

OES PROSPECT NIGHT PROGRAM

Freemasonry, or the Masons, is recognized as the oldest, largest and most widely known fraternal organization in the world. There are over 4 million Masons throughout the world and lodges in most every country. In our United States, there are over 2.5 million Masons and in Colorado, there are 131 Masonic Lodges and 17,000 Masons.

Masonry is most proud of the charitable work it does around the world and this work is supported by other appendant bodies of Masonry, such as the Order of the Eastern Star. The Eastern Star is the largest fraternal organization to which both men and women may belong. The Order of the Eastern Star was organized for the relatives* of Master Masons or Master Masons in good standing at the time of their death, as well as the Master Masons themselves. Minimum age requirement is 18 years old. Worldwide there are nearly 1.25 million members with over 5600 of these being in Colorado and belonging to one of the 47 Chapters across the state.

*(wives, daughters, legally adopted daughters, mothers, widows, sisters, half sisters, granddaughters, stepmothers, stepdaughters, stepsisters, daughters-in-law, grandmothers, great granddaughters, nieces, grand nieces, mothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, aunts, daughters of sisters or brothers of affiliated Master Masons, as well as to members - either active for three (3) years or majority - of the International Order of Rainbow for Girls or the International Order of Jobs Daughters)

(If non Masons are in attendance, have a representative from the Lodge present a brief overview of the requirements for membership and basic teachings. More detail discussion may be held at the conclusion of this presentation.)

I am sure many of you here have heard many things about the Eastern Star, so let's take a few moments and talk a little about what Eastern Star **IS** and what Eastern Star **IS NOT**.

First, let's talk about what Eastern Star **IS NOT!!**

1) Eastern Star is not a religion or a substitute for one or is it an offspring of any church. Eastern Star does **not take** the place of any church, but is its friend and servant. While Dr. Rob Morris, who founded our beautiful Order, used beautiful and inspiring Biblical examples of heroic conduct and moral values to portray the noble principles which should adorn all our lives and while it is true that we must all profess our faith in a Supreme being, and that most of our members are active workers in their church, let us be very clear that **Eastern Star is NOT a religion or a church.**

2) Eastern Star is not a secret society or a cult. While I am sure that some of you have heard that the Eastern Star symbol represents a cult, nothing could be further from the truth. There has never been any attempt to hide our aims, goals, purposes or membership. The star is situated the way it is, that is inverted, because it is considered

symbolic of the Star of Bethlehem, which pointed downward towards the manger where the Christ child lay--hence that is the way our Eastern Star Chapter rooms are set up. You may look forever for any perceived secret connotations, however there are none!

(3) Eastern Star also is not a political active group. While we are all encouraged to take an active part in all civic affairs and be civic leaders, we do not endorse a political party.

NOW, let's take a look at what the Order of the Eastern Star **IS**:

First - Eastern Star is **reverence**. We are a social Order comprised of people of deep religious convictions and spiritual values. All Eastern Star members show reverence towards God--We all believe in God! Although primarily of the Christian Faith, Eastern Star is open to all faiths that believe in a single deity. The lessons taught come from the Old and New Testaments of the Holy Bible. Many Eastern Star members will tell you that they are better Christians because of the beautiful religious lessons illustrated in our degree work. Eastern Star generally strengthens a person's sense of responsibility to God. The Holy Bible is displayed and used at each meeting. Eastern Star is caring, fairness and loving-kindness. Our Order strives to take good people, such as you, and through uplifting acts of love and service, be of benefit to all mankind. In everything we say and do, we are taught to treat our fellow men with the same fairness and truthfulness that we would expect from them.

Second - Eastern Star is **charity**. Eastern Star, together with the Masonic Family, is part of the most benevolent organizations in the world. It is a well-documented fact that we give over \$2 million per day to charity. Building an Order that is truly dedicated to charity was a dream of our founder, and is conclusive evidence of our need, our worth, and our value to society.

Finally, what makes Eastern Star special? There are many great fraternal and philanthropic organizations: The Women's Club, Lions and Rotary just to name a few. What makes Eastern Star different, or unique in its endeavors?

The answer is simple. As a member of the Masonic Family, Eastern Star grounds its existence upon ritual. Ritual is what makes our wonderful Order function. Ritual is the heart and soul and character of the Order. Ritual is the tutorial of right living, orderly conduct and structured existence. Ritual brings discipline to chaos. Thus, one of the greatest lessons of the ritualistic work is self-discipline.

Ritual offers a superstructure of support to all things we do. By nature, we are not too good at coping with disorder and confusion. We try to organize our lives through mental and written notes: grocery lists, to-do lists, birthday and anniversary lists, etc. Ritual offers us the same efficient control of a given situation during a specific period of time.

Ritual offers a social lubricant between people. The interpersonal relationships between families are often built around rituals: Sunday after church family dinners, weekly trips to the Grandparents' and many more. Each action further cements the unity of the family through repetitive orderly conduct.

Ritual educates. Ritual is the oldest and best-established teaching tool. Repetition is a valuable part of ritual. Mnemonics is the opera of teaching.

