

# Reports

of

The Grand Master

The Grand Treasurer

The Grand Secretary

Boards, Commissions and Committees

at the

**232<sup>nd</sup>**

**Annual Communication**

of

The Grand Lodge of

Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons

of North Carolina

at

Winston-Salem, North Carolina

September 27–28, 2019



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## Report of the Grand Treasurer

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

I submit this interim report as of June 30, 2019. Included in this report is the total receipts and disbursement, special funds, and the securities held by this Grand Lodge.

Total Funds available 01/01/2018 (General Funds & Special Funds)	\$681,662
Total Receipts YTD	<u>885,547</u>
Total Disbursements YTD	(372,902)

Total Cash To Be Accounted For \$1,194,307

Deposits:	Rate	Maturity	Issue Date	Amount
Petty Cash				100
1st Citizens Bank (operating account)				277,005
Money Markets:				
North State Bank	VARI			161,472
PNC Bank	VARI			162,849
Investment:	Value		Principle	
Alex. Brown investment	683,517		<u>592,881</u>	

Total Cash Accounted For \$ 1,194,307

Total Cash & Principle Securities YTD

Special Funds Summary	01/01/18	06/30/18
Special Contingency Reserve	\$ 200,000	200,000
Emblems and Awards Reserve	8,265	11,998
Automobile Reserve	49,048	29,051
Operation Reserve	112,686	136,356
Building Reserve	120,710	120,710
Office Equipment Reserve	3,299	3,299
Charity Fund	<u>79,161</u>	<u>89,383</u>
Total Special Funds	\$ 573,169	\$ 590,797

Total Special Funds 06/30/2018 590,797

Total General Funds Available \$ 603,510

Total Of All Funds 06/30/2018 \$ 1,194,307

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, 2019, including projected expenditures for the year and suggested budget for calendar year 2020.

### Grand Lodge of North Carolina 2020 Proposed Budget

Account Name	Budget 2017	Actual 2017	Budget 2018	Actual 2018	Budget 2019	Actual 2019 through June	Proposed Budget 2020
<b>INCOME</b>							
30 600 Master Masons @ \$20 Per Capita Tax	\$ 672,340	\$ 668,303	\$ 644,300	\$ 645,420	625,400	619,360	612,000
762 Initiation Fees @ \$21.00	24,000	18,018	17,850	15,960	16,000	15,876	16,000
[NC Charities @ \$10.00]	(11,420)	(8,580)	(8,500)	(7,500)	(7,470)	(7,560)	(7,500)
[GL Building @ \$5.00]	(5,710)	(4,290)	(4,250)	(3,795)	(3,735)	(3,780)	(3,750)
[GWNMA @ \$5.00]	(5,710)	(4,290)	(4,250)	(3,795)	(3,735)	(3,780)	(3,750)
Initiation Fees Retained [@\$1.00]							
1,466 Endowed Members	24,000	24,216	25,000	27,192	28,460	27,013	29,000
Penalty for Late Returns	250	1,000	250	1,802	500	1,100	500
Dividends and Interest	8,000	9,307	12,000	10,842	12,000	13,712	12,000
Miscellaneous Income	1,000	1,244	1,000	961	1,000	1,463	1,000
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>706,750</b>	<b>704,928</b>	<b>683,400</b>	<b>686,997</b>	<b>668,420</b>	<b>663,404.24</b>	<b>655,500</b>
<b>Philanthropy</b>							
800-00 Masonic Home for Children	12,500	12,500	12,500	12,500	12,500	12,500	12,500
800-02 Masonic and Eastern Star Home	12,500	12,500	12,500	12,500	12,500	12,500	12,500
800-03 Charity and Relief	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	300	4,000
800-04 VA Hospital Visitation	1,000	1,000	1,000	0	250	250	250
800-06 Masonic Youth Organizations	4,250	4,250	4,250	4,250	4,250	4,250	4,250
800-07 Wilkerson College/Scholarships	2,400	2,400	2,400	2,400	1,200	1,200	1,200
<b>Total</b>	<b>36,650</b>	<b>35,650</b>	<b>36,650</b>	<b>35,650</b>	<b>34,700</b>	<b>30,750</b>	<b>34,700</b>
<b>Salaries and Fees</b>							
810-00 Grand Secretary	91,782	91,782	94,077	94,077	94,077	47,039	95,959
810-03 Office Personnel	90,375	90,375	93,450	93,450	95,320	51,035	97,349
810-04 Retirement/Health and Life Insurance HSA	44,691	42,116	45,339	43,269	45,556	19,604	45,601
810-05 Social Security Tax	18,248	18,248	18,767	19,496	18,998	9,701	19,387
810-06 Unemployment Tax	850	850	850	850	850	288	850
810-08 Assistant to the Grand Secretary	56,379	56,379	57,788	57,788	58,944	29,472	60,123
810-09 Summer Intern	1,500	0	1,500	952	1,500	1,500	1,500
810-10 Drewry Memorial Grand Secy. Fund	(20,000)	(16,485)	(16,000)	(17,970)	(18,000)	(16,930)	(18,000)

**Grand Lodge of North Carolina 2020 Proposed Budget**

Account Name	Budget 2017	Actual 2017	Budget 2018	Actual 2018	Budget 2019	Actual 2019 through June	Proposed Budget 2020
<b>Total</b>	<b>283,825</b>	<b>283,265</b>	<b>295,771</b>	<b>291,912</b>	<b>297,245</b>	<b>140,209</b>	<b>302,769</b>
<b>Administration Costs</b>							
820-00 Printing	10,500	9,815	10,500	9,602	8,000	8,000	8,000
820-02 Office Expenses	12,000	12,154	12,000	8,108	12,000	8,109	12,000
820-04 Postage	10,000	9,978	10,000	5,986	7,000	4,963	7,000
820-05 Office Equipment	3,000	2,112	3,000	2,056	1,500	922	1,500
820-06 Office Equipment Maintenance	10,500	10,818	10,500	12,878	9,500	4,746	9,500
820-07 Telephone/Internet	8,000	7,547	8,000	8,249	7,500	4,600	7,500
820-08 Membership Services Fees	(41,880)	(81,645)	(80,000)	(81,780)	(45,000)	(44,590)	(45,000)
820-09 Membership Services Expense	39,500	68,376	68,000	57,947	42,000	21,750	42,000
820-11 Auditing/Tax Services	10,000	11,915	10,000	11,288	10,000	0	10,000
820-13 Legal Fees	3,000	0	3,000	3,000	3,000	0	3,000
820-14 Background check fees	(18,600)	(13,915)	(15,000)	(15,314)	(14,000)	(8,925)	(14,000)
Background check expenses	12,000	8,814	10,000	11,149	10,000	5,543	10,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>58,020</b>	<b>45,969</b>	<b>50,000</b>	<b>33,169</b>	<b>51,500</b>	<b>(1,897)</b>	<b>51,500</b>
<b>Building Expenses</b>							
830-00 Utilities	10,000	10,055	10,000	11,404	10,000	3,793	10,000
830-01 Building Grounds Maintenance	17,000	17,382	17,000	17,563	17,000	11,643	20,000
830-03 Building Equipment Maintenance	5,000	5,137	5,000	2,035	5,000	684	5,000
830-04 Hazard Insurance	8,000	7,058	7,000	7,474	7,000	6,865	7,000
830-05 Bldg. Reserve-Transfer to Building Reserve	10,000	10,000	15,000	15,000	20,000	1,246	20,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>50,000</b>	<b>49,632</b>	<b>54,000</b>	<b>53,476</b>	<b>59,000</b>	<b>24,231</b>	<b>62,000</b>
<b>Membership Fees and Dues</b>							
840-00 Masonic Service Association	2,250	2,359	2,250	2,290	2,250	0	2,250
840-01 Conference of Grand Masters	750	500	750	500	750	0	750
840-03 GMC Committee on Recognition	100	100	100	100	100	0	100
840-05 Northeastern Regional Masonic Conf.	300	30	300	300	300	150	300
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,400</b>	<b>2,989</b>	<b>3,400</b>	<b>2,890</b>	<b>3,400</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>3,400</b>
<b>Travel and Officers Expense</b>							
850-00							

## Grand Lodge of North Carolina 2020 Proposed Budget

	Account Name	Budget 2017	Actual 2017	Budget 2018	Actual 2018	Budget 2019	Actual 2019 through June	Proposed Budget 2020
850-01	Grand Master's Travel	10,000	3,232	10,000	7,824	8,000	2,748	8,000
850-02	Grand Master's Automobile	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,500	0	6,500
850-03	Grand Master's Office	1,250	0	1,250		250	0	250
850-04	Grand Secretary's Travel	7,500	5,893	7,500	5,484	7,000	4,265	7,000
850-05	Grand Secretary's Automobile	4,500	4,500	4,500	4,500	4,500	203	4,500
850-06	Travel - Other DDGM / DDGL Orientation	7,500	7,599	7,500	7,384			
850-07	DDGM/DDGL November Orientation/Other	5,000	1,991	5,000	5018	11,000	2,380	11,000
	<b>Total</b>	<b>41,750</b>	<b>29,215</b>	<b>41,750</b>	<b>36,210</b>	<b>37,250</b>	<b>9,596</b>	<b>37,250</b>
860-00	<b>Boards, Commissions, and Committees</b>							
860-01	Board of General Purposes	4,500	4,616	6,000	526	5,000	0	5,000
860-02	Board of Custodians	2,500	2,430	2,500	3,017	2,500	1,517	2,500
860-04	Masonic Public Relations	3,500	0	3,500	1,495	3,500	0	3,500
860-05	Finance Committee	500	0	500	34	500	236	500
860-06	Code Commission	300	0	300		300	0	300
860-07	Lodge Service Commission	100	228	100		100	0	100
860-08	Masonic Education	3,500	5,169	3,500	3,406	3,500	1,239	3,500
	Middle Chamber Books expense		5,206		5,552		8,093	
	Middle Chamber Books sale/Eventbrite		(10,917)		(4,745)		(10,950)	
	Eventbrite Direct Deposit					15,400	1,035	15,400
	<b>Total</b>	<b>14,900</b>	<b>6,732</b>	<b>16,400</b>	<b>2,835</b>	<b>15,400</b>	<b>1,035</b>	<b>15,400</b>
870-00	<b>Out-of-State Visitation</b>							
870-01	Visiting other Grand Lodges	3,000	2,859	3,000	1,807	3,000	0	3,000
870-02	Conference of Grand Masters	6,500	4,824	6,500	6,406	7,500	4,062.87	7,500
870-03	Conference of Grand Secretaries	2,000	2,098	2,000	2,000	2,000	1,560.81	2,000
870-05	Regional Conference (NE)	3,000	5,941	3,000	4,229	4,000	300	4,000
870-06	World Masonic Conference	4,000	2,206	4,000	3,922	4,000	0	4,000
	<b>Total</b>	<b>18,500</b>	<b>17,928</b>	<b>18,500</b>	<b>17,806</b>	<b>20,500</b>	<b>5,924</b>	<b>20,500</b>
880-00	<b>Annual Communication / CLO</b>							
	Grand Lodge Officers		3,121		1,785			
	Past Grand Masters		3,269		2,910			



Grand Lodge of North Carolina 2020 Proposed Budget

Account Name	Budget 2017	Actual 2017	Budget 2018	Actual 2018	Budget 2019	Actual 2019 through June	Proposed Budget 2020
DDGM Travel		4,586		2,929			
DDGL Travel		1,894		1,762			
Boards, Committees, & Comm.		3,236		4,045			
Guests		11,378		11,920			
Auditorium, Banquets, Etc.		21,282		21,330		2,878	
Printing		3,541		4,490			
Installation Expenses		14,506		9,433			
Lump sum totals	68,000	66,813	68,000	60,603	68,000		68,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>68,000</b>	<b>66,813</b>	<b>68,000</b>	<b>60,603</b>	<b>68,000</b>	<b>2,878</b>	<b>68,000</b>
<b>Miscellaneous Expenses</b>							
890-00 Awards, Aprons, and Emblems	13,000	13,017	13,000	14,733	13,000	3,511	13,000
890-02 Grand Master's Portrait	500	940	500	394	500	0	500
890-04 Miscellaneous	1,000	1,133	1,000	1,008	1,000	100	1,000
890-06 Grand Lodge Library & Archives	4,000	3,375	4,000	4,000	3,500	2,091	3,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,500</b>	<b>18,465</b>	<b>18,500</b>	<b>20,135</b>	<b>18,000</b>	<b>5,702</b>	<b>18,000</b>
<b>Communications</b>							
900-00 Communications Director	29,110	29,110	28,110	28,110	28,110		28,110
900-01 Social Security Tax	2,227	2,227	2,170	2,170	2,170		2,170
900-03 Printing	51,600	51,600	51,600	51,600	41,600		41,600
900-04 Postage	38,000	38,000	38,000	38,000	38,000		38,000
900-05 Retirement/Life and Health Insurance	2,620	2,620	2,620	2,620	2,620		2,620
900-07 Travel	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000		4,000
900-08 Equipment and Supplies	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000		2,000
900-09 Internet Services/Web Page Domain	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500		1,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>131,057</b>	<b>131,057</b>	<b>130,000</b>	<b>130,000</b>	<b>120,000</b>	<b>60,000</b>	<b>120,000</b>

