



Star Gazer



Kansas Grand Chapter - Order of the Eastern Star

Volume 16

March/April 2026

Edition 4

Kansas/Oklahoma Exchange



The Elective and Appointive Grand Officers of Kansas and Oklahoma

The Kansas/Oklahoma exchange was held February 27 and 28, 2026, in Bartlesville, Oklahoma. The committee of Kansas consisted of Ronna Kimbrell, Chairperson, Carlene Brown and Jo Jennings. The committee of Oklahoma consisted of Ashley Andrews and Ronna Kimbrell, co-chairs.

The planning and work started in October of 2024. All meals were held at the Bartlesville Lodge in Bartlesville, Oklahoma as well as the official meeting, and the social time was held at the Hilton Garden Inn, also in

Bartlesville, Oklahoma.

The meeting was opened by Sister Pattie Zoelner, Worthy Grand Matron of Oklahoma and the Oklahoma Grand Family. The altar and charter were draped in honor of Sister Mary Ellen Tidwell, Past Grand Matron, and Sister Mary Stables. Introductions were completed in alternating order by Oklahoma conductresses, then Kansas conductresses, allowing all in attendance to see the differences between the two jurisdictions one after the other. Everyone considered this incredibly interesting and enjoyed seeing it.

Friday evening the Oklahoma Grand Family initiated Dianne Fallis, a new member for Bartlesville Chapter, and Sister Judy Perry walked as the acting candidate. After a successful initiation the meeting was called from labor to recess and we all retired for the evening with many attending the social time at the hotel.

There was much chatter and laughter as well as many snacks to share. Games were played and new and old friendships were strengthened.

Continued on page 4

In This Issue.....

WGM's Page.....	2
WGP's Page.....	3
Cruise & Spring Charity.....	4-5
Calandar.....	5
Around the State.....	6-7

Deadline for next issue is
June 22, 2026

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Assistance Dogs

Worthy Grand Matron



Teresa M. Ryan

**Theme:
Plant a Seed**

Aims:

**To celebrate the Order
of Eastern Star and honor
the history of those who
planted seeds before us.**

**Watchwords:
Service, Faith, Belief**

**Motto:
Spread Encouragement
Every Day**

Scriptures:

**WGM:
Matthew 17:20
Hebrews 11:1
Psalm 118:24**

**WGP:
1 Thessalonians 5:17
1 Peter 4:10**

**Honor Stations:
Conductress, Associate
Conductress, Chaplain**

**Emblems:
Sunflower, OES Star
Square and Compasses
Holy Bible**

From the Desk of the WGM.....

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Happy Spring! It has been so wonderful to see the membership and their service to our beautiful Order as we have travelled near and far from East to West and North to South and back again. I have truly enjoyed this past year and am really looking forward to our Plant A Seed 150th Grand Session starting on April 20th.

We shared a weekend with our Oklahoma Sisters and Brothers at the end of February. There was much fun and fellowship. The Grand Officers from both jurisdictions performed their work beautifully and the Kansas Grand Officers initiated a member for Oklahoma. The Grand Officers of Oklahoma were able to perform their Alter and Charter draping ceremony. The Kansas Grand Officers were able to show how we prove chapter with the staffs. The introductions were a back and forth event and made the night more fun seeing how those are done differently in each state.

The Spring Charity event was a success and I thank you for your generous donations of raffle items which brought in a substantial amount of money for KSDS Assistance Dogs Inc. It was amazing to see the demonstration of the service dogs and to get to meet their owners. The meal was great and the fun and fellowship during the live auction was very entertaining. I appreciate the service shown at this event.

As we enter into a season of change, I encourage you to continue planting seeds and Spread Encouragement Every Day. I have done my best this year serving as your Worthy Grand Matron and it is my hope that I have made our star a little brighter for the next group of officers to follow. There are not enough words to express my gratitude for the love and support I have felt this year and throughout my journey to the East.

Star Love,

Teresa M. Ryan

Worthy Grand Matron
Plant A Seed 25-26



From the Desk of the WGP....

Greetings from your Worthy Grand Patron.

And the Adventure Continues . . .

A little over 3 years ago, Sister Wendy Cunningham and Brother Dave Hendricks asked me to join their Grand Family as Grand Sentinel. The ensuing week was one of much reflection and prayer. I was (and am) still working full-time and really struggled to be comfortable with the time commitment I imagined would be needed. Listening to people who were and are much smarter than me, I finally said I would accept.

And the Adventure Began . . .

Fast forward a year and the membership (that's you) of the Kansas Order of the Eastern Star decided to have me continue as Associate Grand Patron.

