Pilgrim News

Fall 2026

Annual Meeting Speaker is *Governor General* Marty Beerman

Marty Beerman, newly elected as Governor General of the General Society, will be speaking at our Fall meeting. To the right, is a picture of Marty immediately after his election with Cheryl Clark, Gretchen Harvey, Jane Beerman, and Kathryn Morrissey (left to right).



What follows are excerpts from our own Marty Beerman's first address as Governor General (September 2026) to the nearly 30,000 members of The Mayflower Society world-wide. The full address can be read at www.themayflowersociety.org, within "Notes from the Boat," in the Members Only section.

"...membership in this Society is more than about proving lineage. We have inherited something worth preserving and, just as importantly, something worth sharing. Together we have the responsibility to preserve the history of the Mayflower passengers and their descendants, support sound genealogical scholarship, care for the historic places and collections entrusted to us and help new generations understand why the experiences of those who came before us still matters.

As Governor General, I want us to build on the tremendous work already underway throughout the General Society and our Member Societies. That means strengthening the connection between Plymouth and our members everywhere, supporting the volunteers who are the lifeblood of this organization, embracing technology where it can serve our mission, welcoming prospective and new members, and ensuring that The Mayflower Society remains strong and relevant for generations to come.

I also believe we should never lose sight of something wonderfully simple: this is your Society. Its strength is found in members who serve on committees, attend meetings, help applicants, conduct research, preserve local history, support our educational and preservation efforts, welcome new members, and share the Mayflower story in their own communities.

There is much ahead of us, and I am excited about what we can accomplish together. Thank you for your membership, your service and your contributions to our shared heritage. It is a privilege to serve as your Governor General, and I look forward to the journey."

In This Issue

1 GG Beerman Fall Speaker
2 Governor's Greetings
2 General Society BOA
3 Fall Meeting Info
4 Spring 2026 Minutes
4 Directory of Officers
5 New Members
5 Supplementals
5 Nominations for 2027
6 2027 Whedon Scholarship
6 In Memoriam
7 2026 Winning Essay
9 Treasurer's Report
10 Donation Report
11 Junior Members Update
11 Heritage Alliance & Dues
12 Reminders



Outgoing Governor General Lisa Pennington congratulates new Governor General Marty Beerman.

Governor's Greetings

Like many of you, I reached out to Marty Beerman – then our historian—to begin exploring my pilgrim roots. Could any of us have looked in a crystal ball and seen that Marty would one day become the head of the General Society of Mayflower Descendants? **Our first Governor General!** In fact, Marty has put Nebraska on the Mayflower map! But, in retrospect, Marty's hard work, intense dedication and myriad of skills made his election seem like a natural consequence – something destined.

Just like Marty's path to being Governor General, there are many twists of fate in the lives of our Mayflower ancestors. One example is William Bradford. He should have become a prosperous farmer, living out his days in rural Yorkshire. Instead, at an early age, Bradford suffered the deaths of his parents and grandparents. The young man turned to the Bible for comfort, and this set him on a path to Scrooby where Separatists were meeting in secret. Bradford was just 12 years old when he joined that congregation.

As a 23-year-old, Bradford married Dorothy May in Leiden. Who could have anticipated that he and 101 other souls would cross the Atlantic to start a colony in the New World? Or more unforeseen, that upon the death of Governor John Carver, that he would be catapulted into that leadership role? Bradford went on to be unanimously elected 30 times to serve as Plymouth's governor.

While Marty's three-year term as Governor General is much shorter than Bradford's, we know he will make a significant and positive impact. Among Marty's goals will be the completion of the Meetinghouse in Plymouth. This is the place where we will tell the story of our pilgrim ancestors and how they helped shape what would become our great nation. I know you join me in wishing Marty a brilliant tenure as Governor General. Let's raise a glass and toast him! Even more important, let's do all we can to support him in the coming years!

Wishing you all a harmonious and happy Thanksgiving!

Kathryn Morrissey, Governor

General Society of Mayflower Descendants
General Board of Assistants Meeting 2026

In September, I had the privilege of attending the 44th General Congress for the General Society of Mayflower Descendants in Plymouth, Massachusetts as the Deputy Governor General for Nebraska. Kathryn Morrissey attended as our Assistant AG, and Cheryl Clark attended as our Delegate for Nebraska. It is such a privilege to represent our wonderful state! And the highlight of the event was casting our votes for Marty Beerman who was elected Governor General for the General Society of Mayflower Descendants. This is a well-earned honor for Marty, and we are so proud of him for all of his hard work he has already done for the General Society – he is going to do a great job as our new Governor General.

