

The Angelic Bears

Volume 20 – No. 6

December 5, 2021

Grand Chapter of Maine, Order of the Eastern Star

Catherine J. Wood, Worthy Grand Matron

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A Visit to Golden Sheaf Chapter #114, New Gloucester by a Sideliner

*Adapted by Sister Emily Cobb while serving as
Worthy Matron*

T'was the night of our meeting, and all through the
hall
There were coats, boots, hats, and mittens and a sound
to enthrall
Of greetings and blessings to one and to all...
The Warder and Sentinel stood in the doorway with
care
In hopes that the Worthy Patron soon would be there,
The Conductresses entered with our Masons tall
And escorted them cheerily to their thrones in the hall;
All were lined up in anticipatory bounded,
When the sound of a saxophone royally sounded,
At the conductresses invitation suddenly ceased all
chatter,
They marched in solemnly to get to the matter.
The lovely hollow square formed in a flash,
The Worthy Matron ascended the East with a dash.
The moon arose overhead and sparkled on new-fallen
snow,
Gave a luster of magic to the cars parked below,
When what to my wondering eyes did appear,
But every seat present was filled it was clear,
And our Worthy Matron so lively and quick,
I knew in a moment we were right on the tick.
More rapid than ever our Associate Matron came,
And called the 18 members by their positions, not
names:
"Now, Worthy Matron and Patron! Associates, too!
now, Secretary! now Treasurer and Conductresses
two!
On, Chaplain! on, Marshal! on, Saxophonist,
on Star Points and guards all here for this tryst!
With two raps of the gavel! To their feet leapt the hall!
Now recite away memorized work one and all!"
As they did for the last 112 years that before us did
fly,
When they met in harmony, as we do, and lift song to
the sky;
Honors and greetings were given, there were not a few
For everyone had come out this night and us sideliners

too—
And then, in a twinkling, I sat all aloof
But I had to stand up to be honored then sat down with
a whoof.
I had just sat in the south, and was turning around,
When the Worthy Matron arose from her seat with a
bound.
She was dressed all in white, from her head to her foot,
And her prose and greetings were sprinkled with
humorous loot;
A bundle of joys she had asked us to pack,
And of sickness and woes there was a noticeable lack.
Her eyes—how they twinkled! her dimples, how merry!
Her command of the English vernacular ... very!
I sat there bemused to watch her command the show,
And I couldn't help but drift back to the start of the
glow;
When first I came in ...
The Worthy Patron had greeted me on the steps with a
grin
Then lit cigarette he held tight in his teeth,
And the smoke, it encircled his head like a wreath;
He had great big broad shoulders and a medium sized
belly
That shook when he laughed, like a bowl full of jelly.
He was both plump and fluffy a right jolly bear, was
himself!
And I laughed at the memory, in spite of myself;
To the Worthy Matron I then returned
And to my delight all her lines she had learned!!!
A wink of her eye and a practiced governing stead
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread;
She spoke not a word indecisive or chary, but went
straight to the work,
And fulfilled all the needs without an error to cause one
to smirk,
And laying her gavel to the sounder block she arose,
And giving a nod, the chapter she closed;
She closed without form, to her kitchen team gave a
whistle,
And away we all flew to refreshments like the down of a
thistle.
But I heard her exclaim, ere we closed the lodge and
locked up for the night—
"Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good night!"

The Christmas Rainbow

The beautiful green evergreen tree is considered the symbol of faithfulness. It remains green at a time of year when other trees appear to be dead. It provides color in an otherwise drab landscape. Always seeming to point upward, the evergreen tells us to direct our gaze beyond our own limited horizons.

The color orange at Christmas? Oh, yes to remind us of the lovely fruit so often received as a gift or in a child's stocking hung for Santa to fill.

What's so special about an orange? It's special because it takes some work to peel. Then when you bite an orange it's both sweet and tart. Just like life...not too easy, but worth the effort. At Christmas, we must be sure we get beneath the coverings of the season and realize just how special this time of year truly is.

This beautiful candle can represent many things at Christmas time...the kings, the royalty of the Son of God come down to earth, and life itself. But let's reflect here on the purple grape a sign of ongoing life. God told us, *I am the vine and you are the branches; without Me you can do nothing*. Christmas is a time of bearing fruits, especially in gifts of kindness which we bestow on others as the Son of God was bestowed on us.

