



SCOTTISH RITE
Northern Masonic Jurisdiction

The Grand Almoner's Fund



**DOING THE
RITE THING**

The Grand Almoner's Fund

Thank You.



As you go through this Grand Almoner's Fund update, you will read stories that remind us, no matter what life throws at us, we have millions of Brothers to help us catch it. These are stories of heartache, sadness, disaster; these are Brothers and families in some of their darkest moments. Freemasonry was there to help them. You were there to help them.

It has been said that "the team with the best players, wins." But what happens when those "best players" are down on their luck and in need of a little assistance? The team around them steps up. The team members listed at the conclusion of this publication stepped up, big.

Members of our Commander's Circle have given more than money. Their giving has mended hearts, wiped tears, and eased the after effects of hurricanes. They have helped shine a light on that darkness that once was.

Thank you. Thank you for your part in the Grand Almoner's Fund.



Michael C. Russell, 32°

*Vice President of Charities
Director of Development*

Answering in a Very Big Way

Victoria Duhamel of Steubenville, Ohio was given much more than she had expected when she reached out to the Scottish Rite asking for help to get a service dog. Duhamel suffers from lymphangiomyomatosis (LAM), a genetic mutation that causes her lungs to replace lung tissue with muscle tissue so she has no oxygen transfer.

Now, the nine pound oxygen tank she carries on her back will be a weight lifted off her shoulders—literally—with the help of a check from the Grand Almoner's Fund that is making a service dog possible.

Said Deputy's Representative of Steubenville Edsel Emery, "The check we are able to offer is substantial, and it was very much beyond what we could do here at the Valley. We have the Grand Almoner's Fund to thank for that."

Duhamel's father-in-law and husband are both Freemasons, and it was through them that she asked the Fraternity for help. They didn't imagine the Grand Almoner's Fund would answer in such a big way.

"I was astounded," Duhamel said. "Total shock. I had no idea that they were going to help out that much."



Presenting a check from the Grand Almoner's Fund to Victoria Duhamel for a service dog is Valley Secretary, Wayne Fulmer, 32° (l), and Deputy's Representative, Edsel Emery, 33° (r).

After receiving the good news, Duhamel received the \$9,000 check at a small presentation ceremony at the Scottish Rite Temple in Steubenville.

"It was, for me, one of the most memorable moments in my Masonic journey," Ill. Brother Emery said. "I am so very proud of the Scottish Rite."

"It's an amazing feeling to know that the Masons and the Scottish Rite thought that my condition was worthwhile enough to help me out like that," Duhamel said. "I am so grateful."

The Grand Almoner's Fund

The Grand Almoner's Fund At Work

As told by Ill. David A. Auchey, 33°, Valley Secretary, Valley of Harrisburg.

At 7:30 one morning, I received an email from Brother Darrin D. Catts, 32°, District Deputy Grand Master for the 42nd Masonic District in Pennsylvania. Brother Catts informed me he had identified a Brother from our District who had a special medical need.

He went on to explain that Brother Frank Wyatt had been in a battle with cancer for some time, and that the future was quite uncertain. Conventional treatments just did not seem to kill the cancer. Brother Wyatt had found out about an experimental treatment option available at the Johns Hopkins Hospital in nearby Baltimore, MD. Finding that his case made him a good candidate for the program, he learned that he would be eligible to participate, only to discover that these treatments would not be covered by his health insurance.

This is where we stepped in. Brother Catts verified that this was a legitimate need and asked how the Scottish Rite could help. I immediately told Brother Catts that I would put this case through the proper channels to ask for help from the Grand Almoner.

By 8:00 AM, I sent an email to our then Active Member of the Supreme

Council, Ill. Jeffrey W. Coy, 33°, asking him to consider the facts I outlined to him from my communication with Brother Catts. Ill. Brother Coy forwarded the request to our Deputy for Pennsylvania, Ill. Thomas K. Sturgeon, 33°, who forwarded the request with his approval to our Sovereign Grand Commander.

Within hours, an email was sent to Ill. Peter Samiec, 33°, Grand Almoner of the Supreme Council, directing him to issue a check for \$8,000.00 to cover the cost of the treatments for Brother Wyatt.

We received an email in Harrisburg **before 4:30 PM the same day** that this request had been approved by the Sovereign Grand Commander.

Just two days later, I received the check and immediately made arrangements to visit with Brother Wyatt the following Saturday morning.

