

# THE Ashlar

A PUBLICATION FOR MINNESOTA MASONS, STARS AND FRIENDS

MINNESOTA  
MASONIC  
CHARITIES



May 2025 VOL. 1, NO. 12

## GUIDED BY THE PAST. INSPIRED BY THE FUTURE.

2025 Annual  
Communication  
Reflects the Strength  
of Tradition and the  
Promise of the Future.



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A MESSAGE FROM THE GRAND MASTER

## ROBERT S. DAVIS

### SYMBOLISM AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE 2025-2026 GRAND LODGE COIN



The 2025–2026 commemorative coin of the Grand Lodge of Minnesota is more than a token of recognition—it is a rich emblem of Masonic purpose, values, and vision. At its core, the coin embodies the timeless message that “Everything You Do Matters,” a call to intentional living and Masonic integrity.

One of the coin’s most striking features is the hexagon encircling six words: Volunteer, Training, Education, Connection, Community, and Leadership. The hexagon, a six-sided figure found in nature’s most efficient structures, such as honeycombs, is symbolic of the Masonic beehive. In Masonic tradition, the beehive represents industriousness, harmony, and the collective effort of individuals working toward a common good. Each word inscribed on the hexagon reflects a facet of our work as Masons—how we serve, grow, teach, connect, lead, and give back. Together, they express a balanced and structured approach to building a thriving Masonic community.

The coin’s overall symbolism resonates deeply with Freemasonry’s three principal tenets: Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth. “Connection” represents Brotherly Love, the authentic bonds and mutual respect we foster in our lodges. “Community” embodies Relief, our commitment to service and outreach. “Education” speaks to Truth, our pursuit of wisdom and self-improvement. The presence of the Square and Compasses with the letter “G” at the center reinforce our dedication to moral living, spiritual reflection, and the guidance of the Great Architect of the Universe.

Finally, the phrase “Everything You Do Matters” reminds us that every interaction, decision, and effort has weight. It is both a challenge and a reassurance that our Masonic journey is built moment by moment through conscious, values-driven action. Whether mentoring a new brother, supporting a community project, or simply leading by example, our contributions have a ripple effect that extends far beyond what we may see.

This coin calls each of us to act with purpose and uphold the Craft with honor—because indeed, everything we do truly matters.

A MESSAGE FROM THE WORTHY GRAND MATRON

## Kathleen Taylor



Dear Sisters and Brothers, I greet you with great joy and humility as the new Worthy Grand Matron of the Minnesota Order of the Eastern Star. It is an honor to walk this path with each of you—guided by our timeless pillars of fidelity, constancy, loyalty, faith, and love. These values are the foundation of our Order and the heart of our work in the world.

This edition reflects on the recent Grand Lodge Annual Communication Conference—a gathering rich with purpose and unity. Though our paths as Eastern Star and Freemasonry are distinct, our shared

mission to serve is stronger than ever. Together with Minnesota Masonic Charities, we are deepening our efforts to uplift lives across our community.

Looking ahead, we return our focus to one of our most meaningful callings: the Minnesota Masonic Home. As we begin to plan for the future, we renew our commitment to this beautiful campus in Bloomington—to support those who live there and honor and uplift those who care for them. In doing so, we reaffirm our belief that charity begins with compassion and service is love.

Let us move forward, hand in hand, inspired by our shared legacy and the potential of what we can accomplish together. May this be a year of purpose, progress, and heartfelt connection.

Working together for the greater good,  
Kathleen Taylor  
Worthy Grand Matron, Minnesota OES

# REFLECTIONS OF HONEY

## BRADLEY PHELPS, GRAND LODGE EDUCATION OFFICER

Many of us face challenges balancing our interests and needs with the demands of every day life. In response to this struggle, I revisited the book, *Atomic Habits* by James Clear. Available in both print and audio formats, I highly recommend it for its valuable insights about achieving balance. While listening, I reflected on my accomplishments this year, particularly regarding my physical, mental, and spiritual well-being. Although I will maintain some privacy regarding specific achievements, I am pleased to share that I have made significant progress in weight loss, which marks an ongoing journey toward better physical health. The strategies outlined in the book, such as accountability partners and habit stacking, played a crucial role in this progress. While reading, I indulged in one of my rewards – a honey drop candy.

This sweet is deeply meaningful and reminds me of what I strive to be. Honey is timeless and never spoils. As it is stated in *Atomic Habits*, bad habits bring instant gratification or benefit with long-term sacrifice. Good habits are achieved with short-term sacrifice and bring long-term benefits. When you think about honey, it is a pretty fascinating substance – collected and stored by the hive, inhospitable to growing microorganisms or spoilage, and used since ancient times. It is worth considering the valuable insights gained from reflecting on how honey benefits the hive and the fact that honey can outlast the worker bees that produce it.



Read the full article here:



## OPEN HOUSE



On **Thursday, June 5, from 4–6 p.m.**, we're opening our doors at 24 W 2nd Street in Duluth and inviting you to step inside.

Whether you're a longtime supporter, curious about our mission, or just want to see what makes this place so special, we'd love to show you around.