During the two days of meetings, we learned that the construction of the Meetinghouse in Plymouth is moving along, and it is anticipated that the Meetinghouse will be open for viewing next spring. And preparation for the exhibits should also begin during that time. We learned that approximately $12.5 million has been raised for the project, and the Society has a goal to raise an additional $7.5 million for the Meetinghouse. Marty let us know that this project will be a top priority for him, and we all hope to see the completion of the project soon.

We were also able to attend fun tours which were arranged by the General Society. Kathryn and I took a bus tour to Salem, Massachusetts, where we visited the House of Seven Gables, and also the Salem Witch Museum. We were amazed by the beauty of Salem, and how exciting it is to be there during this time of year – such a fun tourist place! My husband Bill also traveled to Plymouth and one of the highlights for us was attending a private tour of the American Ancestors national center in Boston, and a tour of the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston, which is filled with beautiful art exhibits and gardens.

Most importantly, however, all of us were able to meet and reconnect with our Mayflower cousins who were attending from across the country.

Next fall, the Board of Assistants meeting will be held in Atlanta. We would love to have you join us for this trip. Please get in touch with me if you have any questions.

Gretchen Harvey, Deputy Governor General for Nebraska

Fall 2026 Meeting on Nov 22 at The Scarlet Hotel, Lincoln

Our fall meeting will be at The Scarlet, a Marriott Hotel at Nebraska Innovation Campus, the former State Fair Grounds, in Lincoln. We will meet on Sunday, November 22nd in the Barred Owl room on the 6th floor. The Silent Auction preview and registration start at **noon**; the Business Meeting and the meal start at **12:30pm**. The meal will be a buffet with Turkey, Ham, Mashed Potatoes, Green Beans, House Salad, Sweet Potato Casserole, and Assorted Desserts. The cost is $52 per person.



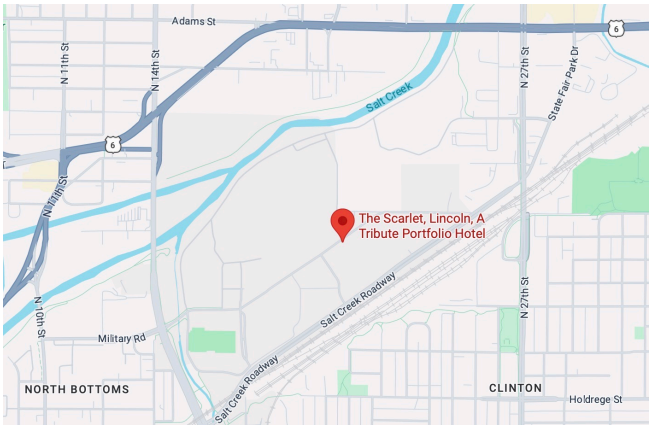
Driving from the west on I-80, take Exit 399 (Cornhusker Highway) and turn east on Cornhusker Highway. Just after going through the 10th Street intersection, take the ramp on the right to 14th Street, turn right and go south to the traffic light at Military Rd/Transformation Dr. Go east on Transformation Drive until you reach the hotel on the corner of 21st Street and Transformation Drive.

Driving from Omaha and points east on I-80, take Exit 403 (27th Street) and drive south on 27th Street for about 4 miles. Turn left at Cornhusker Highway and then right at the next intersection, onto State Fair Park Rd. Continue for about a mile, to 21st Street and turn right onto 21st Street. The hotel will be on the left.

There is free parking beside and in front of the hotel and in a parking lot across Transformation Drive.

Fall Meeting RSVP Information

Please RSVP by **Wednesday, November 11** so we can provide our final count to the hotel. Send your reservation form (at the bottom of this page) and checks payable to the Nebraska Society of Mayflower Descendants to **Gretchen Harvey, 17503 V St, Omaha, NE 68135** or pay at www.NebraskaMayflower.org/dues using PayPal or a credit card. If you pay online, please contact Kathryn Morrissey by the deadline with any dietary restrictions, either by email at kathryn4manmorrissey@gmail.com or by phone at 402-670-3836.