## Grand Lodge of North Carolina 2020 Proposed Budget

Account Name	Budget 2017	Actual 2017	Budget 2018	Actual 2018	Budget 2019	Actual 2019 through June	Proposed Budget 2020
Acct. No.							
<b>EXPENSE SUMMARY</b>							
800-00 Philanthropy	36,650	35,650	36,650	35,650	34,700	30,750	34,700
810-00 Salaries and Fees	283,825	283,265	295,771	291,912	297,245	140,209	302,769
820-00 Administration Costs	58,020	45,969	50,000	33,169	51,500	(1,897)	51,500
830-00 Building Expenses	50,000	49,632	54,000	53,476	59,000	24,231	62,000
840-00 Membership Fees and Dues	3,400	2,989	3,400	2,890	3,400	150	3,400
850-00 Travel and Officers Expense	41,750	29,215	41,750	36,210	37,250	9,596	37,250
860-00 Boards and Committees Office and Travel	14,900	6,732	16,400	2,835	15,400	1,035	15,400
870-00 Out-of-State Visitation	18,500	17,928	18,500	17,806	20,500	5,924	20,500
880-00 Annual Communication	68,000	66,813	68,000	60,603	68,000	2,878	68,000
890-00 Miscellaneous Expenses	18,500	18,465	18,500	20,135	18,000	5,702	18,000
900-00 North Carolina Mason	131,057	131,057	130,000	130,000	120,000	60,000	120,000
<b>Total Expenses (Series 800 - 910)</b>	<b>724,602</b>	<b>687,715</b>	<b>732,971</b>	<b>684,686</b>	<b>724,995</b>	<b>278,578</b>	<b>733,519</b>
	0.87%	0.86%	1.22%		-1.09%		1.18%
ESTIMATED SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	(17,882)	17,213	(49,571)	2,311	(56,575)		(78,019)

**Membership Statistics**

Membership 12/31/2017 .....	38,173
Initiated .....	756
Raised .....	572
Admitted .....	342
Restored .....	298
Total Gains .....	1,523
Expelled .....	15
Suspended UMC .....	0
Excluded NPD .....	1,012
Demitted .....	347
Died .....	1,212
Total Losses .....	2,897
 Total membership 12/31/2018 .....	 36,825

**Service Awards for 2019**

Twenty-Five Year Service Awards presented .....	548
Fifty Year Veteran Awards presented .....	464
Sixty Year Awards .....	175
Seventy Year Awards .....	50

Below you will find several charts of historical and statistical data, beginning in 1850, comparing and cross referencing the Grand Lodge's and subordinate lodges' membership census numbers, initiation fees, lodge dues, and per capita. The intent of this comparative report is to provide some insight into the financial history, financial requirements, and functionality of the fraternity.

These numbers are inclusive of their original contemporary amount and the value of that amount in current dollars. For instance, \$1.00 in 1850 would be valued at approximately \$30.00 today, meaning an item that cost \$1.00 in 1850 would cost you \$30.00 today.

According to the Code of 1838, no lodge in this state could initiate, pass, and raise a candidate for the degrees for less than \$20.00.

**Initiation Fee history, 1838-2000**

	<b>Initiation Fee</b>	<b>Equivalent Amount Today (2018)</b>
<b>1838</b>	\$20.00	\$476.00
<b>1850</b>	\$20.00	\$600.00
<b>1875</b>	\$20.00	\$460.00
<b>1900</b>	\$15.00	\$460.00
<b>1925</b>	\$35.00	\$510.00
<b>1950</b>	\$30.00	\$320.00
<b>1975</b>	\$50.00	\$235.00
<b>2000</b>	\$50.00	\$75.00
<b>2019</b>	\$50.00	\$50.00

Accounting for inflation, the minimum initiation fee remained consistently valued at approximately \$500.00 in today's dollars between 1838 and World War II. After World War II the minimum initiation fee of \$50.00 became stagnant. If one reverses the equation to place a value on the current \$50.00 initiation fee equated to 1950s pricing value, the fee would amount to only \$4.78.

There is a similarity to the amount of dues lodges have charged since the middle of the 19th Century, which has amounted to an average between \$70.00 and \$100.00, depending on the needs of the lodge. Per Chapter 77 of the Code, "Each Lodge shall fix in its by-laws and shall collect such annual dues from its membership as may be necessary to enable it to maintain itself and discharge all of its duties and obligations." The variance of amount differs between urban and rural lodges, and is probably indicative of the expenses incurred in those different communities.

Between 1850 and 1950 per capita remained consistently valued in today's dollars between \$30.00 and \$40.00. At the turn of the 20th Century, Grand Secretary John C. Drewry professionalized and streamlined the function of the Grand Lodge office and was able to maintain the amount needed to provide for the function of the fraternity's business—a model still used today.

In the wake of the dramatic membership increase between the World War I and World War II, per capita remained artificially low because the income derived off the number of members netted a consistent amount necessary to carry out the business of the fraternity. This concept of financial sustainability remained in place until the mid-1990s, when more accurate projections of income were devised from membership trends.

#### Per Capita History, 1850-2015

	Per Capita	Equivalent Dollar Amount Today (2018)	Number of Members
<b>1850</b>	\$1.00	\$30.00	2,379
<b>1875</b>	\$1.00	\$23.00	9,685
<b>1900</b>	\$1.00	\$30.00	11,637
<b>1925</b>	\$2.50	\$30.00	41,334
<b>1950</b>	\$2.50	\$26.00	50,440
<b>1975</b>	\$3.50	\$16.50	71,798
<b>2000</b>	\$10.00	\$14.75	55,178
<b>2005</b>	\$15.00	\$19.50	48,549
<b>2010</b>	\$17.00	\$20.00	45,096
<b>2015</b>	\$20.00	\$21.00	40,482
<b>2018</b>	\$20.00	\$20.00	37,793

In summary, this fraternity is emerging from a 70-year devaluation of its actual, sustaining financial requirements. Economic, cultural, and psychological factors caused this devaluation. It is important for our generation to realize and recognize this unhealthy trend and correct it.

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 GWR.....	\$1,000
To ACB.....	\$1,000
To GR, Jr. ....	\$1,000
To DRM, Jr. ....	\$1,000
To CRB.....	\$1,000
To GDB.....	\$1,000

Respectfully submitted,  
Johnny Surles, Chairman

## Report of the Grand Historian

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

In 1722, only a few years after the Grand Lodge of England first organized, a document was produced called *The General Regulations of a Free Mason* which states in Section XI, "All particular lodges are to observe the same usages as much as possible; in order to which, and for cultivating a good understanding among Free Masons." Though stated very broadly, the concept is clear: Masonic ritual should be standardized enough for members to visit other lodges, know the passwords and recognize the ritual workings. Even at this early juncture, the Grand Lodge recognized the importance of uniformity of ritual work. In spite of this recommendation, and without clear and strict guidance, Masonic ritual evolved rapidly and broadly in the eighteenth century as it proceeded to spread across the world.

North Carolina has over 260 years of Masonic heritage. To trace the evolution of the Masonic ritual in this jurisdiction for this entire span would require a lengthy treatment in order to do the subject proper justice. Furthermore, it would require a good deal more time on my part to continue my research into the matter. In an attempt to be concise but not superficial, I will limit the scope of this report to an overview of my research progress and reserve a detailed history for later publication.

Over the course of the last year, I have begun to investigate the history of the North Carolina ritual so as to better understand how we have arrived at the ritual we possess today. My interest in the subject began several years ago upon discovering a presentation prepared by our Grand Master, Mack Sigmon, entitled "The Pioneers of Our Early Rituals." It was the only noteworthy attempt made by anyone in this jurisdiction to address this subject in any detail. I quickly discovered, as anyone who studies the Blue Lodge ritual in most jurisdictions in the United States, the lack of ritual documentation. This was not surprising, of course, for in most jurisdictions, committing the ritual to any form of writing is a serious Masonic offense to this day. Naturally, this makes research into this topic extraordinarily challenging.

In recent years, several new publications have helped advance our knowl-

edge, understanding, and awareness of Masonic history in this great state. The availability of old lodge records, digitized Grand Lodge proceedings, recent archival discoveries, and original research have enriched the endeavor of pursuing North Carolina's Masonic history tremendously. The work of my predecessors in this position has also done great credit to this grand jurisdiction.

The majority of my effort focused on only a few key sources of information: written copies of the North Carolina ritual (which includes the Official Standard of the Work, but also earlier unpublished cyphers), the Grand Lodge proceedings, the volumes of NOCALORE, and the ritual of other jurisdictions (for comparison). From these sources, the narrative outline of our ritual history begins to emerge. For instance, we discover that the version of the Webb ritual that is worked in North Carolina was first introduced around 1821 by a lecturer named James Cushman. We also learn that our ritual work had an earlier name, "The Stevenson Work," named after one of Cushman's pupils who re-introduced the work to North Carolina in the 1830s and 1840s, and helped formally establish the ritual we use today. A remarkable series of twists and turns between the 1860s and 1890s further modified the ritual into the form that most closely resembles what we use today.

North Carolina's first lodges were chartered between the 1750s and 1770s by a variety of different sources, which included England, Scotland, Virginia, South Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts, deriving from both Ancient and Modern grand lodges. As a result, uniformity of the ritual in the North Carolina was unknown at that time, and would remain so until well into the 1800s.

James Cushman did more than simply introduce the Webb ritual (as well as the York Rite degrees) to North Carolina; he brought this work from Connecticut, where he learned it, to Virginia and New Jersey as well. The resulting similarity between the rituals of these jurisdictions sheds light on just how much we owe to Cushman. I have compared the rituals of North Carolina and Connecticut and found that similarities went beyond the high-level aspects of the work, but can be observed in the phrasing and choice of words of the ritual. Of course there are a number of variances between the two, but they are slight when compared to the differences between North Carolina and New York, or Pennsylvania, or Wisconsin. This was acknowledged by William Galt, the Grand Master of Virginia in 1921, when he addressed the Grand Lodge of North Carolina saying, "I understand there is less difference between our work than between any other jurisdictions in the United States; possibly excepting West Virginia, the last daughter of Old Virginia."

One of the dominant themes that recurs in the reports of the Grand Lecturers throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is the struggle for ritual proficiency and uniformity. North Carolina was not alone in this struggle, naturally, but the distinctive challenges in this state drove the decisions that shaped the course of our ritual's evolution as well as the Grand Lodge's policies on ritual proficiency. Geography, economics, population trends, and sometimes politics all combined to affect those changes that caused North Carolina's ritual to diverge from her sister jurisdictions of Connecticut, Virginia, and West Virginia. The process of change in our ritual has been slow, but steady, marked by periodic modifications, usually for practical reasons.

The ritual is language, and the language changes because we are changing. While Freemasonry cherishes its three centuries of tradition, it also must

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understand how to adapt to the world in which it lives without compromising its core values and principles. This same tension exists in how we preserve and perpetuate our rituals. Understanding how and why the changes that took place occurred may perhaps give us insight and guidance on changes that lay in store for the future.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ludwik J. Wodka  
Grand Historian

## **Report of the Committee on Permanent Building**

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The Committee on the 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 in order to maintain your Grand Lodge as a showcase and showplace for North Carolina Masons.

This year the committee was tasked with upgrading the ground floor classroom. The room was repainted, cost and energy efficient LED lighting installed, and the floors re-waxed. In conjunction with the Library Committee, the library and archive rooms were cleared of excess materials and thoroughly cleaned. The lights in the library were also upgraded to energy efficient LED lighting.

As reported the past several years, the Committee has regularly recommended putting back reserve funds in anticipation of the failure of several aging pieces of HVAC equipment. Those funds were well worth their savings. Since the last communication, the Grand Lodge's 20-year-old boiler failed and was replaced at a cost of approximately \$9,500. Inasmuch, one of the 13-year-old HVAC units failed as well and was replaced at a cost of approximately \$7,500. Both units are modern and more efficient than their predecessors, particularly as R-22 freon, which is the primary cooling agent in our older HVAC units, is being phased out of common use.

The committee obtained the services of a professional landscape architect to review the Grand Lodge's lawn and grounds and recommend a comprehensive plan that will beautify the grounds and reduce the maintenance costs associated with groundskeeping. Special decorative, heat and drought resistant grasses were selected to replace areas of common fescue. Overgrown shrubs have been removed and will in time be replaced with similarly heat and drought resistant plants. Each of these plants was also selected for their low maintenance and slow growth.

The landscaping plan also incorporates several community oriented components, including a rock path that will lead across the Grand Lodge's grounds connecting Glen Eden Drive with Glenwood Avenue for pedestrians. Part of that plan included a set of stone steps leading up an embankment from Glen Eden Drive onto the Grand Lodge's lawn. Those steps were installed complimentary by Williams Realty for Raleigh, for which we are most grateful.

It is the hope of the committee that these improvements will not only ben-

efit the Masons of North Carolina, but will illustrate to the Raleigh community Freemasonry's dedication to participating positively in local affairs and providing services and an appearance that will promote goodwill and community responsibility among the public.