Join us for a tour, good conversation, and light refreshments!



Scan to RSVP





# MASONS RUN WITH PURPOSE AT GOLDY'S RUN 2025



On April 6, 2025, forty-four Masons from nineteen Lodges came together at the University of Minnesota to launch a new wellness initiative—promoting healthy lifestyles while supporting the Masonic Children’s Hospital. Teaming up with Goldy’s Run, Minnesota Masonic Charities encouraged both runners and walkers to participate in an act of community service with a spirit of camaraderie.

With perfect weather and over 8,000 participants, the event was full of energy, nostalgia, and brotherhood. Whether running or walking, the Masons shared stories, reflected on Freemasonry, and enjoyed the scenic course through the East Bank Campus—culminating in a powerful finish at the 50-yard line of the football stadium.

More than just a race, the day was a celebration of Masonic values and a commitment to health and philanthropy. Plans for next year are already underway!

Read the full article here:



## The Civility Project, Duluth



**Presented by: Grand Lodge of Minnesota & Minnesota Masonic Charities**

The Civility Project is designed to engage the younger generation and teach them the significance of decorum, kindness, and civility in today’s society. Rooted in the timeless principles of the Masonic Fraternity, this project emphasizes values that are more important now than ever—putting down our phones, making genuine eye contact, and learning to walk alongside those who may see the world differently.

### Event Details:

May 29th, 6–7:30 PM  
Duluth Masonic Temple  
4 W 2nd St, Duluth, MN 55802  
RSVP to [Markus.Mueller@mnmasonic.org](mailto:Markus.Mueller@mnmasonic.org)

Learn more about hosting a Civility Project Presentation in your area by visiting [civilityprojectmn.org](http://civilityprojectmn.org)

LEARN MORE





# ANNUAL COMMUNICATION 2025



M.W. Bro. Kris Goodmanson (Manitoba),  
RWB Craig Davis (Iowa)

The 172nd Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of Minnesota took place April 11–12 at The Park Event Center in Waite Park, MN.

Grand Master Foster D. Solem was pleased to welcome over 400 brethren from Minnesota, along with dozens of visiting Grand Lodge officers, concordant guests, and spouses. This year's gathering featured a wide variety of breakout sessions, fun social activities, and fellowship.

The busy weekend's festivities were capped off with the installation of Grand Master Robert S. Davis and the Grand Lodge officer line for 2025–2026. Mark your calendars now for the 173rd Annual Communication, to take place on April 17-18, 2026!



CHECK OUT PHOTOS  
FROM THE EVENT



Congratulations Grand Master  
Robert S. Davis



RWB Robert S. Davis,  
MWB Foster D. Solem,  
WB Brad Phelps and  
WB Gerry Coulson



2025 Grand Master  
Robert Davis



PGM Foster Solem and Beverly



RWB Robert S. Davis, MWB Foster D. Solem  
and M.W. Bro. Kris Goodmanson (Manitoba)



SR. Grand Warden  
Chuck Brust



Worthy Grand Matron CJ Brase



Grand LEO Bradley Phelps



# CONUNDRUM 102 – SIDEREAL DAY

The following has been submitted by my good friend and Brother WB Brian Smith of Rochester Lodge #21. As a reminder, if you have an idea for a conundrum or article, please reach out to me: [traveler@bythecompass.org](mailto:traveler@bythecompass.org). I would love to work with you to get them into publication.

The correct answer was submitted by Bro. Adam Martin of Accacia Lodge #51. Thank you to everyone that submitted thoughtful answers. Keep it up!

## How many times does the Earth fully rotate on its axis in one year?

The answer seems straightforward. There are approximately 365.24 days in a year. So, to “fully rotate” you would simply round down to 365, right? Well, if it were easy this would not be a true conundrum!

To answer this Masonic conundrum we must “Look to the South” – to our beloved Junior Warden (JW). The Master of our lodge tasks the JW to call out high-twelve, or noon, when the sun is at its meridian height. Our JW uses his plumb line to determine when the sun is no longer advancing or receding. This, then, is noon. Whether high-twelve is declared at the JW station in the lodge, the UK’s Royal Observatory at Greenwich (which, to this day, declares noon), or a ship at sea: this is noon. From one noon to the next is exactly 24 hours.

**Fun Fact:** This declaration of noon is completely independent of the 12:00 PM you would see on your watch or cell phone. We humans have created 24 time zones to standardize time in each zone. The JW’s declaration of high-twelve would be different for Taconite Lodge #342 and Red River Lodge #292 due to their difference in longitude. In fact, there is a good 23-minute difference between the JW’s declaration of high-twelve from eastern to western Minnesota!

