



Pilgrim News

Spring 2026

Governor's Greetings

Living in Nebraska, we are accustomed to glimpses of spring in what should be the dead of winter. This year, we've seen summer temperatures followed by snow. Now, imagine observing the change of seasons during a 65-day voyage across the Atlantic Ocean like our ancestors did. And imagine seeing your food supply dwindle day by day.

Our (many times) great grandparents and cousins not only landed far from where they planned, they also landed much later in the year than they had hoped. Instead of founding a colony during seasons for planting and harvesting crops, they touched American soil with the bitter winds of November at their back. Contrary to what we may have learned in school, the saints and strangers didn't come ashore initially in Plymouth. The Mayflower first rested in Provincetown Harbor.

Near the present-day town of Truro, a group of brave pilgrim explorers left the Mayflower to scout favorable places to settle. What they discovered instead was probably more important. In a place known today as Corn Hill, they found a buried cache of "Indian corn." It was multi-colored but still recognizable as food they could eat now and seeds they could plant later. Along with other measures of good luck, finding bushels of maize likely saved our kin that first starving winter. And it gave them the beginnings of their first successful harvest in the New World.

As we observe Nebraska farmers preparing the soil for their 2026 crops that will feed the world, consider honoring our pilgrim ancestors in ways that are meaningful to you. Maybe that's serving meals in a homeless shelter or donating clothing or cash to causes that help those in need. Let's pay forward the helping hand and our good luck. Also think about giving a few hours in service to your Nebraska Society of Mayflower. We have many ways for you to become more involved. If we ask you to join a committee or help with a project, please say yes! You'll feel good making these gestures and you never know how today's acts of kindness and generosity will reverberate years into the future!

If you're intrigued about Corn Hill, you can read more about this important moment in our shared history in a story in this Pilgrim News.

Kathryn Morrissey, Governor

We, as a Society, approved online meetings for the BOA and we are going to do this again this spring. Thus, Board of Assistants members and officers should note that our meeting will be on **Sunday, April 19, at 1pm on Zoom**. Please contact Jesse Harding for the link.

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Please keep an eye out for items to donate for our Fall 2026 silent auction, to support the Whedon scholarship. Mayflower-themed items are always popular.

The Great Corn Hill Caper

The date: November 16, 1620. The site: present-day Corn Hill Beach, Massachusetts. The suspects: 16-armed men seen disembarking from the ship “Mayflower.” The crime: theft of up to 10 bushels of multi-colored seed corn. The victims: members of the Nauset tribe. Possible motive: starvation and survival.

Looking back four hundred years, it’s difficult to know exactly how it all unfolded. We have some sources from the past, such as William Bradford, and even some from the present, like <https://newenglandhistoricalsociety.com/tag/mayflower/> Only four of the men involved are named –Myles Standish, William Bradford, Stephen Hopkins and Edward Tilley. While some of the facts are lost to history, this is what likely happened.

After a perilous voyage, the Mayflower dropped anchor in Provincetown Harbor on November 11. A few days later, Myles Standish leads 16-armed men to an area near modern-day Truro. This is the third expedition departing from the Mayflower and they are seeking a place for the saints and strangers to settle. Meandering from the beach and into the hills, they find a fresh-water stream. At one point, Bradford is caught in a deer trap. After freeing him, the scouting party continues to a clearing that appears deserted but also to have once been inhabited. Seeing (or maybe stumbling over) a lump in the sand, the party digs up a large European kettle and finds corn with red, yellow and blue kernels. They excavate other mounds and find more corn – anywhere from 3-10 bushels. They also discover the skeleton of a child and a man and another burial with a bow. These grave sites are left undefiled.

The pilgrims take the corn with, as Bradford writes, the intention of reimbursement. (Undoubtedly, they were mindful of relations with their new Native American neighbors.) Some present-day accounts bluntly report the corn was stolen. While the corn was removed without permission, Bradford later adds that the rightful owners were repaid to their satisfaction in the summer of 1621.

