



REPORTS

2017
ANNUAL COMMUNICATION

**Twin City Quarter
Winston-Salem
North Carolina**

September 22–23, 2017

230th Annual Communication

Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted
Masons of North Carolina

Friday, September 22, 2017

- 10:00 A.M. Open Grand Lodge,
Grand Pavilion
Reception of Dignitaries
- 10:45 A.M.Address of Grand Orator,
MW David R. Cash, PGM
- 12:00 P.M. Lunch Break
- 1:15 P.M. Call to Order
Report of Grand Master Cobb
and Miscellaneous Business
- 4:30 P.M. Adjourn First Day
- 4:30 P.M.Grand Master's Reception, Pavilion Courtyard

Saturday, September 23, 2017

- 9:00 A.M.Grand Lodge Reconvenes,
Grand Pavilion
Miscellaneous Business
Election of Grand Lodge Officers
- 12:00 P.M. Close Annual Communication

Vendors Available in Gaines Ballroom
8:00 A.M. Until Adjournment Each Day

Reports

of

The Grand Master

The Grand Treasurer

The Grand Secretary

Boards, Commissions and Committees

at the

230th

Annual Communication

of

The Grand Lodge of

Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons

of North Carolina

at

Winston-Salem, North Carolina

September 22–23, 2017

Table of Contents

Report of the:	
Grand Treasurer	5
Grand Secretary.....	6
Committee on Charity	9
Ad Hoc Committee on Disaster Relief	9
Grand Historian.....	10
Committee on Permanent Building	11
Lodge Service Commission.....	11
Committee on Fraternal Correspondence	12
Petitions for Restoration	13
Judge Advocate	14
Committee on By-laws.....	15
Committee on WhiteStone	18
Committee on The Masonic Home for Children at Oxford.....	20
Petition for a Charter from Lux Libertas U.D., Chapel Hill, NC	24
Committee on Finance.....	25
Committee on Unfinished Business.....	25
Representative to the Masonic Service Association.....	42
Representative to the George Washington Masonic National Memorial Association.....	44
Committee on Miscellaneous Masonic Ceremonies	45
Board of Publications.....	50
Ad Hoc Risk Management Committee	50
North Carolina Masonic Foundation, Inc.....	51
Grand Lodge Committee on Masonic Education.....	54
Committee on Public Relations.....	55
Committee on Youth Organizations	55
Ad Hoc Task Force on Scouting Report.....	56
Board of Custodians.....	57
Commission on Subordinate Lodge Special Activities.....	59
Library Committee	60
Grand Lodge Personnel Committee.....	61
Scholarship Committee	62
Final Report of Grand Master Bryant D. Webster.....	63
Interim Report of Grand Master A. Gene Cobb, Jr.....	77

Report of the Grand Treasurer

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

I submit this interim report as of June 30, 2017. Included in this report are the total receipts and disbursements, special funds, and the securities held by this Grand Lodge.

Total Funds available 01/01/2017 (General Funds & Special Funds)	\$764,771
Total Receipts YTD	832,950
Total Disbursements YTD	(471,100)
Total Cash To Be Accounted For	\$1,126,621

Deposits:	Rate	Maturity	Issue Date	Amount
Petty Cash				\$100
1st Citizens Bank (operating account)				\$469,319
Money Markets:				
North State Bank	VARI			\$51,472
PNC Bank	VARI			\$162,849
Wells Fargo Advisors				\$442,881

Total Cash Accounted For	\$1,126,621
---------------------------------	--------------------

Total Cash & Principle Securities YTD

Special Funds Summary	12/31/16	06/30/17
Special Contingency Reserve	\$ 200,000	\$200,000
Emblems and Awards Reserve	88,265	15,998
Automobile Reserve	70,283	40,673
Operation Reserve	112,686	106,249
Building Reserve	161,003	124,860
Office Equipment Reserve	3,299	3,299
Charity Fund	79,161	87,303
Total Special Funds	\$634,696	\$578,383

Total Special Funds 6/30/17	\$578,383
Total General Funds Available	\$548,238

Total Of All Funds 6/30/2017	\$1,126,621
-------------------------------------	--------------------

Respectfully Submitted,
Lewis R. Ledford, PGM
Grand Treasurer

Report of the Grand Secretary

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

I herewith submit my interim report as Grand Secretary as of June 30, 2017, and a suggested budget for the calendar year 2018.

INCOME

	Budget 2017	Proposed Budget 2018
32,215 Master Masons @ \$20	672,340	644,300
1,345 Endowed Members	24,000	25,000
Initiation Fees @ \$21.00	24,000	17,850
[NC Charities @ \$10.00]	(10,470)	(8,500)
[GL Building @ \$5.00]	(5,235)	(4,250)
[GWNMA @ \$5.00]	(5,235)	(4,250)
Membership Services	41,880	80,000
Penalty for Late Returns	250	250
Dividends and Interest	8,000	12,000
Background check billed	18,600	15,000
Miscellaneous Income	<u>1,000</u>	<u>1,000</u>
Total Income	\$769,130	\$778,400

EXPENSES

Acct. No.	Account Name	Budget 2017	Proposed Budget 2018
800-00	Philanthropy		
800-01	Masonic Home for Children	12,500	12,500
800-02	Masonic and Eastern Star Home	12,500	12,500
800-03	Charity	4,000	4,000
800-04	VA Hospital Visitation	1,000	1,000
800-05	Hospital Visitation (NC)	0	0
800-06	Masonic Youth Organizations	4,250	4,250
800-07	Wilkerson College Scholarships	<u>2,400</u>	<u>2,400</u>
	Total	36,650	36,650
810-00	Salaries and Fees		
810-01	Grand Secretary	91,782	94,077
810-03	Office Personnel	90,375	93,450
810-04	Retirement/Health and Life Insurance	44,691	45,339
810-05	Social Security Tax	18,248	18,767
810-06	Unemployment Tax	850	850
810-08	Assistant to the Grand Secretary	56,379	57,788
810-09	Summer Intern	1,500	1,500
810-10	Drewry Memorial Grand Secy. Fund	<u>(20,000)</u>	<u>(16,000)</u>
	Total	283,825	295,771
820-00	Administration Costs		
820-02	Printing	10,500	10,500
820-04	Office Expenses	12,000	12,000
820-05	Postage	10,000	10,000
820-06	Office Equipment	3,000	3,000
820-07	Office Equipment Maintenance	10,500	10,500
820-08	Telephone/Internet	8,000	8,000
820-09	MORI Data Base Program Maintenance	39,500	68,000
820-11	Auditing/Tax Services	10,000	10,000
820-13	Legal Fees	3,000	3,000
820-14	Background check expenses	<u>12,000</u>	<u>10,000</u>
	Total	118,500	145,000
830-00	Building Expenses		

830-01	Utilities	10,000	10,000
830-02	Building Grounds Maintenance	17,000	17,000
830-03	Building Equipment Maintenance	5,000	5,000
830-04	Hazard Insurance	8,000	7,000
830-05	Bldg. Reserve-Transfer to Building Reserve	<u>10,000</u>	<u>15,000</u>
	Total	50,000	54,000
840-00	Membership Fees and Dues		
840-01	Masonic Service Association	2,250	2,250
840-02	Conference of Grand Masters	750	750
840-03	GMC Committee on Recognition	100	100
840-05	Northeastern Regional Masonic Conf.	<u>300</u>	<u>300</u>
	Total	3,400	3,400
850-00	Travel and Officers Expense		
850-01	Grand Master's Travel	10,000	10,000
850-02	Grand Master's Automobile	6,000	6,000
850-03	Grand Master's Office	1,250	1,250
850-04	Grand Secretary's Travel	7,500	7,500
850-05	Grand Secretary's Automobile	4,500	4,500
850-06	Travel - Other	7,500	7,500
850-07	DDGM/DDGL November Orientation	<u>5,000</u>	<u>5,000</u>
	Total	41,750	41,750
860-00	Boards, Commissions, and Committees		
860-01	Board of General Purposes	4,500	6,000
860-02	Board of Custodians	2,500	2,500
860-04	Masonic Public Relations	3,500	3,500
860-05	Finance Committee	500	500
860-06	Code Commission	300	300
860-07	Lodge Service Commission	100	100
860-08	Masonic Education	3,500	3,500
860-09	Davie Academy/Adept	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
	Total	14,900	16,400
870-00	Out-of-State Visitation		
870-01	Visiting other Grand Lodges	3,000	3,000
870-02	Conference of Grand Masters	6,500	6,500
870-03	Conference of Grand Secretaries	2,000	2,000
870-05	Regional Conference (NE)	3,000	3,000
870-06	World Masonic Conference/UGLE 300th	<u>4,000</u>	<u>4,000</u>
	Total	18,500	18,500
880-00	Annual Communication / GLO Installation		
	Total costs	<u>68,000</u>	<u>68,000</u>
	Total	68,000	68,000
890-00	Miscellaneous Expenses		
890-01	Awards, Aprons, and Emblems	13,000	13,000
890-02	Grand Master's Portrait	500	500
890-04	Miscellaneous	1,000	1,000
890-06	Grand Lodge Library & Archives	<u>4,000</u>	<u>4,000</u>
	Total	18,500	18,500
900-00	NC Mason	<u>131,057</u>	<u>130,000</u>
	Total	131,057	130,000

Acct. No.	Account Name	Budget 2017	Proposed Budget 2018
	EXPENSE SUMMARY		
800-00	Philanthropy	36,650	36,650
810-00	Salaries and Fees	283,825	295,771
820-00	Administration Costs	118,500	145,000
830-00	Building Expenses	50,000	54,000
840-00	Membership Fees and Dues	3,400	3,400
850-00	Travel and Officers Expense	41,750	41,750
860-00	Boards and Committees Office and Travel	14,900	16,400
870-00	Out-of-State Visitation	18,500	18,500
880-00	Annual Communication	68,000	68,000
890-00	Miscellaneous Expenses	18,500	18,500
910-00	North Carolina Mason	<u>131,057</u>	<u>130,000</u>
	Total Expenses (Series 800 - 910)	<u>\$785,082</u>	<u>\$827,971</u>
	ESTIMATED SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	(15,952)	(49,571)

2016 Membership Statistics

Membership 1/1/2016.....	40,482
Initiated.....	860
Raised.....	671
Admitted.....	412
Restored.....	<u>342</u>
Total Gains.....	1,360
Expelled.....	9
Suspended UMC.....	4
Excluded NPD.....	1,097
Demitted.....	342
Died.....	<u>1,143</u>
Total Losses.....	<u>2,595</u>
Total Membership 12/31/2016.....	39,312

Service Awards for 2016

Twenty-Five Year Service Awards presented.....	1,387
Fifty Year Veteran Awards presented.....	485
Sixty Year Diamond Jubilee Awards presented.....	257

Respectfully submitted,
T. Walton Clapp, III
Grand Secretary

Report of the Committee on Charity

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

Your Committee on Charity wishes to report the following disbursements since our annual communication last year:

To Brother JF	\$1,000
To Brother JH	1,000
To KR (grandson of member needing medical assist).....	500
Total dispersed.....	\$2,500

Respectfully submitted,
Grover Lackey, Chairman

Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Disaster Relief

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

First, your committee would like to thank Most Worshipful Past Grand Master Bryant D. Webster for his trust in our committee and for the opportunity to serve our communities and share the resources of our benevolent brethren from across the nation with those in need.

In early October 2016 Hurricane Matthew devastated much of eastern North Carolina and inundated our state with historic flooding. Following this disaster, Masons from across the country donated tens of thousands of dollars to the Masonic Service Association of North America in order to aid those in need across the southeastern seaboard, of which \$60,000.00 was granted to the Grand Lodge of North Carolina to distribute among the needy, of which only about \$2,600.00 remains.

This committee was formed to evaluate the needs of those displaced and devastated by the floods. A total of 40 individuals and/or families applied for relief, as well as two Masonic lodges in our state.

Your committee physically ventured into the field to observe the devastation firsthand and evaluate the needs of the people. The storm ravaged eastern North Carolina. Floods pushed rivers and streams more than a dozen feet above and beyond their banks in many areas, and the depth of water in some flat, elevated areas ranged from 4 to 8 feet in depth. Many people lost all of their possessions.

We are pleased to report that your committee was able to respond timely and successfully to those in need of assistance. We feel we were able to help begin the reconstruction of lives and of hope and restore faith throughout our great state. The tears, kind words, and gratitude expressed to your committee and toward our fraternity cannot be fully or rightfully put into words. These are the moments we will always cherish as men and as Masons and illustrate the pride we take in being a part of the greatest fraternity on earth.

Again, we would like to thank Most Worshipful Bryant D. Webster, the MSA, Right Worshipful Brother Walt Clapp, Most Worshipful Lewis Ledford, and the staff of the Grand Lodge for their assistance.

Donald R. Hufham, PM, CL
Chairman

Report of the Grand Historian

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina: A Continuing History

In the 17th year of the 21st century your Grand Historian has traversed the Old North State, west to the Yadkin Valley, east to the Tar River Basin, south to the Pee Dee River region, and north to Pilot Mountain. In this modern era of our time saving devices, rapid transit and electronic wizardry, it is reassuring to learn that Brothers throughout North Carolina wish to learn of, and from, the past: our past, the past of our Fraternity, and its impact on our State and the Nation.

While traveling to Lodges to present history programs, as well as attending other Lodge events, it never ceases to amaze me how many of our counties are named in honor of those Brothers who came before us:

Caswell	Montgomery
Davidson	Moore
Davie	Nash
Franklin	Person
Harnett	Stanly
Hoke	Stokes
Johnston	Vance
Jones	Warren
Washington	

Now, as in the past, it remains a solid core of Brethren who keep the “flame of Freemasonry aglow.” Though we do not have the great number of members as in our past, I have found that those who remain are steadfast to the Craft and those select new members joining our ranks continue to maintain our high standards which distinguish our Fraternity from others. We are not, nor ever were, intended to be a civic group. We are a band of brothers bound by the most honorable tenets.

Upon my travels this year I have learned that the vast majority of our Brethren have never visited our Grand Lodge in Raleigh. Since 1787 each lodge in North Carolina has lawfully operated under the umbrella of the Grand Lodge. Hoping to bring our Grand Lodge building to more Brothers, the North Carolina Masonic Postcard Keepsake Collection was initiated. This collector’s set depicts artist Allyn Cox’s lovely murals of early North Carolina Masonic history which grace the walls of the Grand Lodge’s Great Hall. All proceeds garnered will be afforded to the North Carolina Masonic Properties Foundation’s endeavors to save and preserve our historic sites throughout the state.

In two thousand seventeen our 164th Grand Master MW Gene Cobb set the tone for Freemasonry’s future in North Carolina. He has traveled the width and breadth of our state, and his message of looking out for one another, our fellow citizens, our communities, veterans, and the future of our Fraternity provides each Lodge and its members a “floor plan” as to how we should proceed onward...

Perhaps in our busy worlds we do not realize the gravity of our actions or inactions. Upon the conclusion of each Lodge meeting and Masonic event we

become a part of history ourselves. Years from now each of us will become a chapter, page, or footnote researched by historians and scholars.

Let us not be tempted to fall into a pit of despair, let us press onward with the honor, comradeship, and dignity of those who came before us.

Respectfully submitted,
Steven A. Campbell
Grand Historian

Report of the Committee on Permanent Building

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The Committee on Permanent Building remains exceptionally proud of the improvements made in our headquarters building over the past few years. We continue to work on the restoration of the building and, like last year, to collaborate with the Library Committee to display paintings, prints, and objects found in the artifact collections.

Minor maintenance to the building, such as painting, continues to be made, but major improvements this year include re-caulking the front steps and repointing the mortar of the chimney to stop and prevent leaks. There are several proposed projects on which the Committee is receiving information and estimates, including the replacement cost of the building's 12-year-old air-conditioning units, replacing the parking lot's exterior lighting, and reseeding the lawn and replacing several overgrown hedges.

Keeping the value and integrity of any building is not inexpensive or without effort. The cost of preserving our home is a reminder that regularly budgeting and contributing to our building fund is important in every budget. The contributions made toward the building's restoration thus far have certainly remade our home into the showplace it once was and of which we should be proud. We invite you to come see its splendor.

Respectfully submitted,
Ed Johnson, Chairman

Report of Lodge Service Commission

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The Lodge Service Commission (LSC) wishes to thank Most Worshipful Grand Master Arnold Gene Cobb, Jr., for his vote of confidence and assistance as we addressed items submitted to us this year. I want to thank each of the commission members for their timely and helpful input on items that have been addressed this year. The LSC is comprised of WB Christopher L. Burti, WB John D. Carmichael, RWB William L. Mills III, and WB James B. Sykes. Each of these brethren has been very helpful, willing, and thoughtful as they addressed requests and issues presented to them. These brethren have never hesitated to take the time to communicate in a timely manner and consider all aspects of the business before them.

The following is a report on the various applications and inquires that have been submitted to, and addressed by, the Lodge Service Commission during 2016-2017.

An application was received and approved from Federal Point Lodge 753 located in Carolina Beach, for the construction of a building addition and remodeling of the lodge facility.

An application was received and approved from Polk County Unity Lodge 482, located in Saluda, for an addition to the existing lodge building.

Documents submitted by the Raleigh Masonic Temple Association related to proposed bylaw changes, rental, and sale of the property were reviewed by the LSC.

Southern Pines Lodge 484, located in Southern Pines, submitted an application for the approval of a loan to pay for a new roof on the existing lodge building. This application was approved after review by the LSC.

An application was received by Balfour Lodge 188 in Asheboro for approval of a loan to finance existing lodge building updates and repairs. This application remains open.

An application was received from Mystic Tie Lodge 237, located in Marion, for approval of a long term lease agreement. The lease with the City of Marion involved land used for parking by both parties. This application was approved after review by the LSC.

Most Worshipful Grand Master, Grand Lodge Officers, and staff of the Grand Lodge Office, we wish to thank you for the service you have given to the LSC and Masons of North Carolina during the past year. Thank you for the opportunity to serve the brethren of North Carolina and the Grand Lodge.

Respectfully and Fraternaly,
James W. Howell PM, Chairman

Report of the Committee on Fraternal Correspondence

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

During the past year, formal requests for recognition have been received from four Grand Lodges. This Grand Lodge subscribes to the services of the Commission on Information for Recognition of the Conference of Grand Masters in North America to gather information and investigate whether the grand lodge in question satisfies the conditions of regularity. The Commission's guidelines for Standards for Recognition are as follows:

1. Legitimacy of Origin
2. Exclusive Territorial Jurisdiction, except by mutual consent and/or treaty
3. Adherence to the Ancient Landmarks – specifically, a belief in God, the Volume of Sacred Law as an indispensable part of the furniture of the lodge, and the prohibition of the discussion of politics and religion

Brazil State Grand Orients

The Grande Oriente do Paraná, the Grande Oriente do Santa Catarina, the Grande Oriente do Rio Grande do Sul, and the Grande Oriente do Mato Grosso were each recognized by, and treaties signed with their respective State Grand Lodges, in August/September of 2016. Each of these bodies are now recognized by the Confederacion Masonica Interamericana (CMI). The Commission on Information determined these grand orientes are practicing regular Masonry. Therefore, it is the recommendation of this committee to approve

recognition of the Grande Oriente do Paraná, Grande Oriente do Rio Grande do Sul, and the Grande Oriente do Mato Grosso Grand Lodge. The Grande Oriente do Santa Catarina was recognized by the Grand Lodge of North Carolina in 2015.

Grand Lodge of Kazakhstan

A request was received from the Grand Lodge of Kazakhstan for recognition. This Grand Lodge was created on November 12, 2016, by the Grand Lodge of Russia. It is the opinion of the Commission on Information and Recognition that this grand lodge is regular and entitled to recognition. Therefore, it is the recommendation of this committee to approve recognition of the Grand Lodge of Kazakhstan.

Grand Lodge of Liechtenstein

A request was received from the Grand Lodge of Liechtenstein for recognition. This Grand Lodge was chartered in 2016, by the Worshipful Grand Lodge of the State “Andres Quintana Roo” of Mexico. It is the opinion of the Commission on Information and Recognition that this grand lodge appears to meet the requirements for recognition, however, the Commission on Information and Recognition will issue its official determination at the 2018 meeting

Petitions for Restoration

CDO (docket no. 802), formerly a member of East LaPorte Lodge 358, Cullowhee, was expelled for un-Masonic conduct on March 5, 2010. He filed for restoration with the lodge on July 13, 2017, and with the Grand Secretary on July 24, 2017.

CDS (docket no. 709), formerly a member of Oconee Lodge 427, Bryson City, was expelled for un-Masonic conduct on October 25, 2002. He filed for restoration with the lodge on December 19, 2016, and with the Grand Secretary on January 20, 2017.

NGC (docket no. 862), formerly a member of North Wilkesboro Lodge 407, North Wilkesboro, was expelled for un-Masonic conduct on June 6, 2014. He filed for restoration with the lodge on June 6, 2017, and with the Grand Secretary on June 20, 2017.

DRC (docket no. 652), formerly a member of Garner Lodge 701, Garner, was expelled for un-Masonic conduct on March 24, 1997. He filed for restoration with the lodge on June 17, 2017, and with the Grand Secretary on June 20, 2017.

MTL, III (docket no. 832), formerly a member of Fort Bragg Lodge 667, Fayetteville, was expelled for un-Masonic conduct on November 10, 2011. He filed for restoration with the lodge on June 5, 2017, and with the Grand Secretary on June 8, 2017.

DBF (docket no. 867), formerly a member of Hall Lodge 53, Shawboro, was expelled for un-Masonic conduct on November 21, 2014. He filed for restoration with the lodge on May 24, 2017, and with the Grand Secretary on June 1, 2017.

MAB (docket no. 735), formerly a member of Newell Lodge 739, Newell, was expelled for un-Masonic conduct on February 18, 2005. He filed for restoration with the lodge on July 3, 2017, and with the Grand Secretary on July 13, 2017.

Report of the Judge Advocate

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

This report is prepared as of 1 August 2017 and most respectfully submitted for your information and disposition.

Docket no. 895 - Brother MAT, a Master Mason and member of Pleasant Hill Lodge 304, was expelled by the Judge Advocate on September 1, 2016, after he pled guilty in the Superior Court of Duplin County to second degree murder, a felony. Brother MAT did not answer the Masonic charges against him.

Docket no. 896 - Brother MDO, a Master Mason and member of Lee Lodge 253, was expelled on November 16, 2016, by the Judge Advocate after he pled no contest in the Superior Court of Alexander County to two counts of felony embezzlement. Brother MDO did not answer the Masonic charges against him.

Docket no. 897 - Brother PRB, a Master Mason and member of Lexington Memorial Lodge 473, was expelled by the Judge Advocate on November 16, 2016, after a federal jury found him guilty on four counts of fraud involving a \$939 million Ponzi scheme, a felony. Brother PRB did not answer the Masonic charges against him.

Docket no. 898 - Brother BGC, a Master Mason and member of Gaston Lodge 263, was found not guilty by the Trial Commission after he was accused of mismanaging Shrine Club funds. Brother BGC appeared at his Masonic trial and testified.

Docket no. 899 - Brother WEL, an Entered Apprentice and member of South Fork Lodge 462, was expelled by the Judge Advocate on January 25, 2017, after he entered a guilty plea to federal charges of conspiracy to defraud the United States; making a false statement while attempting to purchase a firearm; aiding and abetting the possession of ammunition by a prohibited person—all of which are felonies. EA Brother WEL did not answer the Masonic charges against him.

Docket no. 900 - Brother DRT, a Master Mason and member of Gaston Lodge 263, was expelled by the Trial Commission on March 1, 2017, after he failed to appear at his Masonic trial or to answer the Masonic charges against him. Brother DRT was charged with un-Masonic conduct in that he misused funds intended for Masonic charities, he abused intoxicants, and failed to properly care for his wife and family.

Docket no. 901 - Brother MIP, a Master Mason and member of Bingham Lodge 272, was expelled by the Judge Advocate on January 25, 2017, after he was convicted on federal charges of possessing child pornography, a felony. Brother MIP is currently incarcerated in federal prison and did not answer the Masonic charges against him.

Docket no. 902 - Brother WAP, a Master Mason and member of Stanley Lodge 713, was expelled by the Judge Advocate on March 1, 2017, after he was convicted in the Superior Court of Stanly County on four felony drug violations. Brother WAP did not answer the Masonic charges against him.

Docket no. 903 - Brother MEF, a Master Mason and member of Clifford Duell Lodge 756 was expelled by the Judge Advocate on March 1, 2017, after

he pled guilty in the District Court of Harnett County to felony larceny by employee. Brother MEF contacted the Judge Advocate and asked to have his Masonic case dismissed, but never denied the fact that he pled guilty to a felony.

Docket no. 904 - Brother JPB, a Master Mason and member of South Fork Lodge 462 was expelled by the Judge Advocate on May 3, 2017, after he pled guilty in the Superior Court of Gaston County to statutory rape of a child less than 15 years old. Brother JPB did not answer the Masonic charges against him.

Docket no. 905 - Brother JMG, a Master Mason and member of Mount Holly Lodge 544, was expelled by the Judge Advocate on May 3, 2017, after he was convicted in the Superior Court of Lincoln County on three counts of felony obtaining property by false pretense. Brother JMG did not answer the Masonic charges against him.

Docket no. 906 - Brother DNJ, a nonaffiliated Master Mason and former member of Albemarle Lodge 703, was expelled by the Judge Advocate on May 31, 2017, after he was convicted in the Superior Court of Stanly County of selling a schedule II substance, which is a felony. Brother DNJ did not answer the Masonic charge against him.

Docket no. 907 - Brother PBM, a Master Mason and member of Apex Lodge 584 was expelled by the Judge Advocate on June 28, 2017, after he was convicted in the Superior Court of Wake County on several counts of breaking and entering, obtaining property by false pretense, and credit card theft, all felonies. Brother PBM did not answer the Masonic charges against him.

Respectfully submitted,
Jimmy Stevens
Judge Advocate

Report of the Committee on By-Laws

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

Your Committee on By-Laws reports that amendments to the by-laws of the following lodges were approved during the year 2016-2017. They are listed in lodge order.

