

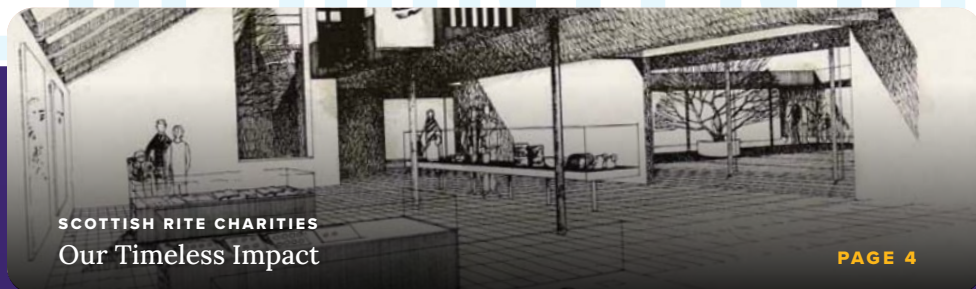
Northern Masonic Jurisdiction

# SCOTTISH RITE™



## OUR TIMELESS IMPACT

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## Scottish Rite Charities 2024 Impact Report

### OUR VISION

*We will strive to be  
a fraternity that  
fulfills our Masonic  
obligation to care for  
our members.*

### LEADERSHIP

Walter F. Wheeler, 33°, SGC  
Supreme Council, AASR, NMJ, USA

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The Scottish Rite Benevolent Foundation, formally known as the Supreme Council Benevolent Foundation, is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization that supports the Scottish Rite, NMJ's charitable and educational endeavors.

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## SCOTTISH RITE CHARITIES TEAM



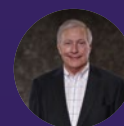
**WALTER F.  
WHEELER, 33°**  
Sovereign Grand Commander



**BRIDGET  
STEELE**  
Senior Director of Charities



**GEORGE T.  
TAYLOR, 33°**  
Development Officer



**GARY  
LUKOVICH**  
Development Officer



**MACLEAN  
RANKIN**  
Charities Coordinator



**KATIE  
MCELWAIN**  
Development Associate



**SPENCER  
NORTH**  
Development Associate

# Our Timeless Impact

Throughout the Scottish Rite's history, its commitment to charity has been unwavering. Each of our Scottish Rite Charities was built on a foundation of compassion, generosity, and a steadfast dedication to changing lives.

When the Scottish Rite Benevolent Foundation was established more than 80 years ago, some of its earliest support helped rehabilitate wounded World War II soldiers. Over time, our mission has expanded to meet the evolving needs of our members and communities. From awarding college scholarships through the Abbott Scholarship Fund – formed to empower young minds – to making dyslexia support a priority for thousands of children, our reach and impact have grown.

But our work is about more than just programs and initiatives. It's about the people whose lives are transformed. It's about the student who gains confidence and skills to pursue their dreams. It's about the family searching for answers that finally finds hope through our Children's Dyslexia Centers. It's about the aging member, no longer able to travel to his Valley, who reconnects with his Brothers and experiences degrees from the comfort of his home.

One of the most inspiring aspects of working for the Benevolent Foundation is connecting with the people whose lives have been touched by your generosity. I've seen the raw emotions of a widow finding comfort in a time of loss, a mother's joy when her child finally learns to read, and a family's relief when they receive the lifeline they desperately needed.

And it's not just those we serve whose lives are changed. I've heard voices crack and seen tears flow as members describe the transformative experience of delivering an Almoner's check to someone with nowhere else to turn. I've

witnessed the passion of a dedicated Center Director or tutor as they recount the moment when a struggling child finally grasps a concept, and everything clicks.

These moments remind us of the profound impact of our work on individuals, families and communities. They inspire me and the staff here to strive for even greater impact and to reach more lives in need.

None of this would be possible without the generous support of donors like you. As you read these stories and see the numbers in this Impact Report, I hope you feel the same sense of pride and purpose that we do. Your contributions are more than figures on a page – they provide opportunity, support, and relief to those who need it most.

**Our impact is timeless, and with your support, our future is boundless.**

Thank you for being a vital part of this journey.

  
BRIDGET STEELE, SENIOR DIRECTOR OF CHARITIES

# A LEGACY OF IMPACT

## WHERE WE BEGAN

**1900** Ill. Charles Levi Woodbury, 33°, makes a bequest to “The Charity Fund of the Trustees of the Scottish Rite of Freemasonry,” which did not exist at the time. This is the first step toward developing a formal and continuing charitable fund.

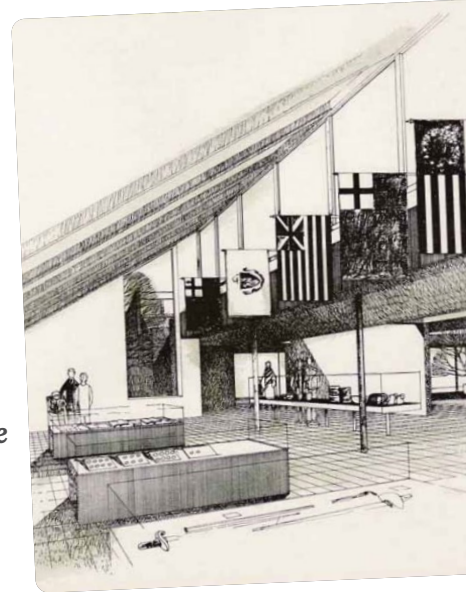


**1922** Ill. Leon M. Abbott, 33°, creates fifteen college scholarships, one for each state in the NMJ, for a deserving son or daughter of a Master Mason to attend a school of their choice.

**1941** The Supreme Council Benevolent Foundation is established by Ill. Frank A. Smythe, 33°, to benefit

**“such religious, charitable, scientific, or educational purposes as the donors thereof shall direct, or, in the absence of specification by the donors, as the Supreme Council shall direct.”**

**1945** The Benevolent Foundation provides aid to rehabilitation of wounded soldiers at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey.



**1969** Annual donations to the Benevolent Foundation surpass \$500,000 for the first time.

## 1910s

**1913** The Scottish Rite Benevolence Committee is formed.

**1918**

**“Our Masonic organizations have the most perfect system of charity ever devised by man, in which the right of a man to loving assistance is limited only by his need and the ability of his Brethren and his Lodge {...} Every body of Masons is bound by the highest possible obligation to see to it that no Brother, or the wife or child of any Brother, shall be hungry, cold, or naked, or be buried in a pauper’s grave.”**

**ILL. JAMES H. CODDING, 33°**  
GRAND SECRETARY GENERAL

## 1920s

## 1930s

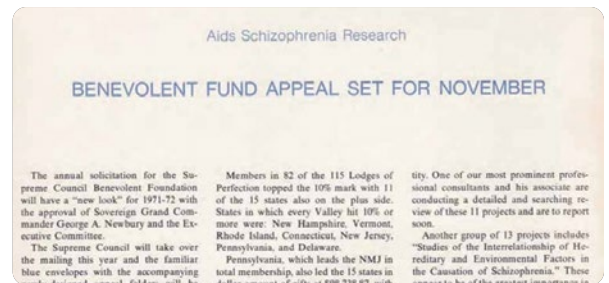
**1934** Research begins into the cause, prevention, and cure of schizophrenia, following a report from SGC Ill. Melvin Maynard Johnson, 33°.

## 1940s

## 1950s

**1950** The Supreme Council Education and Charity Fund is established for journalism students.

## 1960s



**1955** The Blue Envelope Appeal for the Supreme Council Benevolent Foundation is inaugurated by the Valley of Philadelphia.



**1985** Leon M. Abbott Scholarships are first awarded to individual students from the Foundation itself, rather than going to partner universities for journalism programs.

**1989** Donations to the Benevolent Foundation surpass \$1,000,000 for the first time.



**2001** The Builders Council is launched, a giving society for donors who have pledged and/or given \$10,000 or more to the Children's Learning Centers.

**2002** In the wake of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction joins with the Southern Masonic Jurisdiction to announce a pledge of \$2.3 million towards disaster relief.

