fellowship with their guests. They also have a District Holiday party, which this year featured a “Crazy Christmas Sweater” contest. Many chapters report having dinner prior to their meetings, sometimes even going to a restaurant to celebrate a special event prior to their meeting. Neal #522 held their Inspection at the Ohio Masonic Home in order to allow their members who are residents to attend more easily.

Perhaps some of these **fundraising** ideas will give you something new to try!Falls #245 serves a Harvest Dinner, mails letters from Santa, (and also mail to their shut-ins) and has a Salad Luncheon for funds to support their service projects. For over 50 years, Clermont #135 has done a community birthday and event calendar. It serves as both a fundraiser and gets their name into the community. They also tried a “Fishless Fish Fry” which was a lot less work than a Fish Fry for a small chapter! Cardinal #140 sold business card size ads to put onto a placemat for use at their Country Breakfast fundraiser which also had a “goodie table” with sale items. They also provide a booth at the Sharon Fest, featuring a “Pig Race” and “Feed the Pig.” This year they won “Best of the Fest.” Aldora #262 enjoys the fellowship at their annual garage sale. Neal #522 served a formal dinner to 125 high school students and their parents prior to a dance. Food sales continue to be a highlight, from District 18’s cheese project, to East Palestine #381’s pepperoni and ham and cheese sandwiches, as well as Easter Candy. Dorcas #277 offers a Holiday Hello page in their December newsletter and suggests that members donate to their Ways and Means in lieu of the money they save on cards and postage!

Many chapters share the beauty of Eastern Star with non-members through **Public Relations and Charitable events.** Members ofGlenwood #303dress up for Halloween and pass out treats in front of their temple. Bryan #248 continues to participate in the Hicksville Christmas Cruise Thru with a light and decoration display and a giant Christmas Card along the Christmas Card Lane. Both displays include the chapter’s name. The River #517 donated 30 trees to the city of Rocky River. They transport members for medical needs, provide assistance with Quilts of Valor, donate clothing to “Dress for Success” and help with the Salvation Army. One member assists people doing their genealogy! Cary #221 fix bag lunches for the workers at Habitat for Humanity and provide school supplies for their elementary school, as well as hats, mittens and gloves. They donate candy to the nursing home for the residents to distribute at Halloween, and funds for haircuts. Falls #245 rings bells for the Salvation Army, supports Santa’s Hide A Way Hollow (a Christmas theme park for terminally ill children,) Food Baskets for the Valley of Akron, assisted a sister in TX who lost her home in a hurricane, and processed potatoes for a Food Bank. They planted a memorial garden at a local church in memory of the WP, *Art Robinson.* Muskingham #485 presents scholarships to members or their descendants, this year totaling $2000. Several other chapters also are known in their areas because of their scholarship presentations. Greenwood #159 invites their scholarship recipient, their service pin recipients and their families to dinner before a meeting. The chapter, along with Wood County Lodge, set up an information booth at Campus Fest, letting BGSU students know what is available to them in Bowling Green. The two have also worked together to accomplish the reconstitution of Bowling Green DeMolay. Both efforts have encouraged the membership of young members, for all three organizations. The chapter used their “C” dollars to donate 6 chairs to the pediatric unit of the local hospital. Many chapters reported continuing to collect “C” dollars for local cancer relief donations, as well as Dimes for Dogs, for the Service Dog project. Others continue to collect empty medicine bottles for Matthew 25 Ministries, tabs from pop cans for helping purchase computers for the children at the Shrine Hospital, or for donation to a Rainbow or Jobs Daughter chapter, and shampoo, tooth paste, combs, deodorant, paperback books, pens, and cards for the Yellow Ribbon Support Group which donates to our Armed Forces, and some chapters donate these types of items to local women’s shelters. Cardinal #140 also goes to the Yellow Ribbon Facility and helps stuff Christmas stockings for the troop. In addition, they collect towels, and old dog collars and leashes to donate to the SPCA Sharonville Facility. Millersport #301 donated funds from their birthday basket to help make breast cancer pillows, baby quilts, walker bags and lap blankets. They also donated to the Water’s Edge Food Pantry, and gloves, hats and scarves, socks, tights, and underwear to the local elementary school, and school nurse. They also recognized their local Police and Fire departments with a ham dinner. Aldora #262 supports 4 Paws for Ability with monetary donations and also many pounds of dog food and treats. Neal #522 supports the Rocking Horse Center with hats, gloves, mittens and socks. East Palestine #381 rings bells for the Salvation Army, provides hats, scarves, gloves and socks to a local charity, and usually serves hot chocolate the night of the Christmas Parade. They also help with the noon meal for DOG Days, the day about 200 volunteers come together to do various jobs around town. Dorcas #277 adopted a Christmas family and provided dinner and gifts for them. Their *Jeni Nibouar* knit 246 hats and 157 ear warmers (dedicated to the memory of her mother, *Marti Phelps,* 1992 DGM District 20*)* which are given to churches and schools. Their WM and WP also sponsored a “Go to Church Sunday,” inviting their chapter members to join them at their church on a particular day.

Perhaps some of these **program ideas** will encourage your chapaters to enjoy the beauty of our fellowship with our sisters and brothers. Reber #161 used “It’s a Small World” as the theme. Each meeting was assigned a different Disney Movie, and details from the movie were included in the evening activities. The River #517 had Elvis visit, recognized the military and masons with a presentation by *John Youngblood*, Day #479, (who also presented a patriotic program at Falls #245), collected books and magazines for USO for the presentation by *Kelly Hunt*, winner of the GM’s Hero Award, and her service dog, and enjoyed a cookie exchange and cake walk. Cardinal #140’s WM presented Registration gifts this year. The sentinel would bring in the Registration book and four numbers would be chosen from the order in which members signed in! Two women, and two men each meeting were winners! At Installation, many chapters present traveling jewels to their WM and WP, but Cardinal #140 has a traveling jewel for each of the line officer positions! Several chapters mentioned doing something annually to celebrate their anniversary, often involving food! It is good to learn that many chapters join with their Masonic lodge for fellowship, whether it is a Christmas Party with entertainment for children and grandchildren, a Thanksgiving gathering, a Riverboat luncheon ride, a trip to the outdoor drama Tecumseh, or simply meals shared together. East Palestine #381 enjoyed a “Blast from the Past” with a fashion review of OES attire from prior years. They annually hold a tea to honor their 50 year members and invite family and non-members to be a part of the celebration.

It has been a privilege to receive your newsletters, letters, and emails, and to hear from several with G appointments as well as many chapter secretaries. If something is missing, it is probably because I didn’t learn about it!! Help me write a fuller report next year by sending information as it happens!

Our WGM *Kelly* has reminded us many times over the year that those things which we so often take for granted, the beauties of life and nature, are actually a gift from God, and that our lives will be richer if we “never pass up an opportunity to enjoy Nature’s beauty … it is the handwriting of God.”