The General Society owns the 50’x 50’ plot where this momentous activity happened. A small granite marker engraved “Corn Hill - 1620” marks the spot. The General Society raised a much larger monument, pictured to the right, in 1920 as part of the tercentenary celebration. This monument rests at the edge of a nearby public beach parking lot. This location was chosen at the request of the owners of the Corn Hill Cottages who said sight seers were causing traffic problems on the narrow hill road. It may be worth the detour from Plymouth (about 70 miles) to visit a site where such a significant event in American, and in our personal history, took a life-saving turn!



Beware of Scams!

Some of our Mayflower cousins have received emails, texts, or possibly voicemails asking for money or gift cards. Usually, the bogus emails falsely appear to come from our Nebraska Society. Sadly, these scams are becoming more sophisticated. I assume Artificial Intelligence (AI) is being employed to make these messages “sound” authentic. They sometimes include the names of some of our members and appear to be signed by me, your governor.

While non-profits such as our Nebraska Mayflower Society rely on the generosity of our members, we don’t want to see scammers take advantage of your kindness. If you have any questions about the legitimacy of a request for a donation or asking for anything from you for the Nebraska Society, please don’t hesitate to contact me before responding. Stay safe.

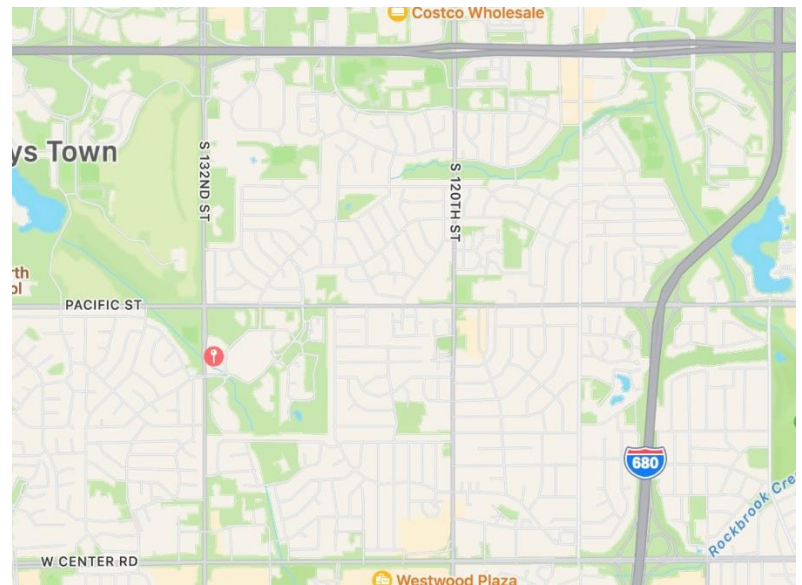
Kathryn Morrissey

Directions to Spring Meeting

As in previous years, our Spring meeting will be at the community room of

Centris Credit Union,
13120 Pierce Street,
Omaha, NE 68144.

It is a new(ish) building near the southeast corner of 132nd Street and Pacific Street. See the **red dot** on the map to the right.



Another big “thank you” to the wonderful people at Centris FCU who make their community room available free of charge. Once again, we will be offering box lunches and suggesting everyone dress comfortably. Please select from the sandwich options listed below. Each lunch includes chips, a fresh fruit cup and a granola bar as well as a choice of bottled water or bottled tea. We’re able to hold the price at \$20 as in the past.

Please complete the form below and mail it to arrive no later than **Friday, April 17**. If you need a gluten-free option, please email Kathryn Morrissey by the same deadline at kathryn4manmorrissey@gmail.com.

The business meeting will begin at **12:30 p.m.** (The Officers and Board of Assistants meeting will be held April 19, 1:00 p.m., via ZOOM.) The Centris FCU doors are set to automatically lock unless someone on the inside opens them. Please plan to arrive by 12:30 as we can’t see or hear people trying to get in the main door after this time.