2026 Fall Meeting Reservation Form

Member Name(s):_____

_____

Guests: _____

Adult(s): _____ @ $52.00/meal Total Enclosed: $_____

Dietary Restrictions? Email Kathryn by **Nov 11** at kathryn4manmorrissey@gmail.com

Please send this form and checks. payable to the **Nebraska Mayflower Society** to be **received** by **Nov 11** to: Gretchen Harvey, 17503 V St, Omaha, NE 68135

When: Sunday, Nov 22 at noon

Where: The Scarlet
2101 Transformation Dr.
Lincoln, NE 68508

Menu: Turkey, Ham, Mashed Potatoes, Green Beans, House Salad, Sweet Potato Casserole, and Assorted Desserts

Spring 2026 Minutes

We met at Centris Federal Credit Union building in Omaha. Governor Kathryn Morrissey welcomed the members and guests with a commemorative quarter featuring a Pilgrim couple. Governor General Elect Marty Beerman gifted the quarters and supplied details about them.

After the Invocation given by Elder Judy Ekeler, Captain Fawn Horner led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance. Secretary Cindy Rademacher read the Mayflower Compact and Membership Chairman Marty Beerman conducted the Roll Call of Passengers, with assistance from Rob Laughlin and John Reinert. The Warren clan had the most attendees with ten, and the Cooke clan came in a close second with nine attendees.

Following a box lunch, members enjoyed sharing stories and/or photos at their tables. This was an Ancestor Activity initiated for the first time.

Marty Beerman gave his Membership Report. We currently have 209 members. Marty reminded us to encourage our siblings, children and grandchildren to pursue membership in our group. He encouraged them to see Historian Dan Hile for guidance or assistance.

Dan Hile stated he feels blessed to have learned about his office from Marty. Since January, four applications and two supplements were approved from the General Society in Plymouth.

Bob Harvey gave the Treasurer's Report, details of which were included in the Spring 2026 newsletter.

The Burt and Becky Whedon Scholarship winner was announced by Committee Chair Fawn Horner. There were 133 applicants, which is up significantly from 86 last year. Kathryn VanSkiver, a senior at Hastings St. Cecilia High School, was the winner and $1,620 will be sent to her higher learning institution. Kathryn and her family attended the meeting where she thanked the group for her scholarship. Fawn Horner, as chair of the Scholarship Committee, acknowledged the hard work of her committee for reading the scholarship essays.

Governor Morrissey mentioned that the Silent Auction will return as our primary tool for raising scholarship funds. The auction will be held at the Fall Meeting, which is scheduled for Sunday, November 22, 2026. She encouraged the members to “Bring One, Buy One,” adding that pilgrim-related items seem to be the best sellers. Please help support this good cause and be generous with your participation!

Governor Morrissey then advised that the General Society of Mayflower Descendants also is hosting a fund-raising auction and is asking each state society to contribute. Proceeds will go toward ongoing improvements of the historic Meetinghouse in Plymouth. Last year, our contribution was a $100 gift card for Omaha Steaks along with four hours of genealogical research done by our own Intrepid Genealogist, Marty Beerman. If you have ideas for our group's contribution this year, please let Kathryn know.

The Benediction was given by Elder Judy Ekeler and the Spring Meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Rademacher, Secretary

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) 657-2293 or rallaw@radiks.net

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

Surgeon | Audrey Paulman, M.D.
(402) 551-2218 or apaulman@me.com

Board of Assistants

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

Karen Standley (2026)
(402) 310-2439 or karenst2@windstream.net

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 | Vacant

Education | Kathryn Morrissey, Omaha

Junior Members | Katie Patrick, Lincoln

Membership | Marty Beerman, Omaha

***Pilgrim News* Editor |** Stephanie Donsig, Lincoln

Public Relations | Thomas Masters, Lincoln

Scholarship | Fawn Horner, Plattsmouth

Scholarship Auction | Cheryl Clark, Elwood

Webmaster | Marty Beerman, Omaha

Welcome New Members!

Name	GSMD #	NSMD #	Residence	Pilgrim Ancestor
Rachelle Marie Rademacher	107894	-1238	Kearney	William Brewster
Aidan Todd Fleischer	108093	-1239	Seattle, WA	Mary (Norris) Allerton
Jane Rose Fett	108217	-1240	South Sioux City	William White
John Edward Anderson	108339	-1241	Lincoln	George Soule
Katie Ann (Hile) Patrick	108402	-1242	Lincoln	James Chilton
Neil Orville Hubbard	108426	-1243	Omaha	William Brewster
James Dean Hile	108448	1244	Lexington, KY	James Chilton

