

# THE Ashlar

A PUBLICATION FOR MINNESOTA MASONS, STARS AND FRIENDS

MINNESOTA  
MASONIC  
CHARITIES

AUGUST 2023 VOL. 1, NO. 6



INSIDE

## A Journey Through Time:

The History and Evolution of the Minnesota Masonic Home

Left - Right: Bro. Kevin Hendrickson, WB Ron Nelson, WB Mark Anderson, Bro. Teige Ehlen



A MESSAGE FROM THE GRAND MASTER

## Dayton L. Berg



Greetings brethren,

We are halfway through the summer which is yet another reminder how quickly time goes by. The past few months have been busy and very interesting to say the least. I was trying to decide what I could

address that may be new to some of our brothers regarding the **Military and Freemasonry.**

No one truly knows when Freemasonry really began as it is complicated and certainly somewhat of a challenge to articulate. However, as our country evolved and took shape, we definitely know that more than one of our founding fathers were Freemasons (the most notable of course being George Washington who was the first Commander-in-Chief). Thirty-three of the men Washington picked to serve as general officers

under him were Freemasons, along with notable figures like Benjamin Franklin, Paul Revere, and John Hancock.

Overall connection to our military is especially strong for each of the Armed Services, as all were either founded (or profoundly influenced) by Freemasons. It's worth noting that 224 of the men who have been awarded the Medal of Honor were members of our fraternity.

There is so much more information to delve into, but we will save it for later. May your journey in the Craft be safe and enjoyable, and I hope to see you soon.

Fraternally,

— Dayton L. Berg  
Grand Master

A MESSAGE FROM THE WORTHY GRAND MATRON

## Sharon Barlow



Greetings from Eastern Star

Our Grand Family enjoyed initiating six new members into two different Chapters this past month. That's a good thing! The Grand Officers did a great job reciting their lectures to the new members. The Grand Family will journey to Duluth in

mid-July, where we will initiate two candidates. That's a good thing! Following Duluth, we have no future candidates to initiate, but we are hopeful there will be more starting in the fall. After all, Membership IS the lifeblood of our Order.

Our membership has dwindled to a little over 2,000 members in Minnesota. How do we fix that? Did you know the Order of the Eastern Star isn't just a Women's Organization? Did you know that to become a member of Eastern Star you must be a Mason or be related to a Mason? Did you know an Eastern Star Chapter must have a Mason to sit in the East next to the Presiding Worthy Matron? Something to ponder, isn't it?

In the last addition, if you remember, I mentioned that Steve and I have chosen to support the Alzheimer's Association. Here is one of the things we are doing. Support "A Purple Rose for Alzheimer's" by sponsoring a Purple Rose (made by a member) for \$3.00 in honor or in memory of someone this unforgiving disease has touched. The goal is to place the Purple Roses throughout the Grand Chapter room next May at the "Roses of Love and Friendship" session. After

Grand Chapter, they will be distributed to Alzheimer's care units. The donations raised will go to the Alzheimer's Grand Chapter Project. If you are interested in donating, please contact me.

The Minnesota Eastern Star has a website, [mnoes.com](http://mnoes.com), that you are welcome to visit anytime. I hope that you might be interested in looking at it.

Enjoy the summer; fall will soon be here!

Remember to always....

Be Wise

Often Compromise

Always Sympathize

Never Antagonize

Seldom Criticize

Sweetly Harmonize

Wisely Idealize

And, if you do otherwise,

Then Apologize

— Sharon Barlow  
Worthy Grand Matron  
Minnesota Grand Chapter Order of the Eastern Star



# FIRE SUPPRESSION TOOL DEMONSTRATION

Saturday, July 22<sup>nd</sup> the Freemasons of Minnesota held a demonstration of a new type of Fire Suppression Tool (FST) at Lake Superior College's Emergency Response Training Center. They hope to raise funds to donate the device to communities across Northeastern Minnesota.

The FST is an aerosolized unit designed to be thrown into any room with a fire. When deployed it produces a thick cloud that interrupts the heat and the oxygen bind in the fire and can reduce the heat of the fire.