The meeting with Brother Wyatt and his wife was very emotional when we were able to present the check for the full amount of the cost of the cancer treatments. We explained that there were no strings attached, and we did not expect anything in return except for him to get well soon.

What a wonderful example of fulfilling our Masonic obligation to help a Brother in need! It should make every member proud to be a part of an organization that actually does this kind of thing.

The steps are simple: identify the need, verify the need, and then apply through your Active to your Deputy to the Supreme Council. While not every broken wrist or defective car transmission will qualify, if there is a verified need that cannot be met through normal local efforts, perhaps the Grand Almoner's Fund can help.

Now almost a year later, while Brother Wyatt is still not cancer free after these treatments, he continues to fight the good fight. While his future is still uncertain, he is looking into programs available from the National Institute of Health. Brother and Mrs. Wyatt are most appreciative of the

help they received from the Scottish Rite. Without that help, they would not have been able to take advantage of the program at Johns Hopkins Hospital and wish to offer their thanks to all who contribute to the Grand Almoner's Fund.

In Frank's own words:

"The costs of new cancer treatments, even trials supported by the drug companies, are very expensive. The Scottish Rite Grand Almoner's Fund made it possible for me to have a chance at living longer, and maybe even a cure. Without the help of my Masonic Brothers, I might not still be fighting the good fight. I am grateful for their relief and support through this difficult challenge."

Bro. Frank Wyatt, 32°



L to R: Bro. Darrin D. Catts, 32°, D.D.G.M. Dist 42, Mrs. Wyatt, Bro. Frank Wyatt, 32°, and Ill. David A. Auchey, 33°, presenting the check to Bro. Wyatt

The Grand Almoner's Fund

Why We Give



Gerti and I give to the Grand Almoner's Fund because of a desire to help our fellow man.

When Gerti became a nurse, she took a pledge to commit to the welfare of others. As a Mason, I took a similar pledge to help my fellow Brothers, their widows and orphans.

People today are naturally skeptical about giving. But when someone needs help, and it comes to fruition, the result is trust and a perceived sense of value. You don't have to be a recipient to come to that same conclusion.

To paraphrase Florence Nightingale, we should devote ourselves to the welfare of those committed to our care.

Commit yourself, and care for a Brother by supporting our Almoner's Fund.

Gregory Clark, 33°

Deputy for Illinois



Gregory and Gerti Clark



Why do I give? I guess in part because I have “Taken” before in my life, and I know how it feels. I also want to teach the next generation that giving can be rewarding. Mostly, I think that giving is a choice. Those who “Take” can have a hard time “Giving.” But those who “Give” sometimes need to “Take” a little help.

Things weren't always perfect when I was young. One Christmas didn't even include presents under a tree. I spent a few Saturdays in line waiting for government-issued food like cheese, chicken soup, prunes, and some form of SPAM, which I ate a lot of over those years.

Later in high school, at times I wondered how I was going to get by. I even resigned to getting food stamps. I saved one of those food stamps, and after 35 years, I still have it. It served as a reminder to me in my early career that I didn't want to need to “Take” again, but would rather be one who could “Give” instead.

As a parent, I've made sure that my children experience “giving.” I used to take my children to the local Veterans Home where a few of us Masons handed out coffee and donuts.

Sometimes they would deliver the donuts as well. They still remember those times.

I was always involved in the “Summer-Fest” event with my Lodge, and my kids knew that it was a charitable endeavor. After many years, I told them I wasn't participating one year. I was shocked to hear the cries of “You have to!” “You always do that!” They knew it was a volunteer event for me, and it had become a part of their lives too.

Recently my son had his eighth-grade graduation ceremony, and as part of his dressing up, he wanted to borrow a bow tie. The one that best matched was my Children's Dyslexia Center Builders Council yellow Teddy Bear bow tie. I let him use it, but I did tell him to take good care of it, as it was an expensive tie! That tie has been a symbol of giving to me, and I have been very proud to wear it.

Freemasonry has helped me surround myself with many other “Givers,” and I think giving is what makes all of us proud and happy to be members.



Jeffrey A. Simonton, 33°

Active Member of the Supreme Council

The Grand Almoner's Fund

A Message from the Grand Almoner

Over the years I've been honored to serve the Craft in many capacities, but no position has given me the deep sense of satisfaction and true service as my role as Grand Almoner. My last message focused on our global assistance aiding victims of natural disaster. To quote an old movie line, "This time, it's personal."