Supplemental Applications Approved

The Nebraska Society of Mayflower Descendants congratulates

Name	Residence	Ancestors	Supplemental Pilgrim Ancestors
Kathryn Elaine (Fink) Austin	Omaha	John Howland	Stephen Hopkins
Colleen Mary (Kenney) Fleischer	Omaha	Mary (Norris) Allerton	James Chilton

Nebraska Society Nominating Committee Report for 2027

2027 Officers:
Governor: Kathryn Morrissey, Omaha
Deputy Governor: Fawn Horner, Plattsmouth
Secretary: Cindy Rademacher, Kearney
Treasurer: Bob Harvey, Omaha
Historian: Dan Hile, Lincoln
Elder: Judy Ekeler, Fremont
Counselor: Rob Laughlin, Omaha
Captain: To Be Announced at Fall Meeting
Surgeon: Audrey Paulman, M.D., Omaha
Public Relations: Tom Masters, Lincoln

2027 Board of Assistants:
Stephanie Donsig, Lincoln (2027)
Judith Moore, Syracuse (2027)
Katie Patrick, Lincoln (2027)
Jesse Harding, Omaha (2028)
John Reinert, Lincoln (2028)
Susan Rice, Nehawka (2029)
Karen Standley, Lincoln (2029)
Marty Beerman, Omaha (Past Governor)

General Society Officers:
Deputy Governor General: Gretchen Harvey, Omaha
Assistant General: Kathryn Morrissey, Omaha

Appointed Chairs continue from 2026.

Respectfully submitted,
Gretchen Harvey & Marty Beerman

2027 Whedon Memorial Scholarship

Fall marks the start of a new school year, and many high school seniors are beginning the college application process. In addition to finding the right college, many students across Nebraska are looking for ways to finance their college education.

The Nebraska Society of Mayflower Descendants is proud to offer the Whedon Memorial Scholarship, named in honor of Becky (Allen) and Burt Whedon in the amount of $1620. Becky joined our Nebraska Society in 1982, a descendant of Pilgrim Francis Cooke, as well as Pilgrim Richard Warren. Becky served as our Society's historian for 18 years, from 1989 to 2007, completing applications for 167 members. Burt joined the Nebraska Society in 1977, a descendant of John Howland, as well as William Brewster. The Whedons served the Society as Deputy Governor General and Assistant General for many years, traveling to Plymouth for Mayflower General Congress and to annual Board of Assistants meetings around the country. Becky died in Omaha on January 16, 2011, at the age of 84. Burt died in Omaha on April 27, 2011, at the age of 88.

In order to apply, scholarship applicants must:

- Be a high school senior planning on attending an accredited 4-year college or university.
- Be a resident of Nebraska and a United States citizen.
- Complete the assigned essay.
- Provide extra-curricular information (e.g., school activities, leadership opportunities, employment)

Mayflower ancestry is NOT a requirement.

One recipient will be awarded the scholarship and announced at the Nebraska Society's 2027 Spring meeting. We were able to offer an online application process and received 45 submissions during last year. The applicant who was awarded the 2025 scholarship was Kathryn VanSkiver from St. Cecelia High School in Hastings. She is currently enrolled at the University of St. Mary in Leavenworth, KS.

Fawn Horner, Scholarship Chair



Kathryn VanSkiver of Hastings, NE is congratulated by Fawn Horner, chair of the Scholarship Committee and the incoming Deputy Governor. Kathryn is the recipient of the 2026 Burt & Becky Whedon Memorial Scholarship. She attended the Spring 2026 meeting of our Society, where she was recognized.

Photo Courtesy of John Reinhart

In Memoriam

We are sorry to report the death of Marlene Ruhga, who died on August 24, 2026, at the age of 86. Marlene was a descendent of Pilgrim John Alden and joined the Society in 2006.

We care about each of our members, so please let us know immediately of any member's illness or death. Send updates to nebraskamayflowerhistorian@gmail.com

NebraskaMayflower.org

Our Nebraska Society website has the latest news, past issues of *Pilgrim News*, links to other Mayflower-related websites, and more!

We're on Facebook, too! Like us at **www.facebook.com/nebraskamayflower**

2026 Whedon Memorial Scholarship Winning Essay – Kathryn VanSkiver

Below is the prompt and the first part of the Scholarship winning essay by Kathryn VanSkiver.

The Mayflower carried approximately 30 children under the age of 18 to the new world. What emotions do you think they experienced? Choose one of the children on the Mayflower to research. Tell us a little about the child and describe an emotion that you think they might have experienced. Then describe a personal story where you experienced the same emotion.