Which buys firefighters time they desperately need. Heath Wiersma, Junior Warden of the Dalles Lodge #181 in Cloquet, MN says, "Time is super important when it comes to firefighting. So being able to gain that time for Firefighters to getting on scene and fight that fire is huge for us."

With the FST cooling the blaze from around 1,000 degrees to closer to 200, the device would be crucial in making sure crews have enough time to set up and protect properties and save lives. And getting the Fire Suppression Tools out to the community is the Freemasons' next priority.

Heath says, "To be able to get these things out into the public and free of charge to them from a donation from our local area lodges is a huge thing."

Right now they're working on getting funding to make that a reality. And in the mean time they hope to motivate other lodge members to consider investing. After seeing the device operate first hand.



Brother Heath Wiersma and Grand Master Dayton Berg



Scan QR Code to watch  
Fire Suppression Tool Demo Video

# EMPOWERING LIVES THROUGH THE MINNESOTA MASONIC CHARITIES ANNUAL GALA



Minnesota Masonic Charities (MMC) has been a cornerstone of community support, driven by the generosity of Minnesota Freemasons. Our resolute commitment to enhancing lives remains unshaken. This fall, a standout event takes center stage: the Minnesota Masonic Charities Annual Gala. This gala presents a remarkable opportunity for Minnesota Freemasons and the community to unite and drive substantial change. By participating in this event, attendees can play a pivotal role in advancing the mission of MMC and shaping a brighter future.

Minnesota Masonic Charities Annual Gala:  
Set for September 23rd, 2023, at the Masonic Heritage Center, the highly anticipated

Minnesota Masonic Charities Annual Gala has been revamped with exciting new elements this year. The gala is dedicated to raising essential funds for the Masonic Charities Scholarship program. This program has been instrumental in empowering the aspirations of high school seniors, college undergraduates, and technical school students by offering them the financial







Left to Right:  
 Director Division of Pediatric Hematology and Oncology, Brenda Weigel, MD, MSc  
 Department Head, Joseph Neglia, MD  
 Department of Pediatrics, Douglas Yee, MD  
 Director of Masonic Cancer Center, Janet Yee

support needed to pursue their educational dreams.

Participating in the Minnesota Masonic Charities Annual Gala transcends mere attendance at a social event. It serves as a testament to our collective dedication to elevating lives. By supporting this gala, we contribute to the betterment of individuals striving for education and a promising future. The impact of our unity can break barriers



Scan to order Gala Tickets!

and empower these individuals to realize their fullest potential.

As Freemasons, we must effect positive change and leave a mark on the world. Rallying behind this event mirrors our core values of benevolence, empathy, and fraternal unity. Let's stand together, enthusiastically engaging in this gala, and perpetuate our unwavering commitment to transforming lives. In unison, we can shape an inclusive future that echoes our compassion and support for future generations, leaving an enduring legacy of positive change.



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# A JOURNEY THROUGH TIME:

## THE HISTORY AND EVOLUTION OF THE MINNESOTA MASONIC HOME



The Minnesota Masonic Home (MMH) stands as a testament to the enduring legacy of its founders and the compassionate spirit of its residents and staff. From its humble beginnings in 1920 to the grand establishment it has become today, MMH has undergone numerous transformations, providing care, comfort, and a sense of community to its residents for over a century. Recently a group of Masons had the opportunity to tour the Home and visit the museum. Because of their feedback, we wanted to share a brief historical timeline of the early days of Minnesota Masonic Home.

### 1920: The Home's Inception and Early Residents

In 1920, MMH welcomed its first superintendent, Brother Charles Wilson, and his wife Ella, who resided on-site. The "Old Home," the original estate home of Marion Savage, was the residence for its first resident, Cevila Burdic, admitted in August of the same year. This marked the beginning of MMH's mission to provide a home for seniors needing care and companionship.

### 1921: The Retirement of Gideon S. Ives

Gideon S. Ives, the visionary and first president of the Minnesota Masonic Home Corporation board of trustees, retired. His dedication and commitment to the Home's establishment laid the foundation for its future growth and success.