The aroma of straw in a live manger scene has a way of reminding us that what we see in such a manger is real, as real as the Baby Jesus who was born in such surroundings and as real as God's love for us that made His birth possible. Stop to enjoy the smells of Christmas whatever they be, and let them remind you of the realities of the birth of Christ.

Most flowers appear to be happy but the beautiful red color of the poinsettias at Christmas is a bringer of joy. They brighten up what might otherwise be a dreary-looking time of year and add a contrast to the greens of the season. The joy we anticipate at Christmas is a joy of receiving gifts but let the joy remind us it is possible because of the greatest gift when *God so loved the world that He gave us His Son*.

The Lamb of God, Jesus Christ. The lambs depicted in pictures of our Lord's nativity remind us that the Lord Himself is described in Scripture as being *like a lamb without blemish and without spot*. Past and future come together in this holy birth. God's gift to man...the most perfect gift, His Son.

May the colors of our Christmas Rainbow and

what they represent remain with you throughout this joyous season.

The Nativity

F E L B A T S S L E G N A D
H R A S A H T L A B A S M L
A E A B C D F E D F U B E O
Y T R N N N I G V S M I H G
L N R O K H G S E A I R E N
E E A X D I U J N L O T L I
U P P E J S N G T I O H H L
N R S N N E E C H P J V T D
A A A E M R M C E O E K E D
M C C E S A L K Y N M E B A
M O S B R E P R A T S R H W
E I M Y M S D R E H P E H S
W A R T S S N A T I V I T Y
L J O S E P H L E I R B A G

Advent	Gifts	Mary
Angels	Gold	Melchior
Balthasar	Hay	Nativity
Bethlehem	Herod	Oxen
Birth	Inn	Sheep
Carpenter	Jesus	Shepherds
Caspar	Joseph	Stable
Census	Joy	Star
Emmanuel	Lambs	Straw
Frankincense	Love	Swaddling
Gabriel	Manger	Wisemen

Web Site

The Maine Order of the Eastern Star's web site is: <http://www.maineoes.org> – this is the place to go to when you want information about our Order in Maine. Current Grand Officers, Chapters and addresses for them, various forms, and a listing of the meetings in Maine etc. Sister Kathy Williamson is the Web Administrator and her email is kackyw@gmail.com.

The Angelic Bears

The Angelic Bears is the newsletter that will be published during the 2021-22 year and distributed currently through *Star News* and when Grand Family events are held it is given to the DDGM's. If you'd like items printed in it, email it to corleybyras@gmail.com or send it by snail mail to Sister Corley Anne Byras, 72 Smith Street, Unit 4, Augusta, ME 04330.

Star News

Please email items for posting on *Star News* to corleybyras@gmail.com and to receive the *Star News* please send your email address to the same email.

Devotional – Sweet Christmas

by Julia Bettencourt

Christmas is such a sweet time of year. It's sweet not just because our kitchens are full of the wonderful smells of baking and all the holiday candy that smells throughout the home, but it's sweet because our Lord is sweet. I love that old hymn, *I Love To Tell The Story*. It says in the third verse, *What seems, each time I tell it, More wonderfully sweet*. Christmas is part of the whole story of Jesus and it ought to be sweet to our ears. Christ came so we could live and that's just so exciting.

Here are some sweet things to remind us of that wonderful sweet Christmas story.

1. Rocky Road® (Journey of Joseph and Mary) It may not have been an actual "rocky road" but Mary was expecting and close to her time of delivering so the journey must have been difficult at the least. Some of us ladies don't take long trips in a car or plane, when we are close to giving birth let alone get on a donkey and go. *And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; because he was of the house and lineage of David. To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. Luke 2:4-5*

2. Sugar Babies® (Reminder of Sweet Baby Jesus) How exciting that God sent His only Son down from heaven in the form of a sweet little baby. A little child would change history and save us from our sin. *And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. Luke 2:7*

3. Candy Cane (Reminder of the Shepherds) The candy cane reminds us of the staff of the shepherds and how they were busy taking care of their sheep while Jesus was being born. What a significant part in the Christmas story they played. I think it's a great lesson to us, that God uses us to play significant parts in weaving history even if we don't know it at the time. *And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. Luke 2:8-9*

4. Almond Joy® (Reminder of the Angel's Announcement) While the shepherds were watching their sheep there was a glorious proclamation of "joy". *And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. Luke 2:10-12*