Unanimity 7	Art 18	investment fund management requirements
Eagle 19		Complete revision of bylaws
Statesville 27	Art 10	dues increased to \$150
	Art 9	initiation fee raised to \$150 plus investigation fee
Zion 81	Art 8	annual meeting in December
	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$200
Morning Star 85	Art 10	dues increased to \$80 plus per capita
Orr 104	Art 10	dues increased to \$80 plus per capita tax
St. Alban's 114	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$200
Franklinton 123		Complete revision of bylaws
Knap of Reeds 158	Art 19	various changes regarding local issues

Blackmer 170	Art 13	charity amount increased to \$300
Cary 198	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$170
	Art 10	dues increased to \$125
	Art 10	dues increased to \$150
Thomasville 214	Art 10	dues increased to \$150
Mystic Tie 237	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$300
	Art 10	dues increased to \$100 plus per capita effective 2018
	Art 10	dues increased to \$110 plus per capita effective 2019
	Art 10	dues increased to \$120 plus per capita effective 2020
	Art 11	affiliation fee increased to \$120
	Art 14	appoint finance and budget committee to three years
	Art 19	institute special ballot procedures
Catawba 248	Art 8	changing meeting nights of lodge for December
	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$350
		Complete revision of bylaws
Excelsior 261		Complete revision of bylaws
Bingham 272		Complete revision of bylaws
French Broad 292	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$185
Raeford 306	Art 10	dues increased to \$75
Granite 322		Complete revision of bylaws
Numa F. Reid 344	Art 10	dues increased to \$135 plus per capita
Mt. Vernon 359	Art 13	charity amount increased to \$500
Orient 395	Art 19	designate \$1,000 annually to Building Maintenance
Relief 431	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$225
	Art 10	dues increased to \$75 plus per capita
West Bend 434		Complete revision of bylaws
Elkin 454	Art 10	dues increased to \$80 plus per capita
	Art 13	charity amount increased to \$100
Dillsboro 459		Complete revision of bylaws
Currituck 463	Art 8	annual meeting in November
Rainbow 479	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$85
Hominy 491		Complete revision of bylaws
Raleigh 500		Complete revision of bylaws
Cookville 502		Complete revision of bylaws
Hamlet 532	Art 8	changing meeting time of lodge
	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$150
Camp Call 534	Art 10	dues increased to \$55 plus per capita
Corinthian 542	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$200
	Art 10	dues increased to \$140 plus per capita
Spencer 543	Art 10	dues increased to \$70 plus per capita

Roman Eagle 550	Art 8	changing meeting time of lodge
Apex 584	Art 8	changing meeting nights of lodge
Ashe 594	Art 10	dues increased to \$80
Cranberry 598		Complete revision of bylaws
St Patrick's 617	Art 8	changing meeting nights of lodge
Garland 664	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$125
	Art 10	dues increase to \$125 plus per capita tax
Fort Bragg 667	Art 19	institute special ballot procedures
	Art 8	location of lodge updated
Acacia 674	Art 10	dues increase to \$130 plus per capita
Creasy Proctor 679	Art 10	dues increased to \$125
Piedmont-Pioneer 685		Complete revision of bylaws
Mount Moriah 690	Art 10	dues increase to \$150
East Gate 692	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$185
	Art 10	dues increased to \$110
Charles M. Setzer 693	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$250
Garner 701	Art 8	changing meeting nights of lodge for December
	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$285
	Art 10	dues increased to \$100 plus per capita
	Art 11	affiliation fee increased to \$100
	Art 22r	prohibiting tobacco use in lodge building
Forsyth 707	Art 8	annual meeting in November
Berne 724	Art 8	change meeting nights
	Art 8	change location of lodge
	Art 8	annual meeting in December
Newell 739		Complete revision of bylaws
Shelby 744	Art 10	dues increased to \$45 plus per capita
Federal Point 753	Art 10	dues increased to \$80 plus per capita
Clemmons 755		Complete revision of bylaws
Clifford Duell 756	Art 10	dues increased to \$125
Oak Island 758	Art 8	changing meeting nights of lodge for December
	Art 8	annual meeting in December
James K. Polk 759	Art 13	charity amount increased to \$350
Mosaic 762	Art 1	lodge location changed to Chapel Hill
	Art 8	change location of meeting hall
	Art 19	institute special ballot procedures
Lodge of the Nine Sisters UD		Adoption of bylaws

Respectfully submitted,
T. Walton Clapp, III,
Chairman

Report of the Committee on WhiteStone: A Masonic and Eastern Star Community

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The Committee on WhiteStone: A Masonic and Eastern Star Community is pleased to report its findings and recommendations to the delegates and attendees of the 230th Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge. This past year marks WhiteStone's 104th year of service and care for our elderly brothers, sisters, and family members in need. With an overall five-star rating, WhiteStone ranks in the top 10% of all retirement communities in North Carolina and is truly a marvelous place for the 300 plus residents who call it "home." From its humble beginnings in 1913, when it employed a small staff to serve just a few residents, WhiteStone has grown to a point where it now employs over 230 full and part-time employees and operates on a \$14.3 million annual budget. Today's amenities include: an indoor pool, gated 24/7 security, state of the art fitness center and on-site medical clinic and pharmacy, full activity program, and a dining room that provides 3 meals a day. This growth would not have been possible without the ongoing support of individual brothers, their lodges, and the Grand Lodge.

Our committee is charged with visiting our Home in Greensboro and reporting on its conditions and management. The highlight of our year was having the opportunity to attend the annual Family Day in May and touring our Home. We are grateful for Brother Mark Kolada's assistance with our work and for his, and the Chairman of the Board MWB Gene Jernigan's, constant care and outstanding leadership throughout the year. We also extend our thanks to the Home's staff for their dedication and service to the residents, and their support of our committee this year.

We are pleased to report that the Home is financially strong, the condition of the property is excellent, and operations appear to be both efficient and professional. Because of our Home's outstanding reputation, there are over 35 people on the waiting list to become residents at WhiteStone.

2016 Operating Highlights

- \$14.3M annual operating budget
- Independent Living 96% average occupancy
- Assisted Living/Memory Care unit 97% average occupancy
- Care and Wellness Center 93% average occupancy
- Resident age range: 65 to 111

Charity Summary

Donations to:	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
WhiteStone					
Masonic Charities	\$100,839	\$112,045	\$125,053	\$176,742	\$419,338
Eastern Star Charities	\$23,680	\$263,750	\$363,723	\$1,235	\$325,665
*NC MESH LLC	\$316,699	\$339,768	\$379,591	\$339,621	
Individual Contributions	\$659,829	\$731,440	\$249,140	\$523,233	\$221,129
TOTAL	\$1,101,047	\$1,447,003	\$1,117,357	\$1,040,831	\$966,132

Donations to:	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
*NC MESH LLC					
Masonic Charities	\$483,340	\$467,446	\$344,544	\$212,127	
Eastern Star Charities	\$192,974	\$164,886	\$155,593	\$130,050	
TOTAL	\$676,314	\$632,332	\$500,137	\$342,177	

*Note: The NC Masonic and Eastern Star Home Foundation LLC (NC MESH LLC) was established in 2012 to receive tax-deductible donations and help administer and fund fraternal-based charity. For example, in 2016, NC MESH LLC gave \$316,699 of the \$676,314 in donations to WhiteStone to cover the cost of entrance fees and/or monthly maintenance fees for fraternal-based residents in need.

Contributions to WhiteStone continue to be robust and Masons and Eastern Stars across our state are to be commended for their support of our wonderful home. In 2016 there were 15 lodges that contributed to WhiteStone who did not do so in 2015, an encouraging uptick in lodge participation. There were, however, 122 lodges (nearly 33%) that did not contribute a single dollar to WhiteStone in 2016, a sad statistic that is uncalled for. In 2016 WhiteStone contributed approximately \$1.2M in financial assistance to 40 fraternally related residents, \$12K above the budgeted amount for the year. Every Mason and every lodge in North Carolina is obligated to support our brethren and widows at our home, and it is inconceivable that any lodge in our state cannot conduct at least one fundraiser a year or at least “pass the hat” at each lodge meeting for a donation to WhiteStone! We can do so much more for those who need our fraternal assistance with very little effort on our parts and for far less than what we might spend frivolously each day.

WhiteStone and its funding partner, the North Carolina Masonic and Eastern Star Home Foundation LLC, have created an exciting program to help our older fraternal members facing financial concerns and/or health care challenges and need help accessing community resources and services. The NC Masonic and Eastern Star Outreach Program (MESOP) is for Masonic and Eastern Star members, age 65 years and older, and their spouses. MESOP’s primary objective is to ensure that our Sisters, Brothers, and spouses have access to the services and resources they need to stay in their own home for as long as possible. Services MESOP offers include: 1) Emergency or long-term financial assistance for members struggling to make ends meet; 2) Case management assistance to help members access community resources such as veteran benefits, Medicare, Medicaid, local transportation, meals on wheels, etc.; 3) Long-term care referrals, which include making recommendations on finding an appropriate level of care for a relative with cognitive and/or health care needs; and 4) Widow/Widower program, that will touch base with member spouses to offer support during the difficult transition of losing a loved one. If you know of a Brother, Sister or spouse in need or would like more information about the program please call WhiteStone at 336-601-5593 (toll free at 1-833-853-1449) or email Crystal Carter, Outreach Director: ccarter@meshhome.org. Once a member calls for help, Ms. Carter will assess either via phone or in person, determine what the needs are for that member, and develop a plan to assist.

Finally, our committee wishes to thank the Grand Lodge and WhiteStone’s residents and staff for giving us the opportunity to learn more about our Home and its charitable work. We hope you will take the opportunity to visit WhiteStone and see for yourself the impact of our fraternity’s involve-

ment in the lives of the residents there. You might consider holding a lodge meeting there to enjoy fellowship with Masonic residents who aren't able to travel to meetings or simply visit the recently formed MESH Lodge 771, which meets at 2:00 PM on the second Saturday of each month. Another way to assist would be to adopt a resident - this is a small investment of time and resources that yields tremendous personal rewards for the recipients, as well as those who give. Feel free to contact one of the committee members or Mark Kolada if you'd like to explore any of these ideas.

Respectfully submitted,
Larry B. Thompson, Jr., JGD, Chairman
Kenneth W. Wical
David E. Quick
Donald L. Jordan
Raymond B. Casey, Jr.

Report of the Committee on The Masonic Home for Children at Oxford

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The Grand Lodge Committee on the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford (MHCO) is comprised of not less than 5 nor more than 9 members. The members serve for 1 year and are appointed annually by the Grand Master of Masons. The Senior Grand Deacon (SGD) is a member of this committee and acts as its chair during his term of office. This year the committee was made up of 9 members. In addition to the SGD, the committee consisted of Brothers Tyler Harper and Roger Bynum of Joseph Warren Lodge 92, Theodore L. King and Timothy L. Krist of Cary Lodge 198, Kevin R. Howell and Richard T. Hamm of Piney Creek Lodge 432, and Timothy Ross and Richard A. Wall of Bush Hill Lodge 732. Of the 9 committee members, only 7 participated in the business of the committee.

Pursuant to The CODE, it is the duty of each committee member to personally visit the MHCO. During that visit, the members are required to inspect the condition of the property, to review the management and operation of the MHCO, and to examine the reports of the Directors and Officers. Thereafter, it is the duty of the committee to report its findings to the Grand Lodge at its annual communication.

The committee visited the MHCO on May 12, 2017, and June 14, 2017. During the May visit, the SGD along with Brothers Krist, King, and Ross met with members of the Board of Directors for the MHCO and observed the quarterly Board meeting. During the June visit, the SGD met with Brothers Harper, Bynum, and Howell for a tour of the home. At both the May and June visits, the committee members met with Brother Kevin Otis, the Administrator of the MHCO, along with officers, directors, house parents, and other employees of the Home. The committee members toured the facilities, inspecting the children's cottages, independent living apartments, York Rite Chapel, print shop, gymnasium and administration building. The committee members also met with children in the direct residential care program and in the independent living program (ILP).

The MHCO serves children in need by providing two types programs: di-

rect residential care and independent living. The direct residential care program provides a home care model for children who have not as yet graduated high school. The children in residential care live in a home with a childcare couple in a family setting. While in residential care, the children attend the Granville County public schools. The ILP program is designed for children ages 18 to 21. The purpose of the ILP program is to assist high school graduates with the transition to adult life. The ILP students reside on campus in studio apartments. The ILP students continue their education by attending Vance Granville Community College. In addition, they are provided assistance in obtaining part-time employment.

This year, the MHCO saw 9 of its residents graduate, 8 from high school and 1 from Vance Granville Community College. Of the 8 children that graduated from high school, 7 transitioned into the ILP program. Of these, 1 has enlisted in the United States Marines. The graduate from Vance Granville Community College is now enrolled in UNC-Charlotte where she will complete her bachelor's degree. She is 1 of 3 ILP residents currently attending UNC-Charlotte. There are 3 other ILP residents attending college, 2 at East Carolina University and 1 at North Carolina A&T University. As of the date of the preparation of this report, the census of the MHCO is 63 residents. There are 42 children in direct care and 21 in ILP.

The Strategic Planning Retreat was held in the York Rite Chapel on March 24 and 25. Over 40 staff members, board members, alumni, Masons, and community partners participated in the Retreat. Friday evening's activities included reflecting on the MHCO's past, resident and staff experiences, discussing the current organizational profile, and analyzing where the MHCO currently stands by examining our strengths, weaknesses, external threats, and opportunities for growth. Saturday's activities included envisioning the future and strategizing how to close the gap between the MHCO's operations in 2017 and vision for 2021. Breakout groups revised the mission, vision, and quality statements and developed a new tagline: "Growing Hearts, Brighter Futures". Goals, objectives, and initiatives were developed to enhance the sustainability of the MHCO including utilization and stewardship of resources, community partnerships, and recruitment and retention of employees.

2016 saw the MCHO's inaugural class of Ambassadors. On April 21 and 22, the Second Class of Ambassadors gathered in the Cobb Center for a 2-day orientation. The Ambassadors toured the cottages, asked questions, and interacted directly with children and House Parents. Older residents and Alumni shared their experience at the MHCO and how important the Home has been in their lives. The group discussed the difficulties of being raised out of one's home, having to abide by campus rules, and the perspective of guardians having to let go and trust others to raise their wards. Hopefully the training will allow the Ambassadors to present information about the Home throughout their communities and the Lodges in their District.

The 2017 Ambassadors are:

Doug Brickhouse	District 1
Earl "Buddy" Wilson	District 4
Johnny Surles	District 7
Randy Bowen	District 8

Don Steichen	District 14
Will Barham	District 16
Mark Sessoms	District 18
Michael Verville	District 19
Velton W. Tudor	District 20
Mark Mabe	District 29
Gary Ramey	District 30
Chris Hawkins	District 35
James Butler Ericson Call, III	District 36
Jessie James Padgett	District 39

The Ambassadors will work with the Lodges and others to provide information about the MHCO. Ambassadors are requested to provide a three-year commitment to the program. The current goal is to have an Ambassador in each of North Carolina's 41 Masonic Districts by the end of 2018. At present, the following Districts are without an Ambassador: 2, 3, 5, 10, 11, 12, 17, 24, 31, 32, 33, 40 and 41. If you would like to be considered for a position as an Ambassador, please contact your DDGM for information and a referral to the Home.

The MHCO is currently licensed and accredited. The Home was initially accredited by the Council on Accreditation (COA) in 2005. COA is an international, independent, nonprofit, human service accrediting organization. COA currently accredits more than 2,200 organizations and programs serving more than 7 million individuals and families. The MHCO must be reaccredited every 3 years. This summer, the MHCO went through this reaccreditation process. The reaccreditation process takes almost a year to prepare for and to complete. It involves a self-study, submission of documentation addressing requirements with twelve standards, an on-site review and continued demonstration of compliance and development toward best practices. The standards that are evaluated and addressed include Client Rights, Group Living Standards, Youth Independent Living, Finance, and Governance.

The COA self-study was submitted by the MHCO in May, and the on-site inspection and review was held July 16, 17 and 18. Within a week of the on-site review, the MHCO received notice from COA that the Home was reaccredited through October 31, 2021. In addition, the MHCO was expedited through the Pre-Commission Review Report process as a result of not receiving any out of compliance ratings in any of the fundamental practice standards. The reviewers for the on-site review were extremely impressed with the MHCO. There were many glowing comments shared by the reviewers with regard to the operation of the Home. "The dedication to the children and mission witnessed was to be commended." "The youth see the home as a family." "This is a safe and therapeutic environment where healing and teaching takes place." While touring the campus and cottages one reviewer asked, "Do you only hire Saints?" At one point the lead reviewer stated that if she had a family member who needed residential care she would want them to live here. Such comments speak volumes about our Home.

Six residents attended the 3rd Annual Summer Academy. The Summer

Academy was conducted during the weeks of July 17-28. The purpose of the Academy is to address many of the pre-employment needs our children have through a concentrated two-week program. High school age residents who are not yet employed participate in the Summer Academy Program. During the 2017 Summer Academy, the children visited Vance-Granville Community College, North Carolina State University, High Rock Farms, UNC Hospital, Raleigh Convention Center/Red Hat Amphitheater/Duke Center for Performing Arts, Weaver Brothers Volvo, Duke Energy, Danco Construction, Duke University IT Department, and Duke Energy Mayo Plant and attended Beauty and the Beast at the Raleigh Memorial Auditorium. In addition, the children completed a community service project, along with nine hours of classroom training.

Several capital improvement projects were identified during the Strategic Planning Retreat held in March. One such program is the swimming pool. Unfortunately, the pool has come to the end of its useful life. After several years of patching, the pool is leaking water almost as fast as it can be replaced. In addition, the electrical wiring in and around the pool has started to fail. As a result, the pool was not opened to the children this summer. An ad hoc committee was formed by the Board of Directors early in the year to develop a plan for the replacement of the pool and the pool house. This ad hoc committee has met with pool designers and contractors, and a proposal should be submitted to the Board of Directors before the end of this year. When the designs are finalized, the MHCO will embark on a capital improvement project to fund the costs of construction. The Board hopes to have a new pool in place by 2018.

On October 12, 13, and 14, the MHCO will celebrate Homecoming. Homecoming will feature a Golf Tournament on Friday, a Shrine Parade through the City of Oxford on Saturday, followed by a Barbecue Contest and entertainment by Jim Quick and the Coastline. If you would like to play in the golf tournament or if your lodge would like to send a team to the Barbecue Contest, please contact the MHCO for more information. For those staying through Sunday, there will be a worship service Sunday morning in the York Rite Chapel. Homecoming is an opportunity for you to visit the Home with your Lodge, your friends, and your family. There you will see first-hand the good work we are doing for at risk children in North Carolina.

The committee would like to thank Brother Kevin Otis for the time he and the staff at the MHCO spent with us during our visits, as well as for making available to us the information contained in this report. If you would like additional information regarding the MHCO, please review the 2017 Annual Achievement Report. This report summarizes the achievements of the Home for 2017, as well as providing a complete financial report for the Home. It is available on the MHCO's website, or a hard copy can be requested directly from the Home.

Although the Grand Master's Lion and Pillar Lodge of Excellence Program did spur some lodges to increase their donations to our Masonic Charities, there still remain some lodges that failed to make any contribution to the MHCO. I cannot help but to think that the reason some lodges give little or nothing to our charities is because the brothers have failed to come to our Homes and see the work that is being done for our widows and orphans. With that as a backdrop, I leave you with a personal experience. In March, during the Strategic Planning Retreat, the participants broke into groups and had

dinner with the children in their cottages. Although my wife had met with the children from the Home on countless occasions, this was her first opportunity to be with them in such an intimate setting. During dinner, we were discussing the children's interests, such as school, sports and how they viewed living at the Home. One boy introduced himself by giving us his 2 first names. Confused, my wife inquired if one of the names was his middle name. He said no. He told her that the first name was his birth name. The second name was the one his adoptive parents gave him. But they didn't want him anymore; so, they left him at the Home. At that moment, my wife understood exactly what we do and why we do it. This child had been abandoned by both his birth parents and his adoptive parents. It is because of you, my brothers, that tonight that child has a safe home to live in, and he is surrounded by a family that loves him. I charge every Mason in North Carolina to come to our Home. Bring your family, and meet your children. When you do, it will forever change your life and theirs.

Respectfully submitted,
R. David Wicker, Jr., SGD, Chairman
Tyler Harper
Kevin R. Howell
Roger Bynum
Richard T. Hamm
Theodore L. King
Timothy Ross
Timothy L. Krist
Richard A. Wall

Petition for a Charter from Lux Libertas Lodge UD, Chapel Hill

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The subscribers hereto respectfully represent that, on the sixteenth day of June, CE 2016; AL 6016, a dispensation was issued by the Most Worshipful Grand Master of Masons in North Carolina for the establishment of a new lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons, at Chapel Hill in the County of Orange, by the name of Lux Libertas Lodge, and that said lodge has worked regularly since that time as appears from the transcript of its records, bylaws, and returns herewith presented.

We, therefore, now pray that a charter be granted to the said lodge, with the following officers, to-wit: Most Worshipful Brother Gene Tart Jernigan, Master; Most Worshipful Brother Dan Charles Rice, Senior Warden; and Worshipful Brother Johnny Craig Surles, Junior Warden. And they do promise, as heretofore, a strict conformity to the edicts of the Grand Master, and to the Constitution and laws of the Grand Lodge.

Given under our hands on this the 3rd day of August, CE 2017, AL 6017.

Respectfully submitted,
The Members of Lux Libertas Lodge UD

Resolution of the Committee on Finance

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

Resolved, That the report of the Committee on Finance shall be the first order of business at the morning session of the Grand Lodge held on Saturday, September 23, 2017, and,

Resolved further, That all resolutions, motions, and reports asking for or carrying appropriations and expenditures not included in the 2017 proposed budget, shall be placed before the Grand Lodge before 4:00 p.m. on Friday September 22, 2017, and,

Resolved further, That all such matters offered after 4:00 p.m. on Friday, September 22, 2017, be carried over to the next business communication of this Grand Lodge when the 2019 budget will be considered.

Respectfully submitted,
Grover Dees, Chairman

Report of the Committee on Unfinished Business

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The following various orders issued during the terms of Grand Master Bryant D. Webster and Grand Master A. Gene Cobb, Jr., are to be considered during this Annual Communication.

Webster Order 5

To the Masters, Wardens, and Brethren of the Subordinate Lodges of the Grand Lodge of North Carolina, A.F. & A.M.:

- A. We have faced a number of questions with regard to title of lodge buildings. Generally, unless there is a civil legal entity, such as a temple corporation, title should be vested in your lodge trustees. To ensure you do have proper title, you are to request a copy of your property tax card from your County Tax Assessor and submit the same to the Grand Secretary by January 15, 2017.
- B. Further, if you have any interest or involvement in a temple corporation, building association, or any civil entity you are to report that and provide to the Grand Lodge Office a copy of the current bylaws of that corporation. The Lodge Service Commission will assist you in updating your bylaws to a current approved template.

This Order is to be read at your next stated communication and entered in the minutes of that communication.

Given under my hand and seal in Black Mountain, North Carolina, this the 30th day of November, 2016.

Webster Opinion 1

It has come to my attention that there are irregularities in the handling of funds in some of our lodges that are causing losses to our lodges and their fund balances. It is my desire and intent to assist our lodges in tightening our procedures to protect us from damage and mismanagement. We have had lodges in which members and officers, including district officers, have been expelled or suspended, and lodges have had financial losses amounting to many

thousands of dollars. This cannot continue; we must increase our vigilance.

I have learned that it is standard practice in some lodges to have the Secretary write checks from lodge funds; some lodges believe that they have authority from the Grand Lodge to handle funds in this way. If you believe that you have that authority, that authority is hereby revoked. Only lodge treasurers shall write checks. It is my official opinion that the proper mechanism for issuing checks is only upon written vouchers. To be clear, no officer other than the Treasurer shall have authority to issue checks on lodge funds; and only after lodge approval, with signatures by Master and Secretary. No checks shall ever be written to cash.

Given under my hand and seal, this the 1st day of December, CE 2016; AL 6016

Cobb Order 1

The Grand Secretary has informed me that the Master of your lodge, WPB, has been charged with first-degree murder. Inasmuch, the charge of such a heinous crime, which has been publicly distributed through the media, has not only brought disgrace upon St. Paul's Lodge 474, but dishonor to the whole fraternity of Freemasonry. Since Brother WPB has only been charged with the crime, and since adjudication by the courts will probably be prolonged, it is my intent to not only suspend him as provided in Regulation 58-1 of *The Code*, but hereby remove him permanently from the office of Master of St. Paul's Lodge 474.

Since *The Code* restricts the authority of the Grand Master to to suspend a membership under Regulation 13-4.11,

Therefore, it is my ORDER that Brother WPB be removed as Master immediately and his membership record so noted. Additionally, is also ORDERED that this case be referred to the Judge Advocate for his disposition immediately following disposal by the courts of the state.

It is noted that if Brother WPB is found to be innocent of his alleged crime, his record will be purged of any notation of this .

Given under my hand and seal in Sanford, North Carolina, this the 1st day of May, 2017.

Cobb Order 2

Grand Master Cobb has issued the following order following a posted video viewed by over 10 million people throughout the world.

WHEREAS, the Masonic CODE sets out the duties, responsibilities and obligations of the officers of the subordinate Masonic lodges located within the State of North Carolina, as well as providing for the conduct of said officers;

AND WHEREAS, it has come to the attention of the Grand Master of Masons of North Carolina that Brother JTL, Junior Warden of Mount Holly Lodge 544, has conducted himself in a way and manner which could bring reproach upon the said brother and upon Masonry in general, by directing vulgar and threatening language toward a female individual, making statements suggesting that the United States of America should be conducted in a manner similar to that of Nazi Germany, and taking the Lord's name in vain on at least two occasions;

AND WHEREAS, the Regulation 58-1 of the CODE provides that, if in

the opinion of the Grand Master, an officer of a subordinate lodge has conducted himself in such a manner as to bring reproach upon himself or the Craft, the Grand Master, in his discretion, may suspend the offending brother from his office, board, commission and committee;

AND WHEREAS, it is the opinion of the Grand Master of Masons that for the good of Masonry, Brother JTL should be suspended from the office of Junior Warden of Mount Holly Lodge 544, as well as from each and every Masonic board, commission, and committee upon which he may be serving;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that Brother JTL should be and is hereby immediately suspended from the office of Junior Warden of Mount Holly Lodge 544, as well as from any other Masonic board, commission or committee upon which he may be serving;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the office of Junior Warden of Mount Holly Lodge 544 is hereby declared vacant until the next annual election of officers as provided by the by-laws of said lodge;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that, pending further orders of the Grand Master, Brother JTL shall not sit as an officer in any Masonic Lodge within the State of North Carolina in any capacity, including in a protem basis, nor shall he serve on any Masonic board, commission or committee;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Secretary of Mount Holly Lodge 544 shall read this Order in open lodge at the first stated communication following the receipt hereof and this Order shall be made a part of the minutes of that meeting;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Master of Mount Holly Lodge 544, or any other brother sitting as Acting Master, shall enforce this Order and that the failure to do so shall be a serious Masonic offense.