### 1924: The Farmstead and Its Importance

A significant development occurred in 1924, as MMH completed the construction of a farmstead west of Normandale Boulevard. The farmstead included various facilities such as a dormitory, stock barn, hog house, creamery, ice house, pump house, and paint shop. The farm was crucial in providing the Home with food and income, allowing residents to work and contribute to the community.



### 1927: The Main Guest Lodge and the Eastern Star's Generosity

In 1927, the Main Guest Lodge, the adjoining Dining Hall, and the Power House were completed, enhancing the living conditions for the residents. The Order of the Eastern Star chapters demonstrated their support by raising \$75,000 for the Home's furnishings, adding to the comfort and beauty of the living spaces.

### 1929: Water Tower and the Renaming of Ives Lodge

A 100,000-gallon steel water tower was added to the farmstead in 1929, further improving the Home's infrastructure. The same year, the MMH trustees honored Gideon S. Ives by renaming the "Old Home" to Ives Lodge as a tribute to the founder's commitment and dedication.

### 1936: Ives Lodge, A Haven of Contentment

In 1936, the MMH Annual Report praised Ives Lodge, the original Home unit, for its warm and contented atmosphere. Residents formed a small, happy family, living in delightful surroundings, reflecting







the Home's mission of providing a place of peace and comfort for seniors.

### **1940-1952: Infirmary, Farm, and Changes**

In 1940, a 52-bed Infirmary building replaced the Home's hospital, providing better medical care for the residents. However, in 1950, the original Ives Lodge was razed, and all residents moved into the Guest Lodge. In 1952, the Home discontinued the use of the farm, marking a significant shift in the organization's focus.

### **1954-1958: Staff Dorms and Expansion**

In 1954, the Power House and Laundry facilities were remodeled into staff dorms, allowing MMH employees to live on-site. These changes also created space for 30 additional residents in the Guest Lodge. Four years later, in 1958, a 47-single-room addition connected the Infirmary to the Guest Lodge, further expanding the Home's capacity to care for more individuals.

### **1967: The Masonic Care Center Dedication**

In 1967, MMH celebrated the dedication of the 156-bed Masonic Care Center. This new facility allowed all patients residing in the Infirmary to move into the new space, and the Infirmary was repurposed to accommodate ambulatory guests and Home employees.

### **1973-2016: Changes and Renovations**

Over the years, MMH continued to adapt and evolve. In 1973, MMH sold the farmstead land to a developer, and it became known as River Bluff Estates. Renovations in 1980 improved the Food Service facilities, ensuring residents received the best culinary experience.

### **1994: A Continuum of Care Community**

In 1994, MMH underwent significant renovations, transforming into a continuum-of-care community. Adding Independent Living Town Homes, Assisted Living Apartments, Memory Care, and Transitional Care Units expanded the options available to residents. The creation of the Town Square provided a central hub for amenities, fostering a sense of community and camaraderie.



### **1998: Eastern Star's Contribution**

In 1998, the Order of the Eastern Star demonstrated its continued support by donating stained glass windows for the OES Chapel, enhancing the spiritual ambiance of the Home.

### **2016: A Tribute to Freemasonry**

In 2016, the Minnesota Masonic Heritage Center was constructed, serving as a working tribute to the concepts and contributions of Freemasonry. The Center included a 443-seat auditorium, Masonic museum, library, and lodge room, enriching the lives of both residents and the wider community.

### **2020: Celebrating a century of compassionate care**

As early as the 1860s, the Freemasons of Minnesota began to plan for a home where their members and others could live out their days in comfort and care. After considerable deliberation, the Masons acquired a large plot of land along the Minnesota River formerly owned by Marion Savage, owner of the famed racing horse, Dan Patch. The property and its facilities were converted into a senior care home, and Minnesota Masonic Home welcomed its first resident on August 3, 1920.

### **2021: Renovation of the OES Memorial Chapel**

In June of 1957, the ground was broken, commencing the Order of the Eastern Star Memorial Chapel construction at the Minnesota Masonic Home. In March 2020, Minnesota Masonic Charities began renovating the 64-year-old chapel with plans to hold a dedication ceremony on April 9, 2021.

