



Joan M. Atkinson
Past Matron, Palestine Chapter No. 114
Worthy Grand Matron

ADDRESS OF THE WORTHY GRAND MATRON

JOAN M. ATKINSON

May 16, 2009

Worthy Grand Patron, Installing Grand Officers, Distinguished Guests, Sisters,
Brothers, Family, Friends:

I have a feeling that it is going to take an awful lot of months for this to sink in.

There are many honors that can be given to a Sister, but none higher in this Grand Chapter than that of Worthy Grand Matron. To the members of this Jurisdiction go my sincere and humble thanks for their confidence in me and my abilities. The responsibilities of this Office are great and I shall count on the guidance of many as I fulfill my obligations with Vision, Faith, Courage and Unity. May I ever keep in mind the purposes and principles for which this Order was founded.

The first order of business I would like to perform is the introduction my family and friends: As always by my side is my Steve who is my right hand. Without his love, support and help, I would travel a very lonely road at times. Thank you for being my biggest fan and a believer in all my abilities. You pretty much will do anything for me and I hope I never to take advantage of that. I am blessed that it is me you chose to love. Thank you also for making sure Electa Chapter No. 19's Bible was on the altar for me this evening. For those who don't know, that was the Chapter of my initiation 36 years ago and it will always hold a special place in my heart. Thank you, honey. I also, at this point, want to recognize people who are not my family by relation, but are family in my heart. I would like to recognize Pat and Richard

Simpson and also the Butland Family. I love you all and the support you give me is great and I appreciate it. I am so happy you are with me. Thank you.

Just as important to me as family is my Palestine and Billerica Chapters, please stand. You are my foundation. You give me anything I need and often volunteer your help. I will need you just as much this year as I have in the past and I hope you will be traveling with Art, me and the Stars of Hope throughout this very busy year. I look forward to being with you as often as possible. Thank you very much.

Brother Art, Worthy Grand Patron: When this jurisdiction had the foresight to elect you as Grand Sentinel three years ago, I couldn't have been more pleased. You and your wife Sister Judy have brought to the Stars of Hope a new dimension. I look forward to our coming year and all we will strive to accomplish together. My best wishes to you both and I know you will always be at my side.

To the Installing Suite goes my thanks for this beautiful evening that you have given to all of us tonight. Each of you have a special meaning to me.

Sister Patricia A. Simpson, PGM: Twenty-three years ago we came together by fate. Sister Eunice roomed us together for the Searchers Caribbean Cruise and our friendship took off from there. Fourteen years ago you were installed as Worthy Grand Matron and I as your Grand Ruth. Who else could I have asked to be my Installing Grand Officer? You did a wonderful job, as I knew you would and I "think" I thank you for getting me into all of this. I am sure the emails between us in the next 12 months will be frequent, so please check your computer daily. Thank you for coming up from Florida to do this for me.

Brother Daniel B. Drew, PGP: I was delighted when Art told me you would be the Installing Grand Patron. But, like Pat, you were no surprise and I would not have had it any other way. You are Art's mentor, friend and a fine example of this Order, so I joyfully agreed it appropriate for you to be the Installing Grand Patron. Thank you for giving us our obligation at the altar and being Pat's right hand man tonight.

Sister Claire E. Wilder, GGCCM, PGM: You have always been a big supporter of me and my ideas and for that I will be ever grateful. Therefore, I had no hesitation when picking out the Installing Grand Chaplain. I wanted it to be your prayer that starts this year off with a positive attitude. I will always feel comfortable asking anything of you. Thank you for all of your assistance.

Sister Jean E. DeSisto, GGCCM, PGM, Installing Grand Marshal: There is an old adage, "when God closes a door, somewhere he opens a window". You are my "window", so to speak. You and Joe came into mine and Steve's life when you were needed the most. I rely on you for a lot which you give to me willing. Mostly I

value the honesty of our friendship which is so important. Thank you for investing me with the badge of this office, conducting me to the Grand East and for all the rest you will surely continue to do for me.

Sister Blanche H. Shaw, PGM, Grand Treasurer Emeritus: I love the twinkle you have in your eye and that mischievous grin that spreads across your face. I have the utmost respect for you and your advice. I was so pleased you agreed to confirm the Stars of Hope deputies. I am sure, along with me, they will always hold the memory of this evening in their hearts and we will all continue to strive to emulate you. Thank you for this service and also for once again agreeing to fill out all the commissions and that one ballot that put me in front of this microphone tonight.