Ordered under my hand and seal this the 15th day of August, 2017.

Cobb Order 3

It has been brought to my attention by the Grand Secretary's office that Oxford Lodge 122 elected Mr. JDB to receive the degrees at the stated communication held on August 7, 2017, and then conferred the Entered Apprentice Degree on him at the same stated communication (August 7, 2017), which is in violation of Regulation 71-22 of *The Code*.

Since the candidate was not responsible for this violation of the law of our Grand Lodge, I hereby order:

That Oxford Lodge 122 heal Entered Apprentice JDB at the first stated communication following receipt of this Order, as provided in Regulation 87-6. It shall be sufficient only to re-obligate the candidate in the first degree, in a lodge opened on that degree. After the candidate has been healed, he may then be advanced when prepared as required in Regulation 72-2.

This Order shall be read in the lodge at the first stated communication following its receipt, and it shall be made a part of the minutes of that meeting.

The lodge secretary shall report to the Grand Secretary within five days after the healing of this candidate that this Order has been complied with and the date thereof. This will be the date of his Entered Apprentice degree.

Given under my hand and seal at Sanford, North Carolina, this the 17th day of August 2017.

Proposed Amendments to The Code
Amendment Group 1

Submitted by Grand Secretary

Would allow the Board of Custodians to elect officers after the installation of the Grand Master.

REG. 29-2 CHAIRMAN AND SECRETARY.

~~In January of each year~~ At its first meeting following the installation of the Grand Master, the Board of Custodians shall elect its chairman from its members and a secretary who need not be from its membership but who shall be a member of a subordinate lodge obedient to the Grand Lodge; and if the secretary is not a member of the board, he shall not have a vote. [27-6;27-7.7; 27-7.8]. *(This regulation amended, effective 9/25/2004)*

Amendment Group 2

Submitted by Board of Publication

This amendment will clarify editorial control of Grand Lodge news and information through the North Carolina Mason and other forms of publication.

REG. 34-20 BOARD OF PUBLICATIONS.

The Board of Publications shall consist of five members. One member of this Board shall be nominated each year by the Grand Master for confirmation by the Board of General Purposes to serve a five-year term. A vacancy shall be filled by nomination of the Grand Master and confirmation by the Board of General Purposes for the unexpired term. It shall be the duty of this Board ~~to establish the policies of the publication, to select the editor, who in turn will select his staff. The committee shall have charge and supervision of the publication. The committee shall recommend to the Committee on Finance the compensation of the editor and his staff:~~ to establish the policies for the publication of Masonic news and information through various media, including print and electronic, and to encourage and promote the use of technology for communicating the message of Masonry amongst the lodges and by the Grand Lodge. The Board shall select the editor and have editorial supervision of the North Carolina Mason and all similar news and informational publications, in all forms and formats. [27-1.1.C].

Amendment Group 3

Submitted by Blackmer Lodge 127

This amendment would allow a lodge to open lodge on the First Degree and conduct its business.

REG. 45-2 STATED COMMUNICATION.

4. A lodge, regularly opened on the first or third degree for an emergent communication on the day of a stated communication at an earlier hour than that named in its by-laws for that stated communication, may be changed to a stated communication without going through the ceremonies of closing and again opening in the following manner.

- A. At a time not more than thirty minutes after the hour named in the by-laws for the stated communication, the Master shall announce in open lodge that “the hour for the stated communication having arrived, and the lodge having been opened on the degree of Entered Apprentice or Master Mason, further work in the emergent

communication will be deferred and the business of the stated communication taken up.”

REG. 45-8 QUORUM.

Seven Master Masons, members of the lodge, one of whom shall be authorized to open the lodge and preside, shall constitute a quorum to open the lodge on any degree and for the transaction of any business that may lawfully come before an Enter Apprentice's or Master Mason's lodge. The Tyler, if a member of the lodge, may be one of the seven. [38-2: 39-11; 74-1; 87-31].

REG. 45-9 DEGREE ON WHICH LODGE OPENED.

All business shall may be transacted in an Entered Apprentice's or Master Mason's Lodge, except proficiency examinations and degree work in the first and second degrees, or the discipline of Entered Apprentices and Fellow Crafts as provided in Chapter 100. If a lodge chooses to transact business in an Entered Apprentice lodge it would be opened for the transaction of business in lieu of for work and instruction.

REG. 45-18 MASTER MASON'S LODGE CLOSED.

Every Master Mason's lodge shall be closed until the next stated communication unless sooner convened. Lodges of Entered Apprentice and Fellow Craft Masons shall be closed without date unless conducting business in a lodge of Entered Apprentice in which case it shall be closed until the next stated communication unless sooner convened.

REG. 51-1 MODES OF AVOUCHMENT.

No brother shall vouch for another unless, in addition to the knowledge that the visitor is a Mason, the brother is also satisfied that the visitor is at the time in good standing. [87-51].

1. There shall be ~~three~~ four modes of avouchment of a brother as follows: [39-2.6.F.(3)1].

- A. By sitting together in a regular lodge of Master Masons recognized by the Grand Lodge.
- B. By an examination authorized by the proper officer of a lodge.
- C. By one Mason definitely stating to another whom he knows to be a Master Mason that he vouches for a third brother then and there present with them as a Master Mason in good standing. The Mason who is vouching for the visitor shall state the manner in which he acquired the knowledge on which he makes the avouchment. [51-2].
- D. By sitting together with an Entered Apprentice or Fellow Craft during the conferring of their respective degree

REG. 59-2 MASTER.

Some, but not all, of the powers of the Master of a lodge which are also duties to be performed by him, or at his direction and under his supervision, are as follows:

16. After having opened his lodge, he may place any capable Master Mason in the East and permit him to confer any of the degrees, the Master being present. If any regular officer is absent, his office should be filled pro tempore by a Master Mason. [24-1.1; 45-12.2: 71-15].

REG. 84-4 HOW AND BY WHOM CONDUCTED.

Any of the ceremonies provided for in this chapter may be conducted by the Grand Lodge or by a subordinate lodge at the discretion of the Grand Master,

but the Grand Master or his duly appointed representative shall preside. The lodge making the request for such ceremonies shall bear the entire expense thereof.

1. The Grand Lodge, or a subordinate lodge, shall be opened on the Degree of Entered Apprentice or Master Mason, the usual ceremonies conducted and instruction and information given relative to the special ceremonies to be conducted. The minutes shall be read, approved and the Grand Lodge or subordinate lodge shall be closed, after which the special ceremonies shall be conducted. The charter of the subordinate lodge need not be removed from the lodge hall if the special ceremony is conducted in another location. [13-3.7: 38-3.1: 41-8: 38-3.41.]

Amendment Group 4

Submitted by Casar Lodge 579

This amendment would allow a lodge to charge a late fee on unpaid dues after March 31st. The late charge is optional and would require a lodge to amend its bylaws before it becomes effective.

ARTICLE 10

SECTION 1. The annual membership dues in this lodge shall be _____ dollars (\$_____) plus Grand Lodge per capita tax as specified in Regulation 20-1.1 of The Code which each member shall pay in advance on or before the first day of January.

Optional

SECTION 2. Dues not paid by March 31st of the year shall incur a \$10.00 or 10% late fee whichever is greater.

NOTE: An amendment to Section 1 of this article shall not become effective until January first next following the date it is approved by the chairman of the Committee on By-laws of Subordinate Lodges. [77-2; 77-3]

Amendment Group 5

Submitted by Bryant Webster, PGM

This amendment is being proposed to close certain loopholes by requiring the conduct of background checks for those seeking Advancement, Restoration after Exclusion, Restoration after Demitting or Affiliation after Two (2) years.

REG. 73-6 DEFAULT.

If an Entered Apprentice or a Fellow Craft fails to present himself prepared for advancement within six months after initiation or passing, he must apply in writing to the lodge for advancement. In the event more than Two (2) years have passed since his Initiation or Passing, the application shall be forwarded to the Grand Secretary and referred to a Committee of Investigation whose report shall be filed before a ballot can be had thereon. The Grand Secretary shall order a criminal background check of the applicant, and information with respect to the petitioner as he may possess.

REG. 78-2 RESTORATION AFTER TWO (2) YEARS.

2. He shall apply to that lodge in writing for restoration on the form prescribed. [Official Form 26].

- A. The application shall be forwarded to the Grand Secretary and referred to a Committee of Investigation whose report shall be filed before a ballot can be had thereon. The Grand Secretary shall order

a criminal background check of the applicant, and information with respect to the petitioner as he may possess. [67-2; Official Form 26].

Demits

REG. 76-9 RESTORATION TO MEMBERSHIP.

A Mason who has received an absolute demit from his lodge shall not regain membership therein by paying dues. He can do so only by an application for affiliation. In the event more than Two (2) years have passed since his demit, the application shall be forwarded to the Grand Secretary and referred to a Committee of Investigation whose report shall be filed before a ballot can be had thereon. The Grand Secretary shall order a criminal background check of the applicant, and information with respect to the petitioner as he may possess.

Affiliation

REG. 75-1 RIGHT TO APPLY FOR AFFILIATION.

The right of every Master Mason in good standing to apply for membership in any regular lodge of his choice, wherever it may be located, shall be absolute. An application for affiliation may be received by a lodge regardless of the *period* or *place* of residence, whether in or outside of North Carolina, of the applicant at the time the application is filed, and not be subjected to a background check. [42-12; 68-7; 76-3.6].

Amendment Group 6

Submitted by Bryant Webster, PGM

This amendment is being proposed to codify the Grand Lodge Committee on Personnel, which has functioned since 2013 as an ad hoc committee, and which has greatly professionalized the handling of our personnel matters and brought us compliant with best practices.

In Chapter 34 (Grand Lodge Committees, Committee on Masonic Jurisprudence) add new Sections 34-23 through 34-25)

Committee on Personnel

REG. 34-23 MEMBERS. The Committee on Personnel shall consist of five members, each of whom shall be a Past Master. (27-6; 27-7.7).

1. The following officers of the Grand Lodge shall be members of the Committee on Personnel during their respective terms of office:
 The Senior Grand Warden, who shall be the Chairman, and
 The Junior Grand Warden, who shall be the Vice Chairman.
2. Three members of the committee shall be nominated by the Grand Master-elect and confirmed by the Grand Lodge as follows. Neither the Grand Master nor the Deputy Grand Master may be a member of the Committee on Personnel.
3. The Senior Grand Deacon shall attend, without the right to vote, all meetings of the Committee on Personnel. His duty to the Committee on Personnel will be to serve as an observer.
4. A quorum of the Committee on Personnel shall consist of three (3) or more members.

REG. 34-24 MATTERS REFERRED. Matters which shall be referred to the Committee on Personnel and its duties relative to these and other things are as follows.

1. To review all proposals to establish, and thereafter to amend, the

Personnel Policy shall be referred to the Committee.

2. To review all questions touching upon personnel matters of the Grand Lodge, and
3. Any other matters that may be referred to it by the Grand Lodge or the Grand Master.

REG. 34-25 DUTIES AND POWERS. The duties and powers of the Committee on Personnel are as follows.

1. To review and recommend appropriate job descriptions for employees of the Grand Lodge.
2. To review the annual evaluations of all employees of the Grand Lodge.
3. Hearing grievances of employees of the Grand Lodge in accordance with the Grand Lodge Personnel Policy.
4. The recommendation to the Board of General Purposes of any additions, revisions, deletions, or amendments to the Grand Lodge Personnel Policy.

In Chapter 27 (Boards, Commissions, and Committees of the Grand Lodge) add the following new section:

REG. 27-1.3(Q)

(Q) On Personnel (24-23).

In Chapter 34 (Committee on Finance) add the following new section:

REG. 34-4.3

3. To receive and address all financially related matters concerning the employees of the Grand Lodge from the Board of General Purposes in due and timely fashion for inclusion in the Annual Budget.

In Chapter 21 (Fiscal Year, Compensation, and Disbursements by the Grand Lodge) amend Section 21-2 to read as follows:

REG. 21-2 COMPENSATION. The Grand Lodge shall annually fix the amount of compensation, if any, to be paid to its officers, employees, agents and members; and ~~or others~~, failing to do so, the amount authorized the preceding year shall govern.

Every proposal to provide for compensation for the services of any officer, member, or agent of the Grand Lodge, or to increase the same shall be first referred to the Board of General Purposes for its consideration and report as a matter of policy and must be adopted by the Grand Lodge before the financial question involved therein shall be considered by Committee on Personnel, which shall then refer the same with its recommendations to the the Committee on Finance.

To the extent that any officer, member, or agent of the Grand Lodge receives compensation for services in a manner deemed to be in the capacity of an employee of the Grand Lodge, said individual shall also be subject to the Grand Lodge Personnel Policy.

Amendment Group 7

Submitted by Grand Secretary

To allow the Grand Master to dispense with the reading of minutes of any lodge communication he closes in ample form.

REG. 13-3 PERTAINING TO SUBORDINATE LODGES. Some, but not

all, of the powers and duties of the Grand Master pertaining to subordinate lodges are as follows:

10. ~~To approve the minutes of a lodge, without the necessity of the minutes being read, at an Emergent Communication called for the purpose of acting as host lodge for a district meeting.~~

Replace with:

10. To approve the minutes of a lodge, without the necessity of the minutes being read, at any communication of a lodge which the Grand Master closes in ample form.

Amendment Group 8

Submitted by GL Finance Committee

This amendment would increase the per capita amount.

Per Capita Tax

REG. 20-1 ESTABLISHED.

Each lodge, including lodges under dispensation, shall pay annually to the Grand Secretary, for the use of the Grand Lodge, the sums hereinafter specified.

1. The sum of twenty-five dollars and for each member of the lodge at low twelve on December thirty-first. A lodge shall be exempt from the payment of the annual assessment to the Grand Lodge for any member who has received either the Fifty-Year or Sixty-Year Service Award and any member of a lodge whose dues have been remitted under Reg. 77-14.2. [5-1.1; 20-1; 81-1; 81-7].

Amendment Group 9

Submitted by State College 770

This amendment immediately stops the purchase of new Endowed Memberships. Applications for Endowed memberships already accepted by the Grand Secretary would be unaffected. Current endowed membership participants would be unaffected. The rules of transferring of memberships and other regulations regarding current endowed memberships would continue. Lodges would continue to receive endowed payments in perpetuity.

REG. 77-25 ENDOWED MEMBERSHIPS.

Endowed Memberships accepted by the Grand Lodge exist under the following terms and conditions.

4. Obsolete
5. Obsolete
6. Obsolete
7. Obsolete
8. Obsolete
9. Obsolete

10. After the endowed membership application and fee have been received and accepted by the Grand Secretary, the endowed membership fee shall not be refundable except under circumstances determined by the Grand Secretary to be mistakes of fact rendering the applicant ineligible for endowed membership as of the date of application.

11. After the applicant's endowed membership has been accepted by the Grand

Secretary, the endowed membership fee shall be paid over to the Grand Treasurer. The funds shall be placed collectively in the Permanent Fund.

- A. These funds shall be accounted for on an individual lodge basis.
 - B. The amount paid shall be apportioned between the Subordinate Lodge and the Grand Lodge in the ratio of the per capita tax in effect on the date of the application to the subordinate lodge dues on the date of the application.
 - C. To protect subordinate lodges from future Grand Lodge per capita tax increases on endowed members, the per capita tax on endowed memberships will be replaced by the apportionment of the endowed membership payment provided in Regulation 77-25.8.B.
 - D. The funds shall be audited annually.
12. An endowed member shall owe no further dues to the lodge of which he is an endowed member. A dues receipt card shall be issued by the lodge secretary.
13. When purchased under the five (5) year option, the subordinate lodge shall receive from the endowed membership installment payment each year not less than the difference between the subordinate lodge dues and the per capita tax on the date of the application. The Grand Lodge shall receive from the endowed membership installment payment each year not less than the per capita tax on the date of the application. These payments shall be made to the subordinate lodge when the installment is received by the Grand Lodge.
14. A. The payments to the subordinate lodge and the Grand Lodge mandated by this Regulation 77-25.11 shall be made regardless of the income earned by the Permanent Fund.
15. B. Beginning the year after the final installment payment is made the endowed member's dues shall be paid as provided in Regulation 77-25.9.
16. The Grand Secretary shall, at the time of the annual income distribution under Regulation 77-25.9, submit a statement to the subordinate lodge showing the apportionment of income from the endowed membership between the subordinate lodge and the Grand Lodge.
17. The obtaining of endowed membership in one subordinate lodge by a dual member shall have no effect on his membership in the other subordinate lodges to which he belongs. Dual memberships are permitted.
18. An endowed member may transfer his endowed membership to another lodge of which he is a dual member.
- A. If the lodge to which the endowed membership is transferred has lower dues, including per capita tax, than the lodge from which the endowed membership is transferred, the entire amount paid for the endowed membership shall, nevertheless, be transferred.
 - B. If the lodge to which the endowed membership is transferred has higher dues, including per capita tax, than did the originating lodge on the date of the application for endowed membership, the member shall remit an amount equivalent to the difference between the original cost of the existing endowed membership and the cost of an endowed membership in the lodge to which it is transferred, computed as of the date of the transfer.
 - C. If the member wishes to retain his dual membership in the lodge from which he transfers his endowed membership, he shall pay that lodge's regular dues and per capita tax for the year in which the

transfer is made and any subsequent years so long as he retains his dual membership.

19. An endowed member may affiliate with another subordinate lodge as provided in Chapter 75 of The Code. If the affiliation is within this grand jurisdiction, the entire endowed membership fee he originally paid shall be transferred to the account of the lodge to which he affiliates. If the affiliation is outside this grand jurisdiction, the entire endowed membership fee shall remain with the lodge of which he was an endowed member.

20. Any certificate of good standing issued to an endowed member shall be endorsed thereon the fact that the holder is an endowed member and the amount of the endowed membership fee shall be transferred to the particular lodge in North Carolina with which he affiliates.

21. If an endowed member shall be suspended, expelled or demits and is subsequently restored to good standing, or re-affiliates from out of state, his endowed membership shall be deemed to also be restored.

22. If a lodge consolidates, surrenders its charter or has its charter arrested, the funds credited to that lodge in the endowed membership fund shall follow the members according to the relevant sections of The Code.

23. A Brother, at a future time, may add any amount to his endowed membership fee through his local lodge secretary.

24. If an endowed member has not been heard from for more than seven (7) years, the Master shall direct the lodge secretary to report the name of the missing brother to the Grand Lodge as deceased. The name shall then be transferred to the rolls of deceased endowed membership. This action shall have no effect on the amount of money paid the subordinate lodge and Grand Lodge for that endowed member as provided in Regulation 77-25.9.

Amendment Group 10

Submitted by State College 770

This amendment creates a new type of lifetime membership, Legacy Membership. Legacy membership is crafted after Endowed Memberships, except with the amount paid out increasing over time. This allows the dues paid to the lodge to keep up with inflation, leaving a true legacy.

REG. 77-26 LEGACY MEMBERSHIPS.

Legacy Memberships may be purchased from the Grand Lodge on the following terms and conditions.

1. Any member in good standing and possessing a current dues card in a particular lodge of this grand jurisdiction may become a legacy member in that lodge pursuant to the provisions of this section.
2. Legacy memberships have a minimum payment as follows:
 - A. The minimum payment for a Legacy Membership shall be thirty-five (35) times the annual dues of the applying member's subordinate lodge effective on January 1st following the date of the application.
 - B. Regardless of the annual dues of the applying member's subordinate lodge the minimum payment for a Legacy Membership shall not be less than one thousand three hundred dollars (\$1300.00).
 - C. The minimum annual installment payment for a Legacy Membership under Regulation 77-26.3 shall not be less than three hundred dollars (\$300).

3. The legacy membership fee may be paid in five (5) equal annual installments according to the following:

- A. The annual installment shall be eight (8) times the annual lodge dues effective on January 1st following the date of application.
- B. A member may not revert to the single payment method, but may remit any or all installments early, provided no installment is past due.
- C. Failure to pay any installment due by December 31 of each successive year constitutes voluntary withdrawal from the program, and regular dues in this lodge for the same year are payable.
- D. A member may withdraw from the legacy membership program at any time.
- E. A member withdrawing from the installment option reverts to the membership status held before joining the program and shall remit dues to his lodge for the current year and for successive years unless otherwise exempted.
- F. A member who has withdrawn from the installment payment option may re-enroll in the program in the same status held when he withdrew. The remaining installments due from the re-enrolling brother shall be determined under Regulation 77-26.3.A and 77-26.2.C based on dues of the subordinate lodge effective on January 1st following the date of his re-enrollment.

4. The member desiring a Legacy Membership shall apply to the secretary of this lodge for such membership on forms prescribed by the Grand Lodge either the minimum payment described in Regulation 77-26.2 or the initial installment described in Regulation 77-26.3.

- A. The application shall contain thereon the computations upon which legacy membership fee is predicated.
- B. The application shall be signed by the applicant. The lodge secretary shall complete his part of the application and apply the certification of the lodge secretary.
- C. The lodge secretary shall forward the application together with the full fee due, to the Grand Secretary.
- D. The application shall not become effective until the applicant's record has been certified by the Grand Secretary.
- E. The date of the application shall be the date the Grand Secretary certified he received the application.

5. The Grand Secretary shall certify legacy memberships as follows:

- A. If the Grand Secretary determines that the minimum fee, tendered by the applicant is in excess of that required, he shall have the power to correct the application and the Lodge secretary's computations of the fee, accept the application as corrected and refund any excess fee to the applicant through the particular lodge secretary.
- B. If the fee tendered is insufficient, the Grand Secretary shall return the application and fee to the constituent lodge secretary for correction.
- C. A copy of the completed and accepted legacy membership application and a certificate of legacy membership shall be furnished to the applicant and his Lodge by the Grand Secretary.

6. After the legacy membership application and fee have been received and

accepted by the Grand Secretary, the legacy membership fee shall not be refundable except under circumstances determined by the Grand Secretary to be mistakes of fact rendering the applicant ineligible for legacy membership as of the date of application.

7. The legacy membership shall be effective for the succeeding calendar year after certification by the Grand Secretary.

8. A legacy member shall owe no further dues to the lodge of which he is a legacy member. A dues receipt card shall be issued by the lodge secretary.

9. A Brother, at a future time, may add any amount to his legacy membership fee through his local lodge secretary.

10. Legacy membership fees accepted by the Grand Secretary shall be paid over to the Grand Treasurer. The funds shall be placed collectively in the Permanent Fund.

A. These funds shall be accounted for on an individual lodge basis.

B. The amount paid shall be apportioned between the Subordinate Lodge and the Grand Lodge in the ratio of the per capita tax to the subordinate lodge dues on January 1st following the date of the application.

C. The per capita tax on legacy memberships will be replaced by the apportionment of the legacy membership payment provided in Regulation 77-26.10.B, thus protecting subordinate lodges from future Grand Lodge per capita tax increases on legacy members.

D. The amount paid in Regulation 77-26.10.B shall start at the subordinate lodge dues in the first year this amount is paid. In the ensuing years, this amount is expected to increase by two percent (2%) of the preceding year, however, the exact amount is dependent on the returns of the permanent fund and the spending policy for legacy funds.

E. The funds shall be audited annually.

11. When purchased under the five (5) year option, the subordinate lodge shall receive from the legacy membership installment payment each year not less than the difference between the subordinate lodge dues and the per capita tax on which the application is based. The Grand Lodge shall receive from the legacy membership installment payment each year not less than the per capita tax on the date of the application. These payments shall be made to the subordinate lodge when the installment is received by the Grand Lodge.

A. The payments to the subordinate lodge and the Grand Lodge mandated by this Regulation 77-25.11 shall be made regardless of the income earned by the Permanent Fund.

B. Beginning the year after the final installment payment is made the legacy member's dues shall be paid as provided in Regulation 77-25.10.

12. The Grand Secretary shall, at the time of the annual income distribution under Regulation 77-25.10, submit a statement to the subordinate lodge showing the apportionment of income from the legacy membership between the subordinate lodge and the Grand Lodge.

13. The obtaining of legacy membership in one subordinate lodge by a dual member shall have no effect on his membership in the other subordinate lodges to which he belongs. Dual memberships are permitted.