As we journey through the timeline of the Minnesota Masonic Home, it becomes evident that this institution has been shaped by its past and continues to evolve with an eye toward the future. With each passing year, Minnesota Masonic Home reaffirms its commitment to providing exceptional care, compassion, and a genuine sense of belonging to those who call it home.



**Scan QR Code to view full article!**



# Leadership in Masonry: Radio and Dreams

FROM THE GRAND LODGE EDUCATION OFFICER WB BRADLEY PHELPS



Jim Irwin, and Ed Mitchell. You can learn more about them in this Scottish Rite Blog. It is interesting to reflect on what drove these Brothers to risk their lives and invest in the space



mission. I suspect it was a strong drive to explore the unknown and a desire to take humanity to the next logical steps. While I never got the chance to travel to and step foot on the moon, I stumbled into a radio hobby that let me do the next best thing: I bounced my radio signal off the moon. Amateur (Ham) Radio has a lengthy and interesting history of service and offers many different avenues of exploration and study. As I said in my previous article, there is no replacement for travel; that said, Amateur Radio opens a new window into the world with structure and civility that the internet cannot or will not offer. As it turns out, many astronauts are amateur radio operators, and there is a strong Masonic presence in the amateur radio community. To learn more, please refer to this short talk Bulletin on Masonic Amateur Radio; de AI0BP.

I would not have been able to achieve Earth Moon Echo (EME) without my Ham Radio mentor(s). The frequencies we used are typically line of sight with a typical range of 50-200 miles. To accomplish this feat took very directional antennas, high power, and the knowledge that the moon would reflect my signal. This might be a far-out question, but how did I know that the returned signal came back reflecting off the moon's surface and not by Marvin the Martian's secret moon base?

The truth is I have no way of saying 100% that there isn't a secret moon base. What I can say is that I am confident that my signal bounce came from the moon itself given the other sources of credible and collaborating information that I have. I am also open to someone or something changing my mind. In today's world, we have so many sources of information that it can be overwhelming. Emerging theories like simulation theory cause science to collide with philosophy and make me appreciate the words of Rene Descartes, "I think, therefore I am."

I would pose to you that we are here to think, learn and

grow. Questions that we might think are silly or that we have a propensity to disregard deserve more than an immediate dismissal. "Silly questions" are what have caused us to grow, and challenge previous consensus and status quo. I have compelling and collaborated evidence that the Earth is spherical and is a planet that rotates around a G-type star at the center of our solar system. This is a stance that is very contradictory of common thought 500 years ago. In that time, my comments might have gotten me thrown in jail (or worse) if uttered in the wrong company. This highlights the importance of sharing thoughts and having civil dialogs as we discover our own truths.



In a recent eMason article, I mentioned a video by WB Michael Poll that explores the disputed origins of Freemasonry. WB Poll acknowledges that there are gaps in our records that make it very difficult to say definitively what our origins are. He acknowledges the research credibility challenges that our Fraternity has faced because of cited sources that did not have enough collaborating information to be historically credible. These are the common modern criticisms of key Masonic thought leaders of the Victorian era or those that built on their thoughts. In response, I think many dismiss everything that they had to say, and I think that this is a shame. WB Poll's video triggered a great conversation amongst Brothers – including reflecting on the idea that Masonry gave a safe meeting place for groups of free-thinkers.

I learned long ago the important differences of hypothesis, theory, and law. I also learned that what is established can change based on new learning. One of the great beauties of Freemasonry is how our teachings give us the foundations for learning and growth together. Modern technological innovations put much into question and may have installed new values that I believe are at odds with basic human societal principles and maintaining our social fabric. I have been reflecting on that and believe that Masonic teachings are key to our next important steps. What do you, and your lodges think?