Brother Robert E. McDuffie, GGCCM, PGP and Sister Anna B. Craig, PGM: I am a firm believer that you only do this once and you should include those who you want. I did give some thought to the mix of a Brother and a Sister being the Confirming Marshals, but I believed you to be up to the challenge. Both of you have been my friend and advocate, so I could not have asked anyone else but you to do this job. Thank you for your support.

Sisters Ann Carley, PM and Tricia Smith, our esteem musicians: I have such admiration for both of you and your talents. Those of us who don't even come close are in awe of what you can accomplish. I gave you the challenge of selecting a couple of songs and you didn't even blink an eye. I thank you both for making this evening a night of memories and great music.

Sister Bonnie J. Zumalt, PGM: Our friendship has grown over the past few years. You have given me much good counsel and I never hesitate to continue in asking for it. I thank you for our lovely Star Point Ceremony. I foresee many more years of 3+2+2 dinners and I look forward to any time we can steal a chat over dinner. Thank you and here's to you.

To my Floral Marshal and Floral Star Points – Sisters Elaine R. Wallace, GGCCM, PGM, Theodora F. Casey, Rose M. Carrow, Barbara L. Miller, Mary G. Houde and Barbara M. McDuffie: All of you mean much to me and I view your friendships as a precious gift. Each of you was asked to represent your station once again for a very particular reasons. I am pleased you agreed to participate in this ceremony and that alone made this evening very special. I wish for each of you all the best and I hope to find myself in your company often.

Sister Natalie, Past Grand Matron and Brother John, Past Grand Patron: I really think it was just yesterday that you were installed and look at us now. I know both of you enjoyed your Crystal Stargazer year and I wish for you both time off to put your feet up, relax and smell the roses. Congratulations to both of you.

Sister Diane, AGM and Brother Mike, AGP: The room takes on a whole different perspective from that angle, doesn't it? I have the utmost faith in both of you and your judgment. I look forward to working closely with you this year. I know you have been planning and now you need to kick it up a notch. I wish you much success in your choices and decisions. Any time you need me, I am confident you will be able to find me.

To all the Elected Grand Officers: I have and will continue to rely on all of you for advice and support – exactly like a working line of officers should be. All of you have much to offer this Jurisdiction and me. I am positive you will rise to the challenge and always function at the high level we have come to expect from you. Thank you for the past, the present and the future.

To our Stars of Hope Grand Family; our Appointed Grand Officers, Deputy Grand Matrons, Deputy Grand Marshals, Fraternal Correspondent, Personal Pages and the Assistant to the Grand Organist: Each of you was chosen with much thought. None of you were picked by chance. Art and I have the utmost confidence in all of you and your abilities to achieve. There is a special spot in our heart for each one of you and we know you will work diligently in this Stars of Hope year. We have faith you will continue to serve our Jurisdiction with Vision, Courage and Unity it deserves. Thank you.

To our Stars of Hope Association: Most of you have been with me since the beginning and some even earlier. You all work very hard in your own Chapters to do all you can do to strengthen them. I thank you for your support of all our endeavors as an Association. I wish you all the best as you lead your Chapters in progress and growth this year. You will always have our love and encouragement in all you strive to achieve.

To Brother Andy Johnson, PP: You didn't hesitate to offer your services to me a couple of years ago before I even knew I needed you. Sometimes we flounder and you just stepped right up and clarified more than one point for me. Thank you very much for your support and for the formation for the Confirmation of our Deputies. It was beautifully done. I look forward to a long and close association. Thank you.

Brother Joseph (Sugerlips) DeSisto, III, PP, my Hall Committee Chairman and all the rest of the Hall Committee: Our Grand Chapter Sessions would never be this smooth without all of you and your hard work. You do make it look easy, but I know better. Our Hall Committee is the best and you are the envy of many other Grand Chapters. On behalf of all of us here, I thank you for all your efforts as you strive to fulfill the requests of each one of us. I look forward to our continued alliance and will always help you in any way I can. Thank you very much.

Sister Willie Stone, PM and her decoration committee, along with Sister Marsha Coocen, PM for the flowers of the evening: When you are in my position and assign jobs to capable people, it then becomes a project I don't have to worry about anymore. All of you volunteered to perform these tasks and I am so pleased with the finished products. Such great decorations and flowers certainly brighten up our Grand Chapter room. My sincere thanks to each one of you for your imagination, talents, and willingness to make this night beautiful.