Ritual gives a sense of identity. Our ritual and our actions give an underlying sense of reality to our lives. We feel "right" or "complete" when we follow certain rituals.

Ritual is a precursor to what follows. Ritual prepares us for what is to come. It is the lead-in for our activities. It is the foundation of our future efforts. Ritual is all this and more!

OES - LOCAL LEVEL (Tell about what your local Chapter is involved in around your community.)

OES - STATE LEVEL

WGM Special Project

Each year, our Worthy Grand Matron, who is the "state president" so to speak, selects a special project for all to work for. The Heart Fund, Diabetes, Cancer research, Multiple Sclerosis, and the Ronald McDonald Houses in Colorado have been just a few of the more recent examples of these projects. Thousands of dollars, all donated by Colorado OES members, have been raised to support these various projects.

Youth Organizations

Many of our Eastern Star Chapters help to support the Order of the Rainbow for Girls, Job's Daughters and DeMolay Chapters in their area. These three organizations exist for young ladies and men between the ages of 11 and 18 and are character building in nature and teach the principles of good clean living. These youth are the future leaders of our world, and whatever we can do to further their Christian, moral, and leadership training to better prepare them to be better people and leaders in life is certainly worthwhile.

(Invite and recognize those leaders and members of Youth Groups to make a presentation regarding their organization.)

Scholarships

Each year Colorado Eastern Star awards three Scholarships through the Glen Monroe Youth Scholarship Fund to students furthering their education. Donations are made by our members to assist in these efforts. This past year a \$1000 scholarship was given to a graduating senior in each of the three Masonic Youth Groups: Order of Rainbow for Girls, Job's Daughters and DeMolay.

Eastern Star - Masonic Home and Center

The Official Opening of the Robert Russell Eastern Star Home was on September 28, 1931 for the purpose of providing an assisted living facility for our members. For almost 80 years we have continued to provide quality care for those residents in a beautiful country-inn style environment. The Grand Lodge of Colorado, Ancient Free and Accepted Masons, joined us in our efforts and we have now become the "Robert Russell Eastern Star-Masonic Center of Colorado, Inc."

Our Assisted Living Home has 38 single rooms, some with private baths and some share a bath. Our Home is licensed for private pay and we are a Medicaid facility for the Home and Community Based Services Program. At our Home we provide 3 meals a day plus snacks, assistance with daily needs, 24 hour nursing staff, planned group activities, all housekeeping and laundry, a beautiful Chapel, library and beauty shop.

Our Retirement Village, called Star Vista Village has 58 one and two bedroom patio homes for independent living on ten acres. These lovely units are available either on a rental plan or on an entrance fee plan. There is also a lovely club house for the Village where residents have many activities. In addition, any resident of the Village may utilize the services of the Assisted Living Facility such as the dining room, beauty shop and chapel. In addition each unit has call buttons to the Home where 24 hour nursing assistance is available.

It is an ongoing process to maintain and upgrade our Home and Village, keeping it attractive to our elderly members of the Masonic Family. The members of the Eastern Star are large supporters of our Center.

OES - NATIONAL LEVEL

SCHOLARSHIPS - ESTARL or Eastern Star Training Awards for Religious Leadership is a project that all Eastern Star members World Wide take an active part in. Awarded at both the state and national level, these scholarships aid and assist those men and women who are actively studying for the ministry, the mission field, youth leadership, religious education and church music education.

Shrine Crippled Children and Burn Hospitals These hospitals provide the finest care for crippled children and burn victims - all at no cost to them or their families. Eastern Star Chapters all across the country contribute to these hospitals with their donations of not only money, but with gifts for the young patients, and large amounts of volunteer time.

Knight's Templar Eye Foundation whose objectives are for research, surgical treatment and/or hospitalization for diseases or injuries to the eye in an effort to prevent blindness. This service is available to anyone regardless of race, creed, color, age, sex, or national origin. The treatment of patients for this purpose shall be free and limited to persons unable to pay.

Thousands of dollars are raised each year by Eastern Star Members for **Cancer, Heart and Diabetes Foundations**, to name a few.

Eastern Star combines friendship and fellowship among people by binding them together to promote a common goal - that being to help their fellow man. Our Order is constantly searching for people of high mental, moral, and spiritual quality who will work together in harmony to perform our objectives. People who are willing to "make a difference." A deep fraternal bond exists among the members of Eastern Star because of the brotherly and sisterly love we have for each other. This is brought about through high principles that are exemplified in our daily lives, which makes us near and dear to each other. If you were invited here tonight as a guest, then a high compliment has already been paid to you - that being, that someone knows that you already meet these standards. Our work in our local communities, our state, and nationally, through the programs we have talked about tonight are very worthy causes.

We are not here to high pressure or "quick sell" you on signing a petition for membership. We do hope however that what you have heard here tonight will let you consider membership in the Eastern Star. After you go home, if you have any questions about anything that you have heard here tonight, please contact the person that asked you here and they will answer your question or find someone who can answer it.

We thank you for taking time out from your busy schedules to be our guests tonight, for your attentiveness, and we hope we have told you something about Eastern Star that will make you want to become a member of our Order.