- A. A legacy member may transfer his legacy membership to another lodge of which he is a dual member.
 - B. If the lodge to which the legacy membership is transferred has lower dues, including per capita tax, than the lodge from which the legacy membership is transferred, the entire amount paid for the legacy membership shall, nevertheless, be transferred.
 - C. If the lodge to which the legacy membership is transferred has higher dues, including per capita tax, than did the originating lodge on the date of the application for legacy membership, the member shall remit an amount equivalent to the difference between the original cost of the existing legacy membership and the cost of a legacy membership in the lodge to which it is transferred, computed as of the date of the transfer.
 - D. If the member wishes to retain his dual membership in the lodge from which he transfers his legacy membership, he shall pay that lodge's regular dues and per capita tax for the year in which the transfer is made and any subsequent years so long as he retains his dual membership.
14. A legacy member may affiliate with another subordinate lodge as provided in Chapter 75 of The Code. If the affiliation is within this grand jurisdiction, the entire legacy membership fee he originally paid shall be transferred to the account of the lodge to which he affiliates. If the affiliation is outside this grand jurisdiction, the entire legacy membership fee shall remain with the lodge of which he was a legacy member.
- A. Any certificate of good standing issued to a legacy member shall be endorsed thereon the fact that the holder is a legacy member and the amount of the legacy membership fee shall be transferred to the particular lodge in North Carolina with which he affiliates.
15. If a legacy member shall be suspended, expelled or demits and is subsequently restored to good standing, or re-affiliates from out of state, his legacy membership shall be deemed to also be restored.
16. If a lodge consolidates, surrenders its charter or has its charter arrested, the funds credited to that lodge in the legacy membership fund shall follow the members according to the relevant sections of The Code.
17. If a legacy member has not been heard from for more than seven (7) years, the Master shall direct the lodge secretary to report the name of the missing brother to the Grand Lodge as deceased. The name shall then be transferred to the rolls of deceased legacy membership. This action shall have no effect on the amount of money paid the subordinate lodge and Grand Lodge for that legacy member as provided in Regulation 77-25.10.
18. A Legacy Membership may be purchased by a bequest in a will by any member in good standing and possessing a current dues card in a particular lodge of this grand jurisdiction at the time of his death.
19. An Endowed Membership described in Regulation 77-25 may be upgraded to a Legacy Membership. To upgrade the member shall remit an amount equivalent to the difference between the original cost of the existing endowed membership and the cost of a new legacy membership in the lodge, computed as of the date of the remittance.

REG. 77-27 VETERAN'S ENDOWED MEMBERSHIPS.

A Veteran's Endowed Membership may be purchased by any Master Mason

of a North Carolina lodge who has received his Veteran's Award (80-3). The purchase fee for a Veteran's Endowed Membership is five hundred dollars (\$500.00). The proportionate ratio distribution for a Veteran's Endowed Membership is fixed at seventy-five per cent (75%) for the subordinate lodge and twenty-five per cent (25%) for the Grand Lodge. *(This regulation amended, effective 1/1/2008)*

REG. 77-28 MEMORIAL ENDOWED MEMBERSHIPS.

A Memorial Endowed Membership may be purchased by any person for a deceased Master Mason of a North Carolina lodge. The purchase fee for a Memorial Endowed Membership is five hundred dollars (\$500.00). The proportionate ratio distribution for a Memorial Endowed Membership is fixed at seventy-five per cent (75%) for the subordinate lodge and twenty-five per cent (25%) for the Grand Lodge. *(This regulation amended, effective 1/1/2008)*

...

Amendment Group 11

Submitted by Eagle Lodge 19

This amendment modifies the order of business for a lodge business meeting.

Reg. 45-21 ORDER OF BUSINESS.

Subject to change or modification by the lodge or by the Master, the order of business at each stated communication shall be as follows:

1. The Master recognizes Past Masters, Certified Lecturers, and Coaches as a courtesy.
2. The Senior Deacon, in the discharge of his duties and at the direction of the Master, introduces visiting brothers.
3. Reading of the Minutes and intervening communications by the Secretary, as information to the brethren. [44-7 (Art. 21A); 45-23]
4. The Secretary clears his desk, which includes if applicable:
 - a. Official communication from the Grand Master, Grand Secretary or any officer or agency of the Grand Lodge which shall be read in the lodge at the next stated communication after it is received. [44-7 (Art.21C)]
 - b. Reception of petitions and applications read by the Secretary and record thereof made stating that the fees are paid [44-7 (Art 21F)];
 - c. Informal communication affecting the craft including correspondence of a general nature such as notes of appreciation for courtesies shown. [44-7 (Art 21K)].
 - d. Issues of delinquency not requiring a vote.
5. Reports of Committees, if any there be, which includes:
 - a. Standing Committees,
 - b. Special Committees including Committees of Investigation.
6. The Business of the Lodge which is conducted by balloting:
 - a. Unfinished business is any Motion or Resolution that was carried over from the prior meeting, plus any matter that was under discussion at a prior meeting not yet formalized by a motion or resolution. [44-7 (Art 21B)].

- b. New business is any new motion or resolution which the master may elect to take up for consideration, including by way of illustration and not limitation, the exclusion of delinquents and action of the lodge in response to correspondence. [44-7 (Art 21D)].
- c. Ballot a separate secret ballot on each petition for degrees and each membership or restoration, and have the results entered on the minutes. [44-7 (Art 21E)].
7. Examination for proficiency and work in any degree. [44-7 (Art 21L)].
8. Masonic Education is required at every meeting by Reg. 59.2 Master, ¶26. (If Masonic Education is being provided by someone other than a member of your lodge, then consider moving Masonic Education to immediately follow the introduction of visiting brothers as a courtesy and accommodation to your speaker who may desire to be excused after presenting.)
9. Announcements and matters of general information affecting the craft.
10. Closing. [44-7 (Art 21N)]

Amendment Group 12

This amendment makes the Senior and Junior Grand Deacon chairmen of the Committees for WhiteStone and Masonic Home for Children at Oxford.

CHAPTER 17

Duties of Appointive Officers

REG. 17-1 DUTIES OF THE GRAND DEACONS.

The Grand Deacons shall perform the usual duties pertaining to their respective offices, aid in distributing papers, documents, and resolutions from members in the Grand Lodge, and place the same in the hands of the Grand Secretary or other officer entitled to them, and generally perform such other duties as may be required of them by the Grand Master or the Grand Lodge. [11-1.2].

1. Their respective places in the Grand Lodge are as prescribed by the custom and usage of the Craft.
2. If, while the Grand Lodge is open, the Junior Grand Deacon is not at his place for any reason even temporarily, the Grand Master shall see that the place is filled at all times.
3. *During his respective term of office, the Senior Grand Deacon shall be a member of the Committee on The Masonic Home for Children at Oxford, Inc., and he shall serve as its chairman. [34-18].*
4. *During his respective term of office, the Junior Grand Deacon shall be a member of the Committee on WhiteStone (a Masonic and Eastern Star Home of North Carolina Community), Incorporated, and he shall serve as its chairman. [34-17].*

Amendment Group 13

Submitted by Oak Grove 750

This amendment will require unanimous consideration for this Grand Lodge. Its purpose is to “suspend” membership of a member who has been charged with a crime but has yet to be adjudicated in criminal court. If he is found guilty, the Judge Advocate will summarily expel him from the fraternity

or if found not guilty, his membership is fully restored and all notations expunged from his record.

REG. 74-5 STATUS OF MASONS.

Status of Masons shall be as follows:

1. A Mason shall be in good standing until charges for unmasonic conduct or Federal or State criminal charges alleging the commission of a felony have been served on him or until he has been duly demitted, excluded, suspended, or expelled. [50-1; 87-5; 90-4].
2. A Mason against whom Masonic charges have been preferred shall be deemed innocent, and he may attend the lodge of which he is a member until he shall have been found guilty. A Mason who has been criminally charged with a felony in any state court, the United States District Courts, or under United States Uniform Code of Military Justice shall be deemed innocent. However, a Mason subject to such criminal charges shall be immediately suspended until such time as there is a final adjudication of said charges. While under suspension for pending criminal charges, a Mason may not attend any lodge.
 - a. It shall be the duty of every Mason with knowledge that a member has been criminally charged with a felony to report that fact to the Master of his Lodge and/or to the District Deputy Grand Master who shall immediately forward that information to the Office of the Grand Lodge.
 - b. If, at the time of the final adjudication of the criminal charges, a Mason is found to be guilty of a felony, regardless of whether the finding of guilt is as a result of a plea of guilty, a plea of no contest or by trial, said Mason shall be immediately expelled by the Judge Advocate.
 - c. If, at the time of the final adjudication of the criminal charges, a Mason is found to be not guilty or if the charges are dismissed by the prosecuting authority, the suspension issued against said Mason shall be immediately withdrawn, and the record of the suspension shall be expunged from the records maintained by the Grand Lodge. The Mason shall thereafter be entitled to all the rights and privileges of Masonry.
 - d. If, at the time of the final adjudication of the criminal charges, a Mason is found to be guilty of a misdemeanor or other lesser offense, regardless of whether the finding of guilt is as a result of a plea of guilty, a plea of no contest or by trial, the matter shall then be referred to the Judge Advocate for his consideration as to whether charges of unmasonic conduct should be preferred. If, after proper consideration, charges of unmasonic conduct are not preferred, then the suspension issued against said Mason shall be immediately withdrawn, and the record of the suspension shall be expunged from the records maintained by the Grand Lodge. The Mason shall thereafter be entitled to all the rights and privileges of Masonry. If charges of unmasonic conduct are preferred, then the suspension shall remain in effect until such time as the matter is concluded pursuant to the procedures set out in the Trial Code.
3. A Mason against whom Masonic charges have been preferred or felony

- criminal charges have been filed shall not be appointed or elected to office, nor installed in any office, nor demitted, nor be buried with Masonic ceremonies while the charges are pending. [50-1; 53-2.4; 55-5; 82-2; 82-2.5; 90-4].
4. A Mason who has been suspended for a definite period of time shall be entitled to all the rights and privileges of membership in his lodge at the expiration of the time without action by the Grand Lodge or the lodge. He shall not be subject to dues during the time he is suspended. [77-10; 101-2].
 5. The reversal of a judgment of suspension or expulsion by the Grand Lodge or a termination of a judgment of suspension by the Grand Lodge shall restore the accused to membership in his lodge without further action by the lodge. [98-11; 100-5; 101-1; 101-8].
 6. If restoration of an expelled Mason is made by the Grand Lodge, he shall not thereby be restored to membership in his lodge, but shall become a nonaffiliated Mason. [98-11; 100-5; 101; 101-3; 101-7; 101-8].
 7. The members of a defunct lodge who are not in arrears for dues shall be nonaffiliated Masons.
 8. The members of a defunct lodge who are in arrears are excluded Masons. Such excluded Masons shall be nonaffiliated Masons upon paying to the Grand Secretary such arrears as may be required by law and obtaining a Grand Lodge demit. [49-4; 49-4.1].
 9. Restoration of an Entered Apprentice or a Fellow Craft shall be to the same status in his lodge that he had before he was suspended or expelled, or as provided in Regulation 101-3.1.

Report of the Representative to the Masonic Service Association

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The Masonic Service Association of North America (formerly the Masonic Service Association of the United States) was formed in 1919 with the initial purpose of providing assistance to American servicemen returning from duty during World War I. However, its charter permits it to perform other services, at a nation level, which would be cumbersome or inefficient for each of the Grand Lodges to manage individually. As of today, the MSA performs three major functions:

1. Education and Information
2. Disaster Relief
3. Hospital Visitation

Education and Information

Most lodges probably best know the MSA as the publisher of the Short Talk Bulletin – the most widely distributed Masonic publication in the world – which has been published since 1923. Several years ago the MSA began republishing a complete collection of their Short Talk Bulletins in hardback volumes suitable for collection. They are currently taking pre-orders for *Volume V*, which covers the years 1983-1997 and can be purchased for just \$68 through

their online store at <http://shopping.msana.com/index.php>. Volumes II through IV are also available through the online store. Volume I is currently sold out, although the MSA plans to survey the membership to determine if there is enough interest to re-print that particular edition.

In addition to the Short Talk Bulletin and a variety of other Masonic pamphlets, the MSA is working to become a central repository for a variety of interesting information related to the Masonic fraternity. For example, they are actively cooperating with the Conference of Grand Secretaries in a project intended to replace the "List of Lodges" book currently published by Pantagraph Printing due to the expected discontinuance of that resource in the near future. They also recently completed their biennial survey to identify Governors, Lieutenant Governors, and Congressmen who are Masons along with another survey to collect the membership statistics from all the Grand Lodges in North America.

Disaster Relief

Beginning in 1923 the MSA issued its first disaster relief appeal designed to assist a Grand Jurisdiction after a natural catastrophe occurred. An appeal for assistance from a Grand Jurisdiction to the MSA triggers their disaster relief protocol, which coordinates the communication of the appeal to other Grand Jurisdictions. They then collect funds from individuals, lodges, appendant Masonic bodies, and Grand Lodges. These monies are accumulated, and forwarded to the Grand Lodge on whose behalf the appeal was made. No charges are made for administrative costs; 100% of the monies collected are sent to the Grand Lodge making the appeal.

This is one the MSA's key services to the Grand Jurisdictions, and through their efforts they have distributed over \$10.5 million of assistance over the past 93 years. Furthermore, it should be noted that, in just the past 20 years, the Grand Lodge of North Carolina has received over \$340,000 in assistance from the MSA disaster relief efforts – the most recent appeal being \$50,000 in assistance for lodges and brethren effected by the flooding and power outages caused by Hurricane Matthew in 2016.

Hospital Visitation

The Masonic Hospital Visitation Program has been the cornerstone service of the MSA from its very beginning, and it continues to go strong. With approximately 180 Hospital Representatives and State Coordinators, as well as hundreds of other volunteers at nearly every VA Medical Center and many state veterans hospitals, this is, without a doubt the finest public relations program ever undertaken by the Masonic Fraternity. The MSA's network of volunteers contribute hundreds of hours of volunteer assistance every day to our veterans across the nation. The type of assistance extends beyond mere "visitations," but also includes rendering personal services to our veterans, Masons and non-Masons alike.

The Masonic Hospital Visitation Program is a vital program that deserves our attention and needs our immediate help. Specifically, in North Carolina, we are in need of an MSA Representative in Wilmington. If you are interested in serving or want more information about this particular position please feel free to reach out to the Grand Master or Deputy Grand Master. If you are unable to volunteer or work as an MSA Representative, then please consider

contributing to the MSA's Green Envelope Appeal (<http://www.msana.com/hvpgreenenv.asp>) commencing in October.

In short, the role of MSA volunteers is humanitarian in nature. Many veterans have no family or friends and are all alone. The Masonic Hospital Visitation program provides a personal touch to help spark a smile or a ray of hope in a segment of the population that is, all too often, forgotten.

Respectfully Submitted,
P. Shaun Bradshaw, MSANA Representative
Junior Grand Warden

Report of the Representative to the George Washington Masonic National Memorial Association

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The George Washington Masonic National Memorial is making significant progress on its current renovation and improvement projects. In late 2016, the GWMNMA created and announced the Landmark Century Campaign in order to provide new opportunities to support the ongoing project of restoring and enhancing the Memorial. This new campaign provides the ability to make contributions in monthly increments. The current restoration project, which began in 2009, has invested \$4.5 million in the project. The current goal, with the support of the new Landmark Century Campaign, is to raise another \$6.5 million to complete the restoration by 2023. This milestone marks the centennial anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone of the Memorial.

Current and upcoming work on the Memorial include exterior work on the seventh, sixth, and fifth floors. During the past year it was discovered that the wall behind the mural had begun shifting very rapidly. This caused a "bowing" of the wall resulting in damage to the mural. Fortunately, this was discovered in time before permanent and irreparable damage was caused. The mural has been removed and is currently being professionally repaired and restored. Upon removal, further discovery revealed that the terra cotta wall behind the mural was also deteriorating. Possible causes for this damage could have occurred from the 2011 earthquake (which caused exterior damage) or other natural occurrences. Fortunately, with the memorial being designated as a National Monument last year, funding was available to offset the \$750,000.00 cost of this repair project. These murals were painted by renowned artist, Brother Allyn Cox, who also painted the murals on both walls in the entrance hall in our beautiful Grand Lodge building on Glenwood Avenue in Raleigh. I would encourage all members and lodges to schedule a trip to Alexandria and witness the great work going on at "our" most famous Masonic Memorial.

Masons across the country continue to support this historical landmark. One new Grand Lodge jurisdiction signed on in 2016 to support the \$1 Per Member Campaign. Thirty Grand Lodge jurisdictions are now supporting the Memorial through their \$1 per year, per capita contribution. North Carolina Masons contributed \$5,710 in 2016 through its \$5 per initiate campaign. It is the hope and goal of the Memorial that the remaining jurisdictions will soon sign on to support the \$1 Per Member Campaign. This would then fulfill the original concept the Founders envisioned, which is that the Memorial is owned

and supported by every Mason in America. It is recommended that North Carolina continue to review options that would allow every member in our jurisdiction to be an annual contributor to this historical landmark.

I am pleased to announce that a new Memorial website was created and launched in late 2016. The new <http://gwmemorial.org> site uses some of the latest web technology providing better displays on mobile devices which now represent half of the visits to this site. This site provides a wealth of information on the Memorial including vivid photography, easy exploration of the Memorial's offerings, as well as many new features and additional programs for financial support.

Finally, I would like to thank Most Worshipful Douglas L. Caudle, PGM-2015, for his service this past year as a member of the Board of Directors for the Memorial. His continued dedication to our craft both within and without our grand jurisdiction is gratefully appreciated.

Remember that the George Washington Masonic National Memorial Association, Inc. is a non-profit organization under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code and contributions are tax-deductible to the full extent permitted by law.

Respectfully submitted,
Dwight M. Sigmon, Representative to the GWMNMA
Senior Grand Warden

Report of the Committee on Miscellaneous Masonic Ceremonies

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The Grand Lodge Committee on Miscellaneous Masonic Ceremonies has met twice since the committee was appointed and installed in December 2016. Our first meeting was on Sunday, December 11, 2016, and our second meeting was on Sunday, August 6, 2017. Both meetings were held at the Greensboro Masonic Temple. The meetings were very productive, with four out of five committee members present at each meeting.

The primary goal of the committee was to review the North Carolina Masonic Ceremonies book, discuss the pros and cons of its current format, and address any concerns with suggestions on improving consistency between the ceremonies within the book, as well as improving consistency with the work and ceremonies within the OSW and Bahnsen lodge manual. It was also our desire to ensure that a new ceremony be included specifically for the purpose of presenting an award or certificate to military veterans within the lodge. We have also begun exploring options to bring the North Carolina Masonic Ceremonies book into the modern digital age, but that is outside the scope of this report.

The committee was assisted by RW Mack Sigmon in their review of modifications which we felt would offer improvements to the current ceremonies book last modified in 2014. After careful consideration, the committee decided to recommend the adoption of the proposed changes, along with a few minor suggestions submitted by committee members.

- The majority of the proposed changes are for titles or names that

merely need to be capitalized.

- The remaining changes are inserted text passages that were not present in the most recent revision of the ceremonies book. In most cases, these additions partially restore some of the text that had been removed from previous versions of the ceremonies book, or clarify descriptions of action or movement.
- The remaining changes are corrections to typographical errors or address very slight wording changes as suggested by the committee. (for example, “within” instead of “in”.)

The committee also recommends that the next printed version of the North Carolina Masonic Ceremonies book include the following:

- We **recommend** that the book include a very basic style guide, noting that action parts should be printed in italic text, within brackets, or both.
- We **recommend** that the ceremonies book include wording clarifying that in the case of the 50-year Veteran’s Emblem, the 60-year Diamond Jubilee and the proposed Presentation of Military Award ceremonies that the recipient may be allowed to receive his award from his seat if his health makes walking or standing difficult or impossible.
- We **recommend** that the next printed version of the North Carolina Masonic Ceremonies book be printed in a book small enough to fit into a jacket or breast pocket, with a spiral binding that allows it to lie completely flat on a podium or to allow pages to be turned up to 360 degrees. This would effectively allow the user to store the book in his pocket while already opened to the desired page. The book should be printed in an easy-to-read font, to make the book as legible as possible for those with poor eyesight, or in rooms that are inadequately lighted.
- We **recommend** that when the NC Masonic Ceremonies book is laid out and formatted for publication, that all pages on the right side of the book end **without paragraphs or sentences wrapping onto the next page**. If a ceremony is being read, it can be quite awkward to pause in the middle of a sentence in order to turn the page before continuing.
- We **do not recommend** now, or at any point in the future, the merging the North Carolina Masonic Funeral Manual with the NC Masonic Ceremonies book.

Respectfully submitted,
 The 2017 Miscellaneous Masonic Ceremonies Committee
 Larry Aydlett
 Jeff Borcik
 Tim Taylor
 Chris Wilhoit
 Christopher L. Wright, Chairman

Proposed changes to the North Carolina Masonic Ceremonies

Within the Charge to the Master, page 6

... Charge them to practice out of the lodge those duties which they have been taught within it; and, by amiable, discreet, and virtuous conduct, to con-

vince mankind of the goodness of the institution, so that, ...

Within the Ceremony of Consecration, near the end of the ceremony, page 15

RESPONSE BY THE BRETHREN: As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. So mote it be. Amen.

The Grand Lodge officers return to their places.

Within the Ceremony of Installation, first and second paragraphs, page 17

... However, if preferred, the officers-elect may wear no aprons or white aprons, to the Altar during their installation and exchange them for the white apron of their office when they are installed and then subsequently receive their jewel.

The apron, jewel, and sword of the Tyler should be on the bottom and the apron and jewel of the Master-elect on top, together with the gavel, Charter of the Lodge, Book of Constitutions, and by-laws of the lodge, should be conveniently placed in the East. (If the Installing Officer prefers to invest the Master-elect before the East, the apron and jewel of the Master will be placed in the East instead of at the Altar.) The hat of the Master-elect together with the gavel, charter of the lodge, Book of Constitutions, and by-laws of the lodge, should be conveniently placed in the east. ~~(If the installing officer prefers to invest the master-elect before the east, the apron and jewel of the master will be placed in the east instead of at the altar.)~~ As an option, the lodge may elect to invest only the Master with his jewel and apron with all other officers wearing their appropriate apron and being invested with only their jewel. ...

Within the Ceremony of Installation, page 18

When ready to begin the Installation Ceremony, the Master appoints a Marshal, fills the place of the Secretary and Chaplain. For a closed installation, the Master should appoint a Junior Deacon, and Tyler with substitute officers, and turns the gavel over to the Installing Officer.

Within the Ceremony of Installation, page 19

INSTALLING OFFICER: Calls up the lodge for prayer. Brother Chaplain, approach the South side of the Altar and lead our devotions. ~~Brother Chaplain, approach the South side of the Altar and lead our devotions.~~

Within the Ceremony of Installation, page 24

CHARGE ON THE INSTALLATION OF
THE MASTER OF A LODGE

... As Master, it is your province to spread and communicate light and instruction to the brethren of your lodge. Charge them to practice out of this lodge those duties which are taught within it. Furthermore, by a diligent observance of the by-laws of your lodge, the constitutions of Masonry, and above all, ...

Within the Ceremony of Installation, page 25

... The Level demonstrates that we are descended from the same stock, partake of the same nature, and share the same hope. Though distinctions among men are necessary to preserve subordination; yet no eminence of station should make us forget we are brethren. He who is placed on the lowest

spoke of fortune's wheel may be entitled to our regard; because a time will come, and the wisest knows not how soon, when all the distinctions, but that of goodness shall cease; and death, the grand leveler of human greatness, shall reduce us to the same state.

Within the Ceremony of Installation, page 25

THE JUNIOR WARDEN

INSTALLING OFFICER: Brother Marshal, present the Junior Warden-elect at the Altar for installation.

Within the Ceremony of Installation, page 26

To you is committed the superintendence of the craft during the hours of refreshment and to carefully observe that none be suffered to convert the purposes of refreshment into intemperance and excess.

THE TREASURER

INSTALLING OFFICER: Brother Marshal, present the Treasurer-elect at the Altar for installation.

...

Within the Ceremony of Installation, page 27

You are especially charged to keep the funds received by you belonging to the lodge, separate and distinct from all other funds under your control.

I trust your regard for the fraternity will prompt you to the faithful discharge of the duties of your office. Brother Marshal, conduct the Treasurer to his station place.

THE SECRETARY

INSTALLING OFFICER: Brother Marshal, present the Secretary-elect at the Altar for installation.

It is your duty to observe all the proceedings of the lodge, to make a fair record of all things proper to be written, to receive all monies due the lodge, pay them over to the Treasurer, and to take his receipt for the same. Your good inclination to Masonry and this lodge, I hope will induce you to discharge your office with fidelity, and by so doing you will merit the esteem and applause of your brethren. Brother Marshal, conduct the Secretary to his station place.

THE SENIOR DEACON

Within the Ceremony of Installation, page 28

INSTALLING OFFICER: Brother _____ you have been appointed Senior Deacon of this lodge. You are to act as messenger of the Master in the active duties of the lodge, to give fraternal attention to visiting brethren, to receive and conduct candidates into the different degrees of Masonry. To be entrusted with the examination of visitors, when required, with such assistance as you may deem necessary. The Square and Compasses, as badges of your office, I entrust to your care, not doubting your zeal and attention. Brother Marshal, conduct the Senior Deacon to his place.

THE JUNIOR DEACON

... If you cannot personally vouch for each person in the lodge room as a Master Mason at the time the lodge is being purged, you shall proceed forthwith in the proper manner to satisfy yourself to that effect. It is also your duty

to be certain that all visitors are duly vouched for and properly clothed before they are admitted into the lodge room. The Square and Compasses as the badge of your office, I now entrust to your care. I do not doubt your vigilance and attention. Brother Marshal, conduct the Junior Deacon to his place.

Within the Ceremony of Installation, page 30-31

THE TYLER

INSTALLING OFFICER: Brother _____, you have been appointed Tyler of this lodge. It is your duty to guard the entrance to the lodge, ... The Marshal will now invest you with the implement of your office. [*Marshal places sword in the Tyler's hands*] As the sword is placed in the hands of the Tyler to enable him effectually to guard against the approach of cowans and eavesdroppers, and suffer none to pass or re-pass but such as are duly qualified. So it should morally serve as a constant admonition to us; to set a guard at the entrance of our thoughts, to place a watch at the door of our lips, to post a sentinel at the avenue of our actions, thereby excluding every unqualified thought, word and deed, and preserving consciences void of offense toward God and man.

...

CHARGE TO THE BRETHREN OF THE LODGE

INSTALLING OFFICER: [*Raps up the lodge:*] My brethren, such is the nature of our constitution, that as some must of necessity rule and teach; so others must, of course, learn to submit and obey. Humility in both is an essential duty. ...

...

Within the Ceremony of Installation, page 32

MARSHAL: By order of the Installing Officer, I declare the officers of this lodge for the ensuing year duly installed. I make this proclamation to the South: [*Junior Warden raps once*] to the West: [*Senior Warden raps once*] and to the East [*Installing officer raps once*].

...

Within the 25 Years Membership Service Award Ceremony, page 69

Service Award

25 Years Membership

...

