

# THE MASONICARE ANNUAL APPEAL NEWS

BY THE MASONIC CHARITY FOUNDATION OF CONNECTICUT



Spring 2009

*Staying Connected . . .*

## Ray and Laura Cooley Maintain “Heartfelt” Support of Masonicare



Nearly three decades after joining the Masonicare family, RW Bro. Ray Cooley and his wife, Laura, remain enthusiastic supporters of the Masonicare Annual Appeal.

In 1981, RW Bro. Ray Cooley was working in the mental health field as a psychiatric chaplain in Kentucky when he was recruited to develop a clinical pastoral education program at Masonicare Health Center (MHC) in Wallingford, then known as the Masonic Home.

“I felt this urge, this call, to work with older people,” Ray said. “So I came up here, interviewed, and fell in love with the place. There was no Ashlar Village yet -- just the Masonic Home, cows, and a dairy barn. We were still drinking milk from our own dairy.”

Ray retired in 2006 after 25 years as Director of Spiritual Services at MHC and Masonicare at Newtown. He and his wife of 49 years, Laura, recently shared their thoughts, feelings and reflections on being a part of the Masonicare family and supporting the Masonicare Annual Appeal, The Masonic Charity Foundation of Connecticut’s ongoing campaign to help Masonicare’s affiliates provide outstanding care for seniors.

A member of Compass Lodge No. 9 in Wallingford, Bro. Ray joined the fraternity shortly after moving to Connecticut. He is Right Worshipful Past Grand Chaplain for the Grand Lodge of Connecticut (1984 and 1989) and is active in the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar, where he served for several years as Eminent Grand Prelate, leading prayers at worship services and conducting sermons. Ray still graciously volunteers to give the invocation at the Masonicare Annual Appeal Donor Breakfast on Grand Master’s Day, when his schedule permits.

Laura, meanwhile, enjoyed volunteering for many years in the Recreation Department at MHC doing crafts with the residents.

Looking back on his many years of service to Masonicare, Ray is very pleased to have helped get MHC accredited by the Association of Clinical Pastoral Education. But what he found most rewarding was working with

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*-- RW Bro. Ray Cooley,  
Annual Appeal donor and  
former Masonicare employee*

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people. This included providing supportive care to the terminally ill and their families, leading worship services and bible studies, and developing what he calls a “spiritual life review program” in which he and his Pastoral Education students made audio recordings of people living at MHC and

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*Still Answering The Call . . .*

## Telephone T Square Club Joins Masonicare Society



**MW Bro. Gus Bodin (left) with MW Bro. Gail N. Smith, at the Masonicare Society Reception in February. Bodin was on hand for the Telephone T Square Club's induction into the Masonicare Society.**

**T**he Telephone T Square Club may be gone, but the generosity and volunteer spirit of that organization lives on in a recent donation to The Masonic Charity Foundation of Connecticut (MCF).

Comprised of Connecticut Masons who worked in the telephone industry, the Telephone T Square Club offered its members an opportunity to communicate with each other at fraternal and social functions. This included performing degree work, which they did at lodges throughout Connecticut while outfitted in standard telephone lineman equipment like safety belts, hard hats and pole climbers.

The Club was also a regular supporter of the Masonicare Annual Appeal, which benefits programs

and services throughout the not-for-profit healthcare continuum.

At its peak in the late 1950s and early 1960s, the Club had almost 500 members. But, as companies like Southern New England Telephone (SNET) and Western Electric were swallowed up by larger conglomerates in the 1990s, many employees either left the industry or opted for early retirement, gradually leading to the disbanding of the Telephone T Square Club.

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**“I feel good about what we do and how we take care of Masons and non-Masons, so the name Masonicare is one that we can all be very proud of.”**

*-- MW Bro. Gus Bodin  
Telephone T-Square Club*

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So how did an organization which had ceased to exist come to make its most recent contribution?

“There was some money sitting in our treasury that had been collected through dues and donations from events we had put on in the past,” said MW Bro. Gus Bodin, Past Grand Master and former President and Treasurer of the Telephone T Square Club. “We decided to donate these funds to MCF because we had been sponsors of an early version of the Lifeline emergency service system called Medical Alert.

We knew some people in the community who benefited from that service thanks to the Annual Appeal, so it just seemed natural that the money should go to Masonicare.”

With this Annual Appeal donation, which will be directed to the Masonicare Home Health & Hospice Quality of Life Fund to help underwrite the Lifeline service, the Telephone T Square Club joined the Masonicare Society. The Masonicare Society is a giving society founded by MW Brothers Gail L. Smith and Gail N. Smith, Past Grand Masters, that recognizes contributions of at least \$520.

“It’s unfortunate that the Telephone T Square Club is no longer active,” said Eloise Mongillo, Director of Development for The Foundation, “but we are very appreciative that the custodians of that wonderful organization chose to make this donation to benefit Masonicare patients in financial need.”

Bro. Gus, a longtime SNET employee who also spent nearly a decade as Director of Admissions at Masonicare Health Center, said he couldn’t imagine the funds being used in any other way.