Because we must leave the community room as tidy as we found it, we can always use help removing trash and resetting the tables and chairs. It takes just a few minutes, and we really appreciate it!

2026 Spring Meeting Reservation Form

Member Name(s): _____

Guests: _____

Adult(s): _____ @ \$20.00/meal Total Enclosed: \$ _____

Box Lunch and Beverage (choose one lunch and one beverage for each person)

Lunch Choices: Chicken Salad Croissant _____ Turkey & Cheese Wrap _____

Chicken Caesar Wrap _____ Vegetarian Wrap _____ Ham & Cheese Wrap _____

Beverage Choices: Bottled Water _____ Bottled Tea _____

For a gluten-free option, mail your check & email Kathryn Morrissey by April 17.

When: Sunday, April 26, 12:30 pm

Where: Centris Credit Union,
13120 Pierce Street,
Omaha, NE 68144

Please send this form and checks payable to the **Nebraska Society of Mayflower Descendants** to be **received** by April 17 to:
Gretchen Harvey, 17503 V St,
Omaha, NE 68135.

Fall 2025 Minutes

The Annual Meeting of the Nebraska Society of Mayflower Descendants was held November 23, 2025, in Ashland, Nebraska, at Ruhlman's Steak House. Governor Kathryn Morrissey called the meeting to order. Elder Judy Ekeler gave the Invocation. Captain Steve Hunt led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance. Governor Morrissey announced Steve's resignation from his office and thanked him for his service, and for purchasing and donating the American flag and stand for our use.

Membership Chair Marty Beerman announced four new Junior Members: McKenna Beerman, Hudson William Harvey, Nora Kamperman, and Julliette Harding. The new junior members present received membership certificates, and a photo was taken with their parents and grandparents.

Governor Morrissey thanked Jesse Harding for printing the program, Gretchen Harvey and Marty Beerman for coordinating the attendee list and meal for our meeting, and Cindy and Rachelle Rademacher for staffing the registration table.

Following a delicious pasta meal, the program resumed. Historian-elect Dan Hile read the Mayflower Compact, reminding us of what courageous ancestors we had. Membership Chair Marty Beerman conducted the Roll Call with the Mayflower Passenger List. Board of Assistants member John Reinert assisted with the count. Congratulations to the many Richard Warren descendants present!

Governor Morrissey began her report by asking if there were any changes or additions to the minutes of the 2025 Spring Meeting as printed in the newsletter. Hearing none, the minutes stand as published. She called our attention to the "Laying of the Board" at the front of the room and asked if anyone noticed anything missing. There were no forks, as forks were not in use for another 80 years. The display was very interesting to the members present. Governor Morrissey then announced that our donation to the initial General Society Silent Auction of \$100 gift card to Omaha Steaks and four hours of research with our very own Intrepid Genealogist, Marty Beerman, brought in \$550. That online Silent Auction brought in \$22,875 for the Mayflower Meetinghouse's renovation and improvements. Our Nebraska Society will conduct its annual Silent Auction at next fall's meeting. The proceeds of our auction fund our Whedon Memorial Scholarship, so please think about donating and purchasing items for that. Governor Morrissey mentioned that Mayflower-related items are the most popular items and suggested looking online at Plimoth Pawtuxet or the General Society's website. Governor Morrissey reported that Scholarship Chair Fawn Horner needs help with reading the applications for the scholarship. Please see Ms. Horner after the meeting to volunteer your help with that.

Membership Chair Marty Beerman gave his report: 225 members, 8 new members, and 3 deaths makes our total membership 217. There are 10-12 pending applications. Dan Hile was introduced as the Historian Elect. He's been working with Marty as assistant for 2 years. Governor Morrissey and the members thanked Marty for his 15 years of service as Historian for our society.

Treasurer Bob Harvey gave the Treasurer's Report, calling our attention to the financial reports published in the Spring newsletter. It's time to pay dues again, so see Bob to pay your \$45 dues.

