But for Scottish Rite...

The Scottish Rite Grand Almoner’s Campaign

Helping Our Brothers and Their Families in Louisiana
In my more than 40 years as a Freemason, I have repeatedly seen Lodges experience the situation faced by the small country Lodge in which I was raised. They struggle financially and are often unable to help, aid, and assist Brothers who are experiencing difficulties in their lives. It seems that, over the years, many Masons have gotten used to letting other organizations take over that responsibility.

In Connecticut, Masons have a premier eldercare organization dedicated to providing for the welfare of our elderly members, and their wives and widows. History tells us that Connecticut Freemasons enjoy a long-standing reputation for helping others during times of calamity. In fact, the Masonic Charity Foundation of Connecticut grew out of a simple act. After the Great Chicago Fire of 1871, $332 was returned to the Grand Lodge of Connecticut—monies from their donation that were not needed. Over the past 120 years, that seed money grew into the fine eldercare organization known as Masonicare. Wonderful as it is, Masonicare and organizations like it cover only a portion of what we, as Masons, should be doing to help members in times of need.

Several years ago, I learned how the Scottish Rite Grand Almoner’s Fund helped a number of young Masonic families that experienced tragedies. The tragic death of a young father is one example. Not long after that, the Grand Almoner’s Fund offered hope and relief to many Brothers who were severely impacted by Superstorm Sandy.

Most recently, after the devastating flooding in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, I was touched that the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction (NMJ) once again reached out with immediate support. No red tape, no restrictions—
just a much-needed helping hand. My wife Barbara and I discussed our support of the Scottish Rite Grand Almoner’s Fund. As Grand Master of Masons in Connecticut, I established a Grand Almoner’s position within our jurisdiction. I’m pleased to say that, through the generosity of our Connecticut Brothers, we are now able to do more to help our Brothers in need.

The need is so much greater than any one state can address. That need is where the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction’s Grand Almoner’s Fund comes into play. When I read how the NMJ stepped up in Louisiana, I knew that it was important to give what we could, and to act immediately. Masons need to understand the importance of contributing to such a worthwhile endeavor. If we don’t, then who will?

My wife and I have been fortunate in our lives. We welcome the opportunity to “give back” by supporting this worthwhile cause. There are many organizations today that seek donations, but in most cases, only a small percentage of one’s donation actually goes to those it is supposed to help. I choose to support the Grand Almoner’s Fund because I know that every cent will be used to help, aid, and assist. It is not something we do for recognition. It is something we do because it is the right thing to do.

Charles & Barbara Yohe

As Grand Master of Masons in Connecticut, Charles Yohe, 33°, established the position of Grand Almoner. He said, “We now are able to do more to help our Brothers in need.”
In August 2016, your Scottish Rite pledged more than $1 million in disaster relief to help Freemasons affected by the massive flooding in Louisiana. The crisis is described by the American Red Cross as the “worst natural disaster in the United States since Hurricane Sandy” in 2012.

“The incomprehensible level of destruction in Louisiana has damaged or destroyed more than 40,000 homes,” said Sovereign Grand Commander John William McNaughton. “Many of our Brother Masons and their families are among the 70,000 persons displaced in this disaster.”

In response to the crisis, the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction issued $100,000 in debit cards that were distributed immediately to Freemasons with urgent needs, such as food and clothing. “During Hurricane Sandy, we learned that accessing cash is a real problem for the displaced,” said Commander McNaughton. “Our Brothers
Dear Brother,

Words are so inadequate to express our deep appreciation for the generous gift card you provided during the recent flood disaster. We received the gift card during a time when financial matters were so uncertain, so it really provided us with a great deal of peace of mind.

We are genuinely touched by your care and concern for our family and others affected by this devastating flood. The love you showed during this difficult time was such a blessing to our family.

Again, thank you so much for your generous gift. We ask that you pray for us as we continue our journey to recovery.

Fraternally, William Taylor
32° Valley of Baton Rouge
in Louisiana who are leading the Masonic relief efforts advised us that the same was true in this situation, so we responded. Many of our Brothers and their families remain without homes, cars, clothes, food, workplaces, or churches. They still do not know what tomorrow will bring. Many have lost almost everything.” The need in Louisiana continues to prove so great that, as of December, the Supreme Council will have issued an additional $50,000 in relief through debit cards.

The pledge of $1 million is designated for construction and rebuilding efforts. The news of the storm is becoming a distant memory for many of us. Recovery, however, is expected to take months, if not years. “We will work closely and deliberately with the Southern Jurisdiction to ensure these funds are used to help our Brothers put their lives back together,” said the Commander.

The Northern Masonic Jurisdiction also organized a large shipment of bottled water and other supplies to be sent to the ravaged area. Several tractor trailers loaded with drywall have also been delivered.

William J. Mollere, First Grand Equerry, S.G.I.G., Louisiana, said, “The Northern Masonic Jurisdiction has been incredible in their generosity to our area. The building materials have been a godsend. It allows us to put boots on the ground, and help people actually rebuild their homes. Latest estimates tell us that 158,000 homes and 7,000 businesses are still flooded. Some churches and schools remain closed. Too many businesses are just quitting, which leaves people without work, further complicating the problems. We are slowly climbing back, but it will take longer than originally thought.”