**2004** Over \$10 million is raised during the 10th anniversary of the Children's Learning Center program.

**2020** Thursday Night at the Rite is established as a response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

**2022** The Grand Almoner's Fund surpasses \$10 million in aid distributed.

**2023** The Children's Dyslexia Centers celebrate 30 years.

**2025** The Scottish Rite Masonic Museum & Library celebrates its 50th Anniversary.



1970s

1980s

1990s

2000s

2010s

2020s

**1970** A Mental Health Research Fellows of the Scottish Rite Scholarship is established to supplement a lack in government funding for research on schizophrenia and mental health.

**1975** The Scottish Rite Masonic Museum & Library opens as the Museum of Our National Heritage in Lexington, MA.



**1993** The first Scottish Rite Masonic Children's Learning Center (now the Children's Dyslexia Centers) opens in Newton, Massachusetts.

**2012** The Grand Almoner's Fund distributes \$2 million in aid to Masonic families affected by Hurricane Sandy.

**2019** The White Flower Society is formed to care for Masonic widows.

**2019** The Scottish Rite Membership Education Fund is established.



# OUR IMPACT IN 2024



## 1,400

Children served through our Children's Dyslexia Centers

## 9,500

Season 5 Thursday Night At The Rite views



## 397

Objects added to the Scottish Rite Masonic Museum & Library collection

## 326

Educators trained through our accredited instruction courses



## 660

Items added to the Van Gorden-Williams Library & Archives



## 339

Abbott Scholarships awarded to students furthering their education



## 73

Brothers and their families assisted through the Grand Almoner's Fund



## 294

Pathfinder Program completions



## 5

New inductees into the American Masonic Hall of Fame



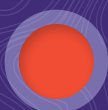
## 30

Hauts Grades Academy graduates

# BY THE NUMBERS

**\$7,131,058<sup>54</sup>**

Total Dollars Raised in 2024



**\$5,118,289<sup>10</sup>**

CHILDREN'S DYSLEXIA CENTERS



**\$168,983<sup>34</sup>**

MEMBERSHIP EDUCATION FUND



**\$229,760<sup>76</sup>**

SCOTTISH RITE MASONIC  
MUSEUM & LIBRARY



**\$505,837<sup>27</sup>**

BLUE ENVELOPE APPEAL



**\$468,832<sup>34</sup>**

GRAND ALMONER'S FUND



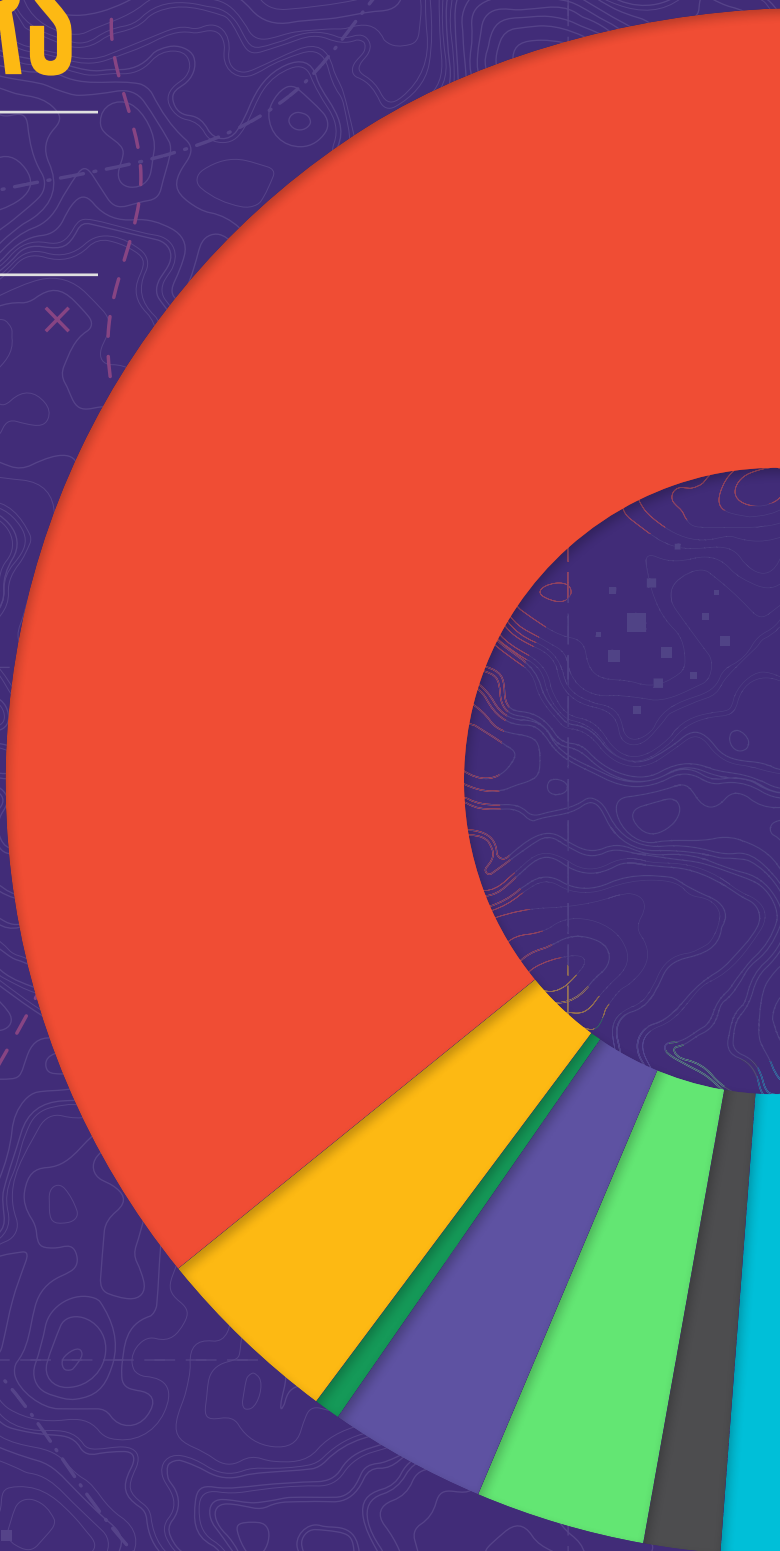
**\$76,951<sup>20</sup>**

LEON M. ABBOTT SCHOLARSHIP FUND



**\$562,404<sup>53</sup>**

SCOTTISH RITE BENEVOLENT FOUNDATION





# Leon M. Abbott Scholarship Fund

## By the Numbers

**\$424k**

Distributed in  
scholarships  
to students

**339**

Deserving scholarship  
recipients

**208**

Colleges & universities  
represented



In 1922, Sovereign Grand Commander Ill. Leon M. Abbott, 33°, created a college scholarship program intended to aid journalism students in their education. Since its creation, the Leon M. Abbott Scholarship Fund has grown to support Masons and their family members in any field of study.

**Abbott Scholarships are awarded to deserving students who meet any of the following criteria:**

- A Scottish Rite Mason of the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction in good standing
- A student related by blood or by legal means to a current or deceased Scottish Rite member of the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction
- A member of a Masonic-sponsored group located within the fifteen states of the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction

# Student Spotlight

**The Leon M. Abbott Scholarship Fund has helped provide a college education for thousands of deserving students. *Marie Gruver, one of this year's scholarship recipients, is using her scholarship to fund more than simply tuition or textbooks.***

Marie is a senior at Hollins University and is double majoring in Classical Studies and History. She focuses on the urban planning and architecture of Ancient Greece, between 3,000 and 800 BCE. After college, she hopes to pursue a graduate degree and a doctoral degree in Europe, and then work with the American School of Classical Studies in Athens.

The Abbott Scholarship made Marie's high hopes for her education more attainable. Both of her parents are elementary school teachers, and although they are helping to fund her time at Hollins, there are extracurricular programs that enrich Marie's college experience and professional development that were difficult to afford.

"College isn't just about life on campus and going to classes, it's also about other experiences like internships and semesters abroad that enrich your time as a student," Marie said.

Marie's father is a Scottish Rite Mason and heard about the Abbott Scholarship through a fellow Brother with a daughter in college. Additionally, Marie used her Abbott Scholarship to help fund her semester in Greece with the College Year in Athens program, where she was able to study ancient urban planning among the ruins of the cities she is learning about. She was also able to experience the vibrant culture that modern Athens has to offer. Marie also used her Scholarship to fund her internship through Hollins, as well as travel to and from school.