Marty Beerman then introduced our special Zoom guest, Richard Pickering, who started out as a volunteer at Plimoth Plantation 40 years ago and now serves as the Deputy Executive Director & Chief Historian at Plimoth Pawtuxet. He gave an educational history lesson of the first 150 years of Plymouth Colony and its influence. Following the Zoom presentation, Marty announced that our society had given a \$100 donation to Plimoth Pawtuxet in Mr. Pickering's name.

(continued on next page)

2026 Directory of Officers

Governor | Kathryn Morrissey
(402) 670-3836 or kathryn4manmorrissey@gmail.com

Deputy Governor | Cheryl Clark
(308) 325-3849 or cherylclark47@gmail.com

Secretary | Cindy Rademacher
(308) 627-9389 or clich1970@yahoo.com

Treasurer | Robert Harvey
(402) 679-8232 or nsmdtreasurer@gmail.com

Historian | Dan Hile
(402) 450-2868 or danhilemf@gmail.com

Elder | Judy Ekeler
(402) 721-8745 or jkekeler@aol.com

Counselor | Robert Laughlin
(402) 397-0868 or rallaw@radiks.net

Captain | Fawn Horner
(402) 490-0227 or fawnhorner75@gmail.com

Surgeon | Audrey Paulman, M.D.
(402) 551-22184 or apaulman@me.com

Board of Assistants

Susan Rice (2026)
(402) 227-3855 or ricesupat@windstream.net

Karen Standley (2026)
(402) 721-8745 or jkekeler@aol.com?????

Stephanie Donsig (2027)
(402) 326-5504 or sdonsig23@gmail.com

Judith Moore (2027)
(402) 269-3480 or faysyracuse@outlook.com

Vacant (2027)

Jesse Harding (2028)
402-547-9340 or jesse@jesseharding.us

John Reinert (2028)
(402) 432-9168 or jr6@aol.com

Marty Beerman (Past Governor)
(402) 709-3786 or mwbeerman@cox.net

General Society Officers

Deputy Governor General | Gretchen Harvey

Assistant Governor General | Kathryn Morrissey

Chairs

Assistant Historian | Marty Beerman, Omaha

Audit | John Reinert, Lincoln

Education | Kathryn Morrissey, Omaha

Junior Members | Vacant

Membership | Marty Beerman, Omaha

Pilgrim News Editor | Stephanie Donsig, Lincoln

Public Relations | Thomas Masters, Lincoln

Scholarship | Fawn Homer, Plattsmouth

Scholarship Auction | Cheryl Clark, Elwood

Webmaster | Marty Beerman, Omaha

Marty Beerman Nominated for Top Job at General Society

Congratulations to our own Marty Beerman for his nomination as the Governor General of the General Society of Mayflower Descendants! Former Governor General Jane Hurt, of the GSMD Nominating Committee, put forth a slate published in the Spring 2026 Mayflower Quarterly. Marty currently serves as the GSMD Secretary General as well as Chairman of the Meeting and Events Committee and of New Product Committee. He also is on the GSMD Bylaws Committee, Long Term Planning Committee, Personnel Committee, and Technology Committee. Additionally, Marty is head of The Warren Cousins Family Society.



Marty is a recipient of the General Society's Certificate of Commendation and Appreciation in recognition of his many years of service to our Nebraska Society which he joined in 1990. He is a past Governor, Newsletter Editor, and was our Historian for 15 years! Marty currently is our Membership Chair, Webmaster, and Assistant Historian. Marty and his wife, Jane, also created our Whedon Scholarship.

Before Marty retired in 2021, he spent nearly 40 years working with hospitals in the Omaha area – developing an expertise in healthcare marketing and obtaining a master's degree in healthcare administration. He retired as the Vice President of Marketing and Community Relations at Omaha's Children's Hospital and Medical Center. Marty also was active on several Omaha community boards.

Delegates from all GSMD's Society's will convene in Plymouth this September for Congress where the elections will take place. Nominations also are accepted from the floor.

Good luck, Marty. Your Nebraska cousins couldn't be prouder!