Fast forward again, to just a year ago and again (for reasons beyond me) you once again affirmed that you wanted me to continue and serve as the Worthy Grand Patron for the ensuing year. And the Adventure Continued . . .

Serving as the Worthy Grand Patron for the 150th anniversary of Kansas OES has been a year that will remain a strong memory for the rest of my life. The many people I have met, friends I've made, places I've traveled, meetings I've attended, honors I have been given – this year is indelibly etched in my mind. From the youth events, local and state level attended, where I saw the future of Kansas OES being developed, to the many 50-year and 75-year service pins awarded which celebrated years and years of dedicated service to our beautiful Order, I was warmly welcomed and cheerfully greeted without exception. Thank you to everyone who said "Hello," who shook my hand, who shared a story of how Star has impacted their life, and especially to those who had a warm smile of welcome. YOU are the heart and soul, and the future, of our Order. Thank you to the many people who said "Yes" when they were asked to help throughout the year, especially our Grand Family. And speaking of youth and the future, it was an absolute delight to have my son serve as Grand Chaplain (both his mother and I were also Grand Chaplains), and see our grand-daughter, an active Job's Daughter member, accompanying her Dad at some events.

There were many days and nights of travel, events and meetings to attend, and the occasional opportunity to take a picture or two. Over 25,000 miles of travel by car was logged throughout the year, which does not include the travel associated with the Cruise Kansas OES fundraising cruise we enjoyed in January of this year. In all, my "picture or two" resulted in over 1,300 images captured at more than 30 events being posted in albums on the Facebook page of Kansas Order of the Eastern Star group to chronicle activities of and promote our Order.

Now, as my "year in the Grand East" draws to a close, I find I am truly looking forward to continuing to serve our Order in whatever way(s) I am asked. And the Adventure Continues . . . ;

Safe travels, my friends.

O. Carl Anderson

Worthy Grand Patron



Worthy Grand Patron



O. Carl Anderson

Just for Fun:

WGM:

Roller Skates, Green Bay Packers, M&M's, Hershey Kisses

WGP:

Lab Rats, Photography, Amateur Radio, Science, Reese's

Colors:

Yellow, Green, Blue, Brown

Flowers:

WGM:

Sunflowers, Lilacs

WGP:

Orchids

Songs:

WGM:

Plant A Seed Somewhere Over The Rainbow I Can Only Imagine Marches written for Past Grand Matrons

WGP:

Make Me A Servant Freely, Freely

Kansas/Oklahoma Exchange

Continued from page 1

Saturday brought us back together for lunch, then the meeting was called from recess to labor and more introductions were made by those unable to attend Friday. The Kansas Grand Family took over and initiated Robbie Gordineer for Bartlesville chapter, with her husband Brother Craig Gordineer walked as an acting candidate. As always, getting to see the differences in the degree work is always

interesting. After another successful initiation, a coin march was held which combined with the income from the Table Fairy money raised, the committee was able to make presentations of donations of \$250 to both Bartlesville Lodge and Chapter, as well as donations to each Worthy Grand Matron for the charity of her state of \$2,142.00. The meeting was then closed by Sister Pattie Zoellner and the

Oklahoma Grand Family and after the Grab and Go dinner everyone was on their way home.

After a few more additional donations after the event for the table fairies, it was discovered we were able to send another \$150.50 to each state to add to their charity donations.

Attendance for Friday: 126
Attendance for Saturday: 143

Cruising Through Kansas



Wow! We had 78 people join us on our cruise from January 23 to the 31st. The cruise was definitely an adventure. The transportation getting to Houston and then onto the ship in time was definitely a nail biting experience for some of us because of the weather. This trip had a lot packed in it. As a group, we had an ice cream social, group dining in the evenings which included entertainment from the wait staff who also serenaded 4 couples celebrating anniversaries and one birthday. Some of us had nightly shots with dinner giving us a new collection of Carnival shot glasses. There was lots to do on the ship from endless trips to the buffets, lunches at Guy's burgers (Chip's favorite), a share the wealth raffle, learning how to make towel animals (Christy I expect to see some at Grand Chapter), poolside fun, roller coaster rides, massages, trivia



contest (Adrienne knows her Big Bang Theory show), a variety of shows and some spirited games of UNO flip to name some of the fun we experienced aboard the ship.

There were a variety of excursions that people got to experience from glass bottom boats, swimming with the dolphins and manatees, snorkeling, visiting the ruins in Costa Maya, wine tasting and chocolate pairing, ATV and dune buggy adventures, and a visit to a tequila farm. In Mahogany Bay, we joked that we can now cross off our bucket list being caught in a monsoon because some of us got drenched in the rain! One of the best parts is that we got to miss the severe cold and snow that everyone else had while we were gone.

