

So I'm A New Member. . .

What Happens Now?



A pamphlet for the newly initiated member
Things you should know

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You are now a member of the largest fraternal organization in the world for both women and men. Its members are comprised of men who are Master Masons and women with specific Masonic relationships. It encircles the earth with over 10,000 chapters in the United States, Canada and 18 other countries. Several chapters form a district and these districts join to form a state organization – a Grand Chapter. Most Grand Chapters are under the jurisdiction of the General Grand Chapter.

Though its teachings are based on the Bible, the Order of the Eastern Star espouses no religion and it's neither secret nor political. Our spiritual symbol is the "Star of Bethlehem." Thus, the five-pointed Star is our accepted emblem. Our initiation is symbolic of the road of life.

Millions of dollars are raised annually within our membership for numerous projects that benefit mankind. Many national and local charities are among the projects supported by our members. Through this fraternal service to

humanity, our members strive to build a better, more fulfilling way of life for all.

You have just completed the ceremony of your initiation in the Order of the Eastern Star and are now fully entitled to take part in all of the functions of your Chapter and visit other Chapters of the Order. The concern is that, during that ceremony, a great deal of information was presented to you in a rather bewildering hour of being escorted around the Chapter Room. You vaguely remember something about having to know certain questions to gain admission to the Chapter you are visiting but you do not have any idea of what they are. Don't use this as an excuse not to visit another chapter because there are others who have been or are in the same position. Many of us have felt the same way.

The purpose of this pamphlet is to provide some guidance in what is expected of you, and how you can find out more information.

In some Chapters, to aid in the orientation of a newly initiated member, another member is appointed to be your Mentor (Big Sister or

Brother) who will explain the different signs, when they are used and your involvement in the other parts of the different ceremonies. In addition, any other member that you may know should be able to help you. Attending the first few meetings after your initiation is the best way to become at ease with the Ritualistic work. In the Chapter meeting Officers perform the opening and closing ceremonies in the Ritual. The Ritual also includes the ceremony of your initiation along with other important information. Between the opening and closing ceremony is the business part of our meeting and how it is done can be found in the Book of Instructions in the Manuel and Code. The Manuel and Code also includes Grand Chapter of Georgia's By-Laws, Rules and Regulations as well as the Book of Instructions. In most Chapters you will be presented a Ritual at your initiation: if not, the Ritual and Manuel and Code can be purchased from your Chapter Secretary. Also by making an effort to attend as many meetings as soon as you are able to after your initiation, you will fix your name and face firmly in the minds of the members who knowing you to be a member, will be prepared to help you if

you are having trouble with any part of the work.

We will now begin by giving you some idea of what to expect that first evening. After your initiation you were informed of the meeting days and times. You should plan to be there at least 15 minutes prior to the starting time. Getting into a meeting after the doors are closed requires a procedure that can be easily avoided, however, it is nothing to be worried about if you are late. There will be someone (Sentinel) sitting outside the door that will be glad to help you. Remember to Ask! Before leaving home, check that you have your Dues Card, and that it is signed. You may be asked to show a valid Dues Card for admission to a Chapter where you are not known. Contact the Chapter secretary to pay your dues and obtain a Dues Card if you have not already done so. This can be done before or after a meeting. If you are visiting a Chapter where you have not previously been, have a sister or brother who sat in a chapter meeting with you vouch for you or the Examining Committee can examine you. The Examining Committee will ask you to recite the Test Oath which you will find in the Ritual and be

prepared to give signs and passes of the Star Points.

Now what to wear! In your initiation ceremony you were told only that hats and gloves are not to be worn in the Chapter room. In Georgia the women wear a dress, suit, skirt and top, such as would be worn at church or in an office. For the men, sport coats and slacks or shirt and slacks and sometimes a suit is appropriate. After you have been a member for awhile and have become a Chapter Officer, there will be times that you will wear formal attire, women in long dresses and men in dress suits or tuxedos.

When the Bible is open on the Altar, it creates a holy area between it and the East and no one is permitted to walk between them except during the Initiation Ceremony and Installation of Officers.

The Labyrinth is the pentagon shaped area around the Star Points with the Altar in the center.

The Reverent Attitude is assumed during Opening and Closing Ceremonies. When either the Conductress or Chaplain enters the Labyrinth, clasp hands loosely, left

hand palm up and the right palm laid over it held at waist level. The Attitude of Prayers is assumed when the Chaplain kneels at the Altar by bowing the head while still clasping the hands in Reverent Attitude and is held during the prayer. The head is raised after the prayer response "So may it ever be". Drop hands to sides when all leave the Labyrinth.

The presiding officer who is usually the Worthy Matron is responsible for the use of the Gavel. Three raps of the Gavel calls up the entire Chapter to a standing position, two raps calls up the officers and one rap calls the Chapter to order, one rap seats Chapter when standing, one rap complete Opening and Closing Ceremonies and one rap completes an order of business.

Grand Honors are given to those who are entitled to be presented West of the Altar and escorted through the Labyrinth to the East. Face the East when the Worthy Matron says "Sisters and Brothers . . ." Give the Grand Honors in one motion by crossing the arms over the breast, the left over the right, with hands open with a slight bow. Grand Honors are given to Most Worthy Grand Matrons, Most Worthy

Grand Patrons, Past Most Worthy Grand Matrons, Past Most Worthy Grand Patrons, General Grand Chapter Officers and Committee Members, Worthy Grand Matrons, Worthy Grand Patrons, Past Grand Matrons and Past Grand Patrons and 50 year Members when they receive their 50 years pin. Grand Honors are also given to Worthy Matrons and Worthy Patrons at their Installation and Grand Representatives at Grand Chapter. Grand Honors are given when a recipient is standing in the East.

After the Opening Ceremonies if you wish to speak, stand, wait until the Worthy Matron acknowledges you and then say, "Worthy Matron" followed by your comment or question. Voting is done "by the usual sign of the Order," which is raising the right hand.

At the close of the meeting, respond to the Worthy Matron's "Farewell" by answering "Farewell" with a slight bow.

WHAT IS THE ORDER OF THE EASTERN STAR

Someone may ask no matter who you are
What is the Order of the Eastern Star?

If you've not been a member for a while or
so,

There are just a few facts you may want to
know.

We belong to an Order, the largest of its
kind.
A fraternity in which men and women you
will find.

Its members are found in every corner of
the globe,
And each is part of the great Masonic fold.

Our purpose is to inspire good; it's that
simple and plain;
The tenets of truth, charity, loyalty and
kindness we train.

Charitable and benevolent projects are the
things we do
To help friends in need and to see their
trouble through.

Our principles are based on Biblical days
But in no way conflict with our religious
ways.

We have lots of fun, too, as everyone
should,
Meeting and traveling and working for
good.

And because of our goals, we develop a
bond
For each member, one to another, we
become very fond.

This is an Order like no other you will find,
A chance to do good for your fellow
mankind.

-- Author Unknown --

Finally, let us again welcome you into the Order and into this Chapter in particular. We want you to feel comfortable among us and not fear the unknown. We hope that you will enjoy yourself while joining with us in works of charity and benevolence. To that end, feel free, at any time to call on any of the members you know, and especially the member designated to be your Mentor, for assistance.

Our meeting nights are

at

Worthy Matron_____

Telephone_____

E-Mail

Address_____

Worthy Patron_____

Telephone_____

E-Mail

Address_____

Secretary_____

Telephone_____

E-Mail

Address_____

Mentor_____

Telephone_____

E-Mail

Address_____

GIVE TO THE ORDER THE BEST
YOU HAVE,
AND THE BEST WILL COME BACK
TO YOU!