Kathryn Morrissey, Governor

Fall 2025 Minutes (con't)

Governor Morrissey then asked Deputy Governor General Gretchen Harvey to give the Nominating Committee's Slate for the Election of our Officers and Board of Assistants, as published in the newsletter. Because there were no nominations from the floor, it was moved and seconded to elect the officers and board as presented. Thanks were given to Gretchen and to Marty Beerman for serving on the Nominating Committee and congratulations were given to the newly elected and re-elected officials.

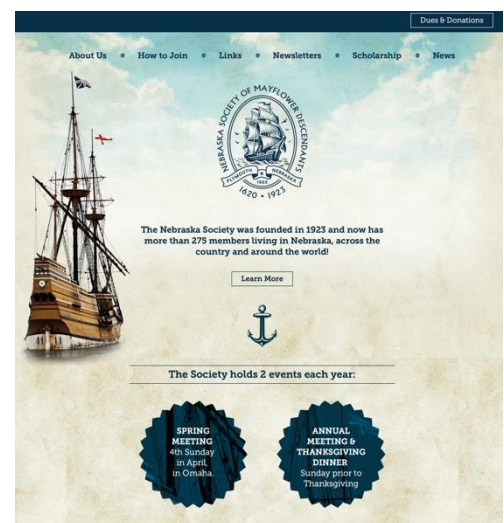
Gretchen Harvey then presented a Certificate of Achievement awarded from the General Mayflower Society to Robert Laughlin, for 34 years of exemplary service as Counselor to our Nebraska Society. Rob modestly said that he is a small cog in the wheel and recognized Marty, Gretchen, and Kathryn for keeping the society going strong. He introduced his wife and daughter and recounted the service his grandfather and mother had given to the society also. Congratulations and thank you, Rob, for your service and recognition by the General Society!

The Benediction was given by Elder Judy Ekeler and the meeting was adjourned with the wishes for a Blessed Thanksgiving by Governor Morrissey.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Rademacher, Secretary

Visit NebraskaMayflower.org



The NSMD website has the latest news, past issues of *Pilgrim News*, links to Mayflower-related websites, a link to pay dues, and more! The Nebraska Society is on Facebook, too! Like us at www.facebook.com/nebraskamayflower

Whedon Scholarship Recognizes Academic Achievement and Service

At our spring meeting on April 26th, the Nebraska Society of Mayflower Descendants will award the Burt and Becky Whedon Memorial Scholarship to a high school senior in the amount of \$1620. The scholarship will be awarded to a qualified applicant who is planning to attend a four-year college during the 2026/2027 academic year and will be evaluated on a written essay, personal goals, and leadership skills. This year, applicants were tasked with choosing one of the children on the Mayflower to research. They were also asked to tell a little about the child and describe an emotion that they thought the child might have experienced. They were asked to describe a personal story where they experienced the same emotion. For more information on the scholarship, visit our website, www.NebraskaMayflower.org

The scholarship we offer provides much needed financial support to students to further their education. If you would like to get involved with the Nebraska Society's Burt and Becky Whedon Memorial Scholarship, please contact Fawn Horner. You can also make a donation on our website or send a check to Treasurer Bob Harvey, 17503 V St., Omaha, NE 68135 made payable to Nebraska Society of Mayflower Descendants.

Fawn Horner, Scholarship Chair

Welcome New Members!

Name	Number	Residence	Pilgrim Ancestor
Colleen Mary (Kenney) Fleischer	107438-1234	Omaha	Mary (Norris) Allerton
Alex Michael Zimmer	107685-1235	Lincoln	Stephen Hopkins
Kathryn Elaine (Fink) Austin	107723-1236	Omaha	John Howland
Harriet Faye Wison Brinkman	107856-1237	Lincoln	Peter Brown

Supplemental Application Approved

We are pleased to report that the following Silver Supplemental Application has been approved:

Colleen Mary (Kenney) Fleischer of Omaha, a descendant of Pilgrim Mary (Norris) Allerton, has successfully completed a Supplemental Application for Richard Warren.