PRESENTING OFFICER: Brothers and friends, we are celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of our brother as a Master Mason, being a part of the fraternity of Freemasonry. We welcome you to this celebration to share in our happiness in presenting this certificate and pin.

My brother, you will recall many times that you have prayed for yourself. On this occasion of accomplishment and celebration, we offer this prayer for you. Brother Chaplain, lead our devotions.

The Presenting Officer calls up the lodge or asks the persons in attendance to stand. The Chaplain goes to the south side of the altar and prays the following or an extemporaneous prayer.

CHAPLAIN: Almighty God, whose watchful eye is ever over all Your children, we bless Your Holy Name for Your goodness to all of us, and especially

to our brother, _____, a brother we honor this evening for twenty five years of faithfulness to You, our fraternity, and his trust. May his zeal for the fraternity continue to inspire and bless the charitable undertakings for which we have dedicated ourselves to You, and may brotherly love and every moral and social virtue continue cement us in all the years ahead until at last we hear the welcomed words: "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Lord." Amen.

BRETHREN: So mote it be.

Presenting Officer seats the lodge.

Report of the Board of Publications

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The Board of Publications has had an interesting and exciting year.

We have been very active in fulfilling our role as an Editorial Board of the *North Carolina Mason* (hereinafter *NC Mason* or Paper). Beth Grace, Editor of the *NC Mason* has worked closely with the Board to provide us with proofs and allow us sufficient lead time to review the proofs in advance of publication deadlines and to make suggested changes that range from copy edits to presentation and style revisions. Moreover, the Board has set Editorial policy as issues have arisen. One Editorial Board Policy is that only pictures of the current GM performing the duties of his office shall appear in the Paper during the term of that GM, and not pictures of former GMs performing their official duties during their past terms.

The Board is also organizing to assist all lodges in posting to social media. A video has been prepared by Board Member WB Riley Beamon as a 'how to' guide for lodges to post to social media, which we anticipate making available to all lodges before the end of November. Member WB Stan Dodd is assisting with this endeavor.

Additionally, the Board has been looking at how to enhance the web presentation of the *NC Mason*. Board Member WB Kevin Combs, assisted by Brother Adam Cloninger and WB Jonathan Underwood, has been looking at alternatives for web presentation. We recognize that the likely future of the *NC Mason* will be electronic, and we want its online presence to be as user friendly and helpful as technology will allow.

We are also looking at assisting lodges as they set up web pages intended to publish and share the message of Masonry with the community. WB and Board Member Elliot Warnock is leading this effort.

Respectfully submitted,
Bill Faison, Chairman

Report of the Ad Hoc Risk Management Committee

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The safety and well-being of our Masonic brethren is paramount to the mission of this committee and individually to each and every Mason in North Carolina. Your committee continues to strive to better understand the intricacies and relationship between lodge attendance, lodge safety, Masonic ritual,

and our venerable tenets and landmarks.

This committee reaffirms Grand Master Nelson Banks's standing opinion, which was reviewed and approved at the Annual Communication following issuance by Grand Master Banks, making it the law of this Grand Lodge, forbidding the carrying of concealed or openly carried firearms into the tyled recesses of a lodge.

While some questions concerning lodge safety were raised this year and formally appealed to this Committee, we have found many lodges failed to implement this committee's recommendations from last year.

Those recommendations were: 1) perform a lodge safety assessment (of which this committee will happily assist any lodge in implementing), and 2) following said safety assessment (such as locking the lodge doors and posting able-bodied tylers at the west door of the lodge), that there may be by the issuance of a policy, amendment, or order:

1) the allowance of only a sworn, currently serving, and duly qualified local, state, or Federal law enforcement officer, or

2) the allowance of only a sworn, duly qualified retired local, state, or Federal law enforcement officer

to possess a firearm, concealed or carried openly, in accordance with State Law, and to serve alongside tylers so long as they remain outside the door of a tyled lodge room, and only if a lodge would like to do so.

This committee will continue to investigate and be apprised of new methods of lodge safety, as well as aid and assist all lodges requesting assistance to ensure their lodges are safe and secure of their members. And, we encourage all lodges to perform safety assessments to ensure the safety and security of our jurisdiction's lodges.

Respectfully Submitted,
A.B. Swindell, Chairman

Report of The North Carolina Masonic Foundation Inc.

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

What a difference a year makes. Since last August, the North Carolina Masonic Foundation (NCMF) has restructured its operations, hired a top-notch development and communications staff, increased financial and editorial support for *The North Carolina Mason*, reported a very positive return on the investments that support our Masonic charities, and welcomed a new face to the NCMF Board of directors.

Now, in the second half of 2017, we have a number of exciting projects underway. We are upgrading our communications to our donors – including individuals and our amazing supporting lodges around the state. We are interviewing financial advisers to ensure that your donations and the funds NCMF oversees are well-managed and return top dollar to our charities and those who support our many other programs.

Here are some highlights:

In January, we welcomed Guy Cline as a board member. A past master of

Snow Lodge 363 and charter member of Sophia 767, Brother Cline has been a Master Mason for 41 years, serving the Craft on numerous committees and boards. He brings more than 24 years of professional experience in the investment industry to our Board.

The Board of Directors spent the last year reviewing our managers, adding new strategies and developing sound benchmarks to track performance. The NCMF Equity Fund finished 2016 with a 9 percent return and through June is positive 8.8 percent. The (smaller) Income Fund finished 2016 up 5.5 percent and is positive 3.4 percent midway through 2017. The board maintains a policy of seeking solid returns while minimizing risks wherever and whenever possible.

With great pride, the Foundation increased its distribution to our charities in 2017. We will distribute \$208,816 apiece to the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford and to the MESH Foundation LLC, directly supporting Masons, Eastern Star members, or their immediate families at WhiteStone: A Masonic and Eastern Star Community.

We entered into a joint venture with the Grand Lodge to publish the NC Mason. This venture allowed us to combine the Grand Lodge budget with our budget to hire a Communications Director, and using these combined resources, to find the right editor and publish a superior publication. It is important to note that the Board of Publications retains editorial control of all content. We believe we found the right editor, Beth Grace, who brings vast experience and success in previous positions. She is charged with making The NC Mason a publication we all cannot wait to read. Thus far her work has sparked glowing praise. Her social media posts inform and educate the Craft almost daily.

Jeff Hensley, our chief development officer, began his work Aug. 1, 2016. He quickly embraced our charities with innovative and organized strategies to improve fundraising. Jeff has put together a highly experienced and professional team in a very short time. In January, we transitioned Chris Richardson, director of financial development and marketing at MHCO, to our Foundation team as eastern region development director. Chris, a 2009 Joseph Montfort Medal recipient, brings to our team 17 years of fundraising experience and service to the Craft. In June, Kenidee (Dee) Blake joined us as western region development director. Dee brings outstanding experience serving many charities with great distinction, and since 2008, as director of development at Duke Homecare and Hospice. Needless to say, we are very pleased with the team that has come together.

The NCMF board and staff look forward to a great year ahead, working together and with all of you to build a strong foundation for the future!

Respectfully submitted,
The Board of the North Carolina Masonic Foundation

Balance Sheet

	Accrual Basis Jun 30, '17
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
100-00 — Checking - First Citizens (Chkg-Payroll)	73,727.06
100-08 — Checking - First Citizens- (Spring Garden)	<u>69,054.36</u>
Total Checking/Savings	142,781.42

Accounts Receivable	
111-01 — Accounts Receivable	
111-03 — Jones Masonic	4,113,749.11
111-01 — Accounts Receivable - Other	<u>4,595.90</u>
Total 111-01 — Accounts Receivable	<u>4,118,245.01</u>
Total Accounts Receivable	<u>4,118,245.01</u>
Other Current Assets	
110-03 — Accrued Int. Jones Masonic Campus	2,979.54
125-00 — Masonic Foundation-Equity Fund	17,511,672.80
Total Other Current Assets	<u>17,514,652.34</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>21,775,678.77</u>
Fixed Assets	
130-00 — Spring Garden-Coapman Land	
130-01 — 3304 Spring Garden	225,074.79
130-02 — 3310-3312 Spring	546,168.70
130-03 — 3418 Spring Garden	504,907.01
130-04 — 3303-3305 Brevard Street	25,200.00
130-09 — 602 Gay Terrace	<u>136,710.23</u>
Total 130-00 — Spring Garden-Coapman Land	1,438,060.73
140-00 — Spring Garden-Coapman Bldg	
140-01 — 3304 Spring Garden	207,404.00
140-02 — 3310-3312 Spring	143,510.80
140-03 — 3418 Spring Garden	110,833.00
140-05 — 602 Gay Terrace Bldg	<u>58,951.77</u>
Total 140-00 — Spring Garden-Coapman Bldg	520,699.57
140-04 — Accumulated Depreciation	<u>139,480.13</u>
Total Fixed Assets	<u>1,819,280.17</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>23,594,958.94</u>
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Other Current Liabilities	
210-00 — Accrued Interest	2,979.54
2100 — Payroll Liabilities	
BlueCross-Medical & Dental (Payee Acct. Emp. Ded)	514.30
NC Unemployment Tax (Payee Acct - Total Taxes)	179.92
Total 2100 — Payroll Liabilities	<u>1,800.00</u>
Total Other Current Liabilities	<u>5,473.76</u>
Total Current Liabilities	5,473.76
Long Term Liabilities	
230-00 — Wells Fargo Bank (Loan for Jones)	3,140,000.00
Total Long Term Liabilities	<u>3,140,000.00</u>
Total Liabilities	3,145,473.76
Equity	
300-00 — Unrestricted Fund (Net Assets-General)	12,820,002.01
420-00 — Fund Balance	7,771,364.49
Net Income	<u>138,408.62</u>
Total Equity	<u>20,332,751.64</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	<u>22,452,957.88</u>
	<u>23,598,431.64</u>

Grand Lodge Committee on Masonic Education

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The Grand Lodge Committee on Masonic Education continued to manage and expand programs designed in 2016 and developed several new programs for 2017. These included the following:

Speakers Bureau: This continues to be one of the most successful programs to date. It is low maintenance, and the rewards are high. It allows lodges to select Masonic speakers from a list; a simple process then brings that speaker to the lodge for a Masonic Education program. The Bureau continues to grow in popularity, and more speakers are being actively recruited.

Lodge Night Programs: This is a list of short talks which can be printed off of the Masonic Education page on the Grand Lodge's website to use for Masonic education programs. We continue to expand these offerings.

Print Material and Guides: This is a set of guides and handbooks that can be printed off of the website and used in the lodge. They include the Officer's Handbook, the Lodge System of Masonic Education, Program for Progress, and the Lodge Self-Assessment Tool.

William R. Davie Academy: This newly created program is focused on lodge leadership and management practices. It is led by MWB Doug Caudle. It offers both workshop style classes as well as a curriculum based program. The first year was extremely successful. This program is not designed to compete with Wilkerson College. It is designed to be accessible to much of the state by offering classes that are constantly moving about within the state. This program is constantly being reevaluated and revised. The future of the Davie Academy is bright. All lodge members and officers should benefit from the Academy. The schedule is available on the Grand Lodge website.

Middle Chamber: This is also a new offering in 2017. The initial class had 41 participants. This school is led by RWB Shaun Bradshaw. It seeks to teach the philosophical lessons of the Craft degrees. The Allegory and Symbolism lectures are offered yearly (in the first quarter). This class is open to all Master Masons and is offered in multiple times and locations across the State. If you are interested in attending the Middle Chamber Program, please attend one of the Allegory and Symbolism lectures where further information regarding the full program will be provided. Each of the Middle Chamber Program classes will be held in two locations for the convenience of the students. By offering this program North Carolina is leading the way in teaching Masonic Philosophy.

Membership Surveys: We are in the process of developing a membership survey to determine further needs and to receive feedback on current programs. This will hopefully be implemented in 2018.

Auxiliary Members: In order to create the amount of things we have in such a short time, this committee called on the time and energy of many brothers who were not able to be official members of this nine member committee. They answered the call and have selflessly given all that was asked and more. We could not have accomplished our goals without them and they have our eternal gratitude.

New Leadership: 2018 will see a new Chairman of the committee. I would like to thank all of the committee members for their dedication over the last

few years.

Thank you also to the members of the Grand Line for their support of Masonic Education. This Grand Jurisdiction is blessed with excellent leadership, and I am proud of our Grand Lodge. Their boldness to let this committee develop so many new and innovative programs to offer the Freemasons of North Carolina is commendable.

Thank you to every member of this Grand Jurisdiction for the opportunity to serve you.

Please continue to view Masonic Education as a means of improving our men and our lodge experience.

Respectfully submitted,
Benjamin G. Wallace, Chairman

Report of the Committee on Public Relations

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The Committee on Public Relations continues to work closely with the Grand Lodge Office and other Committees, such as the Board of Publications, to promote and illustrate the importance and relevance of Freemasonry in North Carolina. The Committee prepared and distributed several press releases this year on behalf of the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford and the Grand Lodge to all available media outlets in North Carolina. The Committee's aim is to education the membership and public of the events, role, and leadership our fraternity displays across the state.

Respectfully submitted,
Gary D. Walker, Chairman

Report of the North Carolina Youth Committee

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The youth committee is happy to report an increase yet again in our youth numbers. DeMolay had a good year with increased membership. The Rainbow Girls led the nation in membership percentage increase for the past two years and is third this year! They have opened several new assemblies across the state that have become very active. The greatest obstacles for our youth programs are twofold:

1. Leadership: We need leaders to get active with and/or continue to lead assemblies and chapters. The children are there and are definitely in need of leadership. I feel with the proper leaders our youth programs could easily double within five years.
2. Funding: The Grand Lodge budget of \$4250.00 is much needed and very appreciated but doesn't even cover the bare necessities for these programs. We preach that we're for the youth, but we fall woefully short of living up to our word. Hopefully we'll begin programs to inform lodges and brothers of these needs, both in leadership and monies.

Respectfully submitted,
Russell E. Bridges, Chairman

Report of the Ad Hoc Task Force on Scouting Report

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

Activity on the task force began when Past Grand Master Charles Lewis set about assembling a team for the purpose of creating a program for the Grand Lodge that would recognize North Carolina's Eagle Scouts. The concept was for North Carolina to implement a program similar to the Grand Lodges of Virginia and Georgia.

At a meeting held in Greensboro on March 19, 2017, the committee members met and appointed Homer Dearmin as Secretary. Charles Lewis would serve as Chairman. Discussion ensued on how to best accomplish recognition of Eagle Scouts by the Grand Lodge of North Carolina. Topics included type of recognition, relative cost, and logistics. PGM Lewis also proposed the idea of an affinity lodge for Scouters. Matt Collins from Wilmington was also proposed to be a member of the task force.

The task force decided that it would be prudent to first pilot the program in an area of limited scope to better understand what was involved in coordinating activity with the Boy Scouts. Occoneechee Council (in the Raleigh area) was selected for two reasons. First was that it was the largest council in the state, with the most Eagle Scouts, giving the pilot program the best prospects of a successful start. Second, task force member Will Highsmith is actively involved in the council and would have the necessary contacts to begin the process of outreach and coordination.

Due to health reasons, PGM Lewis decided to step down as chairman in June, at which time Ludwik Wodka was asked to take over as chairman for the task force.

On July 20, a conference call was held where the following was discussed:

1. We decided that for the pilot program, we would select one district in Occoneechee Council and present certificates to Eagle Scouts who were awarded after January 1, 2017. Will Highsmith recommended Awahili District. Will Chriscoe mentioned that we might consider presenting the certificates at the MHCO.
2. Will Highsmith volunteered to contact the district leaders and arrange for their cooperation. We will send them an email announcing that we will be presenting certificates of recognition to recent Eagle Scouts, and those interested in attending need to submit their names to us. The District Leaders will (hopefully) email the message out to all the Troops in the District.
4. Stencil Wilson and Homer Dearmin volunteered to prepare a script for the presentation ceremony.

As of August 14, 2017, the date of Monday, October 2 (at 7:00pm) was selected to hold the presentation ceremony. The Masonic Home for Children in Oxford (Orphans Lodge room) was selected to host the event. Will Chriscoe, DDGM for the 13th District, will present the award. A message is being drafted to send to the District Leaders to distribute to the Troops, with the expectation of sending it out the week of August 14th.

We hope that this pilot program will help up to develop some best practices for this program, as well as to better understand the costs, logistics, and planning required for it to be successful. We are moving forward and making

progress toward this first milestone and hope that in the near future, we will be properly positioned to expand the program state-wide.

Fraternally submitted,
Ludwik Wodka, Chairman,
members
Homer Dearmin, Secretary
Will Highsmith
Matt Collins
Stancil Wilson
Will Chriscoe
Charles Lewis, PGM, (advisor)

Report of the Board of Custodians

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The members who served on the Board of Custodians during the year 2017 were: Hugh L. McLaurin III, PM, Grand Lecturer; Steve M. Norris, PM, Chairman; Thomas P. Dolinger II, PM, Secretary; J. Luigi Ammons, PM; Clay E. Sorrels, PM; Michael A. Register, PM; and Russell E. Jones, PM. WB John David Cashion served as liaison to the Board of General Purposes.

The Board of Custodians met regularly during the year, with meetings held on January 13th, April 14th (by conference call), July 14th, and September 21st, 2017. The fall meetings are scheduled to coincide with the Grand Lodge Annual Communication in Winston Salem.

Certified brethren qualifying for the Laudamus Certificate in 2017 are: Scott Alan Cook, Green Level Lodge 277; Ronald Huey Gosey, West Gate Lodge 738; James Joseph Hetherington, Cary Lodge 198; Todd Jeffrey McCranie, East Gate Lodge 692; Donald Wayne Millis, Cliffside Lodge 460; David Keith Potter, Statesville Lodge 27; Charles Ray Williams, Asheboro Lodge 699; and Clayton Lee Wright, Temple Lodge 676. The Laudamus Certificate is presented to Class A Certified Lecturers when they have attained 15 years of service.

District Deputy Grand Lecturers qualifying for the Past District Deputy Grand Lecturer Certificate in 2017 are: Mitchell Leroy Spruill, District 1; James Leroy Sanderlin, District 5; David Ralph Ellis, District 16; Homer Eugene Burroughs, District 18; David Hubert Troxell, District 21; Robert Wayne Morton, District 24; Royal Sanford Jarvis, District 27; Larry Todd Hatley, District 29; Edward Joseph Steel, District 32; Phillip Mark Alexander, District 33; Thomas Gary Brooks, Jr., District 35; and Benjamin Augustus Sims, District 39.

Three brothers received certificates for fifty years of service as Certified Lecturers. They are as follows:

WB Jack Clifford Austin, Jr., Steele Creek Lodge 737

WB John Rankin Litaker, West Gate Lodge 738

WB Charles Rebert Southerland, Goldsboro Lodge 634

The 2017 Certified Lecturer examinations were held according to the following schedule: August 12th - Greenville and Greensboro; August 19th - Wilmington and Charlotte; and August 26th - Fayetteville and Asheville.

The examinations continued to be offered on Saturdays in an effort to be more accommodating to our certified brethren who have work conflicts. The Board expresses its sincere appreciation to the brethren at the six locations who donated the use of their facilities for the examinations.

At the end of the 2016 examinations the number of certified brethren was 372. This consisted of 334 Class “A” Certified Lecturers and 38 Class “B” Certified Instructors. Unfortunately, the total number has declined by 2 as of July 2017, with the passing of certified lecturers: Luther James Laton, Pee Dee Lodge 150 (32 years) and Leslie Lawton Turner, Greenville Lodge 284 (42 years). The total number of certified brethren as of July 31st, 2017, is 370. Forty-nine brethren are required to stand examination in 2017. Also, twelve brethren received a one-year extension in 2016. Their certification will expire if they do not re-certify in 2017. Of the forty-nine due recertification in 2017, five qualify for the “Waiver” option as being certified for twenty-five years or more, if requested by the brother. The final 2017 results will be available after the last exams are held on August 26th, 2017, and will be printed in the 2017 Proceedings of the Grand Lodge publication.

In 2017 the Board continued to support the program, “Raising the Instructive Tongue,” which was instituted by RWB Mack Sigmon, Secretary of the Board, in 2013.

The booklet “Important Information Concerning the Certified Lecturers” is posted on the Grand Lodge website and is available to anyone with access to the Internet. A webpage sponsored by the Board of Custodians is also being maintained on a regular basis. This page includes information of interest concerning the history of the Board, latest corrections to the OSW and Bahnson Manual, rules governing the Lecture Service and OSW/Vocabulary, various application forms, and a current roster of those certified. The webpage can be found under the “Center for Members” tab on the Grand Lodge website.

In 2017 the Five-Hour Mandatory Lecture Service was continued for the one hundred ninety odd-numbered lodges throughout the state. All one hundred eighty even-numbered lodges completed the Lecture Service in 2016. As a reminder, the Lecture Service rules were updated in 2011 to formally indicate the continuation of this mandatory five-hour service until otherwise notified. Even-numbered lodges will have their next five-hour requirement in 2018. Also as a reminder, all lodges must participate in one five-hour district School of Instruction each year as long as the mandatory Lecture Service is required or until determined otherwise by the Board.

The Board has been working on a Coach’s proficiency program. Any Coach who can pass the proficiency of the questions and answers of all three catechisms will receive a certificate and a proficiency card. This will be a one-time only examination. Details of the program will be presented at the annual DDGL planning meeting at WhiteStone: A Masonic and Eastern Star Community this November. The program will be launched by the Board and DDGLs after the first of the year.

To continue a practice reestablished in 2011, the Board again unanimously recommended that the Lodge System of Masonic Education Program be recommended for use by all lodges. Dedicated support for this program will help to instruct candidates as they begin the journey through the Masonic degrees.

After a two year absence of the Coach’s Workshop, the Board is instituting

a program to hold at least three workshops in different regions of the state in 2018. The plan for the workshops will be addressed at the planning meeting in November.

Wilkerson College Lodge 760 held its annual Masonic Symposium on June 10th at the Masonic Temple in downtown Greensboro. In conjunction with the Symposium, the third annual Grand Master's Masonic Ritual Competition was held. The open division was won by "Rubbish of the Temple" followed very closely by the defending champions "Down East Ringers". The closed competition was won by Lebanon Lodge 391 followed closely by Semper Fidelis Lodge 680.

The Board of Custodians expresses its appreciation to Grand Master A. Gene Cobb, Jr., for his enthusiastic support of the Board and the Certified Lecturer program. The Board also wishes to thank Grand Secretary, T. Walton Clapp III; Assistant to the Grand Secretary, Jonathan Underwood, as well as Cornelia, Vicki, and Hayley for their valuable assistance throughout the year. The Board also expresses its appreciation to Grand Lecturer Hugh L. McLaurin III for his efforts as the Grand Lecturer for 2017. To all our certified brethren throughout the state, we extend a sincere "thank you" for your continued faithful service to our beloved Fraternity, for your support of the "Raising the Instructive Tongue" program, and for your vigorous support of the Certified Lecturers Program.

Respectfully Submitted,
 Steve M. Norris, Chairman
 Thomas P. Dolinger II, Secretary

Report of the Commission on Subordinate Lodges Special Activities

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The Commission on Subordinate Lodges Special Activities presents this report in supporting lodge fundraising efforts. The following report reflects fundraising numbers from January 1 through August 27, 2017:

Lodges Participating:.....	162
Applications Processed:.....	242
Final Reports Received/Processed:	96
Total Funds Received/Processed by lodges:.....	\$561,772.55
Cost of Fund-raising:	\$216,151.69
Net Proceeds:	\$345,620.86
 For Charity:.....	 \$268,566.10
For Lodge Building Funds:.....	\$ 77,054.76

Type/Category of Fundraisers:	#	Average \$	Per Event
Raffles:	32	\$135,334.70	\$ 4,229.21
Golf Tournaments:	7	\$ 68,875.23	\$ 9,839.32
Breakfast:	10	\$ 22,992.92	\$ 2,299.29
BBQs:.....	11	\$ 17,230.52	\$ 1,566.41

Dinners/Fish/Chicken:.....	19	\$ 45,407.20	\$ 2,389.85
Other:.....	24	\$ 55,780.29	\$ 2,324.18

By Fund-Development Category/Charity:	#		
MHC:	60	\$131,432.50	\$ 2,190.54
MESH, LLC:.....	44	\$ 73,480.99	\$ 1,670.02
NC Masonic Foundation	27	\$ 35,445.64	\$ 1,312.80
Other Charities	28	\$ 28,206.97	\$ 1,007.39
Lodge Building Funds:	23	\$ 77,054.76	\$ 3,350.21

All lodges are reminded to submit final reports of fundraising activities to the Commission on or before 45 days after the fundraising event; all 2017 final reports must be in to the Commission by December 31, 2017.

Respectfully submitted,
James L. Medlin, Chairman

Report of the Library Committee

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

2017 saw a continuation of preservation efforts on the part of the Committee and Grand Lodge staff and further worked toward the cataloging of the Grand Lodge Library's collection, the preservation of its archival collection, and the digitization of Grand Lodge and subordinate lodge records via the North Carolina Digital Heritage Center, as well as coordinating its mission to foster Masonic history by collaborating with Grand Historian Steven Campbell.

The Committee continues to work with the North Carolina Digital Heritage Center to preserve through digitization the early papers and records of the Grand Lodge and its lodges across the state. As of August 1, the early and most at-risk records of the following lodges were preserved online since our last report: St. John's 1 (1788-1802, 1814-1818, 1851-1856), Phoenix 8 (1864-1886, 1898-1921), Buffaloe/Blandford-Bute/Johnston-Caswell 10 (1766-1767), Pansophia 25 (1807), Mt. Moriah/Statesville 27 (1806-1837), Phalanx 31 (1802, 1805-1807), Hiram 40 (1846-1857), Zion 81 (1824-1912), Wake Forest 97 (1850-1867), Belmont 108 (1850-1867), Holly Springs 115 (1851-1888), and Stokesburg 220 (1864).

In addition, the Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of North Carolina have been digitally preserved and made available online through (with some gaps) 1920. The Committee continues to research and obtain, where possible, copies of the missing printed proceedings. Since our last report, hard copies of proceedings from the years 1841 and 1846-1849 have been located, and digital copies from 1787-1796, 1798-1799, 1801, 1802, 1805, 1807, 1810, and 1843 have been obtained.