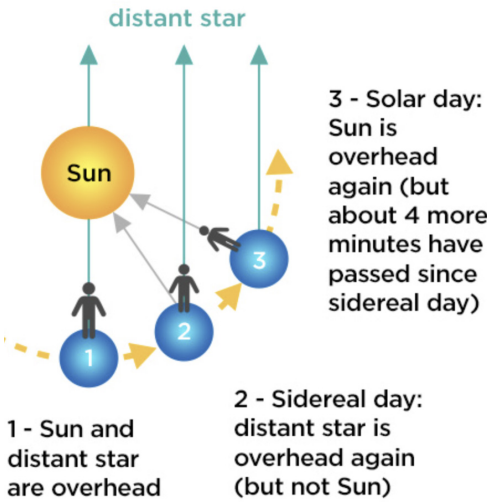
(I could expand: Sir Sanford Fleming, who worked as an engineer for Canadian railways, knew this problem firsthand when he missed a train in 1876. This experience gave him the idea for a standard time, with hourly variations according to different zones around the world.)

Assuming our stalwart JW does not move from his station, it must also be true, then, that the Earth rotates exactly once on its axis between the JW’s declaration of high noon yesterday and today, correct? The answer is no. Herein lies the answer to our conundrum.

The key to understanding the solution to this conundrum is that in one 24-hour day, the Earth rotates slightly more than one full rotation on its axis.

Allow me to explain. Not only does the Earth rotate on its axis, but our Earth also orbits the Sun. This extra 1/365 of a full orbit around the sun forces our Earth to rotate on its axis an additional 3 minutes and 56 seconds per day to get to the next noon.

See the diagram below from [solarsystemscope.com](http://solarsystemscope.com). At (1) our JW declares high-twelve – the sun is at its meridian height. We Masons move from labor to refreshment. Life is good! At (2), the Earth (and our JW!) has completed a full rotation on its axis, but due to our orbit, the Earth has not quite rotated enough for the JW to declare noon. This sidereal day is 23 hours, 56 minutes, and 4 seconds long. It takes an extra 3 minutes and 56 seconds for our intrepid JW to declare noon at (3).



This extra ~4 minutes of rotation a day adds up to a full extra rotation in a year. Therefore, the Earth actually rotates on its axis 366.24 times a year. Rounded down: yields 366 full rotations.

Next time you see your Lodge’s Junior Warden give him a nod of recognition for a job well done. Without him, how would the Master of our Lodge know when to call the craft from labor to refreshment?!

### Conundrum #103

Short and sweet, and please don’t cheat (by looking it up):

**Which two Freemason authors had a complex and strained relationship due to differing views on spiritualism?**

While it is true that one was known for his literary works, the other was a famous showman by trade.

Please send answers to [masonicconundrum@gmail.com](mailto:masonicconundrum@gmail.com).



## MEETING SPACE FOR YOUR LODGE



Every Blue Lodge in Minnesota is eligible for one complimentary use of the Ames Lodge Room annually. Also, book your additional Masonic events at 50% off the standard hourly rate.

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## MINNESOTA MASONIC HISTORIES & MYSTERIES PODCAST

Don't miss the latest episodes featuring KSTP's Joe Schmit, a candid conversation with Chuck Brust, and an inspiring interview with cancer warrior Mike Neeson, who shares his personal experience with the Masonic Cancer Center.

Subscribe today on **Spotify**, **Apple Podcasts**, or your favorite platform.

LEARN MORE



## ORDER OF THE EASTERN STAR SPOTLIGHT

Thank you to everyone who joined us for a wonderful brunch at Grand Chapter! Minnesota Masonic Charities looks forward to working closely with Star Members in the next year.

*Congratulations!*

**WGM Kathleen Taylor  
& WGP Kurt Johnson**



# 2025 AREA CONFERENCES



**30**  
APRIL

**LAKE HARRIET MASONIC HALL**  
4519 FRANCE AVENUE SOUTH • MINNEAPOLIS

6:00 PM  
9:00 PM

**30**  
JULY

**MOUND MASONIC TEMPLE**  
2372 COMMERCE BOULEVARD • MOUND

6:00 PM  
9:00 PM

**29**  
OCTOBER

**SAVAGE MASONIC TEMPLE**  
4821 124TH STREET • SAVAGE

6:00 PM  
9:00 PM

**14**  
JUNE

**PLATO MASONIC TEMPLE**  
200 EAST PLATO BOULEVARD, ST. PAUL

10:00 AM  
3:00 PM

**26**  
JULY

**TRINITY MASONIC TEMPLE**  
2118 WEST FIRST STREET • DULUTH

10:00 AM  
3:00 PM

**13**  
SEPTEMBER

**MOORHEAD MASONIC TEMPLE**  
1815 11TH STREET NORTH • MOORHEAD

10:00 AM  
3:00 PM

**20**  
SEPTEMBER

**HISTORIC MASONIC HALL**  
309 SOUTH SECOND STREET • MANKATO

10:00 AM  
3:00 PM

★ FEATURING PROF. KATHY QUICK FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA



VIA YOUR GRAND VIEW ACCOUNT



# THE Ashlar



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## WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

To contribute news articles and photos about your Lodge activities or upcoming events, please email them to [theashlar@mnmfreemasons.org](mailto:theashlar@mnmfreemasons.org).



If you would like to receive the digital version of the Ashlar in lieu of the paper issue, please sign up on Grand View.



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## THE ASHLAR

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.