The committee anticipates that the Grand Lodge's parking lot will need to be resurfaced next year, the building's facade cleaned, and its stone porch re-caulked. We recommend any unspent funds in the building fund be carried over to the building reserve fund in anticipation of further replacements and uplifting as needs arise.

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,  
Edward R. 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 D.M. "Mack" Sigmon 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 T. Hudson, 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 2018-2019.

- Apex Lodge No. 584** The LSC continues to provide information as requested to Apex Lodge No. 584, pertaining to how to process the sale of real property left to the lodge by a deceased member.
- Camp Call Lodge No. 534** The LSC was contacted by the lodge about the process required related to the approval of a loan if needed by the lodge for roof repair. The information was provided but no further correspondence from the lodge has been received. No further action by the LSC was required.
- Cherokee Lodge No. 146** The LSC approved the purchase of property to be used for a future lodge building. The property is approximately 4 miles from downtown Murphy. Cherokee Lodge plans to build in 2019 and will begin to assemble design, cost and other related information required for the building application. The lodge



- submitted a complete application package for the purchase which was reviewed by the LSC.
- Cherryville Lodge No. 505** The LSC approved the purchase of a vacant lot across the street from the current lodge property. The lot will be used by the lodge for overflow parking. The lodge also plans to make the property available for neighborhood activities. The lodge submitted a complete application package which was reviewed by the LSC.
- Masonic Properties of Mt. Airy** The bylaws for the Masonic Properties of Mt. Airy, Inc. have been received for review and approval. This review is in process.
- Rocky Mount Masonic Temple Association** The LSC received a request to review items and provide a written response to questions related to selling and rental of the property owned by the Rocky Mount Masonic Temple Association (RMMTA). A copy of the RMMTA bylaws was received and reviewed. The LSC response was provided to the RMMTA for the January 2019 meeting. No further information has been requested or documents received from the RMMTA.
- Greensboro Masonic Temple Association** The LSC was recently contacted concerning future projects related to real property owned by the Association that are being considered. No further details have been received by the LSC.
- Charlotte Masonic Temple Association** A Land Purchase Contract was submitted by the Charlotte Masonic Temple Association (CMTA) to the LSC for review and approval. This property is located on Sharon Amity Road in Charlotte and currently is the location of Phalanx and East Gate lodges. The CMTA is currently working with the buyer to finalize purchase details. The LSC continues to provide information and support during this phase as requested.
- Raleigh Masonic Temple Association** The LSC continues to provide support as requested to the RMTA as the options related to the property and building are considered.
- Revisions to the RMTA bylaws related to members leaving and joining the association have been submitted to the LSC for review and approval.
- Gastonia Masonic Temple Association** The Gastonia Masonic Temple Association (GMTA) has an “Agreement to Purchase” document and a lease document related to the building on South Street in Gastonia. The LSC reviewed the documents and communicated areas of the purchase and lease agreement that needed to be addressed prior to final approval.
- The GMTA currently has committees working on developing long and short term plans.
- The LSC continues to support the GMTA as requested during the transition period.

### **Wilkerson College Presentation**

A presentation detailing the duties, purpose, and function of the Lodge Service Commission was added to the curriculum of Wilkerson College for 2019. This presentation was included in Session 1 held at WhiteStone on March 2, 2019.

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### **Lodge Service Commission Documentation**

The Application document to include the sections required for the sale of real property by the lodge is still in the process of review and revision. As the LSC reviews applications and works with the lodges buying and selling property the need for additional information on the application document has surfaced. The need for this type of documentation has really been evident as a result of the recent activity addressed by the LSC. The revision of existing documents and creation of additional ones is in process. A draft document listing items to address in preparing long and short term plans has been prepared and is available for future requests.

The Lodge Service Commission is available to assist any lodge or temple association as they plan projects and other activities involving buildings and real property. Early communication with the LSC will be beneficial in many ways as you plan and execute the projects. Please do not hesitate to ask questions and request documents. The LSC does not want to be the cause of a delay in the progress of the project and will work to avoid them when possible.

Most Worshipful Grand Master, Grand Lodge Officers, and staff of the Grand Lodge of NC 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 or 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 Orient**

The Grande Oriente de Minas Gerais and the Grande Oriente de Mato Grosso do Sul were each recognized by and treaties signed with their respective State Grand Lodges in 2018. Each of these bodies are also recognized by the Confederación Masónica Interamericana (CMI) The Commission on Infor-

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mation determined these Brazilian grand orients are practicing regular Masonry. The Committee on Fraternal Correspondence recommends approving recognition to the Grande Oriente de Minas Gerais and the Grande Oriente de Mato Grosso do Sul.

### **Most Worshipful Keystone Grand Lodge**

In June of this year, we received a letter from the Most Worshipful Keystone Grand Lodge located in Weldon, North Carolina, seeking mutual recognition. The letter states they have lodges throughout North Carolina as well as Royal Arch Chapters, a Knights Templar Encampment, Shriners, OES, and other ladies' auxiliaries. The Committee on Fraternal Correspondence has responded to this group and informed them that it is through our association with the Commission on Information and Recognition we approve recognition. It is the opinion of the Committee on Fraternal Correspondence this group should not be recognized.

### **Regular Grand Lodge of Italy**

We received a request from the Regular Grand Lodge of Italy seeking recognition from our grand lodge. Included was a statement of their grand lodge meeting all the necessary requirements of recognition. However, we presently have fraternal relations with the Grand Orient of Italy and could not determine any treaty being ratified between the organizations. Further, the Regular Grand Lodge of Italy has not made any attempts to meet with the Commission on Information and Recognition and should not be recognized.

Respectfully submitted,  
Charles A. Lewis, Jr., PGM  
Fraternal Correspondent

## **Petitions for Restoration**

R.D.S (docket no. 813), formerly a member of Kedron Lodge No. 387, Hendersonville, was expelled for un-Masonic conduct on August 10, 2010. He has filed for restoration with the lodge on July 22, 2019, with the lodge waiving the 90 day notice and with the Grand Secretary on July 25, 2019.

J.T. (docket no. 841), formerly a member of Wake Forest Lodge No. 282, Wake Forest, was expelled on November 30, 2012. He has filed for restoration with the lodge on May 28, 2019, and with the Grand Secretary on May 31, 2019.

D.B.F. (docket no. 867 ), formerly a member of Hall Lodge No. 53, Shawboro, was expelled on June 27, 2015. He has filed for restoration with the lodge on May 21, 2019, and with the Grand Secretary on May 29, 2019.

T.D.C. (docket no. 804), formerly a member of Traphill Lodge No. 483, Traphill, was expelled on April 13, 2010. He has filed for restoration with the lodge on June 27, 2019, and with the Grand Secretary on July 10, 2019.

J.T.L. (docket no. 908), formerly a member of Mt. Holly Lodge No. 544, Mt. Holly, was expelled on August 30, 2017. He has filed for restoration with the lodge on June 3, 2019, and with the Grand Secretary on June 10, 2019.

## Report of the Judge Advocate

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

This report is prepared as of 1 August 2019 and most respectfully submitted for your information and disposition.

1. **Docket #914** - This case was re-opened in accordance to a vote by the delegates of the Grand Lodge on 29 September 2018, after it had been dismissed by the Judge Advocate in May 2018. Brother WST, a Master Mason and member of Rolesville Lodge #683, was accused of having illegal carnal communication with the wife of a brother Master Mason and threatening the life of a brother Master Mason. Brother WST denied the charges but did not appear at his Masonic trial and was found guilty and expelled by the Trial Commission.
  2. **Docket #925** - Brother HDS, a Master Mason and member of Yadkin Lodge #162, was expelled by the Judge Advocate after he was convicted of a felony in the Superior Court of Stokes County involving sexual misconduct with a minor and is servicing an active sentence in the NC Department of Corrections. Brother HDS did not answer the Masonic charges against him.
  3. **Docket #926** - Open pending an appeal to the NC Court of Appeals
  4. **Docket #927** - Brother DSS, a Master Mason and member of Temple Lodge #676, was expelled by the Judge Advocate after he admitted that he had falsified his petition for the degrees and made several untruthful statements about his military service.
  5. **Docket #928** - Brother KWE, a Master Mason and member of Mystic Tie Lodge #237, was suspended for six months by the Trial Commission after he was found guilty of attempting improperly to influence a Lodge election. Brother KWE appeared at his Masonic trial and offered evidence in his behalf through his attorney.
  6. **Docket #929** - Brother BSW, a Master Mason and suspended member of Apex Lodge #584, was expelled by the Judge Advocate after he was found guilty in the Superior Court of Wake County for Habitual Impaired Driving, a felony. Brother BSW did not answer the Masonic charges against him.
  7. **Docket #930** - Brother PLH, a Master Mason and member of Mill Creek Lodge #125, was expelled by the Judge Advocate after he pleaded guilty in the United States District Court to Theft and Conversion of Government Property in the amount of at least \$676,000.00, a felony. Brother PLH did not answer the Masonic charges against him.
  8. **Docket #931** - Brother JCR, a Master Mason and member of Catawba Lodge #248, was expelled by the Judge Advocate after he pleaded guilty in the Superior Court of Lincoln County to Felony Larceny. Brother JCR did not answer the Masonic charges against him.
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9. **Docket #932** - Brother TRB, a Master Mason and member of Piedmont-Pioneer Lodge #685, was expelled by the Judge Advocate for declaring and making known the kind of ballot he cast on a petition for the degrees. Brother TRB answered the Masonic charges against him and apologized for his actions but did not deny he was guilty of the charges.
10. **Docket #933** - Brother DWG, a Master Mason and member of Wilmington Lodge #319, was expelled by the Judge Advocate after he pleaded guilty in the Superior Court of Bladen County to Involuntary Manslaughter, a felony. Brother DWG did not answer the Masonic charges against him.
11. **Docket #934** - Case dismissed by the Judge Advocate.

Respectfully submitted,  
 Jimmy Stevens  
 Judge Advocate

## Report of the Committee on Bylaws

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

Your Committee on Bylaws of Subordinate Lodges reports that amendments to the bylaws of the following lodges were approved during the year 2018-2019. They are listed as approved.

Lodge Name	Article	Description
St. John's 1		Complete revision of bylaws
Caswell Brotherhood 11	Art 8	meeting time changed to 7pm
Stokes 32	Art 8	meeting time changed to second Monday at 7:30pm
Liberty 45	Art 10	dues increased to \$100
	Art 11	affiliation fee increased to \$100
	Art 19	institute special ballot procedures
Greensboro 76	Art 19	institute special ballot procedures
Western Star 91	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$150
	Art 10	dues increased to \$110 plus per capita tax
Joseph Warren 92	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$160
	Art 10	dues increased to \$115 plus per capita tax
	Art 11	affiliation fee increased to \$125
Millbrook 97	Art 1	updated address
	Art 22	no smoking allowed in lodge room
Oxford 122	Art 8	meeting time changed to 7pm
Blackmer 127		Complete revision of bylaws
Mount Vernon 143	Art 10	dues to include per capita
Sanford 151	Art 10	dues increased to \$100 plus per capita effective 2020
	Art 10	dues increased to \$125 plus per capita effective 2021
White Stone 155	Art 8	meeting time changed to second Wednesday at 7:30pm
	Art 8	annual meeting in November
Lebanon 207	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$400
	Art 10	dues increased to \$100 plus per capita tax
	Art 11	affiliation fee increased to \$100
Corinthian 230	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$150
	Art 10	dues increased to \$75 plus per capita effective 2019
	Art 10	dues increased to \$85 plus per capita effective 2020
	Art 10	dues increased to \$95 plus per capita effective 2021

Monroe 244	Art 10	dues increase to \$80 plus per capita tax
Kenly 257	Art 11	affiliation fee increased to \$100
Greenville 284	Art 8	meeting time changed to second Monday at 6:30pm
Clay 301	Complete revision of bylaws	
Pleasant Hill 304	Art 8	changed meeting time to 7pm
Orient 395	Art 19	allocation of funds made obsolete
	Art 19	treasurer to report monthly building fund status
	Art 19	rental income to be deposited in building fund
Joppa 401	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$140
	Art 10	dues increased to \$85 plus per capita
	Art 19	institute special ballot procedures
Bula 409	Art 10	dues increased to \$85 plus per capita
	Art 11	affiliation fee increased to \$25
Relief 431	Art 10	dues increased to \$125 including per capita
	Art 11	affiliation fee increased to \$125
Biltmore 446	Art 5	filing a report of the Treasurer by Jan
	Art 6	filing a report of the Secretary by Jan
	Art 8	dispense with communications during June, July, and August
	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$200
	Art 10	dues increased to \$125 plus per capita tax
	Art 11	affiliation fee increased to \$50
	Art 16	revision of trustee election process
	Art 22	use of tobacco or any similar chemical delivery system in building prohibited
Clyde 453	Art 10	dues increased to \$80 plus per capita tax
Rockingham 495	Art 16	election of trustees
	Art 10	dues increased to \$200
Raleigh 500	Art 8	annual meeting in November
Mount Holly 544	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$150
	Art 10	dues increased to \$80 plus per capita tax
Roman Eagle 550	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$225
	Art 10	dues increased to \$83 plus per capita
	Art 11	affiliation fee increased to \$25
Vesper 554	Art 3	new seal
Ararat 558	Art 8	meeting time changed to 7pm
Andrew Jackson 576	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$285
	Art 19	initiation fee includes first year's dues after 4th quarter
Waccamaw 596	Art 8	stated meetings in November and December changed to 2nd Monday
	Art 8	election of officers to be held at November stated communication
	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$185
	Art 10	dues increased to \$125
	Art 11	affiliation fee increased to \$50
Cranberry 598	Art 3	new seal
	Art 10	dues increased to \$100 plus per capita tax
Walnut Cove 629	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$200
	Art 10	dues increased to \$100 plus per capita tax
	Art 11	affiliation fee increased to \$75
	Art 19	dues remittance to secretary and treasurer
Goldsboro 634	Complete revision of bylaws	
Guilford 656	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$170
	Art 11	affiliation fee increased to \$75
Black Mountain 663	Art 8	meeting time changed to 7pm
	Art 3	new seal
	Art 10	dues increased to \$100 plus per capita
Temple 676	Art 10	dues increased to \$170 plus per capita
Semper Fidelis 680	Art 10	dues increased to \$150