**"College isn't just about life on campus and going to classes, it's also about other experiences like internships and semesters abroad that enrich your time as a student."**

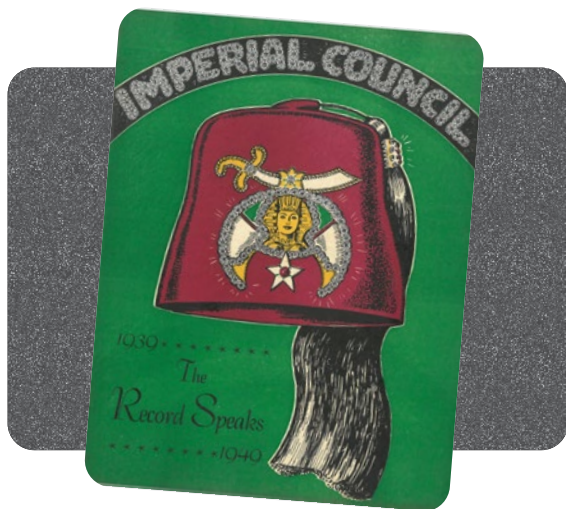


# Scottish Rite Masonic MUSEUM & LIBRARY

*Since 1975, the Scottish Rite Masonic Museum & Library has inspired generations to explore the rich history of American Freemasonry and fraternalism.*

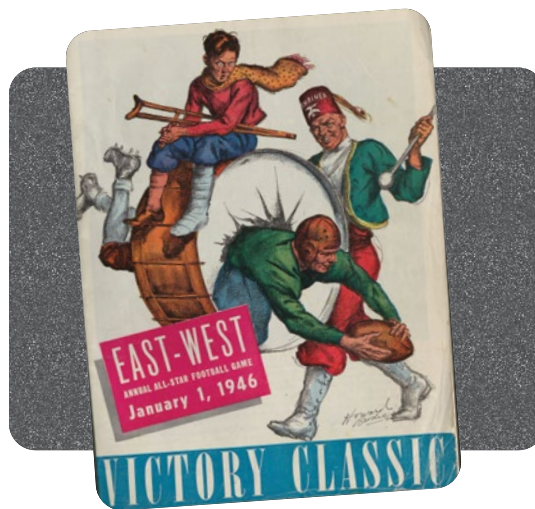
Preserving the stories that shaped our nation, the Museum engages visitors through dynamic exhibitions and the renowned Van Gorden-Williams Library & Archives, bringing to life powerful themes of patriotism, inclusion, and civic virtues. By connecting the past to the present, the Museum ignites curiosity and fosters a deeper appreciation of Freemasonry's enduring influence on American society. This year, the Museum continued to expand its collection, preserving remarkable artifacts that shed new light on the rich and diverse history of fraternal life in America.

## RECENT ACQUISITIONS



### A SERIAL SHEDDING LIGHT ON BLACK MASONIC LIFE AT MID CENTURY

In the last year, the Van Gorden-Williams Library & Archives has added many intriguing items to its collection, including this serial published by the Imperial Council of the Ancient Egyptian Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine of North and South America and Its Jurisdictions. This object gives valuable insight into Black Masonic life in the mid-twentieth century.



### PROGRAM FOR A CHARITABLE COMPETITION

The East-West Shrine Bowl, a game held annually since 1925, raises money for Shriners Hospitals for Children. This program for the 1946 game complements the two other East-West programs in our collection, from January 1, 1943, and January 1, 1948, and sheds light on the early and post-World War II history of this ongoing tradition.



### A HAND-CRAFTED APRON

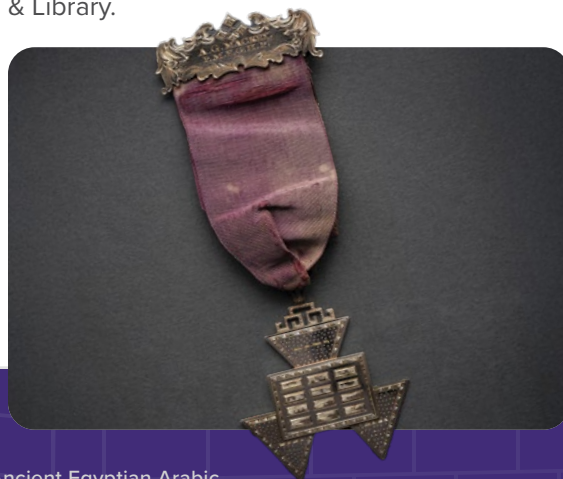
Among the fascinating gifts received by the Scottish Rite Masonic Museum & Library from over fifty donors this year is this painted apron. Inscribed on the back is the name of the person who sewed and decorated the apron in 1826, Harriet Van Rensselaer of Chittenango, New York.

Though they were excluded from Freemasonry, many women worked to support the Masons in their families. Sometimes this work took the shape of creating aprons worn to meetings or for special events. In crafting this apron, Harriet Van Rensselaer delineated Masonic symbols in colored paint on velvet, a popular painting technique in the early 1800s. This apron displayed her skill in the trendy painting style. For inspiration, she looked to a printed apron that had been produced in Albany, New York, in 1821. This gift to the collection speaks to the different kinds of artists who made Masonic aprons in the early 1800s and the designs that inspired their work.

### A SPECIAL JEWEL

Dr. Albert Gallatin Mackey, author of the *Lexicon of Freemasonry* and the *Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*, was an energetic leader of Royal Arch Freemasonry in South Carolina who helped establish over twenty chapters in the state. He stepped down as Grand High Priest in 1867. To acknowledge his many contributions to the Grand Chapter, his brethren appointed a committee “to prepare a Jewel or some other suitable memento.”

For several years, the Grand Chapter’s fragile finances did not allow for purchasing jewels for past presiding officers. After many delays, in 1875, the group presented this jewel, crafted by fellow Mason, jeweler, and goldsmith, Joseph Bock, to Mackey. Upon receiving it, Mackey thanked the Chapter for “this token of brotherly love, coming from the cherished companions of my dear native state.” Mackey’s jewel is a recent gift to the Scottish Rite Masonic Museum & Library.



### CAPTIONS

The Record Speaks, 1939-1949. Washington, DC: Imperial Council, Ancient Egyptian Arabic Order Nobles of the Mystic Shrine of North and South America and Its Jurisdictions, 1949. Museum purchase, 90.4 .R311 1949.

Souvenir program for Twenty-First Annual Game All-Star East vs. All-Star West, 1946. Museum purchase, MA 110.011, A2024/006/001.

Apron Made by Harriet Van Rensselaer, 1826. Chittenango, New York. Gift of Francis I. Karwowski, 2024.10.1.

Past Most Excellent Grand High Priest Jewel Made for A. G. Mackey, 1874-1875. Joseph Bock, Charleston, South Carolina. Gift of the Estate of John F. Bemis and Randall E. Bemis, 2024.011.64. Photography by Michael Cardinali.

# The Masonic Hall of Fame



On view at the Scottish Rite Masonic Museum & Library through December 2, 2024, “The Masonic Hall of Fame: Extraordinary Freemasons in American History” introduced visitors to Masons who, through their remarkable contributions to government, culture, social justice, and Freemasonry, helped shape history. In November of 2023, the Scottish Rite Masonic Museum & Library added five more notable inductees to the exhibition.

1

## BUFFALO BILL

William Frederick “Buffalo Bill” Cody’s (1846-1917) exploits as a scout and hunter were featured in a popular novel and in a stage show while he was still a young man. In 1883 Cody first produced an outdoor extravaganza that showcased animals, cowboys, sharpshooters, frontiersmen, and Native American warriors in thrilling demonstrations of skill and re-enactments of historical events. Millions enjoyed his nostalgic presentation of the frontier; his vision helped shape the national view of the American West.