This year we received and processed 123 requests for personal assistance. The opportunity to help could be both heartwarming and heart-wrenching. But in the end, heartwarming prevailed. Here are some of those experiences:

One Brother whose resources were depleted due to serious illness wasn't going to be able to attend his father's out of state funeral services, a heart-wrenching thought. Helping him get to the funeral and be with the rest of his family in their time of sorrow was truly heartwarming.

A family who escaped a house fire with only the clothes they were wearing was another heart-wrenching story. Everything was gone. In under 24 hours, we supplied them with debit cards for food, temporary shelter, and clothing. Heartwarming.

An elderly Brother was living alone in a house with a leaking roof, a failing heating system, and no resources to

fix either. We helped with both, and his Lodge Brothers are working to paint, repair, and update the house as an ongoing project.

This is heartwarming on two levels. Not only were we able to improve the quality of this Brother's life, but his Brothers are living the obligations of all Freemasons everywhere: to help, aid and assist a worthy Brother Mason in distress.

There are 120 similar stories.

The bulk of our assistance goes, not to disaster relief, but to individual Brothers and their families, each with a name and a face. And those faces have smiles on them because we were here for them.

With your support we can continue doing "The Rite Thing": putting smiles on the faces of many more Freemasons in need.

By the way, it'll warm your heart and make you smile, too.



Peter J. Samiec, 33rd

*Grand Lieutenant Commander
Grand Almoner*

Words of Thanks



This Scottish Rite Brother was in a serious motorcycle accident that left him unable to work. He was facing foreclosure on his house before the Almoner's Fund stepped in.

Dear Brethren of the Supreme Council,

I would first like to express my gratitude and appreciation to you, and all the Brethren of the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite, Northern Masonic Jurisdiction. Without your commitment and assistance, the hardships I've been enduring these past few years would have been completely unbearable. The heartfelt warmth and concern of the Brethren has again assured me that the Scottish Rite has rededicated to its mission to "strive to be a fraternity that fulfills our Masonic obligation to care for its members."

When I first read about the Grand Almoner's Fund, and the accounts of those it has assisted, it offered me some light in my darkest hour. Hearing the stories from other Brethren who have received relief gave me the feeling that I truly wasn't alone.

I've continued to drive onward, finding my way through hard work,

determination, and the lessons I've learned as a member of all my Masonic associations, but particularly those lessons conferred on me by the AASR.

Everyone who knows me knows it's certainly not my way to ask for assistance, but as time had progressed, I truly felt I had nowhere else to turn. I was at risk of losing my home, and what felt like my entire world. I reached out to the leadership of my Valley. Their genuine concern for the complex issues I was facing was reassuring.

It has been a long, trying road since my accident in 2014. With more surgeries looming, at least I can rest a bit easier knowing that the fraternity stands by its members and our obligation. My eternal gratitude to all.

Respectfully and Fraternally Yours,

Brother Smith

The Grand Almoner's Fund

Commander's Circle Donors

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."

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* GOLD DONORS (\$10,000+)

The Commander's Circle

On the occasion of the 200th anniversary of Scottish Rite Freemasonry, Sovereign Grand Commander John Wm. McNaughton, 33°, commissioned a special honor to recognize the most generous donors to the Grand Almoner's Fund.

The Commander's Circle is made up of two levels of giving:

- The Gold Circle is an exclusive honor limited to donors of \$10,000 or more to the Grand Almoner's Campaign. A gold pin has been commissioned to acknowledge members of this group.
- The Silver Circle recognizes those who donate or make a bequest of \$5,000 or more to the Grand Almoner's Campaign. A silver pin recognizes the members of this group.

Members of these donor societies are commemorated on a plaque in the Supreme Council Headquarters located in Lexington, Massachusetts.

Direct donations and pledges that can be paid over a period of time of up to five years are excellent ways to support the Grand Almoner's Campaign. Bequests are also encouraged and deeply appreciated.

Gifts of securities may be donated, as well. Gifts of real property may be possible, but are subject to review before acceptance.

Your donation can be sent in the envelope provided. Or you may contact the Development Department directly at:

The Grand Almoner's Fund

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*Freemasonry was there to help them.
You were there to help them.*

Michael C. Russell, 32°

*Vice President of Charities
Director of Development*

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