— Bradley Phelps  
Grand Lodge Education Officer

To view full article



Scan the QR code



# FIELD ELEMENTARY RECEIVES DONATION

On Tuesday July 11th, Field Elementary School PTA was honored to receive a donation check totaling \$15,610 towards the advancement of the physical and educational programs of Field Elementary School, located in south Minneapolis. The PTA had been ambitiously raising funds for a playground system that is more appropriate for the school aged children now attending the school. Lane Merritt, PTA Adviser Chair stated, "The school had changed from being a grade 6-8 school, to being a grade 3-5, and needed a playground set, which encourages collaborative play and social skills amongst young children, for our younger students." Merritt continued: "Our fundraising efforts for playgroup equipment were successful, due to the generosity of the community and parents. But after all of those generous contributions, we wondered how we would raise the funds to install the playground equipment."



Earlier in the year, Dan Rauchman, whose wife Kate is on the Wellness Committee with Field PTA, was approached by David Hartman of Minnehaha Masonic Lodge located at 5149 Bloomington Ave. S. and asked if there was anything the PTA and Field Elementary needed in regards to financial help. Dan, who is also a member of the lodge, explained the situation they were in, and wheels were quickly set in motion to help the school. On Saturday May 7th, the Freemason's lodges of Minnehaha, Cataract, and Braden held a breakfast fundraiser with an amazing menu, and incredible support from the community! Over four hundred people consisting of Field Elementary parents,



students, and members of the Freemason community, came together over tres-leches buttermilk pancakes with strawberry mascarpone topping and a drizzle of sweetened condensed milk. Fresh strawberries, scrambled eggs, and cheesy hashbrowns too! Cataract and Minnehaha lodge members and professional chefs, Andrew Hall and Allen Domingo, conceived the menu. "We're not going to do just plain old pancakes and sausage fundraisers, we're going to take it up a notch" exclaimed chef Hall.

"With this amazing donation on behalf of the Freemasons of Minnehaha, Cataract, and Braden Lodges, along with matching funds from Minnesota Masonic Charities, we have accomplished our fundraising needs! The families and neighborhood members that make up our south Minneapolis community can't thank you enough", exclaimed Lane Merritt during the check presentation. "Minnesota Masonic Charities is known for larger impacts in the areas of cancer research and healing children in hospitals through our efforts with the U of M Cancer Center, and Masonic Children's Hospital, but we also graciously extend our matching funds, when our masonic lodges work hard in stren strengthening their communities" remarked John Schwietz, COO of Minnesota Masonic Charities.

Look for a playground grand opening celebration at the end of September at Field Elementary School located at 4645 4th Ave. S in Minneapolis. Marketing will be shared on: <https://www.frnng.org/> To learn more about Field Elementary PTA got to [www.fieldpta.com](http://www.fieldpta.com) To learn more about the Freemasons of Minnehaha Masonic Center send a message to: [minnehahamasoniccenter@gmail.com](mailto:minnehahamasoniccenter@gmail.com), and Minnesota Masonic Charities and their impact: <https://mnfreemasons.org/mmc/>

To view full article



Scan the QR code

# UPCOMING EVENTS



## Minnesota Masonic Charities Annual Fundraising Gala

Saturday, September 23<sup>rd</sup> @ 5:30pm,  
Masonic Heritage Center, Bloomington, MN  
Reserve your tickets today!

## Grand Lodge of Minnesota Lodge Hall Dedication

Sunday, September 30<sup>th</sup> @ 1:30pm, Corner Stone Lodge,  
Underwood, MN

97



**Welcome back to the Masonic Conundrum!**  
Conundrum #96 Recently I made my annual trip to the Black Hills, South Dakota. There is so much beauty to see in this area – if you have not been, I would highly recommend a visit. Several years ago, a Brother asked if I had seen the Cemetery in Deadwood. I thought this was an interesting question to ask, and of course I responded with, “No... Should I?” In response I got a wide smile with, “You should really check that out”.