SAVE THESE DATES!

Fall 2026 Meeting

Our Society's Fall 2025 Meeting is scheduled for November 22, the Sunday before Thanksgiving.

Spring 2027 Meeting

Our Spring 2026 Meeting is scheduled for Sunday April 25, the fourth Sunday in April.

Treasurer's Report - Income Statement and Balance Sheet Bob Harvey

	Oct '25 - Feb 26	Oct '24 - Feb 25
Ordinary Income/Expense		
Income		
40000 · Membership Dues	2,800.00	6,840.00
41000 · Application Fees	1,110.00	1,575.00
42000 · Individual Contributions	845.00	1,585.00
43000 · Interest Income	17.07	32.85
43100 · Investment Income	985.79	743.72
45000 · Meals	1,892.00	1,800.00
Total Income	7,649.86	12,576.57
Gross Profit	7,649.86	12,576.57
Expense		
50000 · GSMD Assessment	7,175.00	7,420.00
51000 · Banking Fees	86.96	214.95
52000 · Application Expense	900.00	1,050.00
53000 · Newsletter Expense	171.56	374.30
54000 · Meetings Expense	1,760.22	1,981.27
55000 · Miscellaneous Expense		
55002 · Meetinghouse Donation	100.00	0.00
Total 55000 · Miscellaneous Expense	100.00	0.00
57000 · Website Expense	0.00	45.99
58000 · Supplies Expense	0.00	168.46
Total Expense	10,193.74	11,254.97
Net Ordinary Income	(2,543.88)	1,321.60
Net Income	(2,543.88)	1,321.60

	Feb 28, 26	Sep 30, 25
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Checking/Savings		
10000 · Cash	7,859.77	11,992.44
Total Checking/Savings	7,859.77	11,992.44
Accounts Receivable		
11000 · Membership Dues Receivable	6,290.00	1,070.00
14000 · Accounts Receivable	43.00	0.00
Total Accounts Receivable	6,333.00	1,070.00
Other Current Assets		
12000 · Prepaid Application Fees	950.00	1,850.00
13000 · Undeposited Funds	1,135.00	0.00
Total Other Current Assets	2,085.00	1,850.00
Total Current Assets	16,277.77	14,912.44
Other Assets		
18000 · Marketable Securities		
18001 · Principal Balance	29,893.59	28,907.80
18002 · Unrealized Gain (Loss)	2,892.52	2,861.13
Total 18000 · Marketable Securities	32,786.11	31,768.93
Total Other Assets	32,786.11	31,768.93
TOTAL ASSETS	49,063.88	46,681.37
LIABILITIES & EQUITY		
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	100.00	0.00
Total Current Liabilities	100.00	0.00
Total Liabilities	100.00	0.00
Equity	48,963.88	46,681.37
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	49,063.88	46,681.37

Membership Report

We began 2025 with 212 members. During the course of the year:

- 8 new members were added
- 3 former members were reinstated
- 3 member deaths were recorded
- 3 members resigned
- 12 members were dropped for non-payment of dues (annual members) or failure to respond (life members)

This means a net loss of 7 members for a total membership of 205, as of Jan. 1, 2026. Since then, two new members have joined, bringing the total membership to 207.

Martin Beerman, Membership Chair

In Memoriam

We are sorry to report the death of one member:

Verla Lea (White) Ringenberg of Lincoln died on January 5, 2025. She joined the Nebraska Society in 2017 as a descendant of Pilgrim Francis Cooke and James Chilton.

Donation Report

Listed below are all donations received since the last report in the Fall 2025 Pilgrim News. Please direct questions to NSMD Treasurer Bob Harvey (nsmdtreasurer@gmail.com)

We are grateful for the ongoing donations received from our members! Because of the increase in General Society dues from \$15 to \$35 in 2021, the Nebraska Society has a financial challenge: to pay national dues each year for our life members. While the society has modified how it handles investments, we also ask our Life Members to consider a donation to sustain our society, if you are in a position to do so.