So what does it mean to receive this kind of aid in a crisis? One eloquent “thank you” (on the previous page) is representative of so many received. Think about how, together, we are doing so much good.
Charlotte Lomell, Widow of Leonard “Bud” Lomell, Pays it Forward

Bud Lomell Called “One of the Greatest Men of the Greatest Generation”

Charlotte Lomell, widow of World War II hero and Scottish Rite Brother Leonard “Bud” Lomell, donated $10,000 to the Grand Almoner’s Fund. This kind of generosity from our Brothers, their widows, and their families is not uncommon. But the circumstances surrounding Mrs. Lomell’s gift deserve telling.

Mrs. Lomell’s home was heavily damaged by Hurricane Sandy in 2012. To help make repairs she could not afford, the Grand Almoner’s Fund stepped in with assistance. She said, “I can hardly express the gratitude I felt then and feel now for your very important help to me as a new widow in a time of trouble. Now it is my time to make this donation to help others in need. The Scottish Rite will have my gratitude now and forever.”
The Company We Keep

Leonard “Bud” Lomell, 32°

Mrs. Lomell’s generosity gives us a reason to stop and be reminded of the company we keep as Freemasons. Her husband was Leonard “Bud” Lomell. Bud Lomell is the stuff of legends—a hero in the fierce battle that turned the tide of World War II. He is described by historian Stephen Ambrose in his book, *The Victors: Eisenhower and His Boys: The Men of World War II*, as the single American, other than President Dwight D. Eisenhower, most responsible for the success of D-Day.

Bud Lomell was a 24-year-old staff sergeant and platoon leader with the Army’s 2nd Ranger Battalion. The unit was trained to climb the impossibly sheer cliffs of Pointe du Hoc in Normandy. Theirs was a nearly suicidal mission to scale the cliffs, then find and disable a German gun emplacement threatening the lives of thousands.

Lomell was shot before reaching the beach, nearly drowned, ducked heavy fire, yet still managed to climb Pointe du Hoc hand-over-hand on ropes. Sustaining heavy casualties, the Rangers fought their way from the cliff edge. Lomell and Sergeant Jack Kuhn discovered the camouflaged German guns aimed at Utah beach, where American troops were landing. The artillery was positioned to swivel and hit the Americans coming ashore on Omaha Beach; the guns were unmanned.

Lomell and Kuhn quickly determined that the guns’ crew of 100–150 Germans was bunkered in a French farmhouse 100 yards away. While Kuhn kept watch, Lomell put three of the guns out of action with incendiary grenades. He then crawled back to his platoon for additional ammunition before disabling the other two guns.
Lomell received the Distinguished Service Cross, the nation’s second-highest military honor, for his D-Day action, as well as the Silver Star for bravery in the capture of Hill 400 during the long Battle of Hürtgen Forest. For 50 years after the war, he rarely talked about his wartime experiences. It was only in 1999 that he won fame in the United States after Tom Brokaw published *The Greatest Generation*, and dedicated a chapter to Lomell. Always a team player, when asked about his actions on D-Day, he responded, “I lost half my guys. What more is there to know?”

After the war, Lomell studied law under the GI Bill. He married Charlotte Ewart, a nurse, on the second anniversary of D-Day. He co-founded the Lowell Law Firm, and became known for his pro bono work for the poor and as “a fierce advocate for women in trouble.” Once, when fellow lawyers refused to admit a Jewish colleague into a private club, Lomell told them: “I didn’t climb the cliffs of Normandy to find fascists in my own back yard.”

The action and bravery of Bud Lomell in Normandy on June 6, 1944 proved to be one of the most crucial actions of World War II. He was a Freemason and he was your Brother. We are rightly proud to have supported his widow in her time of need and to keep those connections with her strong today.

The Scottish Rite honored Leonard “Bud” Lomell with the Daniel D. Thompkins Award for Distinguished Service. The posthumous award was given to and accepted by Mrs. Lomell in 2013.
The Commander’s Circle

HELP FROM THE GRAND ALMONER’S FUND MOVES LIVES FROM STATES OF DEVASTATION AND DESPERATION TO PLACES OF GREATER STABILITY AND CALM. WON’T YOU TAKE YOUR SEAT AND BE PART OF THIS MOST ESSENTIAL AND MEANINGFUL WORK?

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 newly constructed Supreme Council Headquarters located in Lexington, Massachusetts.

WAYS TO GIVE

- **Direct donations and pledges** that can be paid over a period 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:

**Grand Almoner’s Campaign**

Attn: Jim S. Deyo, PO Box 519, Lexington, MA 02420-0519 • (781) 862-4410
The 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+)*
Let us not forget that the spirit of the Grand Almoner’s Fund comes alive in simple acts of kindness, as well as in times of crisis. A phone call, a visit, a helping hand to your Brother in need, means so much.

– John William McNaughton, Sovereign Grand Commander