Angier 686	Art 19	institute special ballot procedures
	Art 19	permitting facilities to be rented with alcohol permitted
Mt. Moriah 690	Art 6	change meeting time to 7pm
Renfro 691	Art 8	meeting time changed to 7pm
Asheboro 699	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$100
Garner 701	Art 9	initiation fee reduced to \$100 plus background check
Albemarle 703	Art 10	dues increased to \$80
	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$150
Conover 709	Art 10	dues increased to \$80 plus per capita
Advance 710	Art 19	institute special ballot procedures
Shallotte 727	Art 8	change meeting night to once monthly
PP Turner 746	Art 8	change in meeting nights
Ocracoke 747	Art 8	meeting time dchanged to third Tuesday at 7pm
James K. Polk 759	Art 10	dues increase to \$130 plus per capita
Orphans 761	Complete	revision of bylaws
Mosaic 762	Art 1	change location of lodge
	Art 8	change location of lodge
Lux Libertas 772	Art 19	special provisions for fees attirWe and etiquett

Respectfully submitted,  
Jonathan Underwood, Chairman

## Report on the Committee on WhiteStone

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The excitement continues to build at WhiteStone! Your Committee on WhiteStone gathered on the campus of your continuing care home in Greensboro on February 9th and were graciously received and welcomed by the Board of Directors and members of the staff. Eight of the nine members of the committee were in attendance. The committee sat in on the board meeting and were treated to a tour of the facility afterwards.

There are a lot of working and moving parts to keep a community like WhiteStone running. Those members of the committee that had not previously visited the campus were impressed with the sincerity of the Board and staff members as they strive to make WhiteStone an exceptionally comfortable place for residents to enjoy their golden years. Attention to detail makes the campus extraordinary. The Board of Directors of the community are all Masons or members of the Order of the Eastern Star. Not only do they each generously donate their time and dedication to overseeing the home, but one hundred percent of the board members also contribute monetary support. The Board members also serve on the various committees of the Board without compensation. The various committees of the Board are the Executive, Finance, Audit, Long Range Planning, Personnel, Building and Grounds, and Charity.

WhiteStone has an active Residents' Council that participates in Board meetings with useful input in the areas of Environmental Services, Resident Services, Dietary, Activities, Cheer and Care, Auxiliary, and Marketing. Spiritual Enrichment Services are also offered within the Community.

The income producing divisions of the Community include Independent Living, Health Center, Assisted Living, and Home Health, with some minor revenue generated from other operating sources. Expenses are comprised of

Staff, General and Administrative, Physical Plant, Environmental Services, Food and Beverage, Resident Services, Health Center, Assisted Living, and Community Home Health.

The Community ended the year 2018 with positive net operating income.

WhiteStone is home to three hundred seniors, two-thirds of whom are fraternally related. The residents enjoy amenities including an indoor pool, fitness center, three dining venues, and a care and wellness center. Services include independent living, personal care and wellness, short-term rehabilitation, skilled memory care, and hospice care. The not-for-profit community provides financial assistance to about fifteen percent of the fraternally-related residents, and all revenue above operating costs is reinvested in the community to benefit all of our residents.

The average age of North Carolina's Masons is 65.1 years. The senior population in North Carolina is expected to increase sixty-eight percent in the next fifteen years, and demand for continuing care communities will soar eighty-seven percent in the same period. WhiteStone's leadership is committed to meeting these needs.

WhiteStone must expand to serve more fraternal members while maintaining its standing as the state's premier senior community. The expansion will provide a full continuum of care for residents in Independent Living, Assisted Living, Skilled Nursing, and Memory Care. The Board, through intensive research and planning, mapped out a campus-wide expansion that includes:

- Renovation of the Care Center and the current twelve bed Memory Care Suite, with new dining areas, a new kitchen, and new common areas.
- Many existing semi-private rooms will be converted to private rooms with private baths.
- Twenty-four new Assisted Living apartments, with private one bedroom, one bath units built on two floors. Each floor will feature a dining area, kitchen, and common living and activity spaces.
- Twelve additional new Memory Care suites will include private baths.
- The memory care floor will contain a dining area, kitchen, and common living and activity spaces in a home-like setting. This floor will also include a safe, open-air "wander" garden for residents.
- A renovated and expanded Wellness Center with a new cardio/strength training facility and a group fitness room. The expanded center will serve the independent living residents and rehab patients.
- Enhanced common areas across campus and a new pavilion/picnic space.
- Sixty-seven new Independent Living apartment homes to serve the growing demand for senior housing and services.

This expansion of WhiteStone will be funded through a combination of charitable gifts, bond options, and apartment sales to new residents. The purpose of the Campaign for WhiteStone is to fund the charitable portion of the expansion. Just as every generation of Master Masons and Eastern Stars in North Carolina have improved and expanded WhiteStone to benefit our fraternal residents, we are embarking on an act of renewed faith and building for future generations.

This report was compiled with the assistance of Mark Lewis, Executive



Director of WhiteStone; the Campaign for WhiteStone; the North Carolina Masonic Foundation; and the Board of Directors of WhiteStone, a Masonic and Eastern Star Community.

Cordially and fraternally,  
Donald E. Kehler, Chairman  
Adam C. Ressa (134)  
C. Alvin Billings, Jr (409)  
Brett A. Huffman (670)  
Chance B. Corbin (097)  
Darren G McLain (253)  
M. Douglas Spain (331)  
Herbert N. Thomas, Jr. (755)  
Jeffrey L. Bullington (542)

### **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 pleased to report its findings to the delegates and attendees of the 232nd Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of North Carolina. For nearly 150 years, our home in Oxford has provided outstanding care for children in need. This excellence in care 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 Oxford and reporting on its conditions and management. Throughout the year, committee members attended board meetings, participated in special events, and toured our home. We are grateful for Administrator Kevin Otis's assistance with our work and for his and Chairman of the Board, MW Brother Dewey Preslar's outstanding leadership throughout the year. We also extend our thanks to the MHCO staff for their dedication and service to the children and their support of our committee this year.

MHCO serves children in need by providing two types of programs: direct care residential and independent living. The direct care residential program provides a home care model for children who have not yet graduated high school. The children in residential care live in a home with a couple in a family setting. While in residential care, the children attend the Granville County public schools. The Independent Living Program (ILP) 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. ILP students reside in studio apartments. ILP students continue their education by attending Vance Granville Community College. In addition, they are provided assistance in obtaining part-time employment.

This year four MHCO residents graduated from high school. All four graduates transitioned into the ILP program. One ILP resident attends UNC

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Charlotte. Education support and success remains an integral component of the children's placement. In 2019, the promotion rate was 97% and graduation rate was 100%. The average campus grade percentage for the fourth quarter was 83.95%. Also in the fourth quarter 12 students were on the A-B Honor Roll and 9 students were on Honorable Mention. In 2018, 30 residents increased their GPA by five percentage points or more with a C or better average. As of the date of the preparation of this report, the current census of the MHCO is 50 residents. There are 39 children in direct care and 11 in ILP. Twenty-two children participated in the Summer Enrichment Program which was themed "Strengthening the Brain" and set up in the gymnasium. The connection between healthy lifestyles and the fun children have while being active was connected to the children's perceptions of schoolwork and learning.

During the previous year MHCO served 90 different children and young adults. The average census per day was 54 in care. There were 38 total new admissions. The residents remain engaged with school and extracurricular activities. Youth participated in Basketball, Football, Volleyball, Lacrosse, Soccer, and Wrestling. The Eller Cottage Girls won the City Volleyball Tournament. In addition, the youth participated in Girl Scouts, Marching Band, ROTC, National Sojourners, and other wonderful events, many of which were sponsored by lodges. Three students completed CTE internships through the School of Graphic Arts. The monthly off-campus employment average was 75% of youth aged 16 and older. In addition, on average, 11 younger residents participated in the on-campus Kid\$Earn program to begin learning responsible employment skills.

A swimming pool has been an integral experience for the children for some 97 years. The pool had become inoperable and a new pool (MHCO's third) has been completed and has brought smiles and joy to the children. The Pool Opening Dedication Ceremonies were a big splash! While the pool is completed, funding is still needed to cover all the costs of the project. There are still plenty of funding options, some with naming opportunities.

On April 26 and 27, the fourth Class of MHCO Ambassadors gathered in the Cobb Center for a 2-day orientation. The Ambassadors work with the lodges and others to provide information with regard to the MHCO. Ambassadors are requested to provide a three-year commitment to the program. Many first-term Ambassadors agreed to a second three-year term.

Ambassadors:

<b><u>District</u></b>	<b><u>Ambassador</u></b>
District #1	Doug Brickhouse
District #2	Victor Vogelsang
District #3	Chase Huffer
District #4	Earl "Buddy" Wilson
District #5	Open
District #6	John Harrelson
District #7	Johnny Surles
District #8	Randy Bowen
District #9	Joe Fuller
District #10	Graham Price
District #11	Martin Jackson
District #12	Dave Ozvat

District #13	Hubert Williamson
District #14	Don Steichen
District #15	David Nyce
District #16	Will Barham
District #17	James Pugsley
District #18	Marc Sessoms Justin Parker
District #19	Michael Verville
District #20	Velton Tudor
District #21	Frank Wanko
District #22	Todd Smith
District #23	C. Ray Hall
District #24	Rodney Hardy
District #25	Tracy A. Lucas
District #26	Clifford Shrewsbury
District #27	Kirby Matthews
District #28	Rodney Hinson
District #29	Mark Mabe
District #30	Gary Ramey
District #31	Chris Gibson
District #32	Nick Voelker
District #33	Tommy Cook
District #34	Chris Wilhoit
District #35	Timothy Ross
District #36	David A. Yelton
District #37	Kenny Sudderth
District #38	Wiley Kessler
District #39	Gabe Quinley
District #40	Scott Sigmon
District #41	Ron Hensley

The School of Graphic Arts Print Shop (SGA) continues to provide an array of impressive printing products for lodge, business, and personal needs. SGA lost a long-term contract this year because of a corporate buyout but has replaced much of that business with a new contract with the national Masonic Services Association.

Financially, Fiscal Year 2018 was a difficult year. Income was 7.7% (\$378.6K) below projections. Many factors likely led to the shortfall in donations including tax deduction changes, volatile stock market, impact of the pool construction, and two hurricanes devastating our communities. MHCO has relied on planned gifts to help finance daily operations. Individual Masonic giving to MHCO was down last year which led to a reliance on planned gifts that came from estates of deceased friends of MHCO. The North Carolina Masonic Foundation Development team is working hand-in-hand with MHCO to increase annual giving as well as planned gifts. In the end, lodge leadership is the most important single factor in raising enough funds to support our Children's home.

The Annual Homecoming in 2018 went well despite the inland remnant of Hurricane Michael. The 2019 Homecoming is scheduled for October 11, 12, and 13. Homecoming features the Alumni Association Chip Shots for Children Golf Tournament on Friday, the Shrine Parade through the City of Oxford on Saturday, followed by a Barbeque Contest and entertainment by the Tams. Homecoming is an opportunity for brothers to visit the Home with their lodge, friends, and family to see first-hand the good work that you are helping do for at risk children in North Carolina.

The state of the Masonic Home for Children in Oxford is excellent, but there are challenges at the door. The facility is in great shape, the staff is top-notch, and the home is ably lead by Brother Kevin Otis, the head Administrator. MHCO is something of which North Carolina Masons can be proud. Each year dozens of children are given a new lease on life because of MHCO. Immediate challenges include the ever-changing nature of foster care and the need for greater philanthropic support. MHCO's future success is in the hands of the fraternity and its members.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevan D. Frazier, SGD, Chair

Jacob R. Abernathy, Jr.

William A. Bryson

Thomas R. Cook

John D. Hayes, Jr.

Jeremy R. Hetrick

Kevin L. McKenzie, Jr.

Charles L. Phipps, Jr.

Jeremy W. Vargo

## **Petition for a Charter from Knights of Solomon Under Dispensation, Waynesville**

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The subscribers hereto respectfully represent that, on the second day of July, CE 2018, AL 6018, 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 Waynesville in the County of Haywood, by the name of Knights of Solomon, and that said lodge has worked regularly since that time as appears from the transcript of it records, bylaws, and returns herewith presented.