The Committee was happy to welcome the family of Grand Master Simmons Jones Baker to the Grand Lodge Office on 7 June for the dedication of their ancestor's portrait. Baker's portrait, as well as four others (Grand Masters Joseph Montfort (1771-1775), William Richardson Davie (1792-1798), John Adams Cameron (1820-1821), and Beverly Sampson Royster (1900-1901)) have been restored, reframed, and now hang once more in the Grand Lodge Office.

The Committee is also pleased to report that a new exhibit case was installed in the hallway of the Grand Lodge Office, courtesy of Grand Secretary Walt Clapp. The niche, which was once a cork board for notices, was cleaned out and refitted with appropriate lighting and shelving in which are displayed many Masonic artifacts.

Though still in a state of transition, the committee invites and welcomes visitors to the Grand Lodge's Library and looks forward to aiding those interested in North Carolina's Masonic heritage.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jonathan A. Underwood, Chairman

Report of the Grand Lodge Committee on Personnel

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The Committee on Personnel was established in 2013 by Grand Master Dalton W. Mayo on an ad hoc basis to provide guidance for personnel matters arising from the employment of staff by the Grand Lodge of North Carolina. Over these four years the committee has reviewed and updated the Personnel Policy of the Grand Lodge of North Carolina to ensure compliance with state and federal laws and regulations, implemented and conducted annual employee performance reviews, and made annual salary and benefit recommendations to the Grand Lodge Committee on Finance.

In 2017 the committee observed the timeline established by previous chairs, whereby:

- The Grand Secretary completes his annual reviews of office staff no later than April 30. He forwards staff reviews and his own self-evaluation to the committee chair no later than June 1.
- The committee chair and vice chair meet with the Grand Secretary to conduct his review and discuss his staff reviews and compensation recommendations no later than June 8.
- The committee meets to discuss all reviews and compensation recommendations no later than June 8.
- The chairman meets with the Grand Secretary to share the committee's evaluation of him and discuss his goals and objectives for the coming year.
- The committee forwards its compensation recommendations to the Committee on Finance no later than June 30.

This year our committee submitted to, and received approval from, the Board of General Purposes for an update to the Personnel Policy of the Grand Lodge of North Carolina.

The committee also recommended that the Grand Secretary work with each staff member to develop a list of goals, and establish a list of Individual Performance Evaluation competencies, including a numerical rating on strategy and innovation, for 2018. We asked that he submit these with his ratings and comments, and staff goals for the next year, to the committee during the evaluation process in 2018 and in future years.

We appreciated the opportunity to meet individually with members of the

staff to gain a better understanding of the many ways each serves our brethren and lodges across the state. In his meeting with us, the Grand Secretary said the current staff is the best he has ever had. He described them as hard-working, eager to learn new skills, and dedicated to serving the Craft. The staff was unanimous in its description of the work environment as positive, team-oriented, and wholly focused on service. We are grateful for their ongoing dedication and the skills and energy they bring to their work every day.

Delegates to the 2017 Annual Communication will consider adoption of **Amendment Group 6**, submitted by Past Grand Master Bryant Webster. This amendment codifies the Grand Lodge Committee on Personnel and establishes its membership, duties, and powers. Approving this amendment will ensure that our Grand Lodge continues to manage one of its most precious resources, the staff, in a thoughtful, consistent, transparent, and lawful manner.

Respectfully submitted,
Speed Hallman, Deputy Grand Master and Chair
Mack Sigmon, Senior Grand Warden and Vice Chair
Shaun Bradshaw, Junior Grand Warden
Gene Jernigan, Past Grand Master
Bryan Jones, Past Master
David Wicker, Senior Grand Deacon and Observer

Report of the Scholarship Committee

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The Grand Lodge Scholarship Committee went to work remotely to review this year's scholarship applications. Due to committee members being spread from Edenton to Asheville, it was decided that the applications would be sorted by WhiteStone Administrative staff and then delivered to the five committee members either by mail or by volunteer Masons driving through the area. Winning applications were then forwarded via email and hard copies passed back to the Grand Secretary's office for processing. Once again the response to the scholarship offering this year was extremely popular among high school seniors, with over 200 applications received for 12 scholarships valued at \$1,000 each. As in prior years the applications were divided by five geographic regions across the state (Western, Eastern, Triad, Charlotte, and Raleigh). Each committee member responsible for a region selected two winners along with a third possible alternate for consideration. The scholarship winners all demonstrated strong academic performance balanced with extensive community/volunteer service and extracurricular activities. Special thanks to the committee members Dean Richardson, Michael Fizer, Chris McLamb, and John Dunn for their time and efforts.

Respectfully submitted,
Mark Kolada, Chairman

Final Report
of
Grand Master
Bryant D. Webster
to
the
Grand Lodge
of
Ancient, Free and Accepted
Masons
of North Carolina

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina, Grand Lodge Officers, Past Grand Masters, officers of constituent lodges, voting delegates to the Annual Communication, Brethren all:

As prescribed in The Code, I am pleased to make this report of my activities and our accomplishments in the year 2016 as you allowed me to serve as your grand master. It was truly my honor and privilege, and a most humbling opportunity, to serve as the 163rd grand master in this grand jurisdiction.

Everywhere I traveled, from Rodanthe to Ranger, from Roanoke Rapids to Rockingham, from Reidsville to Franklinville, from Sparta to Cliffside, and everywhere in between, our evenings were filled with wonderful food, great smiles, great fellowship, and sound learning. While the titles and the awards and the kind gestures are most appreciated, it is the genuine relationships with the Brethren throughout this State that I will cherish the most.

We began the year with a wonderful Grand Lodge installation weekend in Asheville, my hometown. Our Grand Lodge officers were installed in a meaningful ceremony at the historic Asheville Masonic Temple, in downtown Asheville. Many brothers stayed for an emergent communication of Veritas Lodge 769, our second Traditional Observance Lodge, and a lodge of which I am a charter member. Many of our out of town guests stayed and we went together to the Biltmore Estate to enjoy a candlelight Christmas tour of the Biltmore House. The entire weekend was a lovely experience and a strong foundation for our year together. It got better from there.

State of the Craft

My theme for the year was “Building a Stronger Foundation.” Together, we have done just that. Our lodges are very active. It seems there are Masonic activities nearly every evening of every week throughout the year. Many weekends, there are multiple activities competing for our time and attention, all of them directed to good Masonic purpose. We have formed five new lodges in the last two years, including our third motorcycle lodge, two traditional observance lodges, two university lodges, and a daylight lodge at our Masonic and Eastern Star Community. Our lodges are vibrant and energized, with young officer lines and diligent ritual work. Our lodges are taking seriously the challenge issued by Past Grand Master, Most Worshipful Brother Doug Caudle, to improve the lodge experience. Buildings are being conserved and improved, food is excellent, and lodges are experimenting with music, incense, and lighting. There are lots of stories of brothers going the extra mile for brothers and for the community.

Necrology

During the past year, we lost 1,228 brothers to that celestial lodge above. They lived respected and died regretted, and we remember them still. On several occasions, including Grand Lodge Installation, our final District Meeting in my home lodge, and at Annual Communication last year, I displayed a single lighted column candle in a hurricane lamp to celebrate the memories of all those brothers and loved ones whom I wish could have lived long enough to be with us on this journey. All of us have those persons in our lives whom we wish were with us now. Cherish their memories. Last year we provided an opportunity for brothers present to place a pebble in a basin to remember a brother. Our Committee on Necrology, our Grand Chaplain, and many of our musicians presented an emotional highlight and moment to pay tribute to those who bequeathed us a strong foundation.

District Officers Conference

Following a practice initiated by Past Grand Master Caudle, in October 2015, we convened a statewide meeting of our District Deputy Grand Masters and District Deputy Grand Lecturers, for a two-day session of team-building, instruction, communication, and core messaging, this occasion on the campus of the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford. A Grand Master, particularly one who lives near an edge of the State as I do, cannot function without the assistance, encouragement, and support of the District Officers. Educating and empowering those men to serve and to lead, so that our Craft moves forward with a unified message and purpose, is important. We thank all of those men who give of their time, talent, and treasure to serve as District Officers.

Honorary Title of Past District Deputy Grand Master

I recommended that this Grand Lodge grant the honorary title of Past District Deputy Grand Master to the following Brethren who are now eligible in accordance with The Code:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Lodge</u>	<u>District</u>
Michael Allen Burnham	314	1
James Earl McDougal	706	4
James Allen Wiley	3	7
G. Anderson Greene	319	12
Wade Randolph Kearney, II	624	13
Larry Dean Hudson	500	14
Kenneth Werner Wical	8	17
Edward Earl Davis	207	18
Murray Marrell Skeen	344	23
Phil Dennis McCraw	322	25
Marion Kirby Matthews	404	27
Michael Neil Starnes	593	30
Bobby Woodrow Nichols	407	33
Christopher Blair Houser	263	36
Larry Dean Sudderth	489	37

Honorary Title of Past District Deputy Grand Lecturer

I recommend that this Grand Lodge grant the honorary title of Past District Deputy Grand Lecturer to the following Brethren who are now eligible in accordance with The Code:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Lodge</u>	<u>District</u>
Christopher Scott East	407	2
Justin Michael Robinson	708	6
Lesley Thomas Robinson	359	7
John Robert Franks	112	10
James Timothy Hairr	125	11
Marcus Johnson Hurt	377	13
Herbert Currie Lyon	210	19
Paul Francis Kelly	151	20
Jeffrey Lynn Bullington	542	23
Alfred Joseph Arnder, Jr.	322	25
Thomas Miller Cohen	576	28

District Meetings

We held twenty-six district meetings, beginning March 2, and ending on May 26. The meetings were well-attended; I counted a total of 2,311 Brothers present over the twenty-six meetings. The brotherly love and courtesy I was extended was remarkable. The food was outstanding and of wide variety. I don't think we had the same thing two nights in a row or two nights in a week throughout the process. When I could hear the Brethren laughing in lodge before I entered, I knew it was going to be good; that happened almost all the time. It was my goal to provide some quality information about estate planning to our Brothers; that happened in all district meetings but two, where we had a different topic or got cut short for some reason. It was my goal to provoke thought among our Brothers, to encourage the building of stronger foundations in our personal lives, in our families, in our lodges, and in our communities.

I was blessed to be joined by trusty brothers for much of the travel to those meetings: D.L. Webster, our Grand Tyler (my Dad); John Burchfield, Grand Lecturer; Hank Hilliard, Grand Chaplain; Al Terrell; Russell Bridges; Mark Kolada, Executive Director of WhiteStone: A Masonic and Eastern Star Community; Kevin Otis, Administrator of the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford; Chris Richardson, Development Director for the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford; Mike Faulkenbury, Chair of the North Carolina Masonic Foundation; and David Wilson, William Mills, Leonard Safrit, and Bob Gresham for the Foundation; Walt Clapp, Grand Secretary; and Jonathan Underwood, Assistant to the Grand Secretary. There were numerous Past Grand Masters and other Brothers who had frequent flyer miles, attending multiple meetings all over the State.

The District Meetings were held as follows:

Date	District	Lodge Names and No.	Location
Mar 2	14	William G. Hill 218	1520 Caswell St, Raleigh
3	10	St. John's 4	1810 N. Heritage St, Kinston
7	19	Knap of Reeds 158	158 Bahama Road, Bahama
8	8	Widow's Son 519	298 Roanoke Ave, Roanoke Rapids
9	16	Wilson 712	2501 W. Nash St, Wilson
22	22	Jefferson Penn 384	110 S. Main St, Reidsville
23	20	Siler City 403	114 S. 3rd Ave, Siler City
28	1	Eureka 317	218 S. Hughes Blvd, Elizabeth City
29	2	Cape Hatteras 698	48338 Hwy 12, Buxton
30	4	Franklin 109	104 Professional Park Dr, Beaufort
31	3	Orr 104	116 E. 3rd St, Washington
Apr 11	30	Lee 253 (s)	108 Second Ave., SW, Taylorsville
12	38	Forest City 381 (s)	17 Wilkie St, Forest City
13	36	Mt. Holly 544	332 W. Charlotte Ave, Mt. Holly
25	32	Mint Hill 742	10224 Lawyers Rd, Charlotte
26	28	Spencer 543 (s)	114 4th St, Spencer

May 2	12	St. John's 1	4712 Oriole Dr, Wilmington
	3	Lebanon 207 (s)	114 Pecan St, Whiteville
	4	Rockingham 495	1107 Fayetteville Rd, Rockingham
	5	Fort Bragg 667	221 Mason St, Fayetteville
16	26	Salem 289	4537 Country Club Rd, Winston-Salem
17	33	Sparta 423	125 E. Doughton St, Sparta
23	41	Blue Ridge 435	305 Main St, Highlands
24	40	Waynesville 259	435 E. Marshall St, Waynesville
25	34	Mystic Tie 237	163 S. Main St, Marion
26	39	Nichols - W. Asheville 650	22 Brevard Rd, Asheville

Joseph Montfort Medals

On February 2, 2016, at a communication of Mocksville Lodge 134, in Mocksville, NC, I presented my first Montfort Medal to Past Grand Master, Most Worshipful Brother Lester Poindexter Martin, Jr. Judge Martin is a World War II hero, former State Legislator, former District Court Judge, and former Superior Court Judge. Judge Martin, now 92 years young, has been a Mason more than 70 years, and represents all that is good and right about Masonry, public service, and building a stronger foundation for us all. On May 26, 2016, at our final district meeting, at my home lodge, Nichols-West Asheville 650, I presented my second Montfort Medal to our Grand Lecturer, Worshipful Brother John Marvin Burchfield. Worshipful Brother John has been District Deputy Grand Lecturer for multiple districts, District Deputy Grand Master, and is a Mason's Mason who is always there for lectures, funerals, or any task of leadership necessary. His gentle but firm leadership in our Craft make him a natural fit for this honor. My third Montfort Medal was presented at Annual Communication to Brother Mark Kolada. In addition to his service as Executive Director of WhiteStone: A Masonic and Eastern Star Community, Brother Mark has worked tirelessly to encourage and support our fraternal and charitable missions, driving long miles, spending many nights away from home, and helping to charter an Eastern Star Chapter and a Masonic Lodge on our Greensboro campus. What he does for our Craft goes far beyond any job description; he is a true and trusty brother among us.

Physical Disabilities

Per The Code, it is the responsibility of the Grand Master to approve all petitions for the degrees on which the petitioner indicates a physical disability. It is the duty of the DDGM to investigate those and make a recommendation. We have had an extraordinary number of such disability waivers this year, a total of twenty-eight. I have approved all but one. I believe this large number of waivers is in part related to a large number of injured military veterans who are petitioning our lodges. There were quite a few that while the physical disability did not prevent pursuing the petition further, there were other items shown on the petition which gave me great pause. I would charge Lodges and their investigating committees to be ever vigilant. If you have a petition with a disability and the Grand Master approves it, do not take that as a signal to rubber-stamp the petition and approve the man. Be diligent in your investigation and make sure we only take the right men. We don't want everyone who can fog a mirror.

Dispensations

It is the province of the Grand Master to issue dispensations to lodges for certain activities outside the normal practice or outside their approved bylaws. Again, there seem to have been a much larger number than is usual. I take this as a sign of strong activity and creativity among our lodges. As of this writing, I have approved the following 63 Dispensations:

Dispensation 2016 - Bryant D. Webster. Grand Master

- Elect Master - Marble Springs 439
- Elect Officers - Rockingham 495
- Elect Officers - Farmville 517
- Stated Communications - Knights of Solomon 766
- Master of Two Lodges - Fulton 99
- Elect Senior Warden - Queen City 602
- Other Place - Sophia 767
- Other Place - Sophia 767
- Other Place Railroad - Spencer 543
- Stated Communications - Knights of Solomon 764
- Elect Junior Warden - Pigeon River 386
- Stated Communications - Wilkerson College 760
- Elect Senior Warden - Knights of Solomon 764
- Elect Senior Warden - Hanks 128
- Elect Junior Warden - Clay 301
- Elect Senior Warden - Fuquay 258
- Other Place - Knights of Solomon 768
- Elect Junior Deacon - Eureka 317
- Other Place - Andrew Jackson 576
- Elect Master - Monroe 244
- Elect Master - Cape Hatteras 698
- Other Place Special Forces - Fort Bragg 667
- Outdoor - King Solomon 138
- Outdoor - Harmon 420
- Outdoor in TN - French Broad 292
- Other Place - Knights of Solomon 764
- Outdoor - Crown Point 708
- Other Place - Salem 289
- Outdoor - Sanford 151
- Dispense with Stated - Wilkerson College 760
- Dispense with Stated - University 408
- Stated Communication - Knights of Solomon 768
- Other Place - Ashlar 765

Move Location - Derita 715
Other Place Battleship - St. John's 1
Outdoor - Dunn's Rock 267
Other Place - Statesville 27
Dispense with Stated - Berne 724
Move Location - Winston 167
Move Location - Salem 289
Move Location - Piedmont-Pioneer 685
Move Location - Forsyth 707
Other Place - Lux Libertas UD
Other Place - Ashlar 765
Other Place - Charity 5
Stated Communication - Lux Libertas UD
Dispense with Stated - Zion 81
Outdoor - Cranberry 598
Other Place - Charity 5
Outdoor - Montgomery 426
Outdoor - Round Peak 616
Dispense with Stated - New River 736
Outdoor - North Wilkesboro 407
Dispense with Stated - Crown Point 708
Other Place - Fort Bragg 667
Other Place - State College 770
Other Place - Lux Libertas UD
Other Place - Mosaic 762
Other Place - Grifton 243
Other Place - Joseph Warren 92
Stated Communication - Knights of Solomon 766
Other Place - Ayden 498
Elect Officers - Widow's Son 519

Emergent Communications

An Emergent Communication of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina was held in the Asheville Masonic Temple, Asheville, North Carolina, on Saturday, December 5, 2015, for the purpose of installing the Grand Lodge Officers.

An Emergent Communication of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina was held at the Hibriten Lodge 262, Lenoir, North Carolina, on Thursday, August 25, 2016, for the purpose of dedicating the new home of Hibriten Lodge 262.

An Emergent Communication of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina was held at the Winston-Salem Masonic

Center in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, on Saturday, October 22, 2016, for the purpose of dedicating the new Winston-Salem Masonic Center.

2016 Initiatives:

It was my desire to finish the year with much more than just a list of activities or a catalogue of travels. It was my hope that together we would move the ball on a number of issues:

1. Strengthening the North Carolina Masonic Foundation—we have promoted the NCMF in the *North Carolina Mason* and by having a representative of the Foundation speak at each district meeting. We have this year hired a Chief Development Officer, Jeff Hensley, and a new Communication Director, Beth Grace.
 2. Strengthening Personal Foundations—we have shared a message of the importance and the vocabulary and the basics of estate planning with over 3000 Masons in district meetings and other speaking engagements across the State. We have urged each of us to look at the man in the mirror and make a change and to truly live out the lessons of Freemasonry in our lives.
 3. Strengthening Lodge Foundations—we have provided a Lodge Self-Assessment Tool to assist lodges in looking within and identifying what we are doing well and where we can improve, and then working on those issues.
 4. Strengthening Community Foundations—we have undertaken the “Masons Can” food drive project, to deliver life-sustaining food to our communities in conjunction with Annual Communication. We raised over \$6,221.00 and 7,000 pounds of food, resulting in over 58,000 meals for our neighbors in need.
 5. Ad Hoc Music Committee—we formed an ad hoc Music Committee to aid in educating members and Lodges about the music of the Bahnsen Manual and to assist Lodges in incorporating music into the Lodge experience, to make the music in the Bahnsen Manual more accessible, and to create guidelines for the use of music, working closely with the Board of Custodians. This committee function has been rolled into the Committee on Masonic Education.
 6. Education Committee—the Grand Lodge Committee on Education has implemented the Speakers’ Bureau to assist Lodges in accessing high quality speakers for Masonic Education programs. The Committee has provided a reading list of quality books and publications. We have re-tooled the Wardens’ Boot Camps into the new Davie Leadership Academy, to supplement the great work being done by Wilkerson College, and to extend leadership training into the corners of our State.
 7. Prestonian Lecture—through several strokes of good fortune, we were able to bring the Grand Lodge of England’s Prestonian Lecturer to North Carolina to present the Prestonian Lecture at an emergent communication of Sophia Lodge 767 at the Greensboro Masonic Temple in January 2016. We were also able to bring the Prestonian Lecturer back to North Carolina to attend and speak at Annual Communication.
 8. Lodge Service Commission—after several years of diligent work and Code revisions by the Grand Lodge Annual Communication, we were able to get an approved set of model bylaws for Temple Corporations
-

- to allow Temple Corporations to function more smoothly and to ensure that the interests of Masonry, and of Masons and Lodges in the Grand Lodge of North Carolina, are preserved and enhanced.
9. Eagle Scout Degree—on Saturday, August 13, 2016, at Camp Bud Schiele, in Rutherfordton, NC, Dunn’s Rock Lodge 267 opened an Emergent Communication and, with assistance of Forest City Lodge 381, examined a candidate and conferred the Master Mason Degree. The Second Section was conferred by a degree team consisting entirely of Eagle Scouts, ranging in age from mid-20’s to 90. Our candidate was an Eagle Scout and grandson of Past Grand Master, Most Worshipful Brother Pete Thomas. We had more than 100 Masons in attendance, representing 36 North Carolina Lodges and 4 South Carolina Lodges. More than 36 Eagle Scouts were present.
 10. National Association of Masonic Scouters—On November 28, 2016, I approved the participation of North Carolina Masons in the National Association of Masonic Scouters.
 11. On October 30, 2016, I ran the Marine Corps Marathon, finishing in 4 hours, 25 minutes, and 7 seconds. From that effort, with a Go Fund Me Page, we raised over \$3,700 for our North Carolina Masonic Foundation.
 12. Risk Management Committee—in 2016, we formed a Risk Management Committee to address issues related to lodge safety and security. That group presented initial recommendations at Annual Communication in 2016, and have continued their work in 2017 to provide our lodges with tools they can use to deal with any issues which may arise.
 13. We chartered State College Lodge 770 in Raleigh on October 19, 2016, and we chartered MESH Lodge 771 in Greensboro on November 12, 2016.

WhiteStone: A Masonic and Eastern Star Community

I urge you to read the report of the Grand Lodge Committee on WhiteStone, contained elsewhere in this report book. The Board of WhiteStone: A Masonic and Eastern Star Community was my first statewide involvement in Freemasonry, and its mission holds a special place in my heart. We are so blessed to be served by a wonderful Board of Directors of twenty Masons and Eastern Stars who have passion and competence to run that home and serve our seniors. They are ably led by Past Grand Master, Most Worshipful Brother Gene Jernigan, Chair of the Board, and Brother Mark Kolada, Executive Director. Those two men spend countless hours in pursuit of our mission, above and beyond any thanks we can adequately provide. In 2016, we completed our Master Planning process, we reached an agreement with the NC Masonic Foundation to acquire property it holds adjacent to our Greensboro campus, and we negotiated our third five-year contract with Life Care Services to assist in the Management of our Home. Great things are happening in Greensboro – stop by and see this jewel in person.

Masonic Home for Children at Oxford

I urge you to read the report of the Grand Lodge Committee on the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford, contained elsewhere in this report book. For over 143 years, the Masons of North Carolina have performed God’s work of caring for children in need in Oxford. I could not be more pleased to have

Past Grand Master, Most Worshipful Brother Dan Rice as Chair of the Board of that Home. Our Administrator, Brother Kevin Otis, continues to deliver a new vision for expanding our services to children on that sacred site. We have a diverse and extraordinary Board of Directors whose expertise and passion in serving children is tangible in everything they do. In April, we commissioned our first class of MHCO Ambassadors, husband and wife teams who are educated and then charged with spreading the good news of MHCO in their communities, both Masonic and beyond. We held our District Officers Conference there in October 2015, to ensure that our District Leaders could see our mission there at work first-hand. Please plan to join us in Oxford in October for our 7th annual Homecoming Festival in its expanded format. This is a great opportunity to see the life-changing work you are doing up close.

Veterans' Hospital Visits

I visited two VA hospitals: one in Salisbury and one in Asheville. Our Masonic Service Association Representatives who act on our behalf at those facilities are doing yeoman's work to reach out to our Masons and other Veterans. At the Asheville campus, I was privileged to participate in the rededication of a Masonic monument on the site, dating to 1924, which is the oldest memorial on that campus. Our Masons in Western North Carolina cleaned up the plaque and arranged for its preservation and re-dedication. We can be very proud of the services and the recognition we provide to our Veterans.

World Conference of Grand Lodges

In November 2015, Past Grand Master, Most Worshipful Brother Doug Caudle, allowed me the opportunity, while still Deputy Grand Master, to represent the Grand Lodge of North Carolina at the World Conference of Grand Lodges, hosted by the Grand Lodge of California, the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of California, and the Grand Lodge of Iran in Exile—operating in California. This conference was held in San Francisco, in the building of the Grand Lodge of California. I was joined there by our Grand Secretary, Right Worshipful Brother Walt Clapp, our Grand Treasurer, Most Worshipful Brother Lew Ledford, and Most Worshipful Brother Lew's wife, Susan. We were struck by the great embrace of Masonry, with Brothers from every corner of the world, who looked differently, spoke different languages, and worshipped in different faith traditions. There were eight (8) different books of faith displayed upon the altar. The fellowship and the learning that took place were extraordinary. Many formal presentations, in many languages, were shared, focusing on the universal issues faced by Masons around the world. We observed that our Brothers from other continents practice tolerance and acceptance on a daily basis, in tangible ways that we never have to experience. Men in some countries (China, Bulgaria) have to practice their Masonry in secret, to protect their lives and their livelihoods. They pay dearly for the privilege of being Masons, and they venerate their Masonry in extraordinary ways. The Brotherly love and friendship celebrated during that week were of an expansive nature and a joyous pageant that are different from what we see in a typical NC Lodge or event, but it was Masonry pure and simple, on a grand scale to which we could aspire. We also experienced first-hand the damage that the acts of a single Grand Lodge (not even present at the Conference), exercising its sovereign rights, can wreak on all Masons everywhere, despite the fact that Masons from other jurisdictions have no control over those actions. It was a reminder that we are all in this together, and we must be prudent, temperate, and discrete.