2

## THEODORE ROOSEVELT

The energetic and colorful Theodore Roosevelt (1858-1919) reached great heights in many endeavors. A writer, conservationist, soldier, and politician, Roosevelt served as President of the United States from 1901 to 1909. In office Roosevelt warred against corruption and powerful business

monopolies. He also supported labor and consumers, seeking “a square deal for every man, big or small, rich or poor.” He worked to position the United States as a power on the world stage and won a Nobel Peace Prize in 1906.

3

## EDWIN “BUZZ” ALDRIN

After graduating from West Point, Edwin “Buzz” Aldrin (b. 1930) joined the Air Force and flew combat missions during the Korean War. He earned a doctorate from Massachusetts Institute of Technology before he joined NASA’s astronaut program. Aboard Gemini 12, his first space flight, Aldrin undertook three spacewalks, during which he spent nearly eight hours outside of the capsule. During the historic Apollo 11 mission in July 1969, Aldrin served as the Lunar Module Pilot and was the second person to walk on the Moon.

Check out a virtual tour of "The Masonic Hall of Fame: Extraordinary Freemasons in American History" at

**SRMML.org/Exhibitions/Masonic-Hall-of-Fame**

4

#### ELIJAH CUMMINGS

A sharecroppers' son who served nearly four decades in state and national legislatures, Elijah Cummings (1951-2019) used his position to advocate for all Americans. Cummings—a lifelong Democrat—strove to increase bipartisan collaboration in Congress through both legislation and committee work. Of the more than four thousand bills he sponsored in his time in Congress, over twenty percent were cosponsored with Republican or independent colleagues. He spent more than twenty years on government oversight and reform committees, working to make the American government better for its constituents.

5

#### MEL BLANC

Actor and radio personality Mel Blanc (1908-1989) is best known for bringing beloved cartoon characters to life with his voice. After working in radio, Blanc performed on Warner Bros. on animated shorts in 1937. His portrayals of many Looney Tunes' characters, including Bugs Bunny, Elmer Fudd, Sylvester, Tweety, Yosemite Sam, and Foghorn Leghorn soon followed. In 1960 he began working for Hanna-Barbara, most notably as Barney Rubble on The Flintstones, the first animated television show broadcast during prime time. His gravestone famously reads: "That's All Folks."

#### PHOTO DETAILS IN ORDER FROM TOP

Buffalo Bill Cody portrait, William Frederick Cody, ca. 1875. National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution.

Theodore Roosevelt portrait. Theodore Roosevelt, ca. 1905. National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution.

Buzz Aldrin portrait. Astronaut Buzz Aldrin in the Apollo 11 Lunar Module, July 20, 1969. Photographed by Neil Armstrong. NASA.

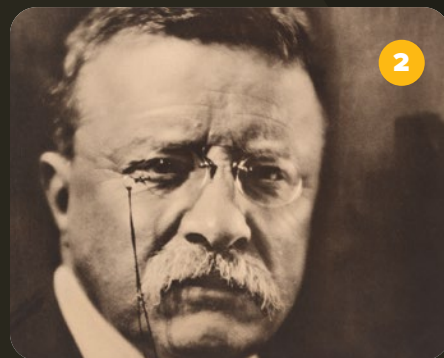
Elijah Cummings portrait, Elijah E. Cummings. US House Office of Photography.

Mel Blanc with carrot, Mel Blanc recording Bugs Bunny's voice, ca. 1945.

1



2



3



4



5



# Transforming Lives Through Literacy

For more than 30 years, the Children's Dyslexia Centers have been at the forefront of helping children overcome the challenges of dyslexia. The dedication of our supporters and educators has enabled us to make a profound difference in the lives of countless families.

## HERE'S HOW WE'VE MADE AN IMPACT IN 2024:

BY THE NUMBERS

**47**

Total Center & Satellite Locations

**1,400+**

Students Served in 2024

**15,000+**

Students Served Since 1994

### TUTORS CERTIFIED IN 2024

**203**

P1-Level

**71**

P2-Level

**23**

Therapist-Level

**21**

Mentor-Level

**325+**

Students Graduated in 2024

**4,500+**

Trainees Certified Since 1994

**3**

Instructor of P1-Level

**4**

Instructor of P2-Level

**1**

Instructor of Therapy



## Making A Difference

Your support helps us provide free, state-of-the-art tutoring to children with dyslexia and continues to fund the training of expert tutors. Together, we are shaping brighter futures for families in our communities.

# The Transformative Power of the Children's Dyslexia Centers

*Elementary school should be a time of curiosity and discovery for children. But for students with dyslexia, it often brings mounting frustration and struggles with basic skills like reading and writing. Without the proper help, these challenges can snowball, leaving confidence shaken and families searching for answers.*

Marti Lisik saw this unfold with her youngest daughter, Evangeline, when she began to notice that something wasn't quite right with her daughter's progress in school. "Looking back, you can see the little warning signs," Marti shared. Teachers assured Marti that her daughter was "so bright" and that "it just takes longer for it to click with some kids." Yet by third grade, Evangeline's struggles had deepened, manifesting in low self-esteem and resistance to schoolwork and activities she once loved. "She'd pick fights with us over silly things," Marti recalled. "It was heartbreaking."

A pivotal moment came when Evangeline's school principal recommended a deeper investigation.





After a few months, it became clear that Evangeline was struggling with dyslexia. While the school provided support where it could, Marti was forced to seek outside help. That's when she learned about the Children's Dyslexia Centers.

After receiving a formal diagnosis of dyslexia, Evangeline began receiving tutoring at the Children's Dyslexia Center, Great Lakes location in Bay City, Michigan. "It was just amazing to see her confidence grow," Marti said. Understanding her dyslexia not only helped Evangeline academically but also emotionally. "It didn't make her less than; it just made her different than," Marti explained.

Over the course of two years at the Center, Evangeline flourished. Today, at 16, she is a junior in high school taking advanced courses like AP Calculus and AP Environmental Science. She plays two sports, dreams of becoming an engineer, and approaches life with confidence and determination. "I have dyslexia, and look at all the stuff I can still do," she told her mom. "That makes me a rockstar."

Marti credits the Children's Dyslexia Centers with giving her daughter the tools to succeed. "We were so fortunate to come to the Center," she said. "The tutors are the best." But she knows not every family has the same opportunity.

Even after Evangeline completed her tutoring, Marti

continues to take an active role in the program, serving on the Center's board and advocating for greater access to resources. "It's vital that these kids have access to one-on-one support," she said. "If we can help them before they hit middle school, before those insecurities take hold, it changes everything."

Marti's message to supporters, especially the Masons who make the Centers possible, is one of gratitude and hope. "Because of you, my daughter has confidence and a bright future," she said. "You're not just changing lives—you're saving them."

The program's foundation lies in the unwavering support of the Scottish Rite Fraternity. Since the Centers' inception, Masons have played a crucial role in funding, volunteering, and advocating for these life-changing programs. For decades, Masonic leaders and members have championed the cause, ensuring that children like Evangeline receive the specialized instruction they need, regardless of their family's financial situation.

***"The Masons' support has been monumental," Marti emphasized. "Without their generosity, so many kids would be left behind. Their belief in these kids' potential inspires all of us to do more."***

**Success stories like Evangeline's are a testament to the transformative power of the Children's Dyslexia Centers. And Marti is forever grateful for the transformation Evangeline underwent thanks to the Bay City Center. "Every child deserves a chance to thrive, to discover their potential. That's what these Centers do—they create possibilities."**

CHILDREN'S DYSLEXIA CENTERS

# BUILDERS COUNCIL

The ability to read is foundational to a child's future, and the work of the Children's Dyslexia Centers helps to build that foundation for children every day. The Builders Council honors supporters who have made a financial commitment of \$10,000 or more to this important work.

Since its inception in 2001, more than 600 dedicated individuals and organizations have made this commitment to transform the lives of children and families struggling with dyslexia. This giving strengthens local Centers, provides new opportunities, moves students off waiting lists, and furthers the program's overarching mission.



**Special thanks to the  
newest members of the  
Builders Council this year:**

Thomas Klecan

Derek A. Jones, Esq.