They, therefore, now pray that a charter be granted to the said lodge, with the following officers, to-wit: Brother Gregory Clifton Grindstaff, Master; Brother Paul Arnold Aulbach, Senior Warden; and Brother Larry Wayne Payne, 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 26th day of July, CE 2019, AL 6019.

Respectfully submitted,

Members of Knights of Solomon Lodge Under Dispensation

## **Resolution for Widow's Son Lodge 75 to Receive a Duplicate Charter**

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

**WHEREAS**, Widow's Son Lodge No. 75, AF & AM located in Camden, North Carolina, is a regular lodge originally chartered December 16, 1820, and **accepted a charter by the Grand Lodge of North Carolina in 1820, and** **WHEREAS**, the chartered history of Widow's Son Lodge No. 75, AF & AM, remains unbroken, and

**WHEREAS**, the 1820 charter of Widow's Son Lodge No. 75, AF & AM, issued by the Grand Lodge of AF & AM of North Carolina is now illegible due to age and deterioration, and

**WHEREAS**, the required fee of \$150 has been submitted.

**NOW THEREFOR BE IT RESOLVED:** Widow's Son Lodge No. 75, AF & AM, Camden, North Carolina hereby petitions the Grand Lodge of North Carolina for a duplicate charter. It also requests consideration for the original charter to be "loaned" as part of the "furniture" of the lodge in lieu of surrendering to the Grand Secretary's Office as required in Regulation 41-4.2.

Respectfully submitted,  
Marty Silverwood, Master

## **Resolution for Belhaven Lodge 509 to Receive a Duplicate Charter**

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

**WHEREAS**, Belhaven Lodge 509, AF & AM, located in Belhaven, North Carolina, is a regular lodge originally chartered January 15, 1902, and

**WHEREAS**, the chartered history of Belhaven Lodge 509, AF & AM, remains unbroken, and

**WHEREAS**, the 1902 charter of Belhaven Lodge 509, AF & AM, issued by the Grand Lodge of AF & AM of North Carolina is now illegible due to repeated destructive effects of hurricanes, rains, and floods, and

**WHEREAS**, the required fee of \$150 has been submitted.

**NOW THEREFOR BE IT RESOLVED:** Belhaven Lodge 509, AF & AM, Belhaven, North Carolina, hereby petitions the Grand Lodge of North Carolina for a duplicate charter.

Respectfully submitted,  
Burl E. Brinn, Master

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## 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 28, 2019, and

**Resolved further**, That all resolutions, motions, and reports asking for or carrying appropriations and expenditures not included in the 2020 proposed budget, shall be placed before the Grand Lodge before 4:00 P.M. on Friday September 27, 2019, and,

**Resolved further**, That all such matters offered after 4:00 P.M. on Friday, September 27, 2019, be carried over to the next business communication of this Grand Lodge when the 2021 budget will be considered.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kevin Combs, Chairman

## Report of the Committee on Unfinished Business

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The following various orders and opinions issued during the terms of Grand Master Charles Speed Hallman, PGM, and Grand Master Dwight MacLauchlin Sigmon are to be considered during this Annual Communication.

### Hallman Order No. 2

On Nov. 29, after hearing that a proposed Code amendment was ruled out of order on account of a misunderstanding, I issued Order #2, pursuant to Reg. 13-1 and 13-2.12 of the Code:

It has been brought to my attention that a proposed amendment to the Code was ruled out of order by the Code Commission this year because the Commission did not have access to the full amendment proposal as presented by the author of the amendment. I believe that any Mason or any lodge submitting an amendment for the Craft's consideration should have an opportunity to be present or to be represented when such amendments are being discussed by the Code Commission and the Committee on Masonic Jurisprudence.

Therefore, it is my order that whenever the Code Commission and the Committee on Masonic Jurisprudence schedule a meeting or conference call to discuss or consider a proposed amendment, the Commission and Committee shall notify the propounder of the amendment (the lodge or brother within the lodge, or current or past Grand Lodge Officer) of the meeting or conference call and provide an opportunity to speak to the Commission and Committee about the proposed amendment, which shall at least include the opportunity to present and discuss the proposed amendment.

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Given under my hand and seal this the 29th day of November, 2018.

### **Sigmon Order No. 1**

It has been brought to my attention by the Grand Secretary that Stedman Lodge No. 730, AF & AM, balloted on and rejected Mr. D.L.C., Jr., a petitioner for the degrees, without complying with regulation 67-4.1 of The Code. The lodge balloted on the petition for the degrees with only two members of the Committee on Investigation having met with the petitioner and filing their report. *The Code* requires three members of the Committee on Investigation to meet with the candidate and file their report.

In such cases the Grand Master may authorize a rebalot at a stated communication. Therefor, the Grand Master, by *positive and unquestionable evidence*, determines the ballot was *clearly and grossly* illegal and is empowered to order another ballot in cases of this kind. I hereby ORDER Stedman Lodge No. 730 to rebalot on the above mentioned petition for the degrees at the stated communication to be held on August 5, 2019.

The dispensation authorizing the rebalot shall contain a proviso that all members of the lodge shall be given not less than ten days notice by first-class mail under sealed cover of the rebalot and the time and place therefor.

This Order shall be read to the lodge at the stated communication to be held on August 5, 2019, entered on the minutes of that communication, and a proper notation made on the margin of the minutes for the stated communication on July 1, 2019, referring to this Order and the date it was recorded in the minutes.

Given under my hand and seal at Newton, North Carolina, this 22nd day of July, 2019 AD; 6019 AL.

### **Sigmon Order No. 2**

It has been brought to my attention that Whetstone Lodge No. 515, AF & AM, balloted on and elected Mr. T.M.C., a petitioner for the degrees. The Secretary reported that in his efforts to contact Mr. T.M.C. on his election, he discovered that Mr. T.M.C. is presently in another state and is engaged in conduct which would be unfitting of a Mason.

Several members of the lodge have made an objection to the initiation and request a new ballot be spread.

Therefor, the Grand Master, by positive and unquestionable evidence, is empowered to order another ballot in cases of this kind. As such, I hereby order Whetstone Lodge No. 515 to rebalot on the above mentioned petition for the degrees at the stated communication to be held on August 27, 2019.

This Order shall be read to the lodge at the stated communication to be held on August 27, 2019, entered on the minutes of that communication, and a proper notation made on the margin of the minutes for the stated communication on July 23, 2019, referring to this Order and the date it was recorded in the minutes.

Given under my hand and seal at Newton, North Carolina, this 29th day of July, 2019 AD; 6019 AL.

### **Amendment Group 1**

The following amendments have been submitted by the Grand Lodge Fi-

nance Committee.

*This amendment would raise the per capita rate owed to the Grand Lodge to \$25 from its current rate of \$20. Per Capita pays for the operation of the Grand Lodge, and an increase was last approved in 2013.*

### **Chapter 20 - Per Capita Tax and Initiation Fee**

#### **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 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]. *(This subsection amended, effective 1/1 /2014.)*

#### **Substitute Amendment**

The following substitute amendments have been submitted by the Grand Lodge Finance Committee.

*This amendment would increase the grand lodge per capita five dollars effective December 31, 2019; five dollars effective December 31, 2022; and five dollars effective December 31, 2025*

### **Chapter 20 - Per Capita Tax and Initiation Fee**

#### **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~~ 31, 2019; the sum of thirty dollars for each member of the lodge at low twelve on December 31, 2022; the sum of thirty-five dollars for each member of the lodge at low twelve on December 31, 2025. 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 2**

The following amendment has been submitted by Sophia Lodge No. 767

*This amendment would require the Grand Lodge to collect \$1.00 a year on all its per capita tax members on roll as of December 31, for the George Washington National Masonic Memorial.*

### **Chapter 20 - Per Capita Tax and Initiation Fee**

#### **Reg. 20-1 Established.**

**5. The sum of \$1.00 in addition to the sum set forth above for each member of the lodge at low twelve on December 31st of each year to be forwarded to the George Washington Masonic National Memorial Association. 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, Endowed Membership, or 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 3**

The following amendment has been submitted by Mount Holly Lodge No. 544

*This amendment would place the requirement of notifying the Secretary of the Lodge of the member's contact information with the lodge member.*

**Chapter 52 - Members of a Lodge**

**REG. 52-3 DUTIES OF A FREEMASON.**

The duties of a Freemason are as follows:

10. To notify the Secretary of his lodge immediately of any change in his mailing address, **home telephone number, cellular telephone number, or email address.**

...

**Amendment Group 4**

The following amendment has been submitted by Stedman Lodge No. 730

*This amendment would make the balloting of Honorary Members a majority vote to approve.*

**CHAPTER 81 - Honorary Membership**

**REG. 81-2 PROPOSAL AND BALLOT.**

Any lodge at a stated communication and by **unanimous majority assent** ~~secret ballot~~, upon a written proposal signed by at least three members of the lodge and received at a previous stated communication not less than twenty-eight days before such ballot, may confer honorary membership upon any qualified Master Mason who at that time shall be a member in good standing of a duly recognized lodge. Such proposal shall not be forwarded to the Grand Secretary and no reference to a Committee of Investigation shall be necessary. [Official Form 50].

**Amendment Group 5**

The following amendments have been submitted by Oak Grove Lodge No. 750

*This proposed amendment would "administratively suspended" the membership of a member who has been charged with a felony. During this time, he may not attend any lodge. The member may request a review of the suspension by the Judge Advocate upon written request. Once his charges have been adjudicated and should he be found not guilty, his record is then expunged, and he is a member in good standing. If found guilty, his case is forwarded to the Judge Advocate for formal Masonic charges.*

**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, sus-

pending, or expelled. [50-1; 87-5; 90-4].

2. A Mason against whom charges of un-masonic conduct 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, a United States District Court, or under United States Uniform Code of Military Justice shall be deemed innocent. However, a Mason subject to such felony criminal charges shall be administratively suspended until such time as there is a final adjudication of said charges. While under administrative suspension for pending felony criminal charges, a Mason may not attend any lodge or participate in a Masonic event.

- 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 with a copy of the criminal pleading such as an indictment.
- b. The Mason charged with a felony may submit a written petition to the Judge Advocate for relief from the administrative suspension within the time period hereinafter designated. The petition shall state with particularity any grounds, extenuating circumstances or special prejudice resulting from an administrative suspension prior to adjudication. The petition must include a proclamation of actual innocence and declaration of intent to contest fully any accusation or conviction the accused may present. The Petition must be signed by the Mason who has been criminally charged prior to its submission to the Judge Advocate. The Judge Advocate shall consider the Petition submitted by the Mason and any other circumstances, including, but not limited to, the nature of the charge, disharmony in lodge, and the potential damage to the reputation of Freemasonry. The Judge Advocate may determine the matter with or without a hearing or upon affidavits, including an affidavit of an attorney. If a hearing is held, it will be upon such notice and at such time and place as set by the Judge Advocate. The Judge Advocate may consider any trustworthy and reliable information and evidence. The Judge Advocate may sustain, reverse, or modify the administrative suspension upon such terms as are just. Unless reversed or modified, the suspension will be effective from the date of initial charge of felony. The petition must be filed with the Office of Grand Secretary within ninety (90) days of the initial criminal charge or ten (10) days from receipt of any notice of suspension from the Judge Advocate, if any, whichever is first to occur. Service shall be as provided in Reg. 91-9 of the Code. The Judge Advocate may, for good cause shown, modify any determination made under this section.
- c. 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 conviction shall be forwarded to the Judge Advocate for action as set out in The Code.
- d. 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 in their entirety by the prosecuting authority, the administrative suspension issued against said Mason shall be immediately withdrawn and the record of the administrative 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.
- e. 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 administrative 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 administrative suspension shall remain in effect until such time as the matter is concluded pursuant to the procedures set out in the Trial Code.

- f. In any case in which the Judge Advocate has a conflict of interest or otherwise recuses himself, he shall designate a qualified brother to perform the duties of the Judge Advocate hereunder.

3. A Mason against whom charges of unmasonic conduct have been preferred 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. Unless a petition for relief from an administrative suspension has been reversed or modified the by the Judge Advocate as set out in Reg. 74-5.2(b) above, until a final adjudication for the criminal charges has occurred and the Mason is again entitled to all the rights and privileges of Masonry, a Mason against whom felony criminal charges have been filed shall not be appointed or elected to office, nor appointed or serve on any committee or board, nor installed in any office, nor demitted, nor be buried with Masonic ceremonies. [50-1; 53-2.4; 55-5; 82-2; 82-2.5; 90-4].

...

Respectfully submitted,  
William Timothy Clifford, Chairman

## **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 (MSA) was formed in 1919 with the initial purpose of providing aid and assistance to American servicemen returning from duty during World War I. Initially the War Department refused work with multiple grand lodges but did agree to work with a single agency, which resulted in the formation of the MSA.

Today the MSA performs three major functions at a national level:

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

### **Education and Information**

Perhaps the MSA is best known for publishing the Short Talk Bulletin, the most widely distributed Masonic publication in the world. The Short Talk Bulletin has been in print since 1923. The MSA and its Masonic Information Center also publish a variety of other pamphlets, digests, and brochures that provide information to the general public about our great fraternity. These publications have reached over 3 million individuals over the past 20 years!

