

STARLITES MEMBERSHIP CORNER-MAY 2025

GRAND CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT 2024-2025

Of course, the most significant thing that happened in the past year related to membership is the legislation that passed at the GGC Triennial Assembly which allows for sponsorship (by an OES sister and brother) for women who do not have a Masonic relationship. Time will tell the impact this will have on our membership numbers. The new preliminary Petition for Degrees and the new preliminary Report of Investigating Committee may be found in The Member Hub of the Grand Chapter website (password protected section). These did receive final approval at this session.

Per the Grand Chapter Constitution, the responsibility of this committee is:

To promote membership and attendance and provide educational and developmental resources to the subordinate chapters. It shall establish and maintain an information and resource center for the use of subordinate chapters.

This is different than the Marketing/Website Committee which is outward reaching.

Sisters and Brothers, here are the things this committee has done this year:

- Worked with the Marketing Committee to produce a new business card with a brief description of what The Order of the Eastern Star is. This is to help you answer the question when non-members ask about OES. Each of you received one of the cards when you checked in for this session. Please carry this in your purse or wallet. In addition, each chapter will receive a small supply of cards so you can give to your active members who are not at this session. It would be good to carry several of these cards and also have them available at a community event. You can request more cards from the Marketing Committee.
- This committee has supported AGP Kurt Johnson in periodic Zoom calls for younger members of the Order. The idea is to see what can be done to get younger members engaged. However, the participation by younger members has been minimal and there has been little consistency in participation. So, this subject will be reevaluated.
- We heard on the young member Zoom calls that people are looking for OES education. So, we have tried a few of these calls. We had good participation when we talked about the GGC change allowing for sponsorship for women. The other two calls had very little participation. We are going to try this one more time on Monday, June 30. Brother Kurt Johnson will talk about Rob Morris and the beginning of OES, GGC and MN Grand Chapter. Look for the Zoom link in "Starlites," on the Grand Chapter website and the Masons, OES, etc. Facebook page. If we get little participation, these will likely not continue.
- Committee Member Katy Riffe brought to the committee a new way of communication called Discord. This was explained in the Membership Corner in the April "Starlites." Katy then spoke about Discord.

A couple of things coming up this year:

- A Subordinate Chapter Line Officer Handbook-When finalized, this will be posted on the Grand Chapter website.

- The Membership Committee will sponsor attendance at a production at the Ives Theater at the Masonic Heritage Center in October or November. The production and date are still to be determined. Watch "Starlites" for details. We especially encourage those from Greater Minnesota to attend.

I also want to tell you that we have been getting a number of inquiries about OES through the Grand Chapter website. This is very encouraging! Seven have come in this year (and three of those were in the month of March). Robbinsdale Chapter has already initiated one of those sisters and she has a friend who may join later. Acacia Chapter initiated a sister by sponsorship who had originally inquired in 2023 but did not have Masonic relationship. Someone from the Membership Committee will initially reach out to those who inquire. And if the person wants to learn more, a chapter near where the person lives will be given the person's contact information. Sisters and Brothers, please follow up with these people as soon as possible and let the Membership Committee know the result. We cannot let these opportunities slip away.

The number of new members initiated in 2024 was 15, which is much smaller than the several prior years. However, there have been several initiations in early 2025 and I think we are already close to the 15 if we have not exceeded it. I am hoping with much of the year to go and with sponsorship for women, that the number of initiations in 2025 will exceed any of the recent years.

And a few reminders about things we have talked about in the past:

- Speakers Bureau-Please utilize these folks to make your meetings interesting.
- Templates of letters that can be sent to newly raised Masons and their significant others telling them about OES (of course, the significant other no longer needs to be a spouse).

Both of these things can be found on the Grand Chapter website. Go to "For Members" and then "Member Resources." A password is not required. There are also two videos that were recently posted and these are options to show at a meeting. Many other membership resources also reside in this section.

Lastly, keep reading the Membership Corner in "Starlites." The New Initiate Plaque was awarded to White Bear #200, White Bear Lake, for initiating 5 new members in 2024. (They also initiated 5 in 2023.) Runner up is Trinity #242, Duluth, with 3 new members.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathie Brown, PGM, Chairperson