Aldous N. Hofmann

Edward L. & Darlene K. Hoover

Henry Haisch

Bruce H. Morris



For a complete list of Builders Council members, visit  
[ChildrensDyslexiaCenters.org/Builders-Council](https://ChildrensDyslexiaCenters.org/Builders-Council)



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### DEREK A. JONES JR., 32°, HGA • VALLEY OF BANGOR

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*“We Scottish Rite Masons know the Children’s Dyslexia Centers represent hope and progress for children battling dyslexia. For my part, I battled dyslexia through school. Though I never attended the Children’s Dyslexia Centers, I understand the profound difference that dedicated help can make in a child’s battle with dyslexia. Despite this, I never thought I would be the type of donor to join the Builders Council.*

*That changed last year, when I received the HGA. As Ill. Bro. Jeff Simonton handed me the HGA jewel, I noticed some of the teddy bear ties in the audience. I thought about how, despite my dyslexia, I had gone to college, then on to graduate school, and now I was receiving the HGA for, frankly, having done quite a bit of reading. I could never have accomplished these things without the help I received early on. I realized it was time I did something to give back.*

*Ten thousand dollars is a lot of money all at once. However, spread out over 10 years, for me that’s 260 pay periods. It’s actually less than a single dinner out per pay period. In that perspective, it felt doable, so I did it.”*



# DONORS GIVING BACK

HENRY HAISCH, JR., 33° • ACTIVE, ILLINOIS

**I first became aware of this charity after joining the Scottish Rite. Our Valley was fairly active in fundraising activities. Several of my friends were on the Board of Directors for our Center.**

As I progressed in my role within the Rose Croix line, I became more involved in fundraising for the Valley and the Dyslexia Center. It was during this time that I learned about the need for more tutors. Intrigued by the multisensory instruction, I decided to become a tutor and help our Center. The process was straightforward, and I was provided with the necessary training and resources to make a meaningful impact.

Everything you read and hear about how devastating dyslexia is for children and their families doesn't come close to the reality. Their experiences are all similar but different. I overheard one of my students talking to himself before a lesson. He was saying over and over, "Please don't make me read." They are facing their greatest fears with every lesson. One student would be doing an outstanding job and miss one thing, then start to cry—every lesson.

Another student had a meltdown over the lesson for "tion", pronounced like *shun*. He wailed like Luke Skywalker when he found out that Darth Vader was his father. "Noooooooooooo, tion is tie on not shun."

It's not all bad. Soon, the students gain confidence. Lessons can be fun. Reading aloud with your hands over your mouth impersonating Darth Vader is always good for a laugh. Using other voices like Batman, Yoda, or even Gollum from Lord of the Rings makes reading more enjoyable. Don't forget "Talk Like a Pirate Day" is September 19th.

It is extremely fulfilling to watch the students grow and gain self-confidence. My Center Director said my first two students ruined me as a tutor because they did so well.

One's school recognized him as the most improved student. He later earned his Eagle Scout. His Eagle Scout project was a patio at the Dyslexia Center for parents and siblings to sit while waiting for their students. Both he and his dad are now Masons. His dad is currently Junior Deacon, and he is the Senior Steward for their lodge.

My other student graduated from high school with a 4.0 GPA. He invited me to play a duet with him at his graduation recital. Besides being an extremely talented violinist, he amazed me with his singing and acting. He performed "Anything You Can Do" from the musical Annie Get Your Gun. These success stories are a testament to the transformative power of the Children's Dyslexia Center.

With both of these young men, the Children's Dyslexia Center completely changed their lives. They are totally different people. I don't know of another charity where you can see the dramatic results and positive influence of your contributions.

**Joining the Builders Council, a key support group for the Children's Dyslexia Centers, was the next logical step in my journey of advocating for dyslexia causes. This council plays a crucial role in providing resources and support to the Centers, and I was eager to contribute in any way I could.**



# GRAND ALMONER'S FUND

## Our Mission in Action

Since its inception, the Grand Almoner's Fund has provided critical support to Masons, their families, and communities in times of need. This year, the Fund continued its legacy of compassionate aid, ensuring relief reached those who needed it most.

### SUPPORTING THE MISSION

**\$468,832<sup>34</sup>**

#### In FY Donations

- Grand Almoner's Fund: \$432,347.13
- White Flower Society: \$36,485.21

### RELIEF EFFORTS IN 2024

**\$541,719<sup>67</sup>**

#### Total Relief Distributed:

- Checks: \$470,219.67
- Gift Cards for Individuals: \$51,500
- Gift Cards for Natural Disaster Relief: \$20,000
- Recipients Assisted: 73 unique individuals

### IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS

#### Historical Total Relief Distributed (2011–2024):

- Direct Assistance: \$10,776,221.61
- Gift Cards Disbursed: \$588,500

A close-up portrait of an elderly couple. On the left is Brother Dennis Rhawn, a man with a mustache wearing a teal polo shirt. On the right is his wife Mary Ann, with short white hair, smiling and wearing a blue top. The title 'BROTHERHOOD IN ACTION' is overlaid in large white letters.

# BROTHERHOOD IN ACTION

Like all Masons, Brother Dennis Rhawn took a solemn obligation to care for his Brothers. When life threw him overwhelming challenges, Dennis found that this bond went both ways. Leaning on his Brothers during his most difficult times, he discovered just how far they would go to lift him up.

With a rich Masonic family history, it was natural for Dennis to follow in his father's footsteps. After joining Doric Lodge 630 in Sewickley, PA, where he served as Master from 2015-2017, he continued his journey by joining the Valley of New Castle and the Syria Shrine in Pittsburgh.

For Dennis and his wife Mary Ann, their later years brought relentless challenges. Dennis, a retired building engineer working part time at a hardware store, faced mounting financial and health issues that left the long-time couple struggling to stay afloat. Just before Covid hit, Dennis

## “I WAS BLOWN AWAY,” DENNIS

## SAID, STILL AWESTRUCK BY

## THEIR GENEROSITY.

was diagnosed with congestive heart failure. Further tests revealed an incurable condition caused by excess protein in his heart, hardening the muscles at the bottom. The price tag of the medication he needed to survive was an astronomical \$20,000 per month – a lifelong expense.

Even with insurance covering part of the medical costs, the Rhawns were left with an unsustainable financial burden. They initially worked with an endowment foundation to secure life-saving medication at no cost through 2020, but later had to rely on another patient assistance program. The \$8,000 in funding they received didn't even last a year. The constant worry about how they would continue to afford the medication weighed heavily on them. “Without these medications, I wouldn't be alive,” Dennis shared.

Although a later scan showed some improvement in Dennis's heart condition, he was also diagnosed with Hereditary Spastic Paraparesis, a neurological disorder that causes weakness and stiffness in the legs. This incurable condition progresses over time. Muscle relaxants eased some of the stiffness, but Dennis's mobility diminished to the point where he relied on a walker or cane. Mary Ann also faced her own mobility issues, adding to their difficulties.

Unfortunately, home repairs do not wait for health to improve. For years, Dennis had his boiler cleaned and checked annually, but after 30 years of use, it started leaking. The cost of installing a new one was quoted at \$19,000, later reduced to \$11,000, but still far beyond their means. They managed to baby the old boiler through the winter, only to face a new issue in the spring. Birds began entering their basement through an aging chimney that required a new cover, liner, and brick repairs—an additional \$4,000 expense.

Desperate and out of options, Dennis reached out

to the Grand Lodge and Scottish Rite for assistance. He never anticipated the kindness that followed. Ill. Keith Parkinson, 33°, Scottish Rite Deputy for Pennsylvania, and Bill Bittinger, 32° MSA (Valley of New Castle) from Doric Lodge visited Dennis and Mary Ann with two checks: one from the Grand Almoner's Fund and another from the Doric Lodge. “I was blown away,” Dennis said, still awestruck by their generosity.

The support extended beyond financial aid. During this challenging period, Dennis also lost his father—the man who inspired his Masonic journey. His Brothers honored the Rhawn family by conducting a heartfelt funeral service. This act of compassion deeply moved Dennis's mother, who had previously been skeptical of Freemasonry. Witnessing the Fraternity's dedication and care transformed her perspective entirely.