At the time of this report, the MSA has partnered with the Masonic Home for Children School of Graphic Arts to print and mail its Short Talk Bulletin and Emessay Notes.

This is a great opportunity for our school and finally partners the MSA with a Masonic entity after 96 years. Brother Eddie Dickerson and his staff are to be commended for their persistence in making this partnership a reality!

### **Disaster Relief**

Since 1923, the MSA has collected and distributed over \$10.5 million in assistance to multiple Grand Jurisdictions following natural catastrophes.

Immediately following a natural catastrophe, an appeal for assistance from a Grand Jurisdiction to the MSA triggers their disaster relief protocol. The MSA coordinates communication of the appeal to all U.S. and Canadian Grand Lodges who then collect funds from individuals, subordinate lodges, and appendant Masonic bodies. The MSA then distributes 100% of the monies collected to the affected Grand Jurisdiction. No charges are made for administrative costs that are incurred by the MSA for coordinating these relief efforts.

In the last 23 years, North Carolina has been the recipient of over \$340,000 in assistance from MSA disaster relief efforts.

### **Hospital Visitation**

The Masonic Hospital Visitation Program has been the foundation service of the MSA from its very beginning, and it continues to be a primary focus. With approximately 180 Hospital Representatives and State Coordinators, as well as hundreds of other volunteers at nearly every Veterans Administration (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 untold hours of volunteer assistance to our veterans across the nation every year. Assistance extends beyond mere "visitations" and includes reading to them, writing letters for them, personal errands, and taking them to Chapel Services or to other parts of the hospital where testing or treatment is to be provided. 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.

On a sad note, Brother Bill McEntire, our dedicated MSA Representative to the Asheville VA Hospital, passed away on August 6, 2019, leaving a huge void to fill. We could also use help in the Fayetteville/Fort Bragg area. If you find yourself interested in volunteering or working as an MSA Representative, we would love to hear from you. If you are unable to contribute your time, then please consider contributing financially to the MSA's Green Envelope Appeal (<http://www.msana.com/hvpgreenenv.asp>).

In closing, special recognition must be given to M.W. Brother Simon LaPlace, MSA Executive Secretary, who will be leaving his position on October 1 after completing a three-year commitment. M.W. Brother LaPlace has worked tirelessly to promote the mission of the MSA and has done an outstanding job of letting others know that "MASONS CARE AND WILL ALWAYS BE THERE!" Well done, sir!

Respectfully Submitted,

Larry B. Thompson, Jr., MSANA Representative

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

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

In May 1909, Joseph W. Eggleston, Grand Master of Virginia, invited the Grand Masters from across America to meet at Alexandria-Washington Lodge No. 22 to discuss the creation of an association to build “a suitable Memorial Temple to George Washington, the Mason.” On February 22, 1910, what would have been George Washington’s 169th birthday, representatives from 26 Grand Jurisdictions, along with Jacob Dickson, Secretary of War; William H. Mann, Governor of Virginia; and William Howard Taft, President of the United States, met in Alexandria, Virginia. At this meeting, the George Washington Masonic National Memorial Association was formed. A construction site on Shooter’s Hill in Alexandria, Virginia, was acquired in 1915. On November 1, 1923, the cornerstone was laid and on May 15, 1932, the Memorial was dedicated. The design of the Memorial was inspired by the lighthouse of Alexandria, Egypt. The design incorporates the classical architecture of the Greeks and the Romans, with the 3 sections of the tower ascending in the Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian orders of architecture. The Memorial is capped with a pyramid symbolizing Light.

In 2006, restoration work on the Memorial began with the goal of completing the restoration by 2023, the 100th anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone. In 2018, the painting by Br. Allyn Cox depicting George Washington’s laying of the cornerstone of the United States Capitol Building in 1793 was removed to be repaired. The surface behind the painting began to bulge gradually outward, as the terra cotta and plaster beneath the canvas cracked and shifted. This, in turn, caused the canvas itself to stretch and tear in some places. Paint began to flake off of the surface of the painting along a more than thirty-foot-wide line of stress. The mural is 48 feet x 18 feet, oil on canvas, making its removal and restoration very complex. The restoration work to the wall and the mural were completed, and the mural has been returned to its place on the South wall of the Memorial Hall. This mural depicts one of the most important Masonic ceremonies ever held in the United States, the laying of the cornerstone at the Capitol Building. It demonstrates that our country was founded upon Masonic principals. The cornerstone laying was a public affirmation of that fact.

During the last year, the Memorial was able to locate, secure, restore, and install the statue of George Washington by the French sculptor, Jean-Antoine Houdon. The statue depicts a standing life-sized Washington. In his right hand is a cane, and his left arm rests on a fasces or bound bundle of wooden rods. It is considered one of the most accurate depictions of George Washington. The statue now stands in the Grand Masonic Hall. This statue is a bronze replica of the original c. 1791 marble statue that stands in the Virginia State Capital in Richmond.

Restoration of the exterior stonework continues. The restoration work involves the removal and repointing of the exterior mortar joints, restoration of the exterior stone work, and repair and replacement of lead weather caps on all the horizontal joints. The restoration and waterproofing of the roofs on the 5th and 7th floors were completed, and work now continues on the 3rd and 4th floors. New LED lighting has been added to exterior of the Memorial. This al-

lows the Memorial to be lighted in different colored lights for different events. On August 7, 2019, in honor of National Purple Heart Day, the Memorial was lit in purple. The Purple Heart was first instituted by George Washington in 1782, and was then known as the Badge of Military Merit. The Purple Heart is awarded to those wounded or killed in the line of duty.

Future projects include repaving the front driveway, replacing the windows in the Memorial Hall, and the restoration of Br. Cox's mural on the North wall depicting George Washington attending St. John's Day Observance at Christ Church in Philadelphia on December 28, 1778. Of note, Br. Cox also painted the same murals in our Grand Lodge building in Raleigh.

The Lodge of Nine Sisters No. 773, was granted a dispensation to open at Alexandria-Washington Lodge No. 22 on Saturday, August 3, 2019. During this emergent communication, Br. Joseph D. Meece of Cannon Memorial Lodge No. 626 was raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason with MW Dwight M. "Mack" Sigmon, Grand Master, presiding in the East during the second section. The Grand Master also presented the lecture. During the weekend, the delegation from North Carolina received a tour of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial.

The George Washington Masonic National Memorial began a \$1 Per Member Campaign to support the restoration and continued operation of the Memorial. Currently there are 31 Grand Jurisdictions supporting the Memorial by contributing to the \$1 per Mason campaign. North Carolina does not currently participate in the \$1 per Mason campaign. North Carolina Masons contributed \$3,795.00 in 2018 through its \$5 per initiate campaign. There is a pending CODE Amendment that would mandate that \$1.00 out of the annual per capita for each Mason in North Carolina would go to the GWMNMA. It is the hope that the delegates will give serious consideration to approving this Amendment Group at our Annual Communication. This would fulfill the original concept envisioned by the Founders: that the Memorial be owned and supported by every Mason in America.

Finally, I would like to thank Most Worshipful Douglas L. Caudle, PGM 2015, for his service as a member of the Board of Directors for the Memorial. PGM Caudle ended his term as a member of the Board of Directors of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial in February 2019. 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,

R. David Wicker, Jr., SGW, Representative

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## Report of the Board of Publication of the NC Mason

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The Board of Publications has logged a busy, creative year.

The board has begun to meet monthly, by phone conference, to oversee its newest project: *The Buzz*. This e-newsletter, edited by board member Dwight Decoskey II, junior warden at New Lebanon #314, was designed to provide the Craft with news and updates that occur in between issues of the *NC Mason*. It also allows publication of photos and information on certain items that normally could not be fit into the printed NC Mason, including all lodge officer elections and service awards.

The board created the online-only publication, which goes out to members whose email addresses are current in MORI, as an extension of the paper to keep brothers in the loop.

All board members and *NC Mason* Editor Beth Grace read and comment on each issue before it is sent out, and all submit news for each issue. Brothers interested in submitting news to *The Buzz* can do so by sending it to [ncmason@glnc.us](mailto:ncmason@glnc.us).

The board considered the first year of this publication a success and is working together to keep the content fresh and relevant in an easy to read publication. It's not the board's intention to replace with an online newsletter the printed *NC Mason*, which continues to be the official publication of the NC Grand Lodge.

The board's work with the Committee on Masonic Public Relations continued this year, as Mason Editor Beth Grace joined that committee and is on call to help members to help coordinate social media presence.

The board also is grateful to its continuing partnership with the North Carolina Masonic Foundation, which shares with the NC Grand Lodge the cost of producing, printing, and distributing the *NC Mason*.

We look forward to a productive and newsy year ahead!

Respectfully submitted,  
Kenneth Lambert, Chairman  
Board of Publication

## Report of The Code Commission

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The Code Commission met by telephone conference call on March 7, 2019, to review proposed amendments to The Code pursuant to Reg. 33-2 and to ascertain that each proposed amendment was in order for submission to the Grand Lodge.

The following is a summary of the proposed amendments which have now

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been submitted for consideration at the 2019 Annual Communication:

Amendment Group 1 was proposed by the Grand Lodge Finance Committee and would raise the per capita rate owed to the Grand Lodge to \$25 from its current rate of \$20. Per Capita pays for the operation of the Grand Lodge and was last approved in 2013. A substitute amendment was also submitted by the Grand Lodge Finance Committee and would increase the Grand Lodge per capita five dollars effective December 30, 2019; five dollars effective December 31, 2022; and five dollars effective December 31, 2025.

Amendment Group 2 was proposed by Sophia Lodge #767 and would require the Grand Lodge to appropriate \$1.00 a year on all its members on roll as of December 31, to the George Washington National Masonic Memorial.

Amendment Group 3 was proposed by Mount Holly Lodge #544 and would require the lodge member to notify the Secretary of the Lodge with any changes in the member's contact information.

Amendment Group 4 was proposed by Stedman Lodge #730 and would make the balloting of an Honorary Member a majority vote to approve.

Amendment Group 5 was proposed by Oak Grove Lodge #750 and would “administratively suspend” the membership of a member who has been charged with a felony. During this time, he may not attend any lodge. The member may request a review of the suspension by the Judge Advocate upon written request. Once his charges have been adjudicated and should he be found not guilty, his record is then expunged.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Doug Calhoun, PM  
Chairman

## **Report of the North Carolina Masonic Foundation, Inc**

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

2018 was a difficult year in the financial markets. Solid gains in the first nine months of the year were wiped out by a broad market sell off in the 4th quarter. We are pleased to say that during the first half of 2019, we have made up the losses and then some. Last year emphasizes the importance of our subscribers understanding that funds placed with the NCMF should be long-term in nature because financial markets can be volatile. In 2018, NCMF distributed \$563,400 to WhiteStone and the Masonic Home for Children — or \$281,700 to each — a 40 percent increase from 2017. Despite the market downturn, we will be distributing \$586,142 total or \$293,071 to each home in 2019 — approximately a 4 percent increase.

We also helped craft capital campaigns to enlarge WhiteStone's campus and to help fund MHCO's new pool. The NCMF kicked off the pool campaign with a \$100,000 lead gift. We established strong new financial partnerships

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with our lodges and our charities, and we reached out to brethren across the state.

At year end, the Foundation had over \$20 million in assets and another \$55 million managed for other Masonic entities in North Carolina, totaling approximately \$75 million under our care. Our major funds ended 2018 with losses, the equity fund finished down 10 percent, and the income fund was down one-tenth of 1 percent. The 4th quarter selloff in 2018 proved to be short-lived, and as of June 30, 2019, the equity fund was positive 20.1 percent and the income fund was positive 4.7 percent. Our three-year returns are very good on a relative basis. The equity fund has a three-year average annual return of +12.2 percent, and the income fund has a three-year average annual return of +3 percent.

Brother Mike Faulkenbury was reappointed to a five-year term on the board. He was re-elected President and MWB Robert Gresham was re-elected Vice President. RWB Walt Clapp was re-elected Secretary and MWB Lew Ledford was re-elected Treasurer. Other board members include MWB Leonard Safrit, WB Guy Cline and MWB Dan Rice.

The support of our lodges and the brothers statewide set new levels of generosity. Lodge giving increased by 20 percent this year over last.