Conference of Grand Masters of North America

February 20-23, 2016, together with our Deputy Grand Master, Right Worshipful Brother Gene Cobb, our Senior Grand Warden, Right Worshipful Brother Jimmie Hicks, our Junior Grand Warden, Right Worshipful Brother Speed Hallman, our Grand Treasurer, Most Worshipful Brother Lew Ledford, our Grand Secretary, Right Worshipful Brother Walt Clapp, and our Assistant to the Grand Secretary, Brother Jonathan Underwood, we represented the Grand Lodge of North Carolina at the North American Conference of Grand Masters, held this year in Madison, Wisconsin. I was privileged to chair the Planning Committee for the Conference, and together the Grand Masters who formed that committee made incremental changes to streamline the program, increase the amount of idea exchange and interaction between Grand Lodges, and craft a conference more useful and beneficial to the participants. There is more work to be done on those counts, but most who attended agreed that we moved the ball toward creating an event which serves the needs of those attending and allows useful information and ideas to be returned to Grand Lodges which participate, rather than being a hide-bound traditional pageant. One of the greatest benefits of these conferences is the opportunity for our elected Grand Lodge leadership to be together, to plan strategically, and to deepen the bonds of trust to allow greater service to our Grand Lodge. Additionally, we were able to showcase to Grand Lodges around the world (for there are visitors from outside North America), some of the things we are doing right in North Carolina, including unified 990 tax reporting and audit performance, and improving the lodge experience.

Northeast Conference of Grand Masters, Deputy Grand Masters, and Grand Secretaries

We attended the Northeast Conference of Grand Masters, held at Killington, Vermont, the weekend of July 15-17, 2016. Attending were our Deputy Grand Master, Right Worshipful Brother Gene Cobb, our Senior Grand Warden, Right Worshipful Brother Jimmie Hicks, our Junior Grand Warden, Right Worshipful Brother Speed Hallman, our Grand Treasurer, Most Worshipful Brother Lew Ledford, our Grand Secretary, Right Worshipful Brother Walt Clapp, and myself. We participated in a number of presentations regarding emerging issues in our Craft and were able to share with our Brothers from some 17 Grand Lodges how we in North Carolina have approached some of those issues. I am always struck, when attending conferences like this, with how far we are ahead of some of our sister jurisdictions when it comes to matters like tax treatment, background checks, affinity lodges, appendant body relations, etc. We have a professional Grand Lodge office and a strong, coordinated officer line which provide us with guidance and leadership which is often lacking in other places. We are not perfect in North Carolina, and we have much improvement ahead of us, but we are on the right track in so many areas.

Visitation and Special Activities

I have kept a running log of my many activities as Grand Master since being elected on September 26, 2015. That Activity Log has been provided, on a cumulative basis, to the Board of General Purposes, at each of our quarterly meetings. I continued that practice through the end of my term and provided a final cumulative list of activities to the Board at my final meeting as its chair in December. I additionally tried to keep the Craft abreast of my activities by posting pictures and brief descriptions of notable events on the Facebook page

of the Grand Master of Masons of North Carolina. This seems to have been well-received. Many Brothers have tagged me in posts and put up pictures and other information from our travels around the State.

I made a point of trying to attend lodges throughout North Carolina, in large places and small. I have often been officially received at lodge communications, have participated in degree work, and have participated in several fundraisers, notably Ham Day at Riverside Lodge in Catawba, NC, and the Brunswick Stew Fundraiser at Andrew Jackson Lodge in Salisbury, NC. I was an invited guest at the Shrine Bowl of the Carolinas in Spartanburg, South Carolina, in December 2015. I attended the Installation of the Amran Shrine Officers, and the Spring Ceremonial of Oasis Temple in Blowing Rock, NC. I was the special guest of the Imperial Potentate, NC Mason and Imperial Sir Jerry Gantt, at the 142nd Imperial Session of Shriners International in Tampa, Florida, in July 2016. Our three NC Shrine Temples, Amran, Oasis, and Sudan, hosted me and had me as their special guest for the week also. I learned much and enjoyed strengthening the relationship between our Shrine and Blue Lodge leadership. I attended and spoke at the Annual Grand Communication of the North Carolina York Rite Bodies in March in Greensboro, and I attended, participated in, and spoke at the York Rite Summer Assembly in Maggie Valley in July. I attended the Scottish Rite Regional Leadership Seminar hosted in Charlotte, North Carolina in April, and I attended an Orient of North Carolina Leadership Meeting in Greensboro in February. The Scottish Rite Valley of Charlotte hosted a Table Lodge in my honor in June. I attended the North Carolina Annual Communication of the North Carolina International Order of Rainbow, and participated in and spoke at that ceremony in June. I was honored to speak at the Grand Chapter of North Carolina, Order of the Eastern Star in June. I, and a delegation of NC Masons and Grand Line Officers, attended the Annual Communication of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of North Carolina in October. I attended the Annual Communication of the Royal Order of Amaranth in October.

I instituted MESH Lodge 771 in Greensboro, and I instituted Lux Libertas Lodge under dispensation in Chapel Hill. I attended the Grand Lodge of South Carolina Annual Communication in April. I celebrated several 100th Anniversaries and 150th Anniversaries of lodges in our state. Two highlights for me were participating in the recognition of five Eagle Scout projects and the Eagle Scouts who performed them at the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford and organizing and executing the first ever Eagle Scout Degree in North Carolina, where a degree team comprised of Eagle Scouts raised an Eagle Scout to the sublime degree of Master Mason at a Camp Bud Schiele, near Rutherfordton, NC, in August.

Recommended Legislation

My recommendations on Legislation that I believe appropriate are listed as follows: (These items are listed under the Report on Unfinished Business)

Amendment Group 5

This amendment is being proposed to close certain loopholes by requiring the conduct of background checks for those seeking Advancement, Restoration after Exclusion, Restoration after Demitting or Affiliation after Two (2) years.

Amendment Group 6

This amendment is being proposed to codify the Grand Lodge Committee on Personnel, which has functioned since 2013 as an ad hoc committee, and which has greatly professionalized the handling of our personnel matters and brought us compliant with best practices.

Acknowledgments and Special Appreciation

Growing up in a then-rural part of Durham County, there were two institutions outside my family and my school that greatly influenced my life: Rose of Sharon Baptist Church, where my family attended, participated in, and were members; and the Boy Scouts of America, where I had great opportunities to travel, to learn leadership, life and citizenship skills, and to be mentored by authentic men of the highest moral fiber. In both the church and the Boy Scouts, the men who were most influential in my experiences were Masons. They poured energy, character lessons, and hard truths into me as a young man, and I have tried to honor that by paying forward those expenditures into the lives of others. This year has been a seminal moment in that process, as I have had great opportunity to use the skills I learned, to feature Masonry and Boy Scouting, and to deliver on the lifelong promise “to do my best to do my duty to God and my Country... and to help other people at all times.”

When Most Worshipful Brother Dan Rice asked me to be his appointment to the Grand Line, I objected that I was too young, too inexperienced in Masonry, and isolated to the Blue Lodge experience only, having no memberships in any appendant body at that time. He overruled those objections and assured me that I could be properly suited to fill this role. While I then and now appreciated his confidence, I still feel unworthy. I resolved when I accepted that I would do everything in my power to be prepared to lead if the opportunity ultimately presented itself. I read The Code several times. I made lists of appointments and duties, I joined appendant bodies in a structured and organized way. I began working to meet Masons and identify potential leaders for our Craft. I hope I have been somewhat successful in meeting the challenge and providing leadership to this incredible organization. My view of the role of Grand Master is that the leader of all must be the servant of all. I am most happy when I am doing the job that nobody else will do, whether it is taking out the trash, cleaning the toilet, parking the cars, or cleaning up some leftover mess. You, my Brothers, have thrust me more into the limelight than I would otherwise choose to be. I look forward to returning to quieter service to help in any way I can behind the scenes.

A special thanks goes to our Past Grand Masters who have been so supportive this year. They have filled critical leadership appointments. They have supported me at district meetings. They have hosted me in their homes during long stretches of travel. Unlike some grand jurisdictions, they do not interfere with the leadership of the Grand Lodge, but rather guide and support and defer to the elected leadership you choose. We are well-blessed with this cadre of experienced wise counselors who are always ready and willing to give a word if, and only if, requested.

Our Grand Line Officers are the finest men around. The time, talent, and treasure they expend to serve us all in the Grand Lodge of North Carolina is extraordinary. Nine years of continuous service is a lot to ask of any man and his family, but these Brothers cheerfully travel and participate whenever and wherever needed. My hat is off to each and all of them. Our Grand Lodge will

be well served over the next decade and beyond by these Brothers and the men whom they select to follow in our footsteps.

Our Grand Lodge staff in Raleigh provide invaluable and consistent service to us all. I am afraid that the support they provide to us is treated much like electricity in our homes: we pay little attention to the comforts it provides, and we only notice how important it is when it is not present. We should all take special note and say thanks anytime the opportunity presents itself. Cornelia, Vicki, Hayley, and Brother Jonathan do countless things behind the scenes that could not be accomplished if we were a volunteer-only organization. Right Worshipful Brother Walt Clapp is a wise counselor and strength and support to us all. My deepest thanks to each of them.

My family: Dad (Worshipful Brother D.L. Webster), Mom (Mary), and brother (Walter) have been a great support system, traveling with me, allowing me to stay in their homes, and keeping me grounded at all times. I thank them for their patience and love shown to me throughout. To Jan and Amy, my girls who have sacrificed much for me to perform this service, I thank them for their patience, for the many extra tasks they had to perform in my absence to keep house and home together, and for the love that kept me going on the long nights and the far distances traveled.

At many opportunities when I spoke in Lodges, I commented that the Most Important Man in Masonry was there that night, and it was not the Grand Master. The Most Important Man in Masonry is each and every Blue Lodge Mason who turns on the lights, cooks the meals, coaches the candidates, performs the ritual, raises the charity funds, and buries the dead. Masonry in North Carolina could continue without any particular Grand Master, but it cannot continue without the Most Important Man in Masonry. It is critical that each and every one of us continues daily to apply the lessons of Masonry in our lives, to seek self-improvement, to start with the man in the mirror, ask him to change his ways, and understand that no message could have been any clearer, if you want to make the world a better place, you've got to look at yourself, and then make a change.

Thank you for all that each of you do for Freemasonry in North Carolina. Thank you for the opportunity to serve with you. Our foundation is stronger. We are on the cusp of something great! Keep up the good work!

Fraternally and respectfully submitted,
Bryant D. Webster
Grand Master, 2016

Interim Report
of
Grand Master
A. Gene Cobb, Jr.
to
the
Grand Lodge
of
Ancient, Free and Accepted
Masons
of North Carolina
at
Winston-Salem, North Carolina
September 22, 2017

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina, Grand Lodge Officers, Past Grand Masters, officers of constituent lodges, voting delegates to the Annual Communication, Brethren all:

As prescribed in The Code, I am pleased to make this report of my interim activities and our accomplishments in the year 2017. It has been a joy for me to serve as your Grand Master, and my gratitude for your hospitality, respect, and dedication to the Craft made this not only a humbling experience for me, but an honor to serve as your 164th Grand Master.

We live in the greatest state in America. We are bigger in size than most folks imagine. Until someone literally drives from beyond Manteo to beyond Murphy, the vast expanse of North Carolina remains a mystery. I am pleased to say the beauty and glory of our state is no longer a mystery to me.

We are also big in heart. One year ago, you elected me to serve you during a time of change. Our Grand Lodge has been led in years past by great men, and as I watched each of them exit the Grand East, they took a part of my heart with them. Yet, every time they were needed for wisdom, wise counsel, strength, and support, our Past Grand Masters were there for all of us. They deserve our sincere appreciation.

Working through the challenges of our early time together, our two new grand stewards have begun to prove they were up to the task. I am confident that you will be seeing more of your appointed line officers in the coming year. Your elected line officers function like the true team we have been since coming into the line. There are great men in line to serve, and their gifts, talents, and superlative graces will serve the Grand Lodge of North Carolina well for many years.

After the election, meetings with District Deputy Grand Masters and District Deputy Grand Lecturers revealed some tweaks to the “Lion and Pillar Lodge of Excellence” award were needed. Working together with them and with Tony Rathbone, we are pleased to recognize the 81 who applied for the award with 54 meeting all of the requirements and 27 being named “honorable mention.”

The Installation Ceremony held at the Carolina Inn in Chapel Hill is one of the places legend claims “could” have been where decisions were made to create the University of North Carolina. It was a most elegant weekend with everyone gathered under one roof, and the beauty and glory of the Inn during the holiday season provided a perfect setting for us.

State of the Craft

Building upon Grand Master Webster’s theme of “Building a Stronger Foundation,” it was my intent to “Roar with Excellence.” My challenge and calling to the Craft was “Let’s Go to Work.” We spent time with lodges, brothers, gatherings of all kinds promoting education, patriotism, philanthropy, Masonic membership, and community connections. Fifty-four of our lodges met all of the requirements for the William Richardson Davie Lodge of Excellence. This program is expected to continue in the coming years, and each Grand Master will be able to identify the areas of excellence upon which he wishes to focus, thereby enabling our future vision to remain alive and vital and relevant for years to come.

While we have continued to form new lodges and look to ways and means through which this may happen that will effectively address the needs of the

Craft in today's world, we continue to build our relationships with our Masonic family. This Grand Master believes the connection between our Grand Lodge, the York Rite, the Scottish Rite, the Shrine, the Order of the Eastern Star, Rainbow, DeMolay, Amaranth and any other family member is vital to our future. As we identify our niche in the Masonic family, we must support one another in the quarry where the Great Architect of the Universe sets us to work. Masons are about cooperation—best work and best agree.

Accordingly, we have received one of the largest donations ever from the Order of the Eastern Star for the charitable work we do together. Oasis Shrine gave more than \$2.1 million to the Shriners Hospitals. A new 33rd Degree team has formed in the Scottish Rite consisting of many of the Grand Lodge officers. Masons Can Food Drive No. 2 is underway at this Annual Communication. There is something great roaring loud and proud everywhere in this state. We went to work and we are working together.

Necrology

I witnessed my first Masonic funeral when I was seven years old. My grandfather, John Moody Cobb, was laid to rest at Crestview Cemetery in Roanoke Rapids. It made an impression on me as youngster, and as a pastor by vocation, I have known how important the presence and power of words and actions are when we celebrate the life of those who now rest from their labors.

Some years ago, a new North Carolina Masonic Funeral Manual was published giving us guidance on ceremonies that could be done around the jurisdiction and at the Annual Communication. It allows for the remembrance of every man who enters our doors from the youngest Entered Apprentice to the oldest Master Mason. This year, we will remember 1,143 of our brothers and Most Worshipful Grand Master Norburn B. Hyatt (PGM, 1986).

I do trust that this solemn remembrance will remind us all of the fact that we stand on the shoulders of great men, mentors, and friends who have made us what we are today. As we remember them on Friday, it is my hope and prayer that their lives will continue to inspire us toward excellence.

District Officers Conference

In October of 2016 after the Annual Communication, I met with the District Deputy Grand Masters in Raleigh at the Grand Lodge Office. This was part of a three year plan to get our Officers to WhiteStone, the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford, and the Grand Lodge office building. We had a wonderful meal prepared by Cary 198 and spent the day on Saturday rolling out a plan for lodge excellence called the William Richardson Davie Lion and Pillar Lodge of Excellence. The name for the award was chosen for two reasons. First, I wanted to honor the longest serving Grand Master in our history, William Richardson Davie. Second, the lion and pillar were his chosen mark for the Royal Arch degrees he took in Fayetteville after the Revolutionary War. At that time, we realized we would need to tweak the program, and for those who stayed with it, honors will be given at this Annual Communication. Promoting it in the district meetings was a joy. It also made my repetitive speech a whole lot easier.

I also met with District Deputy Grand Lecturers in October 2016 at the Greensboro Masonic Temple to hear their unique concerns and share with them my ideas for the upcoming district meetings. We have outstanding lecturers in this jurisdiction. To call attention to their presence and the need for

more Certified Lecturers, I asked the resident DDGL to lead the closing charge at each district meeting this year in whatever way he chose. They roared with excellence.

The work that our district officers do is of paramount universal importance to the fraternity. They represent the Grand Master when he cannot be "on the spot." There are situations that occurred this year that our DDGMs and DDGLs responded to with roaring excellence. Some of these situations were filled with great challenge and others filled with great joy. Some were expected. Some were not, particularly the call for Form 39 which is still required in the Code, but hopefully we will address such issues by appropriate legislation and a more streamlined practice soon.

I cannot thank our District Officers enough for their leadership and service.

Honorary Title of Past District Deputy Grand Master

I recommend that this Grand Lodge grant the honorary title of Past District Deputy Grand Master to the following Brethren who are now eligible in accordance with The Code:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Lodge</u>	<u>District</u>
Dale Covington Winstead	747	2
Jeffrey Michael Futrell	17	5
William Edward Phillips	58	9
Milburn Eugene Powers	340	10
Edward Earl Wells	98	11
William Charles Barrett, IV	117	16
Frank David Wanko	484	21
Robert Charles Peeler	657	28
Robert Gibbon McIntosh	176	31
John Herbert Caudle	31	32
John Lester Allen	259	40

Honorary Title of Past District Deputy Grand Lecturer

I recommend that this Grand Lodge grant the honorary title of Past District Deputy Grand Lecturer to the following Brethren who are now eligible in accordance with The Code:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Lodge</u>	<u>District</u>
Mitchell Leroy Spruill	7	1
James Leroy Sanderlin	90	5
David Ralph Ellis	117	16
Homer Eugene Burroughs	563	18
David Hubert Troxell	305	21
Robert Wayne Morton	699	24
Royal Sanford Jarvis	214	27
Larry Todd Hatley	150	29
Edward Joseph Steel	461	32
Phillip Mark Alexander	407	33
Thomas Gary Brooks, Jr	202	35
Benjamin Augustus Sims	118	39

District Meetings

I continue to stand amazed at my predecessors in this office and the Grand Secretary at how they held so many district meetings. This year, we held 21 meetings in our 41 districts. It was a joy to welcome our brethren who attended from other districts, and in some respects this extended the hand of fellowship and encouraged the “stretch” of the hand of friendship in its own right across North Carolina.

“Let’s go to work” were some of my father’s last words on his way to the paper mill each day when I was a child. Thus far, we went to work in Greenville, Lumberton, Dunn, Wilmington, Sanford, Wilson, New Bern, Jacksonville, Raleigh, Oxford, Greensboro, Mount Airy, Deep Gap, Franklin, Asheville, Shelby, Lenoir, Chapel Hill, Kannapolis, Trenton, Garner, Roxboro, Elizabeth City, Manteo, Washington, High Point, Mount Gilead, Huntersville, Brevard, Thomasville, Shallotte, Ocean Isle, Littleton, Murfreesboro, Cary, Salisbury, and Newton for various district meetings and other functions. In each place we worked, we had fun, we celebrated, and we talked about the various concerns we have here in North Carolina.

District meetings were open to the public this year because we have invited non-Masons who are vital to us to speak. The Worthy Grand Matron of Eastern Star, Helen Lentz; Beth Grace; Melody McBride; and Jeff Hensley have attended our meetings. In Manteo and Deep Gap, I was pleased to welcome my wife Brenda at our meetings. I believe the more we involve our wives and families in what we do, the better off Freemasonry will be. The decision to be “open” was made based upon who was present and what the agenda was that evening. Several members engaged in a conversational style of reporting for not more than 3-4 minutes per topic. Everyone roared with excellence.

The personal highlight of the district meetings happened for me on May 16, 2017, at Blackmer 127 in Mount Gilead. WB Ernest Tedder interrupted my journey to the East by the North side of the altar. There were a few whispers as I entered the room without my jewel. Only a few people knew that WB Tedder had it. WB Tedder had presented my original apron on April 6, 1993, when I was initiated at Blackmer. What a joyous moment this was when WB Tedder gave the apron lecture and placed the jewel of the Grand Master on my shoulders before I went to the East. I will appreciate this moment for as long as I live—a moment few of us in this office have the opportunity to experience. Thank you Blackmer 127, and thank you WB Tedder.

In our last district meeting at Long Creek Lodge, I had Kevin Otis, Mark Kolada, and Chris Richardson standing together for the charity report. The time has come for North Carolina to realize there are not two charities, but three who stand together for our causes. The so-called “silent partner” is not and can no longer be silent. For years, the North Carolina Masonic Foundation has roared like a lion we could not see. Our lodges are beginning to see, as they hear the importance of our support for our charities and individual lodges in perpetuity through the NC Masonic Foundation. Let’s continue to go to work and roar!

One of the great and fun things to do this year has been to post the videos on the Grand Master’s Facebook page. One never knows when one might appear. The video of the pushups for raising the goal of \$12,000 before we “kick the bucket” and the Memorial Day video in Thomasville garnered more than 10,000 views! Within 48 hours of the Thomasville event the video reached

17,726 people on Facebook. 7,100 viewed it. 87 shared it. Apparently, these successful and impromptu videos are being well received and anticipated from the Craft. There will be more as we approach Annual Communication. These videos are a great way to get our word out and to let the Craft know what is happening in “real time.” We all appreciate how Beth Grace and the Board of Publications who are doing a super job at keeping us in the public eye. We do not recruit, but we can sure let the light shine!

We must unify our efforts in charity now and in perpetuity. This effort will advance the work we do for the children and the elderly and the Craft. On May 28-29, 2017, several Grand Line officers and I attended the Thomasville Memorial Day celebration. We were told that this annual celebration is the largest Memorial Day observance by any town or city in the Eastern United States. We walked the two mile parade route, enjoyed the crowd, and honored those who made our freedom possible. The Thomasville North Carolina Memorial Day Parade and Ceremony team presented the Grand Lodge of North Carolina a plaque for our participation which I proudly received on our behalf.

The Masonic Home for Children at Oxford, WhiteStone, and the NC Masonic Foundation are our worthy charities. I enjoy explaining why every Mason in North Carolina would be pleased to share his generosity with these charities. I accept the challenge to change the conversation about our charitable giving and invite everyone else to do the same. Helping others is what we do as Masons and “injury to ourselves” seems impossible at the minimal level of just \$9 per year. Some of the conversations and correspondence I’ve shared about MHCO and WhiteStone have been the happiest times of my service this year. I’m so proud of what we are doing and the charitable work that we do to faithfully execute the promises we made at the altar with our hands on the Holy Bible, square, and compasses. Let’s roar with more!

We have been at work in North Carolina addressing concerns with temple associations, issued one dispensation to allow the formation of The Lodge of Nine Sisters UD, worked on Code amendments, performance reviews, formed a Task Force on Membership and Finances that will involve appendant and concordant bodies as they so choose, and formed a Scouting Task Force.

In an effort to consolidate Code issues, address the rising number of alleged embezzlements, delays in paying per capita, and other financial reporting matters, I called for the Form 39 audit from every lodge in the jurisdiction this year. Working through the office of the Grand Secretary, we will tweak the process for fiduciary responsibility and accountability in a way and manner that is not only feasible, but also effective by the end of 2017.

You will hear an important report Saturday morning from the chair of our Membership Committee, WB Steve Norris, regarding the committee’s work prior to receiving and acting on the budget.

Joseph Montfort Medals

MW Bryant Webster was given the highest honor for service we can bestow upon a North Carolina Mason, the Joseph Montfort medal. This was my first action as Grand Master following installation. PGM Webster’s service to Scouting, to our beloved fraternity, to his community through pro bono legal service for which he was honored, and most especially his effort to help save WhiteStone must not only never be forgotten, but also embraced as present and future needs unfold. Though he did not agree with me, I have felt for many

years that MW Brother Bryant Webster was one of the most deserving members of our Craft to receive the Montfort. He said, "It's too soon." I said, "No it's not." This time, I had the last word.

WB Oscar Keller was given the second Montfort at his place of business: Parkview Retirement Home in Sanford, North Carolina. WB Keller's commitment to the care of the elderly, the development of his community, along with his dedication to the highest principles of Freemasonry and family serve as a lasting influence on all of us. Upon our return from the Grand Lodge Officers Retreat on January 16, 2017, RW Brothers Speed Hallman, Mack Sigmon, and Shaun Bradshaw accompanied me on a visit to meet their 95-year old brother. The Montfort was given later that week as friends, family, and members of Buffalo 172 in Sanford gathered around him at Parkview.

The third Montfort will be given at the Annual Communication, if possible.

Physical Disabilities

Per The Code, it is the responsibility of the Grand Master to approve all petitions for the degrees on which the petitioner indicates a physical disability. It is the duty of the DDGM to investigate those and make a recommendation. We have had an extraordinary number of such disability waivers this year, a total of 22. I have approved all, and on several of them I noted to use "extreme caution." Like Grand Master Webster before me, I believe a large number of injured military veterans are petitioning our lodges.

Dispensations

It is the province of the Grand Master to issue dispensations to lodges for certain activities outside the normal practice or outside their approved bylaws. Again, there seem to have been a much larger number than is usual. I take this as a sign of strong activity and creativity among our lodges. As of this writing, I have approved the following 37 Dispensations:

Dispensations 2017 – A. Gene Cobb, Grand Master

1. Elect Officers - Ocean 405
2. Stated Communications - Knights of Solomon 764
3. Elect Officers - Corinthian 542
4. Elect Officers - Roman Eagle 550
5. Change time of Stated - William Pitt 734
6. Stated Communications - Knights of Solomon 768
7. Elect Officers - Shallotte 727
8. Stated Communications - Wilkerson College 760
9. Other Place - Federal Point 753
10. Elect Junior Warden - Eureka 317
11. Stated Communications - Lux Libertas UD
12. Other Place - Ashlar 765
13. Other Place - Zion 81
14. Dispense with Stated - Zion 81

15. Other Place - Ashlar 765
16. Elect Master - Leaksville 136
17. Outdoor - Clay 301
18. Other Place - Ayden 498
19. Other Place - Ashlar 765
20. Elect Senior Warden - P P Turner 746
21. Outdoor - King Solomon 138
22. Other Place - Knights of Solomon 768
23. Outdoor - Crown Point 708
24. Other Place Railroad - Spencer 543
25. Elect Master - Seaside 429
26. Elect Junior Warden - Cherry Point 688
27. Elect Master - St. Pauls 474
28. Other Place - Ashlar 765
29. Dispense with Stated - Gaston 263
30. Dispense with Stated - Berne 724
31. Dispense with Stated - Perquimans 106
32. Dispense with Stated, add Stated - Wilkerson College 760
33. Other Place - Phalanx 31
34. Elect Master - Clay 301
35. Stated Communication - Knights of Solomon 768
36. Outdoor - Yadkin 162
37. Outdoor Battlefield - Buffalo 172
38. Other Place - State College 770
39. Dispense with Stated - Zion 81
40. Other Place - Lux Libertas UD
41. Other Place Battleship - St. John's 1
42. Elect Master - Stanly 348
43. Other Place Rendezvous Mountain - Liberty 45

Emergent Communications

An Emergent Communication of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina was held at the Carolina Inn on the campus of the University of North Carolina, on Saturday, December 3, 2016, for the purpose of installing the Grand Lodge Officers.