**Throughout his Masonic career, Dennis had always given back. When he and Mary Ann faced their greatest struggles, his Brothers stepped forward, living out their Masonic obligation. This unwavering kindness and solidarity are proof of the profound bond Masonry fosters—a Brotherhood that truly lifts one another up in times of need.**

# The Commander's Circle

The Commander's Circle is a special group of donors who have chosen to honor their commitment to the principles of our fraternity through their generous support of the Grand Almoner's Fund. Their passion and their giving are a true and lasting expression of "Masons Caring for Masons."



## DIAMOND MEMBERS

**\$100,000+**

|                          |                          |                        |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| James M. Alter Trust*    | Lafayette Consistory     | Sven R. Mossberg       |
| Edward Parkinson         | S.P.R.S*                 | New Hampshire          |
| Clark Trust*             | J. Marshall, Jr.         | Consistory*            |
| Louis S. Ehrich Trust*   | & Patty K. Blizzard      | SEI Investments        |
| Fort Wayne Scottish Rite | John Wm. McNaughton      | Company*               |
| Benevolent Fund*         | Karl J. Mock             | Richard J. Stephenson  |
| Hilmar Gulseth Revocable | Estate of Robert         | Henry E. Thelin Trust* |
| Living Trust*            | Morefield*               | Malcolm B. Wernik      |
| A. Norman Johnson        | G. Michael & Ruth Morris | John R. Wronski        |



## RUBY MEMBERS

**\$50,000+**

|                        |                         |                    |
|------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Thomas F. Brown        | Estate of Charles       | Michael A. Wolcott |
| Far Hills Lodge #784*  | McGrattan*              | The Royal Order    |
| David & Monica Glattly | Paul & Joan Rubschlager | of Scotland*       |
| Massachusetts          | Robert William Smith    |                    |
| Consistory*            | George G. Talisse       |                    |



## SAPPHIRE MEMBERS

**\$25,000+**

|                          |                         |                         |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Boston Lafayette Lodge   | Ben & Sherrie Grisham   | Terry N. Steinheiser    |
| of Perfection*           | Jeff & Darla Kitsmiller | Richard J. Stewart      |
| Elbridge & Mareetta      | Charles R. Lefever      | Walter & Vickie Wheeler |
| Brewer                   | J. Brian McNaughton     |                         |
| Ronald & Elaine Connelly | George Nakonetschny     |                         |
| James Dill               | Howard & Ann Orr        |                         |
| Thomas E. Ewald          | Scottish Rite Bodies    |                         |
| Matthew & Kate Gerrish   | Valley of Hartford*     |                         |
| Giles F. Yates Council   | Jim Sheets              |                         |
| Princes of Jerusalem*    |                         |                         |

\*Indicates Organization



## GOLD MEMBERS

**\$10,000+**

Marcus E. Abbott  
Amwell Lodge #12 F & A.M.\*

John A. Amarilios

Anonymous

Herb & Mary Ann Atkinson

D.J. Barrett

David R. & Pauline Bedwell

Ronald W. Beebe

Frederick & Evelyn Berenbroick

William & Lisa Berenbroick

Ross & Linda Black

Brian & Jane Blades

Matt & Angela Blaisdell

Timothy & Beth Boutell

Robert E. & Irene M. Brightbill

Leland L & Marilyn J. Burlison

William C. Chapman

& Helen A. Shaw

Austin P. Clark

Greg & Gerti Clark

J. Randolph & Dana Clark

The Cockerham Family

Cogswell Benevolent Trust\*

Thomas H. & Dorothy Corson

Keith W. Cravens

Michael & Annie DeWolf

Donald & Wendelyn Duquette

James T. Elliott Jr.

Philip & Arlene Elliott

Paul & Semra Ferreira

James H. Fischer

Raymond & Ginnie Foose

Mark David Gall

In Memory of the  
L. W. Getman Family

Bradford & Kathleen Goebel

Nicholas & Marla Graff

Marlin & Kay Gray

Matthew Francis Griffin

Garry D. & Sonia G. Hageness

Philip L. Hall

Brian & Lynne Hartel

Alan R. Heath

Kevin J. Hecht

Dick & Susan Heldman

Donald & Nancy Hicks

Lee D. Hieronymus

Scott & Aubri Hilsee

George & Leslie Hixon

Keith & Judy Hoskins

Theodore "Ted" H. Jacobsen

David W. Jones Trust

Richard R. Jones Jr.

Bob & Maria Kefalas

Gail N. Kemp

Robert F. Keuper

Estate of Sherman Kisner\*

Thomas & Virginia Labagh

Estate of Paul E. Lange\*

Lawrence J. Leib

Charlotte E. Lomell

Albert R. Marshall

Masonic Family Health Foundation\*

Carl L. Martenson

Lois L. McNaughton Memorial Fund\*

Michigan Scottish Rite Fund\*

David W. Miller

Donald D. (Pete) Miller

Randy R. Milone

Dr. John E. Moats

Paul E. Mossberg

Mount Olivet Chapter of Rose Croix\*

D. Dee & Kathy S. Mowry

Dr. & Mrs. Gary L. Nicholson

Oriental Lodge No. 27 A.F.&A.M.\*

Kamel & Mary Oussayef

Clark D. Page

Laurence E. & Nancy Perkins

George Powell

Robert W. Reinhardt III

Edgar J. Rennoe Jr.

Carolyn Ribordy

Mark & Karla Roth

Peter J. & Gail R. Samiec

Jon & Kellie Sellars

John A. Sentz, Jr.

Scottish Rite Cathedral,  
Valley of Chicago\*

Scottish Rite Valley of Boston\*

David & Cheryl Sharkis

Jeffrey A. Simonton

Neil & Willa Jean Smalley

Gail N. Smith

James R. Spencer Jr.

Glen A. Stahl

Henry & Karen Stein

Paul C. St. Pierre

Howard E. Struble

Robert N. Stutz

George T. Taylor III

George Thomas Taylor IV

In Memory of Ferris O. Tryon

The Grand Lodge of  
New Jersey F&AM\*

The LIGHT Foundation\*

Donald D. Thomas

Richard V. Travis

James & Susan Tungate

Len & Brenda Vander Horn

Valley of Chicago\*

Valley of Cincinnati\*

Valley of Michigan\*

Valley of Philadelphia\*

\*Indicates Organization



## GOLD MEMBERS

\$10,000+

Valley of Portland\*

Valley of Utica\*

Maurice C. Vercoe

Verdon R. Skipper

Paul & Karen Weglage

Frank M. & Caitlin C. Williams

Gary B. Williams M.D.

Connie & Daniel Wilson

Douglas N. Winter

James E. Winzenreid

Bruce T. Work

John & Jacque Wright

Charles W. Yohe

David & Sandy Young



## SILVER MEMBERS

\$5,000+

Anonymous

Harold & Phyllis Aldrich

Ronald & Norma Aungst

Robert E. Barnett

Archie & Kellie Canterbury

Steven B. Carr

Craig & Susan Cobb

Columbian Lodge AF & AM\*

Congdon-Overlook Lodge #163\*

Daniel C. Deufel

Robert A. DiPalma

BG(Ret) John J. Driscoll

Darrin Eugene Eastes

John W. Eldred

Emil Ewald Family Foundation\*

E. R. H. Enterprises, Inc.\*

Estate of Richard H. Schnakenburg\*

William R. Faulkner Jr.

Bret & Mary Jane Fledderjohn

Bruce C. and Margie Golway

Donald I. Green in honor of George & Helen Green and Joseph & Jean Lenhart

John & Sara Greer

Dr. Richard Carlton Haney

Leon F. Higgins, II

Jeffrey B. Hodgdon

Frank & Kathryn Howard

Clyde R Huddleston Sr.

John J. Hunt

Lawrence D. Inglis

John D. Jawor

Robert Johnston

Thomas E. Julian

Douglas & Diana Kaylor

Marc R. Koble

Aaron R. Kohart

Harold T. J. Littleton

Laurel Lodge No. 237 F. & A.M.\*

John E. Lord, Jr.

Richard J. Luckay

James A. Manninen

Harold Dean Meade

Mark E. Megee

Emmett W. Mills

Anthony W. Montuori

Steven M. Moon

Arthur Moore

Don & Meg Moran

William S. Moyer

Robert E. Murray

Samuel C. Nana-Sinkam

North Jersey Past Master's Association\*

Walter F. Neumann

P. Michael Nielsen

Robert & Jane Ogg

Keith & Linda Patch

E. Joel Peterson

Macario J. Ramos Jr.