Donations Report Bob Harvey

<u>Name</u>	<u>Memo</u>	<u>Paid Amount</u>
Vernita Bramwell	Life member donation	45.00
Barbara Fiechtner	General donation	55.00
Priscilla Grew	General donation	55.00
Gretchen Harvey	Scholarship donation from the Rotary Foundation	500.00
Barbara Laughlin	Life member donation	50.00
Robert Laughlin	Life member donation	50.00
William Laughlin	Life member donation	35.00
Karen Standley	Scholarship Fund	55.00
		<u>845.00</u>
		<u>845.00</u>

General Congress 2026 in Plymouth this September

Hooray! It will soon be time for the Forty-fourth General Congress 2026, which will meet **September 11-16** in Plymouth, Massachusetts. There are many fun tours and events for members and families this year which include:

1. Tour of the Boston Tea Party Museum and JFK Library on September 15
2. Tour of Salem, which includes the Witch Museum, and House of Seven Gables on September 12
3. Plymouth County Register of Deeds and Burial Hill Tour on September 11

The Congress Business Sessions will take place on Monday, September 14 and Tuesday, September 15. The Banquet and Installation of Officers will take place on Tuesday evening, September 15. A highlight of the Congress for our family is the Pilgrim Progress where families dress as Pilgrims and lead the procession in Plymouth. Registration for these events opened on Monday March 2, 2026. Please go to the General Society of Mayflower Descendants website for further details, for information on how to reserve your hotel room in Plymouth, and to register for the events.

You can register at the General Society website by clicking on the Members Only Section, and then login to get to the Members Only Events where you will find Congress Registration.

This year, there is also a Pre-Congress Special Event on **Thursday, September 10**, which includes an exclusive visit to the New England Historic Genealogical Society/American Ancestors in Boston, including VIP tours of the Family Heritage Experience and Brim DeForest Library, and a private dinner at the Mayflower Society House hosted by Governor Lisa Pennington. This is a limited capacity event – for further details, see the Spring 2026 Mayflower Quarterly.

If anyone has any questions, please get in touch with me. We hope to have many NSMD members march in Pilgrims Progress in Plymouth this year!

Gretchen Harvey, Deputy Governor General, Nebraska

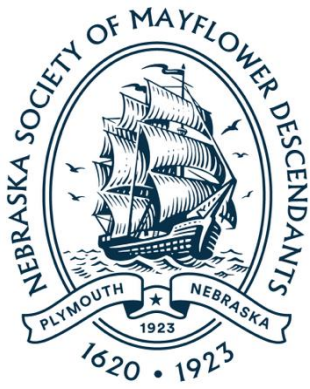
2025 Fall Meeting Photos



The Beerman and Harvey families with their Junior Member certificates. Note Mackenna's tight grip on her certificate.



Robert Laughlin accepts a Certificate of Achievement and reflects on his family's service to the NSMD.



Pilgrim News

8704 Douglas St
Omaha, NE 68114-4035

Silent Auction Fundraiser for Wheden Scholarship

For the best Silent Auction yet, we are challenging you to either bring one auction item or buy one item -- or better yet, do both! The next auction is scheduled for our Fall 2026 meeting, **November 22**, in Lincoln.

Remember that the Silent Auction is the primary way we raise \$1620.00 for our annual Burt and Becky Whedon Memorial Scholarship. So, as you consider your donation -- whether that's bringing an auction item or buying one -- please be generous.

Annual Dues Reminder

Annual Members were sent dues notices in February. Annual Dues are \$45. Thanks to everyone for paying their 2025 dues.

If you haven't paid yet, please pay now, either at our website or by sending a check, payable to the Nebraska Society of Mayflower Descendants, to **Bob Harvey, 17503 V St, Omaha, NE 68135**.

Questions about dues? Please contact our Treasurer, Bob Harvey, at nsmdtreasurer@gmail.com