Other key events in a very busy year:

- NCMF offered a \$10,000 minimum investment subscription through Dec. 31, 2019. Many Lodges have taken advantage of this one-year reduction from \$25,000.
- NCMF was able to facilitate sales of two parcels of land at the Jones Masonic Campus. In doing so only a very small parcel, three acres or so, remain.
- On the communications side, we continued to record sales of two major fundraising pieces: a full-color poster of the “G” in lodges across North Carolina, and a photo book – *Sacred Retreats: A Tour of North Carolina Masonry*. Both items will be available again this year at Annual Communication. Proceeds from sales of both pieces go to the Historic Masonic Properties Fund.
- NCMF celebrated two inductees into our new Bridge Builder’s Society. Two brothers — Robert “Bobby” Broughton Carr, Mingo #206 and William Pete Franklin, Charles B. Newcomb #740 — were honored for making significant financial contributions to the NCMF.
- Our new web site, [www.mfnc.org](http://www.mfnc.org), is bringing new opportunities for the Craft to learn about the Foundation and to see what we do and who we are. It supports NCMF through a special donor button that makes it easier than ever to give and offers links to our other charities and their donation links.
- NCMF hosted two invitation-only donor events in the past year, one in Charlotte and the second at the GALOT Motor Speedway in Dunn. A fall event is set for Asheville. The events not only generate interest in giving to NCMF but helps reunite brothers across regions.
- The NCMF staff logged a lot of miles on the road this year, making 163 in-person donor visits (22 percent increase over 2017) and 68 visits to lodges and appendant bodies. The NCMF raised approximately \$405,000 from individuals and \$144,000 from lodges to support the work of the Foundation, a nearly 200 percent increase from 2017.
- We helped all three charities establish gift acceptance policies.
- We extend special thanks to Most Worshipful Grand Master Sigmon for his commitment to the Foundation’s efforts, fundraising, and development work, as we continue our important work in 2019.

As always, it is a pleasure to serve with you in our work to keep Freemasonry strong, to grow our charities and to make good men better.

Fraternally,

The Board of Directors and staff

North Carolina Masonic Foundation

## **Report of the Committee on Masonic Education**

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

In 2019 members of the Grand Lodge Committee on Masonic Education have worked on several projects for the Craft.

The Speakers Bureau has reached the point of mostly running itself with only a few additions and a couple Speakers being removed because of other demands on their time.

The Davie Academy continues to spread Leadership skills throughout the state. This year we held two Core classes in each of the three regions as well as four workshops which were held simultaneously in six locations (2 in each region). Many of the Brethren asked about our District Officer and GL Committeemen Class which we held last year, so we plan to bring it back for 2020. As the coming year will be the fourth for WRDLA we are looking at the classes and the material for places we can update and freshen it up.

Members of the GLCME working with WCL have changed the Ritual Competition to be held in three locations across the state in conjunction with the Certified Lecturers exams. The winners of each Region will compete at Annual Communication.

Another joint effort with WCL has been an attempt to start a mentoring program through the Lodge. Interest hasn't been as hoped, but we are looking at continuing next year as a Workshop sponsored by the GLCME taught by members of WCL.

The PDF that was started last year is almost complete. All writings have been completed. Grand Historian Ludwik Wodka has put together a timeline with dates along with a brief description of important events in Masonic history to be included. They are currently with Jonathan Underwood to be checked over.

The Middle Chamber has grown and gained some national attention. Members of the Committee, WB Ben Wallace and the DGM Shaun Bradshaw, went to Illinois and taught the class to a group interested in recreating the program in their jurisdiction. There has also been an addition of a Capstone Class to the Middle Chamber. This class will be held over a weekend in October with attendees being chosen from the Alumni based on an application and essays.

The GLCME would like to thank the Grand Master and other Grand Lodge Officers for their continued support.

Respectfully submitted,

Tony Rathbone - Chairman

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## Report of the Grand Lodge Committee on Public Relations

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The Grand Lodge Committee on Public Relations has been active in working towards promoting North Carolina Masonry by working closely with the Grand Lodge office, namely Beth Grace, and the Grand Line officers in bringing many goals to fruition throughout the year. These exciting initiatives are geared toward bringing an awareness to Masonry, giving North Carolina Masonry a more public face, and thereby generating interest in the fraternity and attracting quality men to petition for membership in their local lodges.

The first initiative to be launched by the committee was to create a hashtag campaign to promote North Carolina Masonry across social media platforms; **#WeAreGLNC**. When brothers share this hashtag along with photos or videos from the events of their lodge or other Masonic functions, the post can be added to the Grand Lodge's social media outlet.

The second initiative was to create an Instagram account and a YouTube account for the Grand Lodge of North Carolina as platforms to post the activities of lodges and North Carolina Masons through the aforementioned hashtag posts. These social media accounts will be monitored and administered by members of the committee, or as the Grand Master shall order, with all posts and comments being approved by an authorized party before being published for public view. This will allow the committee to block any posts or comments which may be divisive or inappropriate in nature, or denigrative of the fraternity.

The Grand Lodge Committee on Public Relations remains committed to reaching out to our friends and neighbors to show all of the great things that North Carolina Masons do and to promote interest in the fraternity.

Respectfully submitted,  
Matthew N. Parker  
Grand Lodge Committee on Public Relations

## Report of the Committee on Youth Organizations

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

We Masons in North Carolina sponsor two youth organizations: the Order of DeMolay International, for young men, and the International Order of the Rainbow for Girls.

The Order of DeMolay, for young men ages 12 to 21, was founded in 1919 by Bro. Frank S. Land, the director of social services for the Scottish Rite bodies in Kansas City, Missouri. Bro. Land had hired a local boy for odd jobs, and found out that the boy's father had died and that the boy had several friends in the same situation. Bro. Land and the boy invited the others to form a club to meet at the local Scottish Rite temple. Within three years there were 39 DeMolay "chapters" in the then-48 states and the District of Columbia.

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The organization took its name from the last Grand Master of the medieval Knights Templar, Jacques DeMolay. The Templars had become too powerful for the comfort of the King of France, and he took DeMolay and other Templar leaders prisoner, torturing them trying to force betrayal of the organization. DeMolay refused and died a martyr to courage and loyalty. These virtues, as well as service to God and fellow persons, honoring women and girls, and slandering no one, are the core teachings of DeMolay. As with Freemasonry, members are required to believe in a Supreme Being, but their religious activities are their own. There are eight active chapters in North Carolina, from Wilmington to Charlotte, and they are celebrating their centennial year this year.

The International Order of the Rainbow for Girls, originally the Order of the Rainbow for Girls, was founded in 1922 by Bro. W. Mark Sexson, active in Scottish Rite and the Order of the Eastern Star in McAlester, Oklahoma. He had become involved with the new organization called DeMolay, for teenage boys, and saw a need for a similar organization for teenage girls. He wrote the Rainbow ritual and proposed it to his Eastern Star chapter, which exemplified it for the first time on April 6, 1922. Since then, most Rainbow “assemblies” are sponsored by Eastern Star chapters.

North Carolina has 15 active Rainbow assemblies, from Wilmington to Asheville, most are directly sponsored by Eastern Star chapters. One lodge directly sponsors an assembly, and a second lodge will soon open an assembly. Two more assemblies are in the planning stages. Rainbow teaches the rewards of service, using the seven colors of the rainbow to illustrate and explain how the concepts of love, nature, religion, immortality, fidelity, and patriotism, all are areas of service. Members are required to believe in God, but like DeMolay, members’ religious activities are their own.

The seven colors in the International Order of the Rainbow are red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet. In addition to service concepts, Rainbow members are taught to be virtuous, behave modestly, and to develop self-confidence, as they conduct meetings and plan service projects and fun outings.

Rainbow is truly international, with assemblies, and Grand Assemblies (State/Province governing bodies, similar to Grand Lodge/Grand Chapters) in eight other countries around the world. The Supreme Assembly, headquartered in McAlester, Oklahoma, is the world-wide governing body. North Carolina will have the great honor to host the bi-annual meeting of the Supreme Assembly, with delegates from 47 of the 50 states, and eight countries, in 2024.

When this committee was formed, the idea arose that we Masons should also be involved with other youth organizations. The thought was that if the youth have no contact with Freemasonry, or the appendant bodies, where will members for lodges and chapters be found? Grand Lodge has formed a liaison with Eagle Scouts, and a Girl Scout has completed a project at WhiteStone, so the committee researched the state for other lodge activities. Scouting, either through lodge sponsorship, or involvement by individual Brothers, is prevalent. One district has many of its lodges sponsoring and coaching local baseball/softball teams. We are also co-ordinating with DeMolay and Rainbow officials to get speakers onto the Grand Lodge Speakers Bureau list, so that interested lodges can get more details about those organizations. Meanwhile, the committee feels that local lodges should actively seek more opportunities

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to interact with the youth in their areas, in any way possible.

We in the committee thank Grand Lodge, and Grand Master Sigmon, for the opportunity to serve.

Fraternally,  
Alfred Serff, PM, Chair  
Committee on Youth Organizations

## **Report of the NC Eagle Scout Task Force**

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

This year, the North Carolina Eagle Scout Task Force built upon the progress that was made in the previous years. Certificates were presented to eight Eagle Scouts on May 25, 2019, in the Battleground District in the Piedmont Council. Cleveland Lodge 202 in Shelby, NC, hosted the presentation and WB Eric Newton, a member of the Task Force, organized it. Plans are in progress for a presentation in Raleigh in the fall.

The Task Force has also worked with the Grand Master, MW Mack Sigmon, to put together a Congratulations Letter to accompany the certificate. Additionally, a form has been created to gather information on Eagle Scouts and Scouters who are Masons. If you have not completed this, you can fill out the form online at <https://bit.ly/2LxrOfr>. Thirty-one people have filled it out so far, and many of them are interested in helping the Task Force expand the program.

As we move into a new Masonic Year, work will be done to finalize a process that will be shared with those interested in assisting in the presentation of certificates. We are expecting it to be done in the late summer. We have also discussed how we can better organize and assemble Masonic Scouters to efficiently work together across the state. If you have any questions or comments, feel free to contact the Task Force at [glnceagles@gmail.com](mailto:glnceagles@gmail.com)

Fraternally,  
North Carolina Eagle Scout Task Force  
Will Highsmith, Chair  
Will Chriscoe  
Matthew Collins  
Homer Deamin  
Jonathan Johnson  
Keith Morgan  
Eric Newton  
Stancil Wilson

## **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 2019 were: MWB Dwight Mack Sigmon, Grand Master, Chairman Ex-Officio; MWB Dalton Mayo, PGM, Grand Lecturer; Steve M. Norris, SGS, Chairman; Tom Dolinger, Secretary; Luigi Ammons, Past Secretary; Russ Jones, Dickie

Lyon and David Troxell. Mike Register, past board member, served as the liaison to the Board of General Purposes.

The Board of Custodians met regularly during the year, with meetings held on January 11th, April 12th, July 12th, and September 26th, 2019. The fall meeting is scheduled to coincide with the Grand Lodge Annual Communication in Winston-Salem.

Certified brethren qualifying for the Laudamus Certificate in 2019 are: Dwight Wayne Crews, Bula Lodge No. 409; John William Davis III, Millbrook Lodge No. 97; and James Patrick Fitzgibbons, Lafayette Lodge No. 83.

District Deputy Grand Lecturers qualifying for the Past District Deputy Grand Lecturer Certificate in 2019 are: Christopher Scott East, Sr., Manteo Lodge No. 521; Hylar Wayne Cox, Atlantic Lodge No. 294; Charlie Leonard Hall, Sr., Jerusalem Lodge No. 95; Richard Lee Smith, Berne Lodge No. 724; Michael Conrad Saviak, III, Mount Olive Lodge No. 208; Christopher William Dement, John H. Mills Lodge No. 624; Daniel Lee Short, St. Paul's Lodge No. 474; Herbert Currie Lyon, Eno Lodge No. 210; Christopher Lee Wright, Stokesdale Lodge No. 428; Stephen Matthew McCraw, Granite Lodge No. 322; Andrew Ray Hartman, Allen-Graham Lodge No. 695; Lance Baxter Hegler, Mooresville Lodge No. 496; Brandon Lee Penley, Riverside Lodge No. 606; Charles Andrew Hicklin, Fairview Lodge No. 339; Leonard Ray Cherry, Jr., Mount Holly Lodge No. 544; Charles Elmo McCowan, Andrews Lodge No. 529; and David Carroll Simmons, Salem Lodge No. 289.

Two of our brothers received certificates for fifty years or more of service as Certified Lecturers. They are as follows:

Robert Glenn Capps (Creasy Proctor Lodge No. 679)

James Beauford Kiser (Charles M. Setzer Lodge No. 693)

The 2019 Certified Lecturer and Instructor Examinations were held according to the following schedule: August 10th – Greensboro and Greenville; August 17th – Charlotte and Wilmington; and August 24th – Asheville and Fayetteville. The examinations continued to be offered on Saturdays in an effort to be more accommodating to our certified brethren who have work conflicts. If a conflict would keep a brother from attending one of the above locations, he was able to petition the Board for a Special Exam. The Board expresses its sincere appreciation to the brethren at the six locations who donated the use of their facilities for the examinations.

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 web page 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 Bahnsen Manual, rules governing the Lecture Service and OSW/Vocabulary, various application forms, and a current roster of those Certified.

At the end of the 2018 examinations the number of certified brethren was 366. This consisted of 328 Class "A" Certified Lecturers and 38 Class "B" Certified Instructors. Unfortunately, the total number has declined by 6 as of August 1st, 2019, with the passing of the following Certified Lecturers:

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Gerald Odean Barnes	West Gate No. 738	47 Years
Billy Max Walker	East Gate No. 692	28 Years
William Theodore Cope	Stanley No. 713	28 Years
Steven Marvin Vincent	Denver No. 757	36 Years
Clarence Ezekiel McLamb, Jr.	Palmyra No. 147	32 Years

Fifty-nine brethren are required to stand examinations in 2019. The final 2019 results will be available after the last exams are held on August 24th, 2019, and will be printed in the 2019 Proceedings of the Grand Lodge Publication.