Thoughtfully considering the life of a child on the Mayflower and the days following their harrowing journey across the ocean, I questioned what I could have in common with someone who lived 400 years before me in order to better understand what they were feeling. At no time would I want a comparison to my life to diminish the hardships, tragedies or achievements of the Pilgrims. The degree of courage and sacrifice they demonstrated vastly overshadows the accomplishments of my life. I decided to break my research into aspects of life we would share, compare the differences and look for similarities. Our lives would both include a practice of our faith, family life, friendships, and the love of our home. While reviewing their history, I imagined what emotions they likely experienced prior and during their journey, at their arrival to the New World and then in settlement life. I collected my research and set these findings against the events of my own life. It did not take long to discover a reoccurring common sentiment, vulnerability, and one child's story resonated with me above the others, that of Mary Chilton.

The Mayflower departed from Plymouth, England on September 6, 1620 carrying 102 passengers traveling for many reasons but generally in search of a better life and economic conditions (Stratton, 1986). Of these passengers, about 30 were children (The Mayflower Society, n.d.). These children had known hardship for most of their life after being displaced from their home of England to Leiden, Holland in their parent's efforts to avoid religious persecution (Stratton, 1986). Life was hard for them after this move. They were in a foreign land and so did not enjoy the rights of citizenship, were pulled from the home and friendships they had known, and were often made to bear the burden of working to support their family (Stratton, 1986). I would imagine fatigue, hopelessness, hunger and fear would be common among the Mayflower children. Embarking on the journey to the New World might have given them hope and definitely a sense of excitement, despite being nervous about their unknown future!

The Pilgrims were of strong religious conviction but the concept of religious freedom would be very different for me and the Mayflower children. As I take the right to practice my faith for granted, they would have dreamed and hungered for this privilege. England, under the rule of King James, persecuted those groups whose practice of faith differed from those of the Church of England (Stratton, 1986). It is why they fled England for haven in Leiden. Mary Chilton and her family were among those relocating in search of freedom from the oppression. In around 1609, the Chilton family moved to Leiden because of the excommunication of her mother from the Church for the secret burial of a child (The Mayflower Society, n.d.). But while their move gave them more freedom of religion, their new home presented a different set of challenges such as poverty and social injustice. In 1619, while in Leiden, Mary's father and sister were attacked and James was injured in a riot (Pilgrim Hall Museum, n.d.). Perhaps this was the last straw for the family, convincing them that a better life would be found across the sea, despite the intense fear of the dangerous voyage and wilderness that awaited. They must have had an endearing faith and been incredibly brave to overpower this uncertainty and make such sacrifices.

The day the Puritan party boarded the Mayflower would have been filled again, with fear and anxiety, but now also with hope and excitement. Because they had been living together for several years in Leiden, the children would have been acquainted and likely even friends. While the young passengers knew those from their community, there were many new and probably unfriendly faces. Certainly they were nervous and intimidated by these outsiders, termed the Strangers (Thatcher, 1832). Ship conditions were harsh and were endured by the lot for 66 days as they encountered rough storms and suffered from a lack of clean water and food (Johnson, n.d.). It is my hope, but I seriously doubt that the children became numb to their hunger pains, the frigid cold and wet accommodations, and the tensions among all the passengers. I imagine feelings of self pity were widespread, among the children as well as the adults. Thinking to the emotions I feel when traveling, we would share excitement, but not much else. Their fear, hunger, and general suffering during their trip set the conditions of which I travel far from my Mayflower counterparts.

Mary Chilton, only 13 years old, was on board with her parents (Johnson, n.d.). We know that she left all of her surviving siblings behind in Leiden (Johnson, n.d.). Goodbyes are hard for me today even with the ability to text, FaceTime and call at any time. I have also lived in my same family home for my entire life. It is hard to imagine how deeply the Chilton's would have grieved leaving their family and home as they set off on their dangerous trip to a destination so very far away. Mary had already left England at a young age, and now she was leaving yet another home. She surely would have developed the courage of an army general to face these obstacles on a reoccurring basis.