Carlos O. Ramos Rivera

Carl R. Richard

Douglas E. Robinson

N. S. Jack Ruby

Michael & Megan Russell

Robert W. Sanborn

Gerard and Julie Sealy

Frank & Debbie Sekeres

Thomas & Pauline Skoog

South Bend Lodge of Perfection AASR\*

Edward & Diana Stumm

John K. Takian

The McCormick Family Foundation\*

The Order of the Thistle\*

Valley of Allentown\*

Valley of Moline\*

Valley of Pittsfield A.A.S.R.\*

Valley of Portsmouth/Dover\*

The Western Reserve Chapter of the Philalethes Society\*

Deon P. White

Stephen R. & Ann Whittaker

Charles Carter Wicks

Alton Paul Williams

John L. Winkelman

Bertram J. Woodside

\*Indicates Organization

# Donor Spotlight



**Len & Brenda Vander Horn**

**Brenda and I are very excited to continue participating in the Scottish Rite Charities, including the Commander's Circle, White Flower Society, Children's Dyslexia Centers Alumni Association, and the continued support of the annual membership campaign.**

More specifically, we find donating to the Commander's Circle particularly rewarding, having seen the benefits in action here in New Jersey where we reside.

Hurricane Sandy was a terrible storm back in 2012 when multiple homes were destroyed and lives uprooted. While we were not affected directly, we saw the direct impact on our Masonic Brothers



A glimpse into the devastation that some of our Brothers and their families in New Jersey faced during Hurricane Sandy, as the Grand Almoner's Fund stepped in to support them in their time of need.

and their families. I remember clearly the Scottish Rite Grand Almoner's Fund coming to the rescue to aid our Brethren.

Brenda and I will never forget those times. We are also incredibly grateful for the Abbott Scholarships, of which one of our children was a beneficiary. For these reasons, we gladly contribute to this important fund.

We are so thankful for the continued support of our Brothers through all of these efforts.

**Len Vander Horn, 33°  
VALLEY OF NORTHERN NJ**



**The White Flower Society is dedicated exclusively to providing support to Masonic widows in need.**

## WHITE FLOWER SOCIETY MEMBERS

|                                                                                       |                                                                        |                                                                           |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Anonymous                                                                             | Benjamin F. Griscom, IV                                                | Nancy Scott                                                               |
| Mary Ann Atkinson                                                                     | Brian & Lynne Hartel                                                   | Ellen Secallus                                                            |
| Evelyn M. Berenbroick                                                                 | Kim Hecht                                                              | Kellie R. Sellars                                                         |
| Irene Berman                                                                          | Susan Heldman                                                          | Janice Sharpe                                                             |
| Jane M. Blades                                                                        | George & Leslie Hixon                                                  | Jim Sheets                                                                |
| Elbridge & Mareetta Brewer                                                            | Keith & Judy Hoskins                                                   | Willa Jean Smalley                                                        |
| Irene M. Brightbill                                                                   | Susan Jacobson                                                         | Bridget & Evan Steele in honor of MaryAnn Bichajian                       |
| Leland L. & Marilyn J. Burlison                                                       | Diana & Douglas Kaylor                                                 | Karen Stein                                                               |
| Annamarie Castagno-Clark                                                              | Jeff & Darla Kitsmiller                                                | Stephenson Family Foundation                                              |
| Greg & Gerti Clark                                                                    | William & Prudence Kline                                               | Paul & Kristin St. Pierre                                                 |
| Robert & Stacia Cockerham                                                             | Charles E. Knapp, Jr.                                                  | Howard & Carol Struble                                                    |
| Ford & Pamela Conley                                                                  | Thomas & Ginny Labagh                                                  | Thomas & Joan Sturgeon                                                    |
| Elaine Connelly                                                                       | Ladies of the Valley of Philadelphia                                   | Barbara Tryon                                                             |
| David & Cheryl Cyrus                                                                  | Charles R. & Frances H. Lefever                                        | Brenda & Len Vander Horn                                                  |
| Ruben & Cathleen Dominguez                                                            | Masonic Charity Foundation of New Jersey                               | Valley of Bridgeport, Lafayette Consistory                                |
| Barbara Elliott                                                                       | Judy McNaughton                                                        | Valley of Columbus                                                        |
| Sandy Engelmann                                                                       | Karl J. Mock in memory of Ann Mock                                     | Valley of Dayton                                                          |
| Karin M. Ernest in memory of Ruth Beumann Mahler                                      | Thomas & Christine Moe                                                 | Valley of Utica in honor of Diane H. Clark & in memory of Daniel L. Clark |
| Thomas Ewald and Family                                                               | Craig & Anne Mollon                                                    | Walter & Vickie Wheeler                                                   |
| Ginnie & Raymond Foose                                                                | Robert & Joyce Monacelli                                               | Maureen Williamson                                                        |
| Mark David Gall                                                                       | G. Michael & Ruth Morris                                               | Connie Wilson                                                             |
| Matt & Kate Gerrish                                                                   | Sandy Nakonetschny                                                     | Charles & Barbara Yohe                                                    |
| Monica Glattly                                                                        | New Hampshire Consistory*                                              | David & Sandy Young                                                       |
| Bruce C. & Margie Golway                                                              | Keith & Linda Patch                                                    |                                                                           |
| Marla M. Graff                                                                        | Mark & Karla Roth in memory of Elizabeth M. Helldorfer & Hilda H. Roth |                                                                           |
| Grand Lodge of NJ 2020 Grand Staff in memory of Ill. Donald Porter & S. P. James Damm | Gail R. Samiec                                                         |                                                                           |
| John & Sara Greer                                                                     |                                                                        |                                                                           |



*Membership in the White Flower Society reflects a \$5,000 level of giving, either as a one-time gift or a pledge over 10 years. As a token of our appreciation, members of the White Flower Society receive a special white flower brooch and lapel pin.*

# White Flower Society Member Spotlight

Kellie and I are always happy to give to many of the Masonic charities; the White Flower Society is one that we are incredibly proud to support.

We count our blessings with each passing day and are fortunate enough to be able to give back to those in need. The White Flower Society gives to widows of our Brothers, with whom we have enjoyed sharing our Masonic journey. Throughout our Masonic careers, many of us have our wives and families at our side; it is a comfort to know that the ladies who have supported our journey will have the helping hand of the Masonic community should the need arise.

As Scottish Rite Masons, we are often asked for help; as Masons, we have a duty to help in our communities, Lodges, and Valleys. We also must give help where it is needed for our Masonic

*It is with great pride that we are members of a charity that ensures our widowed ladies, and their families, are not forgotten in their time of need and sadness.*

families. A Brother should feel comfortable knowing that charities like the White Flower Society are set up to assist his wife in what would be the most challenging time for her to face. The White Flower Society is dedicated to helping our Masonic widows and their families after the passing of one of our own.



Jon & Kellie Sellars

We never really know what someone will face after the passing of a loved one. The White Flower Society provides much-needed help and brings light to the darkest days for our Masonic widows and their families. For this reason, we continue to support this charity and encourage others to consider doing the same.

**Jonathan R. Sellars 33°**  
VALLEY OF DENVER, SCOTTISH RITE, SJ



GIVING TUESDAY 2024

# A NIGHT OF CHARITY

Tammy Glode (right) and daughter Lily (center), talk with Ill. David Sharkis, 33°, Director of Operations for the Children's Dyslexia Centers during the telethon.

**On December 3, Scottish Rite Masons came together to raise \$487,879 for our charities, with 455 donations from 27 states and 72 Valleys.**

This generous support will help sustain the vital work of Scottish Rite Charities. Throughout the evening, heartfelt stories from those impacted by our programs left a lasting impression. Tammy Glode, mother of a Children's Dyslexia Center graduate, shared how the CDC transformed her daughter's life: **"We saw Lily blossom from the shy girl sitting in the back of the class to having a voice, finding herself, and helping others."**

Ill. Timothy S. Marshbanks, 33°, shared his deeply moving experience with the Grand Almoner's Fund, which provided critical support after his son's life-changing accident. *"You have changed this young man's life... Josh is now giving back by volunteering for the University of Michigan Hospital,"* he said.