That was enough to pique my interest. When I was next in Deadwood, I followed his suggestion. The first thing I noticed was that I had to travel up a very large hill to get to the cemetery. Once at the top, I was at the visitor’s center. This is the cemetery where Wild Bill and Calamity Jane are buried. That is interesting, but I was certain that this is not why Worshipful Brother Kurt suggested the visit. I went up to the greeter and asked, “Is there something in this cemetery that would be of particular interest to a Freemason?” Her eyes lit up and said that the local Freemasons had a fundamental part in planning the cemetery layout and pointed to the center of the map, and suggested, “You want to make sure and visit here”. I saw roads that had very familiar names: David, Darius, Boaz, Jachin, Solomon, Jabez and Hiram.

With a little help from the tour literature and a Black Hills Pioneer article, I discovered that the Deadwood Masonic Lodge formed in 1877. In 1878, Lawrence County bought land for the development of the Cemetery, and in 1887 Deadwood Lodge purchased 1.5 acres of the cemetery. The layout of this section is structured like a Masonic lodge and is formed in a large oval on an east/west axis. The celestial lodge is one of a very few in the country and was re-dedicated in 2017 by the Grand Lodge of South Dakota, Deadwood Lodge and the Deadwood Historic Preservation Commission. The article continues to describe the make-up of the cemetery, and notes that famous historic Masons of the area: Seth Bullock, Sol Starr and George Ayres are also buried there.



WB Mark Robbins sent me a great **video** (scan QR code below) that is another great resource to learn more about Mount Moriah cemetery, and the connection to St. Cloud granite. That said, videos and articles are not a replacement for seeing this treasure in person. With it being so close, I would highly recommend the trip to you.

In my conundrum clue, I mentioned the hand of a Dead man. I capitalized that in reference to Deadwood. Wikipedia notes that Wild Bill was a famous character in the Old West and was a known soldier, scout, lawman, cattle rustler, gunslinger, gambler, showman, and actor. Bill was also shot in the back during a game of poker in Saloon No. 10 located in Deadwood by a disgruntled gambler by the name of Jack McCall. The hand Wild Bill was holding when he was shot was





Aces and Eights – now known as “the dead man’s hand”.

Bill Hickok was not a Mason, but he plays a very interesting part in local Deadwood history. As a result, Deadwood has actors that re-enact the murder of Wild Bill, and trial of Jack McCall – a melodrama that was presented in the local Masonic Hall for many years. While I was sad to

see its venue changed on my last trip, I am happy that I got to see it performed here previously.

Correct responses were received by: Robert Anderson Jr. (Cataract #2, Minneapolis #19), Al Farmer (Ionic #186), Adam Martin, Clay Anderson (St. Paul #3), M. Wiley Smith, Joel Porter (Lebanon #346), Dick Sellman (Mesaba #255), Mark Hines (Lebanon #346), Harlan Brand (Templar #176), Dave Etter (Mora #223), Mark Robbins (Mankato #12), Jason Ames (Masonic #166), Gary Wettschreck (Forest Lake #344), Jason Breunig (Corinthian #67), Bruce Reichow (Tusler-Summit #263), Herb Berzelius Jr. (Cataract #2), Edwin Fillman (Mesaba #255), Paul Cook (Macalester #290), Steve Bernu (Anoka #30), Patrick Trepanier, Ray Frandsen (Cataract #2), David Sheppard (Arcana #187), Ronald Reed (Grand Lodge of Rhode Island), Jim Runquist (Corinthian #67), Carl Oberg (Arcana #187, Valdez #4), Roger Wollum (Canby #147), Mark Wallen (Monticello #16), Bradley F. Johnson (Fortitude Lodge #188, Gila Valley #9)

Send your answers by September 30<sup>st</sup>, 2023 to:  
[masonicconundrum@gmail.com](mailto:masonicconundrum@gmail.com)



Scan QR Code for for Deadwood's  
Masonic Celestial Lodge Video



Scan QR Code for Book Review by  
MWB Thomas G. McCarthy



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The perfect ashlar shows what can be done with a rough, unpolished and unsightly piece of stone as a result of skill, industry and perseverance, so man, with all his rudeness, roughness and imperfection, may, under the operation of the Divine workman be polished and prepared until he becomes a noble character fit to be included as a part of the great spiritual temple which will abide forever.