An Emergent Communication of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina was held at the Grand Lodge Building on Sunday, January 22, 2017, for the purpose of going to First Presbyterian Church in Raleigh to re-dedicate the cornerstone.

2017 Initiatives

Most of the Initiatives this year relate to recognition of the Lion and Pillar Lodges of Excellence and my deep commitment to ensuring the memory and

legacy of our longest serving Grand Master, William Richardson Davie. To that end, I have recommended the following.

1. That we continue to build strong foundations with the NCMF, estate planning, lodge experiences, and community connections as introduced by Grand Master Webster.
2. That we continue to promote and explore as many opportunities for Masonic Education as possible through the Davie Leadership Academy, Wilkerson College, Middle Chamber, Speakers Bureau, and whatever else we can through our Grand Lodge Masonic Education Committee.
3. That we continue to find ways to honor our military veterans and promote programs of importance to them. One outstanding way we can help veterans and pursue excellence is to volunteer in VA clinics and hospitals, visit or call veterans on a regular basis, and above all, never forget that the freedoms we know and enjoy were given to us by our brave men and women in service to our country.
4. That we continue to find ways to increase our generous giving to our three charities and open the door for more lodges to subscribe to the North Carolina Masonic Foundation. Furthermore, it is my hope that future Grand Masters will increase the minimum expectation for contributions from our members to the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford, WhiteStone: A Masonic and Eastern Star Community in Greensboro, and to the North Carolina Masonic Foundation. Excellence, as defined by this Grand Master, supports all three charities without exception toward the goal of that day our Homes are fully endowed so that the children and elderly never have to worry about Masonic care and support again.
5. That we will address our “membership” issues for what they really are: relationship issues. If all we want is members so that we can pay our bills, then we are NOT Masons. To be the fraternity God wants us to be, friendship, morality, and brotherly love must prevail always. These virtues are relational matters. While we must utilize MORI, pay our dues, care about our members so much that we retain and not suspend; the real issue is establishing and maintaining lasting relationships that cause people to want to participate and give their best.
6. That we will get out of our buildings and into the community as the family we are supposed to be. The time has come for all Masons to embrace their niche wherever it may be. I am a Blue Lodge Mason, a York Rite Mason, a Scottish Rite Mason, a Shrine Mason, and an Order of the Eastern Star MASON. Many of us can say the same. For us, there is no “either-or.” There is only “both-and.” When we start working together as such, our fraternity will soon discover a loud roar of excellence found in cooperation like the world has never heard. So, I encourage everyone to find their niche in Freemasonry, cooperate as a family, and give everything we have to whatever it is we are doing in the quarry without ever being so high and mighty that we are unable to humble ourselves before the fraternity on the level.
7. That we continue the work previously recommended by my predecessors in office as much as possible.

WhiteStone: A Masonic and Eastern Star Community

Please take the time and read the report of the Grand Lodge Committee on WhiteStone: A Masonic and Eastern Star Community from our Junior Grand Deacon, Larry Thompson. We work together with our sisters and brothers from the Order of the Eastern Star to provide five star care in the best facility in North Carolina for our elderly. PGM Gene Jernigan is the chairman of the board and Helen Lentz, Worthy Grand Matron of the North Carolina Grand Chapter, Order of the Eastern Star is the vice chair.

There are many people who have not visited WhiteStone, and what I've observed is that everyone who ever does immediately recognizes the great things happening on the campus. The charitable work now is attempting to extend further. Programs that help people all over North Carolina will now actually help keep people in their own homes and communities. There will be many who do not have to vacate their home and move to Greensboro because charitable giving will provide assistance in communities all over the state.

Brother Mark Kolada, the executive director, is roaring loud and making us proud of the work in Greensboro. I say this with all sincerity: Every brother should visit WhiteStone and MHCO within one month of being raised a Master Mason. Lodges need to make this happen. Although we cannot require it, I can and do strongly recommend it. Getting proper information and staying the right course is how we best work and best agree. Visit WhiteStone. See what we see. Experience what we experience. You will be glad you did it. You will want to give as liberally as possible to WhiteStone and in so doing experience the joy every true Mason has in remembering the elderly.

Masonic Home for Children at Oxford

It has long been the custom of Masons in North Carolina to give very well to the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford. This year, it was my joy to share gifts at Christmas and graduation with our children. Our children are wonderful! The MHCO is not only a great place to be a kid, but also a great place for a kid to grow up and become a wonderful young adult. Over 10,000 children have been served over the last 144 years. It is truly God's work. We celebrated another year of accreditation in August after our Board meeting and heard wonderful testimonies from our staff from "the heart."

Grand Master Dewey Preslar is our new board chairman, and he leads the team in breakthrough thinking in each meeting. We enjoy streamlined decision making from outstanding committees. I commend the MHCO Board of Directors for including every member of the Grand Line on one of their committees. Our Shrine Temples head back to Oxford for the Masonic Homecoming each October, bearing witness to our cooperative efforts. We are constantly making plans to welcome MHCO alumni back to their home. Executive Director Kevin Otis and his fine staff have made significant and positive changes in the last year.

Our continued support of the MHCO is vital to the future development of children and adults who make a difference in our society. There is an exciting vision for the future at Oxford and every Mason would do well to learn of it. Please read the report of the Grand Lodge Committee on the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford from our Senior Grand Deacon, David Wicker.

North Carolina Masonic Foundation

The Foundation was formerly referred to as "the silent partner." We have

worked together this year to remove that stigma and replace it with a roar that is “loud, clear, and proud.”

Our Directors have much wisdom to strengthen the position of the Foundation financially, and under the superb leadership of Chairman Mike Faulkenbury, the great strides over the last twelve months have blessed us all. By the time we get to Annual Communication, the Foundation will have talked with all members of the Grand Line, all Past Grand Masters, and many lodges across the state about remembering the Foundation in perpetuity.

Over the course of the last year, we have hired Jeff Hensley as our executive director and two regional directors: Chris Richardson for the East and Dee Blake for the West.

Beth Grace joined us as our new communications director and editor of the *North Carolina Mason*. This new approach to the work of the Foundation and the communication of vital information to our fraternity has proven to be a wonderful and productive relationship that we expect to continually improve over time.

We can and must do more. As the Foundation helps our Homes, it is also in a unique position to help our lodges. Accordingly and in response to information learned from the Form 39 report, I will be asking the Foundation board to decrease the minimum subscription rate from \$25,000 to \$10,000. We will all be better off when this happens.

I will also be asking the lodges of this jurisdiction to reach out to the Foundation. Find out how we can work together for the good of the fraternity in every way.

Veterans' Hospital Visits

I visited the VA hospitals in Asheville and Salisbury. Our Masonic Service Association Representatives who act on our behalf at those facilities are doing yeoman's work to reach out to our Masons and other veterans. We continue to need volunteers for our VA hospitals and would be a very worthwhile Lodge of Excellence project. At the Asheville campus, I was privileged to participate in the presentation of the Order of the Long Leaf Pine and a Masonic Award for a 70 year Mason, Brother Wayne Carringer. All of us are grateful to him for his service to our country as he was a survivor of the Bataan Death March. It was also my privilege to visit three brothers at the VA in Salisbury. We need to visit more and build relationships with our Masonic veterans. Many from World War II and Korea have died. Only 31% remain alive from the Vietnam War. On August 12, I visited a 102 year old brother in Newton who was a decorated Marine from World War II. It means so much to our veterans to have us visit, spend time with them, shake their hands, listen to them, and show appreciation. Honoring our veterans by volunteering to spend a few minutes with them as often as possible is the least we can do.

World Conference of Grand Lodges

We did not attend the World Conference in Madagascar this year but are planning to attend the 300th Anniversary of the United Grand Lodge of England October 29-31, 2017, in London, England.

Conference of Grand Masters of North America

February 19-22, 2017, together with our Deputy Grand Master, Right Worshipful Brother Speed Hallman, our Senior Grand Warden, Right Wor-

shipful Brother Mack Sigmon, our Junior Grand Warden, Right Worshipful Brother Shaun Bradshaw, our Grand Treasurer, Most Worshipful Brother Lew Ledford, our Grand Secretary, Right Worshipful Brother Walt Clapp, and our Assistant to the Grand Secretary, Worshipful Brother Jonathan Underwood, we represented the Grand Lodge of North Carolina at the North American Conference of Grand Masters, held this year in Omaha, Nebraska. This was the first time since I've been in the elected Grand Line that the wives of the four principal officers attended. The expense for our wives are paid by the Grand Line Officers, not the Grand Lodge. To have all four with us made the trip a double blessing and it allowed them to see what we do. We continued to experience the improvements Grand Master Webster brought to the Conference during his year of chairing the Planning Committee. It was humbling to have lunch with the Grand Masters of Newfoundland, Russia, and Kazakhstan. Aside from the fellowship we experience and the friends/connections we make at the Conference, we are able to bring ideas back to North Carolina that are best practices in other jurisdictions that could work for us. One of the best parts of attending this Conference is being able to see first hand how we are doing things so well here in North Carolina and are about to do them even better.

Northeast Conference of Grand Masters, Deputy Grand Masters, and Grand Secretaries

We attended the Northeast Conference of Grand Masters, held in Indianapolis, Indiana, on the weekend of July 21-23, 2017. Attending were our Deputy Grand Master, Right Worshipful Brother Speed Hallman, our Senior Grand Warden, Right Worshipful Brother Mack Sigmon, our Junior Grand Warden, Right Worshipful Brother Shaun Bradshaw, our Grand Treasurer, Most Worshipful Brother Lew Ledford, our Grand Secretary, Right Worshipful Brother Walt Clapp, and myself. This was the best of the four Conferences I attended. A rousing speech was made by Chris Hodapp, challenging the Grand Masters to do the right thing rather than pursue popularity. Brother Chris will be coming to our Grand Lodge next year, and I hope he inspires all of us like he did your Grand Line Officers. We participated in a number of presentations regarding emerging issues in our Craft and were able to share with our Brothers from some 17 Grand Lodges how we in North Carolina have approached some of those issues. We don't experience the same problems that other grand jurisdictions have because we are striving for excellence all of the time. Background checks, while part of what we normally do, must constantly receive the attention of the lodge before the ballot is cast on a profane. We can always improve, but I am convinced, as Grand Master Webster said in his report last year, "we are on the right track."

Visitation and Special Activities

Every year, the Grand Master is elected and begins a schedule that resembles a full time job. Below and in the pages that follow is a brief account of the places I've visited and things I've been doing since election at the 2016 Annual Communication. As of August 12, 2017, it represents at least 17,319 Masonic contacts, 25,772 miles driven and flown, 223 written correspondences, at least 2,798 emails, and at least 1,608 phone calls. There are many contacts, emails, and phone calls that I never took the time to document. It is a privilege to serve the Craft, and I thank everyone for all of the support and respect with which the office of Grand Master is treated.

1/25/2017	Wilmington	District Meeting
1/27-28/2017	New Bern	Sudan Ceremonial and 100th Anniversary
1/30/2017	Sanford	District Meeting
1/31/2017	Wilson	District Meeting
2/2/2017	Halifax	Lux Libertas UD
2/6/2017	Jacksonville	National Sojourners in Jacksonville at Semper Fidelis 680
2/7/2017	Greensboro	Greensboro OES Initiation for Shaun Bradshaw
2/8/2017	Greensboro	Greensboro SR and Centennial Planning
2/9/2017	Oxford	MHCO Board Meeting
2/10/2017	Oxford & Greensboro	MHCO and WhiteStone
2/11/2017	Greensboro	WhiteStone/Middle Chamber
2/13/2107	Raleigh	Meetings
2/18-22/2017	Omaha, Nebraska	Conference of Grand Masters of North America
2/24/2017	Greensboro	Greensboro Scottish Rite Leaders
2/27/2017	Raleigh	Risk Management Meeting
3/3/2017	Raleigh	Board of General Purposes
3/4/2017	Charlotte	One Day Ceremonial Oasis Shrine
3/6/2017	Sanford	Buffalo 172
3/7/2017	Halifax	Royal White Hart 2
3/8/2017	Mount Gilead	Blackmer 127
3/10/2017	Raleigh	Meeting with delegation from Congo
3/11/2017	Catawba	Riverside Lodge Ham Day
3/15/2017	Raleigh	Raleigh Masonic Temple Matters
3/20-21/2017	Greensboro	Grand York Rite
3/21/2017	Mount Airy	District Meeting
3/22/2017	Greensboro	District Meeting
3/23/2017	Deep Gap	District Meeting
3/27/2017	Franklin	District Meeting
3/28/2017	Asheville	District Meeting
3/29/2017	Boiling Springs	District Meeting
3/30/2017	Lenoir	District Meeting
3/31/2017	Raleigh	Meeting regarding Risk Management
4/3/2017	Sanford	Buffalo 172: Third Degree
4/4/2017	Halifax	Royal White Hart 2
4/5/2017	Raleigh	Meetings

4/12/2017	Halifax	Speaker for Halifax Day 2017
4/19/2017	Trenton	District Meeting
4/20/2017	Garner	District Meeting
4/24/2017	Roxboro	District Meeting
4/25/2017	Halifax	District Meeting
4/26-27/2017	Greenville, SC	South Carolina Grand Lodge
4/28-29/2017	Greensboro	Greensboro/Charlotte Scottish Rite
4/29/2017	Kannapolis	Quarry Degree moved to Stokes Lodge
5/1/2017	Elizabeth City	District Meeting
5/2/2017	Manteo	District Meeting
5/3/2017	Washington	District Meeting
5/4/2017	Greensboro	Lux Libertas Lodge
5/5-6/2017	Raleigh	Wilkerson College Graduation
5/10/2017	Greensboro	Grand Master's Banquet
5/11/2017	Oxford	MHCO Board Meeting
5/12/2017	Oxford & Greensboro	MHCO and WhiteStone
5/13/2017	Greensboro	WhiteStone/Middle Chamber
5/14/2017	Lumberton	Sixty Year Award
5/15/2017	High Point	Numa F. Reid 344 Veterans Night
5/16/2017	Mount Gilead	District Meeting
5/17/2017	Huntersville	District Meeting
5/19-20/2017	Brevard	Dunn's Rock 150th Anniversary
5/24-27/2017	Raleigh	Meetings and Amran Shrine Matters
5/28-29/2017	Thomasville	Memorial Day Festivities
6/3/2017	Shallotte/Ocean Isle	Board of General Purposes
6/7/2017	Raleigh	Meetings
6/11/2017	Durham	Grand Chapter OES Worship Service preaching
6/12/2017	Durham	Grand Chapter OES
6/13/2017	Raleigh	Meeting with State Legislators
6/19/2017	Littleton	Fellowcraft Degree
6/21/2017	Raleigh	Various Meetings
6/24/2017	Asheville/Durham	Meeting/St. John's Day Celebration UGLE 300th
6/26/2017	Raleigh	Rainbow Girls Assembly
7/7/2017	Greensboro	Letters from Home for Rite Care
7/9-10/2017	Maggie Valley	York Rite Summer Assembly
7/10/-13/2017	Daytona Beach, FL	Imperial Shrine
7/15/2017	Albemarle	Third Degree at Albemarle 703
7/17-20/2017	Toronto, Canada	Grand Lodge of Ontario: Toronto

7/21-22/2017	Indianapolis, IN	Northeast Conference Indianapolis
7/24/2017	Raleigh/Littleton	Meetings and Third Degree at Royal Hart 497
7/28-29/2017	Winston-Salem	Scottish Rite Leadership Weekend
8/3/2017	Oxford	Lux Libertas Lodge
8/5/2017	Oxford	Davie Academy
8/7/2017	Ahoskie	American George 17 Seventy-Year Award to Joe Dickerson, decorated WW II veteran
8/8/2017	Salisbury	VA Hospital Visit
	Cary	Ribbon Cutting at Cary 198 with Highway Patrol
8/9/2017	Greensboro	Greensboro Scottish Rite
8/10-11/2017	Oxford	MHCO Board Meeting
8/11-12/2017	Greensboro	WhiteStone Board Meeting
8/12/2017	Newton	Josephine Pruitt 100th Birthday visitation and visited WWII decorated veteran, Bro. Joe Noble

Recommended Legislation

My recommendations for legislation will be included in my final report. For now, I am considering the following:

1. Empowering the Secretaries of the Lodges to oversee a process in MORI that will enable the Annual Audit and Form 990 information to be collected, reported, and filed in one action that is financially responsible, reduces the risk of improper handling of funding, and aids the work of the DDGM in the lodges.
2. A full review of the Masonic Funeral Manual.
3. A potential recommended procedure to help members pay their dues online and in monthly payments.
4. A potential recommended procedure that will assist the Judge Advocate in handling cases that are initiated in other Masonic organizations to be addressed in those organizations before hearing them.
5. Other matters that may be included in my final report at the 2018 Annual Communication.

Acknowledgments and Special Appreciation

I have often spoken about being from Halifax, North Carolina. It is a rural area of Northeastern North Carolina in one of the poorest areas of the state. My father worked three jobs to provide his three children with the best experiences they could possibly have. On my way to becoming an Eagle Scout, my father hiked with me while none of us knew he was suffering the initial stages of multiple sclerosis. My mother, who died last year, made sure I was in church every week—something I do now by vocation. My parents taught me great values and the importance of striving for excellence in all things.

During my years at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, I

majored in Religion. My experience as a Christian has grown over the years, but it was during those formative years that I began to realize God was bigger than any of us and that many people in the world have come to know God in different ways. It was through Freemasonry that I came to appreciate how toleration through friendship, morality, and brotherly love not only embodies the gospel I preach, but also the beautiful teachings of Masonry we all know and enjoy.

I always wanted to be a Mason. When I was 34 years old, WB J.C. Robbins came into my office and I tried to schedule a meeting with him for the Church. He couldn't do it after repeated attempts. Finally, I asked him what was so important that he could not meet on first or third Tuesday nights. He said, "I've got Masonic Lodge meeting that night." I told J.C. I was disappointed in the Masons because they never asked me to join. He said, "...and we never will." Immediately, I understood. The look on his face was, "Come on, please ask me." The rest is history, and I am forever grateful to J.C. and to my coach, Ken Fritts. Both are now resting from their labors, and I thank God for them every day.

Blackmer Lodge 127 took me in, gave me opportunities to get involved in the work, and helped make me a Mason. When I moved from Mount Gilead in 1995 during my year as Master, I had the privilege to join and become a member of my grandfather's lodge. He had taken me into Royal White Hart 2 as a six year old saying words I've never forgotten. "Come on in. Follow me and I am fear no danger." My brothers in that lodge welcomed me home and helped me through the years prepare for this office, particularly WB Wilbur Garner who was coached by my grandfather and graciously sat in the East at my installation. The Greensboro Scottish and York Rite, the Sudan Shrine, and the Order of the Eastern Star have shown me the very best of this fraternity and I am deeply indebted to them all, especially the late William H. Simpson, PGM; the Reverend Victor Dowd; and Helen Collie, PWGM.

Being part of the formation of MESH Lodge 771 and Lux Libertas U.D. provided opportunities for me to give back to the fraternity that has given so much to me in friendship, morality, and brotherly love.

When Grand Master Dave Cash asked me to become the Junior Grand Steward in 2008 after the Annual Communication, I've always been grateful for the opportunity. The office of Grand Master is not an office I ever sought or thought in my wildest imagination that I would ever be elected to serve. Yet, somehow, these great leaders in our Craft saw something in me that I did not see in myself and asked me to share it. I've tried to do give my best. Every Past Grand Master has mentored and assisted me, and I am grateful to God for each one of them, especially those I have served with in the Grand Line: Dan Rice, Billy Dill, Lew Ledford, Bob Gresham, Dewey Preslar, Dalton Mayo, Doug Caudle, and Bryant Webster. They have blessed my life and my service through the years. For the success we have enjoyed, I am grateful. For the shortcomings we have experienced, I accept the responsibility.

From this report, I hope it is obvious that we function best when we function as a team. Your elected and appointed Grand Line strives for excellence, and the truth is we are better at it some days than others. When we go to work, our work roars loud and proud. I've had the best Deputy Grand Master in Speed Hallman I could have ever asked for from God. He along with every other officer had to step forward a whole year as Right Worshipful Jimmie

Hicks stepped out of the Grand Line. Right Worshipfuls Speed Hallman, Mack Sigmon, and Shaun Bradshaw formed a great team with me quickly, and we worked tirelessly to cover the state, give our best, and move things along the best we knew how to do. Worshipful Brothers David Wicker, Larry Thompson, Kevan Frazier, and the two appointments I made to the line, Don Kehler and Bobby Rideout, will prove over time to be wise and effective leaders for our future.

Right Worshipful Walt Clapp became the longest serving Grand Secretary in the country. Walt's wise counsel, support, and presence this year in my life has blessed all of us. I hope we will take the time to share our appreciation to Walt for all he does for us, as well as Vicki Lam, Cornelia Doherty, Hayley Moll, and Jonathan Underwood, whose talents and skills serve us so well.

St. Luke United Methodist Church, especially my wonderful staff where I serve as Lead Pastor has been as understanding as possible of my time serving you this year, but no one more so than my wife Brenda. She knows how much time and personal sacrifice is required of this office and how "they love you when they love you and when they are not happy—they are not happy" better than anyone. "Thank you" seems lame. Yet, "Thank you with love" is the best I can offer.

Grand Master Webster used to talk about the most important man in Masonry. It is NOT the Grand Master. He said:

It is each and every Blue Lodge Mason who turns on the lights, cooks the meals, coaches the candidates, performs the ritual, raises the charity funds, and buries the dead. Masonry in NC could continue without any particular Grand Master, but it cannot continue without the Most Important Man in Masonry. It is critical that each and every one of us continues daily to apply the lessons of Masonry in our lives, to seek self-improvement, to start with the man in the mirror, ask him to change his ways, and understand that no message could have been any clearer, if you want to make the world a better place, you've got to look at yourself, and then make a change.

I have spoken about the second most important man being the one who pays his dues whether he participates or not for without that support, much of what the rest of us do would never happen. How do we help that second most important man become a "most important?" We build relationships. How are we going to do that going forward? There are many ways, and there are many lodges in this state making the effort. Keep doing it!

To God be the glory for all of the good things that have happened, are happening, and are about to happen.

May we hear and heed the call now and always: Let's go to work!

Fraternally and respectfully submitted,
A Gene Cobb, Jr.
Grand Master, 2017

Necrology Service of Remembrance
Grand Lodge of Masons of North Carolina 2017

Prelude

Opening Prayer Grand Chaplain

Scripture Reading Psalm 90:1-10

Oration..... “Days Gone By” Grand Chaplain

Eulogy John M. Burchfield, PM

Song “Great Is Thy Faithfulness” -Masonic Quartet

Funeral Grand Honors

Benediction..... Grand Chaplain

Postlude

Grand Lodge Officers

A. Gene Cobb, Jr	Grand Master
C. Speed Hallman	Deputy Grand Master
Dwight M. Sigmon	Senior Grand Warden
P. Shaun Bradshaw	Junior Grand Warden
Lewis R. Ledford	Grand Treasurer
T. Walton Clapp, III	Grand Secretary
R. David Wicker, Jr.....	Senior Grand Deacon
Larry B. Thompson, Jr.	Junior Grand Deacon
Kevan D. Frazier.....	Grand Marshal
Donald E. Kehler.....	Grand Steward
Robert W. Rideout.....	Grand Steward
Mark M. N. Vickers.....	Grand Chaplain
William B. Bruton.....	Grand Tyler
Hugh L. McLaurin, III.....	Grand Lecturer
Steven A. Campbell.....	Grand Historian
David R. Cash, PGM.....	Grand Orator
James R. Stevens	Judge Advocate

Past Grand Masters

Lee Roy Thomas, Jr.	1988
Bunn Tate Phillips, Jr.	1990
Lester Poindexter Martin, Jr.	1991
Richard Groves Moore	1993
William Bailey Brunk	1994
Gerry Theodore Smith	1997
Thomas Warren Gregory	1998
Charles Marshall Ingram	1999
Charles Edward Cathey	2000
William Graham Mathis.....	2001
Jerry Reginald Tillett	2002
Charles Albert Lewis, Jr.....	2003
Leonard Yearby Safrit, Jr.....	2004
Graham Wiles Pervier	2005
Gene Tart Jernigan.....	2006
Wallace Berry Rigdon	2007
David Ronald Cash	2008
Dan Charles Rice	2009
William Lynn Dill	2010
Lewis Ray Ledford	2011
Robert Elvis Gresham, Jr.....	2012
Dewey Ralph Preslar, Jr.....	2013
Dalton Wayne Mayo.....	2014
Douglas Lynn Caudle	2015
Bryant Deleron Webster.....	2016

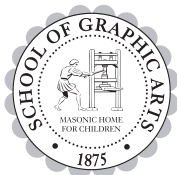
**As supplies of these reports
are limited, please retain them
for use during other sessions**

OR

scan this QR Code



**and download the
2017 Reports
to your
electronic device.**



DESIGNED & PRINTED BY

**PRINT & DESIGN CENTER
SCHOOL OF GRAPHIC ARTS**

600 COLLEGE STREET • OXFORD, NORTH CAROLINA 27565

printorders@mhc-oxford.org • www.schoolofgraphicarts.com

(919) 603-3910