“It was rewarding to come here and see that people were taken care of properly,” he said. “I feel good about what we do and how we take care of Masons *and* non-Masons, so the name Masonicare is one that we can all be very proud of.” ☆

## From the Order of the Amaranth . . .

# A Generous Increase in Support for the Annual Appeal

That the Order of the Amaranth made a donation to The Masonic Charity Foundation of Connecticut (MCF) in support of the Masonicare Annual Appeal is, by itself, worthy of recognition. But the organization's decision to dramatically increase its 2009 gift is especially noteworthy.

HL Barbara F. Lott, Past Supreme Royal Matron of the Order of the Amaranth, explained that successful efforts to control costs in the production of an official publication

called The Amaranth Circle helped make this year's donation of \$1,000 possible.

"Part of the Order of the Amaranth's purpose is benevolent and charitable works," Barbara said. "To this end, support of Masonicare through The Masonic Charity Foundation provides the opportunity to fulfill that purpose. Contributions have ranged from a donation to the endowment to donations to the Masonicare Annual Appeal. Although not large, these donations have provided funding for 'quality of life' items for residents and patients of Masonicare, which are not norm-

ally covered by other means."

Half of the Order's 2009 contribution was earmarked for Masonicare Health Center (MHC), with the remaining portion to be divided equally between Masonicare at Newtown and Masonicare Home Health & Hospice.

Thanks to the availability of these funds, residents and patients

throughout the Masonicare continuum will lead more comfortable, enjoyable, and rewarding lives. At MHC, for example, some "quality of life" purchases

have included transportation services, wheelchair batteries, clothing, and recreational equipment. At Masonicare at Newtown, gifts to the Annual Appeal were used to underwrite the cost of a LiteGait physical therapy system and the planting of a Serenity Garden. And at Masonicare Home Health & Hospice, purchases include temporary ramps for wheelchairs, in-home telemonitoring services, and memory books for hospice patients and their loved ones.

"I was honored to accept this generous donation from the Order of the Amaranth at this year's Grand Court Session," said Jennifer

A. King, President of The Foundation. "The Order's increased level of giving, particularly during these uncertain economic times, is very much appreciated." ☆



"The level of care and service which is provided to the patients and residents of Masonicare is second to none. In December of 2007, my husband, Dave, Past Grand Royal Patron, and I learned firsthand about Masonicare Health Center's rehabilitation program. Dave, who is in his early 40s, needed a total knee replacement. When asked where he wanted to go for rehab, our first instinct was to request Masonicare in Wallingford, but we were uncertain of age limitations. We were pleased to learn that he was eligible to be admitted. After Dave's discharge, he continued with his outpatient rehab at the facility. The staff was personable, friendly and continually went above and beyond to help patients and residents reach their healthcare goals."

**-- Past Grand Royal Matron Charlene Rowe, Order of the Amaranth**

*If you would prefer not to receive any future fundraising communications from The Masonic Charity Foundation of Connecticut, please write to us at MCF of CT, P.O. Box 70, Wallingford, CT 06492. In order to ensure that we accurately reflect your request, please provide your full name and street address. Please note that it may take six to eight weeks to make your request fully effective.*



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Masonicare at Ashlar Village. From 1983 until 2004, they collected stories from nearly 200 residents.

“I happened upon a book,” Ray said, “by Dr. Robert Butler, a gerontologist who first developed the message that when elderly people start remembering the past, it’s not because they’re *living* in the past, it’s because they are bringing *meaning* to their lives. So we recorded them with the idea of preserving their memories, how they felt about the contributions they made in life, and how they would like to be remembered.”

During his time as a Masonicare staff member, Ray felt it was im-

portant to support the Annual Appeal. Giving to The Masonic Charity Foundation remains a priority to the Cooleys, even in retirement.

“Giving to the Annual Appeal makes you feel like more a part of what’s happening at Masonicare,” Ray said. “I think of us, even as employees, as belonging to the Masonic community, whether or not we belong to the Masons or some other affiliated organization. It’s good to know that we can contribute to that community and its future.”

Annual Appeal donors since 1986, the Cooleys generously increased their contribution in 2008 to

join the Masonicare Society. Members of this ever-expanding group of caring individuals and organizations are those who give \$520 or more each year in support of the Annual Appeal.

“I continue to feel like I’m a part of Masonicare Health Center and believe very strongly in what Masonicare is doing,” Ray explained. “I believe in the quality of care that Masonicare offers, including spiritual care, and I am also a Mason who wants to support the Masonic facility here in Connecticut. Above and beyond all of that, our donation is heartfelt.” ☆

### The Foundation’s Bequest Language

The Masonic Charity Foundation of Connecticut deeply appreciates gifts of all kinds. Should you wish to remember The Foundation in your Will, we encourage you to provide the following bequest language to your attorney:

*“I give, devise, and bequeath \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (sum of money), or \_\_\_\_\_% (percentage) of my estate, or all the rest, residue, and remainder of my estate to The Masonic Charity Foundation of Connecticut, Inc., located in Wallingford, CT.”*

Bequests provide important revenue in support of the mission of Masonicare, enabling us to provide the highest quality healthcare programs and services to our residents and patients regardless of their ability to pay. If you wish to discuss a bequest to The Foundation, please contact Jennifer King, President of The Foundation, at 203-679-5555.