As the Puritans credited often, "divination saw them to their destination" (Thatcher, 1832). Arriving on November 11, 1620, a small group of 15 or 16 men disembarked to explore the mainland (Thatcher, 1832). The majority of their group, including the children, stayed onboard the anchored Mayflower. That sense of excitement would have been almost uncontainable at this point, especially when exploration parties would return with their stories of Indian encounters and treasures of trinkets and new

Essay Continued

foods such as Indian corn, mostly all of which they found buried under ground (Thatcher, 1832). After such a long journey, the children would have wanted to see the new wilderness and set their feet on land. The first to do so was Mary Chilton. She is recorded as being the first Pilgrim to step on Plymouth Rock (Thatcher, 1832). In that moment, she would have been unaware as to the historical significance of her actions. What an incredible honor! A verbal account exists recounting the story that at the age of 75, she returned to Plymouth Rock and laughing said she was the first to step on the rock and now she is stepping on it for the last time (Stratton, 1986). With that step, her courage and fearless attitude shined, two of her qualities for which I greatly admire and respect her. Great moments like these were always overshadowed by fear in the concern for the fathers who set out to find food, shelter and a settlement location. Deaths began shortly after their arrival, with six in December alone, one of whom being Mary's father, James Chilton (Thatcher, 1832). Her mother followed shortly, along with nearly half of the party during that first winter in Plymouth (Stratton, 1986).

The Pilgrims suffered greatly during their first years of settlement. Hunger, exposure to the elements, and the threat of Indian attack would have often left them weary, exhausted and terrified. But overall, I think the greatest burden would have been bearing the grief from the deaths of their family and friends. They were forced to bury their dead in unmarked graves on the shoreline, the area later to be called Cole's Hill, to prevent revealing their losses to the natives which might expose their weakness (Thatcher, 1832). This meant they had no gravestone to visit. Sorrow, anxiety and fear probably remained daily emotions. This is what it is like to feel vulnerable. I know this feeling. The loss of Mary's parents made her vulnerable and reflecting on this makes me think I might know a bit of what she experienced. In the beginning of my freshman year, I got a little taste of the impermanence of life and learned the feeling of vulnerability. It was coming face to face with loss, that I, like Mary, lost a bit of my childhood innocence.

The path to my dreams seemed to be on track and I had everything under my control the fall of my 9th grade year. I had friends, was elected class president, worked diligently on my 4.0 and most importantly, at least in my small minded, immature conception of a perfect life, I was a starter on my high school varsity volleyball team. This was something I had been working on since I was four years old with my mother, who incidentally, is my biggest fan. I remember our times together playing driveway volleyball and in a gym where she would toss, hit and shag balls with me until we were kicked off the courts. She is my best friend.

I will never forget the night my parents sat me down to tell me she had breast cancer. I couldn't breathe and wanted to scream. Nothing would stop the tears that came despite my best efforts to remain strong and brave for my mother. My thoughts jumped to what my life would look like if she died. I didn't know much about cancer but I knew it was bad and I know of people who were gone because of it. Both my maternal grandparents are gone because of cancer. But their loss would not be near as devastating as the loss of my mother. The manner in which my parents delivered the news did not seem proportionate to the degree of seriousness. They were calm and spoke mater of factly, like they were filling me in on our weekend plans. My mother would undergo a bilateral mastectomy with treatment to follow after recovery. Because of the need to move quickly, she had been visiting with doctors for the past two weeks with me being completely unaware. Now, instead of feeling angry because my mother may die, I was angry at my parents for deceiving me. I always assumed I was included in important family decisions and news, just as, I suppose, I assumed my parents were years from their graves. This is where the vulnerability bomb dropped into my life. I questioned everything. In a heartbeat, I went from being certain of my future and under the illusion that I was in control, to struggling with crippling fears of helplessness, loss and abandonment.

I did not lose my mother as Mary lost her parents. At first, a day did not go by where I did not worry about the cancer returning. But time seems to be healing that hurt although I don't think I will ever be able to regain my childlike, carefree attitude of certainty and control. I recognize this is part of maturity and that it occurs at different times of life for everyone. Mary's carefree childhood never really existed. She was forced into the tough reality of a harsh world at a young age and knew loss her entire life. I can imagine what that would feel like but have not experienced it. I have however, gotten a glimpse of what it feels like to be vulnerable. Like Mary, I know helplessness, and I know worry. I know the despair that comes when you cannot care for a loved one and the worry of wondering whether they will return home when they walk out of a door.