We raised money with a share the wealth raffle, some of the winnings from the door decorating contest and the

donation from Carnival Cruise line. Stay tuned for a total amount raised in the report given at Grand Chapter. We would like to thank everyone for joining on this fun cruise.

Melanie Marcy, Chr
Christie Britt
Teresa Ryan WGM



Thanks to all who provided photos for this issue!
Carl Anderson WGP,
Glenda Gilpin, Melanie Marcy
and Ron Kammerer
Thanks!

Spring Charity

“Let’s Paw-ty” Spring Charity 2026 took place on March 14th in Emporia, KS. The tables were decorated with yellow, green and blue table covers, each with a blue color mason jar with navy roses and sunflowers. The meal was catered by 627 Event Space, providing us with pulled pork, cheesy potatoes, and salad as well as some relish trays. We finished the meal with Wanda Ryan giving some interesting facts about Eastern Star, while the members enjoyed a beautiful cake decorated with a large sunflower, with the star point colors shining through. Rhonda Theroff set up and ran the silent auction, to which we made \$917.00 and a little over \$200.00

on the trinkets that were donated by the families of Past Grand Matrons, Patricia Berry and Virginia Johnson.

After dinner we went upstairs for the live auction, where the auctioneer was really engaging with the members. We had wine baskets, bears, collegiate signs, quilts and so much more.

We brought in an estimated total of around \$9,000.00. Overall, the food was great, the auctions were fun and everyone enjoyed the fellowship.



Photos from the Cruise and Spring Charity



**Up Coming Events!!
Mark your Calendar!**
(With Covid and the flu still around...Please be mindful of your Sisters and Brothers)

**Change of Date!!
April 20th - 22nd
Grand Chapter
Topeka**

**Worthy Grand Matron and
Worthy Grand Patron
Reception
Saturday, May 2, 2026
Hutchinson, KS**

**More Information
Coming Soon!**

Grand Receptions

May 16, 2026

May 30, 2026

**Please see your
Chapter Secretary for
more information**

Star Gazer Information

The Star Gazer is published quarterly, normally in June, September, December, and March. Actual publishing dates may vary, depending on circumstances.

Distribution of the newsletter is primarily through electronic means. Paper copies of the newsletter are available upon request.

The Star Gazer is a publication of the Grand Chapter of Kansas. Production is the responsibility of the Communications Committee of Kansas Grand Chapter OES.

Articles and pictures may be submitted for inclusion by sending them to the editor at:

cindy@smithlawoffices.net

All articles and pictures are subject to editing and approval prior to publication. Please include names of individuals in photos when submitting for publication.

Around the State!

Service Dogs

ESTARL



Pictured above is of Phil Stacy who is the Worship Pastor at Central Community Church in Wichita, KS. He is one the ESTARL recipients for this year. He is enrolled in the Doctorate program at Asbury Theological Seminary and just completed the first semester and is starting the second Semester of a 3 year program.



Liberal Chapter members have collected \$150 in one-dollar bills throughout the year for the Kansas Chapter Challenge program. Sister Caitlin Gilmore has creatively arranged these “D and G” bills into a puppy face. As a reminder, the deadline to participate is approaching. Please ensure that all \$150 fund increments are mailed to the Grand Secretary’s Office and postmarked by April 6th.



Missiori OES sister Nancy and her KSDS Service Dog “Par” (Photo to the Right) KSDS trainer Deb talking and she brought “Ozzie” with her. I didn’t get a picture of “Ozzie” he will be placed at the KSDS April 18th graduation. All are welcome to attend.



Some of the supplies brought to Spring Charity by OES Chapters and members. Supplies can be donated to KSDS all year round. Check the KSDS website for current listing. Thank you to everyone who contributed supplies for KSDS throughout the year.



Thank you Sisters and Brothers from the Grand Chaplain

As many of you know, I had a major life event during my year as Grand Chaplain and have been in an uphill climb since. When we become members of Eastern Star, we promise to give to our sisters and brothers advice in their troubles, sympathy in their sorrows, and aid in their misfortunes. To the Craft at large, my family would like to give our deepest thanks for how all of you have fulfilled that obligation.

Not even a week after I filed the papers, my parents were being asked in Iowa about how Aubrey and I were doing. News of a Brother in need crossed state lines to fulfill that obligation.