At this point, I would like to ask all Master Masons in the room to please stand? This Order would not exist without the commitment you have to it. I am going to ask you to take that commitment one step further. When you attend your Lodge meetings and especially at the initiation of new members to your lodge, I would like you to present to that new member one of our "Way of Life" brochures which you will find in the lobby of this auditorium by the front entrance doors. I have been informed that some Lodge secretaries present their new members with a packet after their initiation. So I'm not exactly sure why our informational brochure can't also be included in that packet, for the new Mason and his wife? You are our necessary link between Eastern Star and Masons. You are the only ones in this room, that have that power. None of us Sisters have the contacts that you do. The membership in Masons is growing by leaps and bounds, so why can't we also go hand in hand with them? This is my challenge to you. You are the lynch pin in our membership growth. Please take as many of the "Way of Life" brochures you might need and remember we have a very active Membership Committee who will be more than happy to provide you with more. I thank all of you and I hope you accept this challenge.

The Stars of Hope will again offer a Travel Award program this year, but there will be a few changes and some new goals. You will find this flyer in the hotel lobby. Please pick it up and review the requirements and start earning your "gold star".

This year, as in previous years, we still plan to be a big supporter of the Muscular Dystrophy Association. Please respond generously when asked, whether it is to be a donor or to work the Telethon on Labor Day weekend. The walk around Lake Quannapowitt will be Saturday, June 20th and these flyers are also in the lobby of the hotel. So please pick one up.

I'm now going to share with you my special project. My special benevolent project for this year will be to help support the annual "Celebration of Life": A celebration for those who have been touched by cancer. It is a full day of celebration, education and kinship for the Beth Israel Deaconess cancer community. This annual event raises awareness of the battle against cancer, and welcomes all women and men who have been touched by this class of diseases. The event also welcomes those patients from other hospitals in and around Boston. Now in its 16th year,

Celebration of Life brings together patients and their friends and family members, along with physicians, nurses, social workers, and other cancer care providers at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. This event allows people living with cancer an opportunity to share personal experiences, information about new treatments and support systems, and to learn from Harvard Medical School physicians and community experts and, of course, to learn from each other.

Each year, the Celebration of Life is held on National Cancer Survivors Day – an annual, worldwide day of symbolic unity for cancer survivors, their loved ones, and cancer care providers that is typically observed on the first Sunday in June, which this year is June 7th. It will include more than two-dozen workshops led by BI faculty and staff and other community experts. This event will also feature an extended lunchtime discussion with cancer survivors hosted by Kelley Tuthill from Channel 5, a breast cancer survivor. The day is chock full of workshops, music, art, and opportunities for participants to share their personal stories and includes breakfast, lunch, goodie bags, and so much more for the attendees.

This event relies solely on donations to continue. Since it is so important for cancer patients to receive all the information and assistance they can, I think this is a different and unusual way for us to be able to help them. I hope you will assist me in this endeavor. As I have seen the devastation of several different cancers take the lives of my family and friends, I was unable to choose just one particular cancer to support. So I decided to encompass all cancers, for both women and men. I'll bet every family in this auditorium has been touched by some sort of cancer. I feel this is an important service that they provide and the Order of the Eastern Star of Massachusetts will be proud to be able to assist with their patient's education and care.

Art and I will be sharing one pin this year, which will represent both of our special charities, and after he has spoken, I will be happy to describe it to you. The total proceeds received from the sale of this pin will be divided equally between each of our charities.

At this time I would like to announce my committee appointments for 2009 - 2010:

Constitution and Laws
Constitution and Laws

Finance
Finance
Jurisprudence
Registration
Membership Listing

Sister Bonnie J. Zumalt, PGM
Brother Robert E. McDuffie, PGP,
1 year unexpired term
Brother Russell W. Cutter, PP (100)
Sister Claire E. Wilder, PGM, 1 year
Sister Constance E. Vick, PGM
Sister Susan D. Dalton, PM (14)
Sister Theodora F. Casey, PM (89)

Membership
ESTARL Representative
International Headquarters
Awards
Hall Committee Chairman
Housing Chairman
Chairman of Tellers

Sister Pamela R. Main, PGM
Sister Geraldine A. Penney, PM(212)
Sister Cynthia L. Sampson, PM (63)
Sister Natalie R. Jenkins, PGM
Brother Joseph DeSisto, III, PP (100)
Brother Robert W. McBournie, PGP
Brother Edward C. Wright, PP (157)

My thanks to all of you for your continued commitment and service to the
Order of the Eastern Star.