These are just a few of the stories highlighting the profound difference our charities make in the lives of individuals and families. We are deeply grateful for the generosity of everyone who made this evening a success, strengthening the bond within our community and ensuring our work continues.



Members of the band Sudden Relic provide music and entertainment for the live and virtual audience.



Trish Marshbanks (Valley of Michigan) talks with Sr. Director of Charities, Bridget Steele, about the importance of families supporting our charities and the work the Ladies of the Rite are doing in Michigan.



During "A Night of Charity" each of our Scottish Rite Charities had an area dedicated to providing more information about the impact that charity has on our members, families, and our communities.



Ill. Tom Fallis, 33<sup>rd</sup> (Valley of Indianapolis) was on stage to present a donation to host Ill. J. Brian McNaughton, 33<sup>rd</sup> (Valley of Ft. Wayne) on behalf of the members of the Valley of Indianapolis to the Children's Dyslexia Center - Indianapolis.

## By The Numbers

# \$487,879

Total Amount Raised

## 455

Number of donations

## 27

Total States

## 15

NMJ States

## 72

Valleys Represented

### Most Donors by Valley

## 21

DONORS

Valley of Reading

## 19

DONORS

Valley of Utica

## 19

DONORS

Valley of Michigan

### Most Donors By A Children's Dyslexia Center

## CENTRAL NEW YORK CENTER

## 100

(YEARS OLD)

Oldest Donor

## 8

New 1975 Club Members

## 95

Non-Member Donors



# THE MEMBERSHIP EDUCATION FUND

## MORE KNOWLEDGE. MORE LIGHT.

The Scottish Rite, NMJ is constantly striving to better serve our members by creating educational opportunities to help them along their Masonic journey. All of these programs share the same goals – to educate our members and grow our Fraternity. None of these experiences would be possible without your support of the Membership Education Fund.



### THURSDAY NIGHT AT THE RITE

Thursday Night at the Rite Season 5, running from January to March 2024, featured degrees filmed at six different Valleys in six different states, including the premier of the brand-new 20th degree video. Each production included a special look at life in these Valleys. Thousands of Scottish Rite Brothers tuned in to chat, connect, and watch the degrees.





## SCOTTISH RITE PATHFINDER PROGRAM

The Pathfinder Program continues to encourage members to focus their time and attention on enhancing their knowledge of the Scottish Rite, NMJ and ensuring they get the most out of their member experience.

With approximately **80 Mile Markers** spread across the **5 Waypoint categories**, the Guidebook has continued to grow and evolve through the addition of **20 Mile Markers** with specific themes for added depth and meaningful experiences. These include Core Values in our daily lives, involvement with our Blue Lodges, interpersonal engagement, self reflection, and more.

The results from the survey offered upon completion of the program tell us that 90% of our members rate Pathfinder at Excellent or Above Average and are eager for more complex challenges.



## HAUTS GRADES ACADEMY

**THE HAUTS GRADES ACADEMY (HGA)** was designed to promote education, knowledge and engagement through in-depth study and reflection of the Scottish Rite's 29 degrees.

To date, **144 Brothers** have completed this program, with **30 new graduates** in the last year. Joining the HGA is free to all Scottish Rite, NMJ members, with open enrollment held three times a year in January, May, and September.

Visit [ScottishRiteNMJ.org/Hauts-Grades-Academy](https://ScottishRiteNMJ.org/Hauts-Grades-Academy) to learn how to be a part of our next class!



“

HGA has helped me better understand the true lesson of each degree and, in turn, I now watch them with an intention of taking in the lessons completely. It has totally enriched my experience of witnessing the degrees and will continue to do so."

*An HGA Graduate*

# The Cornerstone Society

## SCOTTISH RITE CHARITIES

Named for one of our Fraternity's greatest builders, the George A. Newbury Cornerstone Society was created to acknowledge Brothers and supporters who have made a lasting investment in our Scottish Rite Charities through planned giving, ensuring the strength and sustainability of our Charities for generations to come.

There is no dollar or age requirement to join the Cornerstone Society. Membership is achieved by making a planned gift commitment, which may include:

### BEQUEST

A provision in a will or living trust that can designate a specific dollar amount, percentage, residual, or remainder of an estate.

### CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY

A contribution funded with cash or securities that provides lifetime income to the donor while supporting Scottish Rite Charities.

### NAMED BENEFICIARY

Designating a Scottish Rite Charity or the Supreme Council Benevolent Foundation as a beneficiary of a life insurance policy, retirement account, or IRA distribution.



Many of our Brothers & community members have generously included Scottish Rite Charities in their estate plans.



Learn more by visiting:  
[ScottishRiteNMJ.org/Charities/Cornerstone-Society](https://ScottishRiteNMJ.org/Charities/Cornerstone-Society)



## CORNERSTONE SOCIETY

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

ILL. BENNY L. GRISHAM, 33°

Active Emeritus, Illinois

A few years ago, when my wife Sherrie and I examined the many gifts that God has provided us in our lives, we searched our hearts for the best way to assist others. Because of my many years of Masonic activity, we of course looked to those charities that I was most familiar with and those that provided lasting funding for our Masonic goals, Masonic members and widows.



I sincerely believe the words in our Scottish Rite mission statement:

**“We will strive to be a fraternity that fulfills our Masonic obligation to care for our members.”**

The gifts we have given allow us to provide funding well beyond our lifetimes and long into the future.

# The Blue Envelope Appeal

The Blue Envelope Appeal is the oldest Jurisdiction-wide fundraising appeal in the Scottish Rite, NMJ. Next year will mark 70 years of Brothers upholding the Fraternity's charitable efforts. Donations to the Blue Envelope directly support the Grand Almoner's Fund, the Children's Dyslexia Centers, the Leon M. Abbott Scholarship Fund, and the Scottish Rite Masonic Museum & Library.

## THE BLUE ENVELOPE BY THE NUMBERS

### Most Dollars Donated:

- 1 Valley of Harrisburg, PA
- 2 Valley of Boston, MA
- 3 Valley of Columbus, OH

### Highest Number of Member Donations:

- 1 Valley of Harrisburg, PA
- 2 Valley of Columbus, OH
- 3 Valley of Indianapolis, IN

### Highest Percentage of Member Donations:

- 1 Valley of Lancaster-Littleton, NH
- 2 Valley of Concord, NH
- 3 Valley of the Firelands, OH

\*Blue Envelope competition results run from 10/1/2023 - 2/15/2024

# \$505,837<sup>27</sup>

Total Donated Across The NMJ In 2024

# 7,471

Individual Donations  
in 2024

# 8.9%

Of Total Membership  
Donated in 2024



Members also help their local Valleys receive Valley of Excellence credit by supporting the Blue Envelope Appeal. Many thanks to all Valleys who participated in our friendly competition. Congratulations to our winning Valleys!

# FIRST-TIME DONORS

## First-Time Donors

This year more than **1,600** donors made their first gift to one of our Scottish Rite Charities. Their support is essential in advancing the mission of Scottish Rite Charities and ensuring its lasting impact. Thank You.

# 1,619

Total First-Time Donors In 2024

# 1,458

First-Time Individual Donors In 2024

# 161

First-Time Organization Donors In 2024



**MICHAEL R. DUROCHER, 32°**  
Valley of Boston

***“We all have different reasons for why we give. I came from a family of five boys, with me being the second oldest. My parents were both blue collar workers who instilled their work ethic into each one of their boys. To say that money was tight in our household would be an understatement.***

Although their money was spent before it reached their bank account, my parents still had enough, or sacrificed something, to give to others. It might not always have been giving monetarily, but also through their time as volunteers in Boy Scouts, church, or sporting activities.

The thing that stands out is the time that they would spend either the day before Thanksgiving, or Thanksgiving Day, delivering food baskets to families in need. To me, the unselfish act of giving to others when it was sometimes a struggle at home, is true charity.

I have followed the example set forth by my parents and believe that even when times are tough for you, that is the time when your charitable acts mean the most. Whatever charity that you decide to give your time, efforts, or money, remember that each act has a ripple effect on those who benefit from your kindness.”

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