The children of the Mayflower would have certainly laughed and played like any child, but their situation would have inflicted grief, fear, anxiety and suffering upon them on an almost daily basis. Despite their difficult lives, they were survivors. After the first winter, over one half of the settlement's population was comprised only of these children (The Mayflower Society, n.d.). They had to be tough. Mary Chilton was one of the children to withstand the New World trials because she was fearless and strong, living a long and ultimately affluent life. She married John Winslow, a passenger among the second ship to arrive at Plymouth, and at the end of his life was one of the richest men in Boston (Pilgrim Hall Museum, n.d.). But in the beginning, her childhood was difficult and she was accustomed to death. She would have known vulnerability intimately. Retrospectively, 400 years may have passed but this same emotion endures today and I share it with Mary and her Pilgrim family.

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

Nebraska Society of Mayflower Descendants
Balance Sheet
As of September 30, 2026

	Sep 30, 26	Sep 30, 25
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Checking/Savings	11,457.53	11,992.44
Accounts Receivable		
11000 · Membership Dues Receivable	3,438.00	1,070.00
Total Accounts Receivable	3,438.00	1,070.00
Other Current Assets		
12000 · Prepaid Application Fees	500.00	1,850.00
13000 · Undeposited Funds	860.00	0.00
Total Other Current Assets	1,360.00	1,850.00
Total Current Assets	16,255.53	14,912.44
Other Assets		
18000 · Marketable Securities		
18001 · Principal Balance	30,701.35	28,907.80
18002 · Urealized Gain (Loss)	3,726.77	2,861.13
Total 18000 · Marketable Securities	34,428.12	31,768.93
Total Other Assets	34,428.12	31,768.93
TOTAL ASSETS	**50,683.65**	**46,681.37**
LIABILITIES & EQUITY		
Equity		
32000 · Retained Earnings	43,820.24	40,841.98
32100 · AOCI	3,726.77	2,861.13
Net Income	3,136.64	2,978.26
Total Equity	50,683.65	46,681.37
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	**50,683.65**	**46,681.37**

Nebraska Society of Mayflower Descendants
Profit & Loss Prev Year Comparison
October 2025 through September 2026

	Oct '25 - Sep 26	Oct '24 - Sep 25
Ordinary Income/Expense		
Income		
40000 · Membership Dues	5,795.00	7,785.00
41000 · Application Fees	3,445.00	2,275.00
42000 · Individual Contributions	2,345.00	3,840.00
43000 · Interest Income	37.96	60.09
43100 · Investment Income	1,793.55	1,620.91
45000 · Meals	2,792.00	2,520.00
Total Income	16,208.51	18,101.00
Gross Profit	16,208.51	18,101.00
Expense		
50000 · GSMD Assessment	7,175.00	7,420.00
51000 · Banking Fees	154.37	278.29
52000 · Application Expense	2,550.00	1,950.00
53000 · Newsletter Expense	388.55	527.76
54000 · Meetings Expense	3,491.18	2,488.24
55000 · Miscellaneous Expense		
55002 · Meetinghouse Donation	100.00	1,050.00
55000 · Miscellaneous Expense - Other	77.77	0.00
Total 55000 · Miscellaneous Expense	177.77	1,050.00
56000 · Scholarship Expense	1,620.00	1,620.00
57000 · Website Expense	0.00	45.99
58000 · Supplies Expense	0.00	168.46
Total Expense	15,556.87	15,548.74
Net Ordinary Income	651.64	2,552.26
Net Income	**651.64**	**2,552.26**

Donation Report

Listed below are all donations received since the last report in the Spring 2026 Pilgrim News. We are grateful for the generous support of all of our donors. Please direct questions to NSMD Treasurer Bob Harvey (nsmdtreasurer@gmail.com)

Donations Report Bob Harvey

Name	Memo	Paid Amount
Vernita Bramwell	Life member donation	45.00
Charles Davis	Scholarship	100.00
Charles Davis	General Donation	40.00
Alfred Ericson	General donation	50.00
John Fairhead	General donation	5.00
Barbara Fiechtner	General donation	55.00
Constance Freed	General Donation	100.00
Priscilla Grew	General donation	55.00
Priscilla Grew	General donation	55.00
Diane Hartman	General Donation	5.00
Gretchen Harvey	Scholarship	500.00
Daniel Hile	For meeting room	200.00
Fawn Horner	General donation	5.00
Bonnie Kolowski	General Donation	500.00
Bonnie Kolowski	General Donation	35.00
Barbara Laughlin	Life member donation	50.00
Barbara Laughlin	Life member donation	50.00
Robert Laughlin	Life member donation	50.00
Robert Laughlin	Life member donation	50.00
William Laughlin	Life member donation	35.00
Patricia Lucke	General Donation	35.00
Kathryn Morrissey	Scholarship	35.00
Holly O'Neal	General Donation	5.00
Audrey Paulman	General donation	100.00
Susan Rice	General donation	55.00
Charles Robinson	General Donation	55.00
Trudy Schlumberger	General Donation	5.00
Sue St. Amant	General donation	15.00
Karen Standley	Scholarship Fund	55.00
TOTAL		**2,345.00**

Membership Report

This year began with 215 members. Six new member applications have been approved and one death noted, bringing current membership to 220.