5. Candy (Reminder of Peace) The dove has always been a symbol of peace. Because Christ was born we

can have peace. *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you...is what Christ said in John 14:27. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. Luke 2:12-14*

6. Smarties® (Reminder of the Wise Men) Even the wise men of Christ's day sought the Lord. The Bible doesn't tell us too much about the wise men, but we do know from the fact that Herod had the babies under two killed, that Matthew says of the wise men that *they were come into the house* when they found the baby in Mary's arms, and a few other things that the wise men probably actually came to Jesus when He was a little older and not to the stable where Christ was born. I know a few Christians who will place their wise men from their nativity set far off like they are traveling and I know Christians who won't acknowledge that the wise men played a part in the Christmas story because the world emphasizes that the wise men were there at the manger on the actual day Christ was born. They get all hung up on that. Personally, I don't think we want to leave the wise men out of the story. They played a big part. The world does need to see that wise men did seek Jesus, even if they don't understand how the sequence all fell into place. The world doesn't understand the things of God anyway. *Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. Matthew 2:1-2*

7. Starburst® (Reminder of the Star) When we see the shape of the Christmas star at the holidays, I think sometimes we forget its importance. It was something God used to guide the wise men. Today he has ways of guiding us too. When the wise men saw the star, they "rejoiced". I think when we see the shape of the Christmas star, it should be like a surge that goes through us and we should be reminded to rejoice as well. *When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. Matthew 2:9-10*

8. Hersheys Treasures® or Foil Wrapped Coin Candy (The Gifts From the Wise Men) When the wise men came they brought treasures with them to Jesus. I think this should always spur us on to give our own gifts to the Lord such as our time, talents, and other things we know we should be giving to Him. *And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. Matthew 2:11*

9. Reison® (Jesus is the Reason for the Season) Jesus came to earth that Christmas Day so that we could

live with Him forever and that our lives on earth might be more meaningful. He is our "reason" for the wonderful holiday season. *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. John 3:16*

So, don't you think Christmas is Sweet?

Quickie Questions (answers below)

1. Should the Worthy Matron welcome everyone before the Warder closes the door?
2. When the Conductresses are proving the chapter and speaks to the Associate Matron, are those standing on the sidelines members or visitors?
3. If the Conductress is being presented along with others, who leads - the Associate Conductress or the the Marshal?
4. When does the Worthy Matron seat the chapter after presentations have been made for those that are taken to the altar?
5. If the secretary verbally corrects the minutes when reading them, does the Worthy Matron state "as corrected"?

129th
Grand Chapter Session
Angels Gather Here
May 15, 16, 17, 18, 2022
Augusta Civic Center

Quickie Answers

1. No. Once the opening has commenced with the ritual words, the opening ritual is not interrupted.
2. They are visitors until they have been verified as members.
3. The Associate Conductress steps into the position of the Conductress and leads in the presentation.
4. She may seat the chapter shortly after the Grand Honors, or when the Honorees are back at their seats or inbetween those times. May depend upon the size of the chapter room and age of those in attendance.
5. Never have seen this question or an answer to it. But it stands to reason, if they are not written correctly, then they have been corrected regardless of who notices the error.

Christmas Trivia – True or False

1. Everytime a bell rings an angel gets his/her wings.
2. North America's first eggnog was made in Jamestown.
3. White Christmas is considered the best selling single record of all times.
4. *You're a mean one, Mr. Grinch*. The Grinch is said to be as cuddly as a cactus.
5. In *Frosty the Snowman*, the hat is the magical accessory that animates Frosty.
6. The original story behind the *Elf on the Shelf* is the Elf spies on children and reports their behavior to Santa.
7. At the end of his visit in *Twas the Night before Christmas*, Santa puts his finger to his nose.
8. Handwritten letters to Santa still outnumber online communications like email.
9. Judy Garland sang *Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas* in the movie, *Meet Me in St. Louis*.
10. Santa was not included in Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade until its second year.
11. Ten reindeer pull Santa's sleigh in Clement Moore's *Twas the Night Before Christmas*.
12. Clement Moore compared Santa's belly to a bowl full of jam.
13. The British and German Soldiers played baseball during the Christmas truce of 1914.
14. George Washington spent six Christmases as President.
15. Hallmark introduced their first Christmas card in 1910.
16. The first candy canes were green.
17. In *We Wish You a Merry Christmas* the carolers demand some chocolate pudding.
18. Brenda Lee was 20 when she first recorded *Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree*.

The first nine are true and the rest are false.