I have lost count of the number of times I have been given encouragement or advice in the trials I have gone through this year. And every time my parents or I were asked, people made

sure to ask about Aubrey as well. As we requested, everybody treated her the same so that she had some normalcy in her life, and for this, I can never thank you all enough. My chapter as a whole has been a well of support for me, but I would also like to highlight two sisters specifically for their actions during this time. Barbara Say and Violet Wayman of Miriam Chapter #14 have both stepped up for me in quiet support.

Barbara has taken Aubrey to her Jobs Daughters activities in Topeka every week when my work schedule prevents me from doing so. She has already marked in her calendar when my schedule will again rotate to where I am unable to attend meetings. She volunteered for this, and has treated Aubrey like one of her own so she could continue to have normalcy and continue to grow in

her fledgling Masonic journey.

Violet Wayman, as soon as she received word came up to me with a calendar, and asked what official visits and other Grand Family activities I had planned to attend. She informed me that she was my new travel buddy, and I quickly realized that there was no telling her no. We have spent many hours behind the windshield together, talking about Star, life, and religion together.

I do not wish anyone to experience the difficulties I have had this year. But if anyone has to face what Aubrey and I have together, I pray they have the same support network I have through my Masonic Family. Everyone of you, through your actions, thoughts, and prayers, have encouraged us, and we would not be where we are today without your support.

The Chair in the East

It is not special because of how it looks, It is not powerful of where it is located in the Chapter Room. It usually is not very comfortable. The Worthy Matron's chair is heavy—not with wood or fabric, but with responsibility, doubt, sacrifice and expectation.

When a Sister is elected to that chair in the East, something changes. Not because she is better than her Sisters and Brothers around her—but because from that moment on she carries them. Their harmony, Their disagreements, Their hopes for the Chapter, Their frustrations when things don't go right. Every empty seat on the sidelines or in the Chapter Room floor. Every Sister or Brother who drifts away, or everyone who stays.

The chair does not elevate a Sister—it exposes her. It reveals her patience when it runs thin. Her temper when tested. Her humility when pride whispers. It forces her to make decisions that will not make everyone happy. It forces her to choose what is right over what is easy. And sometimes, it forces her to sit alone with those choices long after the lights are turned off and the doors are locked.

There are nights when the Chapter Room feels quiet. Too quiet. Nights when she looks out and sees empty chairs and wonders what more she could have done. Nights when she questions whether she is strong enough, wise enough or even worthy enough to sit where so many Sisters have sat before her.

No one tells her that part.

No one tells her about the weight she feels when using the gavel for the first time—or the lump in her throat setting it down for the last time. No one tells her how much of herself she will give or how little recognition she will receive for it. And no one tells her how deeply it will change her.

The Worthy Matron's chair demands everything she has—and asks for more. It asks her to lead Sisters and Brothers who are older and know more than her. It asks her to stay calm when emotions run high. To protect the harmony of the Chapter, even when her own spirit feels worn down, To put the Chapter first, even when life outside the Chapter walls demand attention.

And still-- she shows up.

Because Eastern Star was never about comfort. It was never about titles. It was about service, when service hurts.

When she sits in the Chair, she does not sit alone. She sits with the ghosts of every Worthy Matron who came before her—the ones who struggled, the ones who failed, the ones who gave everything they had. She feels their presence. She feels the unspoken expectations: leave it better than she found it.

And when her year is done, when the Badge and gavel are passed on, she walks away changed. A piece of her will remain in the Chair. The Labyrinth she walked through. The Chapter she worried over. In the Sisters and Brothers she tried to lead the best way she knew how.

The Worthy Matron's Chair does not make a Sister great.

It will break her down.

It will humble her.

It will test her.

And if she is honest about the experience—it will make her better.

So when you see a Sister in the East, do not see a Sister seeking power, see a Sister carrying the weight to fulfill the duties of her office and the Obligation, taken at the Altar. A Sister who chose responsibility over recognition. A Sister who sat in a Chair that demanded more than it will ever give back.

And if you have ever sat there yourself—you already know.

Original Words "The Master's Chair" written by Steven Miro, Smithfield Lodge #182, Smithfield, Ohio
Adapted by Wendy Cunningham PGM Kansas "The Worthy Matron's Chair" with his permission



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Dear Sisters and Brothers of
Kansas Eastern Star:

Walking is great exercise for heart health. Regular walking helps reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke, Type 2 diabetes, many cancers, depression and cognitive decline. Walking helps lower blood pressure, improve cholesterol, strengthens bones and helps with weight management. The AHA recommends 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity a week. A brisk walk will meet that goal. Having trouble getting motivated? Try joining a walking club or find a friend to walk with. Just get up and start walking your heart will love you for it.

My heart beats for OES
Garrie Oppitz, GGCCM – Heart