Junior Membership Update

Humility Cooper was just a year old when she arrived on the shores of Plymouth in 1620. She was the youngest child to survive the entire passage and build a new life in what would become the United States of America. Her early years were no doubt shaped by hardship and sacrifice, yet being a child, she surely also had her share of mischief, playfulness, and wonder.

I imagine her aunt and uncle, Edward and Ann (Cooper) Tilley, had their hands full keeping track of a one-year-old on a crowded ship with no yard or fence to play in! Sadly, the Tilleys died during the first hard winter at Plymouth, and Humility was probably cared for by another Pilgrim family, the Brewsters. They were also undoubtably challenged with instilling long-held values and beliefs in Humility while living in a place with so few people to model them. How often do we, as parents, grandparents, and elders, point to others in our communities to reinforce the values of kindness, generosity, compassion, and integrity?

Junior membership gives today's children a way to know their own story and heritage. My husband and I share strong Irish, Scottish, and British roots, though he cannot claim Mayflower lineage. Our daughters, Keira, Saoirse, and Nora, are among the newest Junior Members, proof that this story belongs to the whole family. Any child under 18 who is sponsored by an approved Descendant through our established process may join as a Junior Member of the Nebraska Society of Mayflower Descendants.

Junior Members receive a certificate, an annual newsletter, and an invitation to our Thanksgiving coloring contest. The contest and directions will be mailed to all approved Junior Members, and completed coloring entries are due to Katie Patrick, 4505 High Street, Lincoln, NE 68506, by **November 20th**. We hope to explore additional ways to engage our youngest members in the years to come.

To learn more and access the application, visit nebraskamayflower.org.

Katie Patrick, Junior Members Chair

Heritage Alliance Meeting in Omaha

The Heritage Alliance met in Omaha at the Centris Building on September 18, 2026. This is a meeting of many lineage societies in Nebraska to promote each society. I had the honor of representing and promoting our Mayflower Society. It was an honor to announce that our own Marty Beerman was elected and installed during our triennial Plymouth Meeting as Governor General.

Heritage Alliance gives societies time to encourage new members and to understand each society. The special guest was the President National Cheryl “Cher” Miller Sesma of the National Society of United States Daughters of 1812.

Cheryl L Clark, Deputy Governor

Annual Dues for 2026

Annual Members were sent dues notices in February. Annual Dues are $45. Thanks to everyone who has paid their 2026 dues. If you haven’t paid already, please pay now, either at our website (NebraskaMayflower.org) or by sending a check, payable to the Nebraska Society of Mayflower Descendants, to **Bob Harvey, 17503 V St, Omaha, NE 68135.** Annual members who have **not paid 2026 dues by December 15 will be dropped**. For questions, contact our Treasurer, Bob Harvey, at nsmdtreasurer@gmail.com

Pilgrim News

8704 Douglas St
Omaha, NE 68114-4035

Reminders – Silent Auction and Meeting Dates

Silent Auction items for Whedon Memorial 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! This auction is scheduled for our Fall 2026 meeting, November 22 at 1:00pm, at The Scarlet in Lincoln – directions are inside, on Page 3. The General Society's Governor General, our own Marty Beerman, is our special guest.

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.

Remember to send me, Cheryl Clark, a list of the items that you will be bringing to the meeting for the auction a week before the meeting, meaning by **November 15**. My email address is cherylclark47@gmail.com

Cheryl L. Clark, Deputy Governor

SAVE the dates of our 2027 meetings!

Our Spring 2027 Meeting is scheduled for **Sunday April 25**, at Centris Federal Credit Union.
Our Fall 2027 Meeting is planned for **November 21**, the Sunday before Thanksgiving, in Lincoln.

Our Fall 2026 Board of Assistants Meeting will be on Zoom on Sunday, Nov. 15 at 1:00pm. Details will be emailed in advance of the meeting.