

The information as to the beginning of the O.E.S. Courtesy Board was given to me several years ago by the late Maude Monson. I trust it will be interesting, informative and inspirational.

Sister Maude served continuously on the board for 47 years and was an active member at the time of her death. Services were held at Moore-Howard's Berkeley Park Chapel on Tuesday, January 30, 1979. Entombment was in the Tower of Memories. At the Chapel it was standing room only and the many, many friends and neighbors who were in attendance were proof of the regard and esteem those who knew her held for her. Our sister was a life member of Unity Chapter # 97, O.E.S., an active member of the North Side Woman's Club. It was always a delight to get Maude to reminisce about "days of yore" the golden days in Denver and her experiences on the O.E.S. Courtesy Board. This was her life and what she enjoyed most about her Eastern Star membership.

The Relief Board was started July 15, 1906 with 4 chapters participating. Grand Chapter had no part in the Board's beginning. This was before welfare and there was no help of any kind if a member was temporarily without funds or needed aid or assistance. The Board gave what help they could during the Great Depression of the twenties and thirties with the small fund that was available to them from the 4 original chapters.

Many sisters would come into town seeking a job in the big city. Get off the train at the Union Station and the Station Master would call the Relief Board as it was well known and some Board member would get up perhaps in the middle of the night and go to the depot and pick up the "Star lady" and take

her to a hotel and more often than not the "Star lady" would spend the night in the Board member's home. Those were the days of sharing. This service was always repaid with Eastern Star love and gratitude.

The first president was Fannie Hardin, Vice president Dora Snyder, Secretary Elizabeth Markham, Treasurer Minnie Higgins. Brothers William Steman and N. P. Hinckley was to draft the rules and regulations.

It wasn't until January 13, 1936 that it was unanimously voted upon to change the name to O.E.S. Courtesy Board. This change had to be made because at that time and during the Great Depression the Board was getting calls for coal, firewood, food and clothing and shelter from people who were not members of the Eastern Star or even Masonic affiliated families. There was not the funds for this although the Relief Board would gladly have given assistance wherever there was a need if it had been possible. The Courtesy Board from its beginning was meant to be continuous with new members to serve each year. This plan is still being carried out. There is no stipulation as to how long a member can serve if it is agreeable to each Worthy Matron, the Chapter and the member serving their respective Chapter and the Order of Eastern Star.

In the beginning the Board met in the members homes to make their plans and to conduct their business meetings.

In 1922 Sister Carrie Cooper Ferguson went before the Masonic Board and asked that the Relief Board be permitted to meet in the Temple on 16th and Welton Streets, Denver. The request was granted and they met in Tucker Hall with no rent to pay. The Courtesy Board met here until 1976 when the Board was asked to pay \$10.00 a month rent.

The president Ruth Chapman, P.M. Fern #94 appointed a committee to find a new meeting place. The Courtesy Board now meets in the Columbian Savings and Loan Bank at Colfax and Wadsworth rent free.

To bring the Courtesy Board up-to-date. In October of 1975 Sister Ruth Chapman, P.M. Fern 94, accepted the presidency. Each year since she has been Unanimously elected to serve and carry out the work and the purpose for which the Board was organized. The 1978-79 officers are: President-Ruth Chapman, P.M. Fern #94; Vice president-Luella Sorrensen, Inspiration 107; Secretary-Treasurer Doris Wade, P.M. Peace 151; Chaplain-Helen Creighton, Peace 151. All officers work untiringly with the members and the Grand Secretary Dorothy Stearns who has written to each Grand Secretary across our land for the names and addresses of their members in the Denver area who are infirm, elderly, blind or just lonely and far from their home O.E.S. Chapters. Sister Doris Wade keeps up a correspondence with all members, sojourners and Chapter Secretaries.

In January of 1976 a O.E.S. Courtesy Board Funeral Team #1 was organized under the direction of the president Ruth Chapman. Sister Virginia Ballard of Fern 94, and our president's mother, is the Board's telephone "warrior". She spends much time on the telephone at the time of a funeral. All Denver area mortuaries have the Board's officers telephone numbers to call if it is the deceased member's family's request to have an O.E.S. service. This requires much telephoning and checking to see if the deceased is a member in good standing. This must be done immediately upon receiving the call. All members of the funeral team must be called, a flower piece ordered, robes and jewels must be taken to the mortuary or church and rides provided for the participating members. All agree that this is no effort at all to be of service to a family in their hour of greatest need. These members are on 24

hour call and this is no small task but all love it and remember "the greatest of these is love."

In November of 1977 the president, Sister Ruth, appointed a committee to revise and up-date the By-Laws of the Board. The members of this committee were: Doris Wade, P.M. 151; Roma Muller, P.M. Golden Sheaf 111; Frances Larson, P.M. Mt. Zion 133; Virginia Owen, Temple 96. The recommendations of this committee were presented November 14, 1977 at a regular meeting, was voted upon and was unanimously accepted.

Presently there are 26 Denver Area chapters participating with 52 members and 36 sojourners.

Let us not fail in the purpose for which the founders organized the International Order of Eastern Star. So much of our American heritage is being stricken from the records.

Colorado is unique in having an organization of this kind within the Star. It is the only one in the General Grand Chapter O.E.S. All members owe a vote of thanks to the founders of the Relief Board for their vision and insight, now the OES Courtesy Board, all members past and present and the 4 original participating chapters.

The purpose and the duties of the Courtesy Board s to make calls on Sojourners who are blind, or who are shut-ins because of illness or advanced years, those in Nursing Homes or wherever they might be found. To deliver gifts, at Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine Day, Easter, Mother's Day and Father's Day and to

remember all birthdays, paid for by the Courtesy Board Treasurer. Most of all just be their friend and shower them with Star love and concern.

It is the duty of the Board members to request a contribution of money from their respective chapters payable to the O.E.S. Courtesy Board. A luncheon party is held on the 4th Saturday in April. Each Associate Matron of the participating chapters to be guests. The members are to attend business meetings on the 2nd Monday of each month from September thru June. Come prepared to make a report on the welfare of the Sojourners. The Sojourners are cared for during the summer months. The Courtesy Board never takes a vacation. They don't stop loving and giving and more often than not the Board member receives the greatest blessing.

In the year of our Lord 1979 may all O.E.S. members recognize and thank the president Sister Ruth Chapman for re-organizing the Courtesy Board and making it a very important group of dedicated and concerned members of the O.E.S. in these perilous times. We on the Board "will show you our faith by our works."

Thanks to Grand Chapter and especially to the Grand Secretary Dorothy Stearns for her many letters and moral support.

When the Worthy Matron speaks to the new candidates she mentions the pitious wail of the orphan. Let us not turn a deaf ear to the pitious wail of loneliness of our infirm and older members.

The Board is grateful for any monetary gift that it receives and all members may rest assured that it will be used to give advise in trouble, sympathy in sorrow and aid in the misfortune of our own O.E.S. members.

May our light so shine before our sisters and brothers that they may see our good works and glorify our Heavenly Father. May we never forget that the One upon whose Life and Works the Order of Eastern Star was founded said, "if you have done it unto the least of these, you have done it unto me."

Finally my sisters and brothers, "let us not love in words only but in deeds and truth."

And may the warming love of friends surround you as you go down the paths of joy and happiness where the happy memories grow.

Fraternally and lovingly compiled for the O.E.S. honoring the Courtesy Board.

Virginia L. Owen  
Temple Chapter #96