In 2019 the Five-Hour Mandatory Lecture Service was continued for the one hundred ninety-two odd-numbered lodges throughout the state. All one hundred seventy-nine even-numbered lodges completed the Lecture Service in 2018. 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 2020. 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 Coaches' Proficiency Program has been well received. As of August 1st, 2019, 68 coaches have applied for and received a card and certificate indicating that they have passed the proficiency exam. The Board would prefer the exams for proficiency to be held at one of the three Coaches' Workshops, however, if it is more convenient for the Coach and Examiner, the exam can be held at a location of their choice. The three Coaches' Clinics this year were scheduled to be held as follows:

March 30th, 2019	-	Greensboro Masonic Temple
May 25th, 2019	-	Greenville Masonic Center
October 5th, 2019	-	Nichols-West Asheville Lodge No. 560

Any brother who can recite both the questions and answers to the three catechisms will qualify for the Proficiency Certificate.

To continue a practice re-established 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 their journey through the Masonic Degrees.

The Fourth Annual Grand Master's Ritual Competition will be held on Friday evening at Annual Communication with the winners of both the Open and Closed Competition being announced by the Grand Master on Saturday. The Board encourages all districts to assemble a team to compete. The fellowship among the brethren of the different lodges is one of the highlights of the competition.

The Board of Custodians expresses its appreciation to Grand Master Dwight 'Mack' Sigmon for his enthusiastic support of the Board and the Certified Lecturer Program. Grand Master Sigmon served as Secretary of the Board from 2007-2013. 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 invaluable assistance throughout the year.

The Board also expresses its appreciation to Grand Lecturer, MWB Dalton Mayo for his very hard work as the Grand Lecturer for 2019. To all our certified brethren throughout the state, we extend a sincere “thank you” for your continued faithful service to our beloved Fraternity, your support of your DDGLs, and lastly, your vigorous support of the Certified Lecturers Program.

Respectfully Submitted,

Steve M. Norris, Chairman, Senior Grand Steward

Thomas P. Dolinger II, Secretary

## Report of the Commission on Subordinate Lodge Special Activities

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The following report of the Commission on Subordinate Lodge Special Activities was received and entered on the record.

The Commission on Subordinate Lodge Special Activities presents this report in supporting lodge fundraising efforts. The following report reflects fundraising numbers from January 1 through August 8, 2019, and a short summary recap of 2018:

Lodges Participating:	172		
Applications Processed:	282		
Final Reports Received/Processed:	159		<u>Average Per Fundraiser</u>
Total Funds Received/Processed by lodges:	\$702,555.86		\$ 4,418.59
Cost of Fund-raising:	<u>\$251,226.66</u>		\$ 1,580.04
Net Proceeds:	\$451,329.20		\$ 2,838.55
For Charity:	\$385,740.26		
For Lodge Building Funds:	\$ 65,588.94		
Type/Category of Fundraisers:	#		<u>Average \$ Per Event</u>
Raffles:	34	\$ 99,094.15	\$ 2,914.53
Golf Tournaments:	7	\$ 61,422.12	\$ 8,774.59
Breakfast:	12	\$ 33,462.24	\$ 2,788.52
BBQs:	34	\$ 90,386.51	\$ 2,658.43
Dinners/Fish/Chicken:	28	\$ 83,986.63	\$ 2,999.52
Other:	46	\$ 82,977.55	\$ 1,803.86
By Fund-Development Category/Charity:	#		
MHC:	88	\$148,533.70	\$ 1,687.88
MESH, LLC:	65	\$ 82,600.23	\$ 1,270.77
NC Masonic Foundation:	47	\$ 40,565.55	\$ 863.10
Other Charities:	49	\$114,040.78	\$ 2,327.36
Lodge Building Funds:	37	\$ 65,588.94	\$ 1,772.67

Regarding the year-end 2018:

Total Funds Received/Processed by lodges as of 12/31/18:	\$ 1,410,412.12
Cost of Fund-raising in 2018:	<u>\$ 524,314.05</u>
Net Proceeds in 2018:	\$ 886,098.07

Total Funds to Charity 2018:	\$ 738,913.06
Total Funds to Lodge Building Funds 2018:	\$ 147,185.01



All lodges are reminded that final reports of fundraising activities are due to the Commission on or before 45 days after the fundraising event; all 2019 final reports must be in to the Commission by December 31, 2019.

Respectfully submitted,  
James L. Medlin, Chairman

## Report of the Library Committee

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

Your Library Committee has worked hard this year to fulfill its mission to preserve, protect, and promote the records, manuscripts, artifacts, and books of the Grand Lodge. Materials such as minute books, scrapbooks, and photographs from several lodges, including St. John's 1, Royal White Hart 2, Phalanx 31, Orange 47, Zion 81, Fellowship 84, Numa F. Reid 344, and Raleigh 500 were submitted to the North Carolina Digital Heritage Center for digitization. We also submitted the Hillsborough's Lafayette Chapter of Royal Arch Masons' Books of Marks for digitization, courtesy of the Durham York Rite. We have also begun to digitize the Orphan's Friend (now the North Carolina Mason) in partnership with the Sallie Mae Ligon Museum and Archives at the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford. As of the printing of this report, the bound, full volumes for the years 1875, 1876, 1877, and 1883 have been digitized. Further editions will be forthcoming. Those historic materials, as well as countless others, can be found at [digitalnc.org](http://digitalnc.org)

The Committee is also proud to report that since the last Annual Communication, volumes I through V of *NOCALORE: Being the Transaction of the North Carolina Lodge of Research* have been reprinted through Lulu Press. Volumes VI and VII are currently being edited for reprint and are anticipated to be available this fall. The remaining volumes of the series, volumes VIII through XIX are expected to be published in 2020.

The Committee is also proud to report that *Launching the Craft: The First Half-Century of Freemasonry in North Carolina*, written by Thomas Parramore in 1975, has been formatted and prepared for reprint. The committee is now discussing the possibility of republishing that volume with historian Joe Mobley's forthcoming history of North Carolina Freemasonry, taking up the story of our Grand Lodge from where Parramore left off. As of the printing of this report, Mr. Mobley anticipates completing between 8 and 10 chapters. Currently, Mr. Mobley's research and writing has carried him through the mid-19th Century. Once complete and agreeable to the Grand Lodge and the publisher, the two volumes would then be sold together as a set and are anticipated to be available in late 2020 or early 2021—in time to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the Joseph Montfort's commissioning as Provincial Grand Master of North Carolina.

The Committee would like to remind the brethren of Dr. Ric Berman's book, *From Roanoke to Raleigh: Freemasonry in North Carolina, 1730-1800*. Dr. Berman was able to illustrate through his latest work the economic and social connections that were the foundation of Freemasonry's connectivity between North Carolina and Great Britain in the 18th Century. The committee is also happy to report that so many of our brethren in North Carolina, as well as

our Grand Lodge, were able to aid in the acquisition of information for Dr. Berman during the writing of his book, which is available through Amazon.com

The Committee met via telephone conference and in person several times, including a clean-up and cataloging day at the Grand Lodge this past June 22. The committee was able to comb through several boxes of historic materials and sort them into their appropriate location for yet further review.

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 Grand Lodge Committee on Personnel was established in 2013 as an ad hoc committee to ensure compliance with state and federal laws and regulations, to implement and conduct annual employee performance reviews, and to make annual salary and benefit recommendations to the Grand Lodge Committee on Finance. At the 2017 Annual Communication the Grand Lodge Committee on Personnel was codified as a permanent committee.

In 2019, the Personnel Committee followed the established protocols with regard to its duties and obligations which are as follows:

- The Grand Secretary completes the annual performance reviews for each member of the office staff and forwards those reviews to the Committee Chair. The Chair then shares the reviews with the other members of the Personnel Committee.
- The Grand Secretary completes his annual self-evaluation and forwards that self-evaluation to the Committee Chair. The Chair then shares the Grand Secretary's self-evaluation with the other members of the Personnel Committee.
- Prior to the Personnel Committee meeting, the Committee Chair meets with each member of the office staff independently to assess their employment needs, current work load, anticipated future work load and to understand each employee's working relationship with other employees and with the Grand Secretary.
- The Committee meets with the Grand Secretary to discuss the annual performance reviews of the office staff and the Grand Secretary's self-evaluation.
- After the Personnel Committee completes its work, the Committee Chair meets with the Grand Secretary to share the Committee's evaluation of him and the office staff as well as to discuss his goals and objectives for the coming year.
- The Committee Chair forwards the Committee's recommendations for compensation adjustments, if any, to the Grand Lodge Committee on Finance.

In 2019 the Personnel Committee met on July 25, 2019, at the Grand Lodge office in Raleigh, North Carolina. All members of the Personnel Committee were present, either in person or via telephone conference. Prior to the Committee convening, the Chair met with each member of the office staff, privately and individually, to assess their individual work load, anticipated future work load, working conditions and work environment. There were no

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grievances or complaints expressed to the Chair by any member of the office staff. To the contrary, each and every member of the staff reported satisfaction with their employment with the Grand Lodge. More than one staff member described the environment at the Grand Lodge as being their “second family.” Each staff member attributed the pleasant work atmosphere as being a direct result of the Grand Secretary’s leadership. The Committee is grateful for the willingness of members of the office staff to discuss, with candor, their work conditions.

The Committee met with the Grand Secretary and discussed the performance evaluation of each staff member. The Grand Secretary describes the staff as being dedicated and hardworking. The Grand Secretary believes that the staff is performing at a high level. The Committee agrees with this assessment. The Committee also discussed with the Grand Secretary his self-evaluation. The Committee discussed with the Grand Secretary the goals set for 2019 and the progress made toward the completion of those goals. Thereafter, the Committee discussed with the Grand Secretary goals for 2020.

After meeting with the Grand Secretary, the Committee met privately to discuss the Grand Secretary’s performance evaluation, the staff evaluations, and the current compensation package for each employee. The Committee is of the opinion that the Grand Secretary is exceeding expectations with regard to the performance of his duties. The Committee is of the opinion that, although the Grand Lodge Staff is working at capacity, currently the need additional staffing does not exist.

The Committee considered the current salaries of each employee. WB Bryan Jones continues to offer a great service to the Personnel Committee by providing us a market analysis with regard to the salary ranges of our staff and the Grand Secretary. WB Jones provided the Committee with information relating to the current job market and employment opportunities that exist in that job market. Unfortunately, based on the education and experience of each of our staff members, we continue to be well below the median pay range with regard to the current Raleigh-Durham market. Salary demands may become an issue in the very near future with regard to the retention of our current staff. Nevertheless, the Committee is aware of the current situation regarding the budget and the need of per capita increase to avoid running a negative budget. The per capita restraints make it impossible to make salary adjustments to bring the staff salaries in line with the current market or to recommend merit pay increases that the staff deserve. As such, the Personnel Committee is recommending only a cost of living increase with regard to employee compensation.

The market analysis also demonstrates that the compensation package offered to the Grand Secretary is substantially below that available in the Raleigh-Durham market for a similar position in a nonprofit organization/corporation. In years past, the Grand Secretary has declined merit raises and costs of living increases to assist the Finance Committee with its budget constraints. However, the Personnel Committee does not believe it appropriate for the Grand Secretary to decline a cost of living increase for a second consecutive year. As such, the Personnel Committee has recommended a cost of living increase for the Grand Secretary. The Committee recommends that the Grand Secretary continue to work with WB Bryan Jones to maintain an understanding of the market trends with regard to staff salary. Should the Grand Lodge

salaries continue to decline as compared to the market, we are in danger of losing one or more of our office staff to other employers in the market.

The Chair met with the members of the Finance Committee and communicated the Personnel Committee's recommendations with regard to employee salary for the 2020 budget. The salary recommendations have been included in the proposed budget for 2020. The Personnel Committee hopes that the members of the Grand Lodge will take into consideration the need to adequately compensate the office staff when considering the proposed per capita amendment this year.

The Committee is grateful to the Grand Secretary and the Grand Lodge staff for their continuing dedication to serve our Fraternity. The skill and energy they bring to the office every day is evident in the excellent service they provide to the Craft. Remember that to us, Freemasonry, our Masonic lodges, and the Grand Lodge of North Carolina are volunteer organizations from which we gain much enjoyment and personal fulfillment. However, to the Grand Secretary and the Grand Lodge staff, these organizations represent a hard job that they execute with exceptional skill and ability on a daily basis. Therefore, it is incumbent upon us to act accordingly.

Respectfully submitted,  
R. David Wicker, Jr., SGW and Chair  
Larry B. Thompson, Jr., JGW and Vice Chair  
Dalton W. Mayo, PGM  
Douglas Caudle, PGM  
Bryan Jones, PM  
Kevin D. Frazier, SGD and Observer

## **Report of the Scholarship Committee**

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The Grand Lodge Scholarship Committee went to work to review this year's Charles Edward Cathey Masonic Scholarship applications. The committee divided up the applications and carefully reviewed each one. Once again the response to the Charles E. Cathey Scholarship offering this year was extremely popular among high school seniors, with over 350 applications received. Each committee member was responsible for a region and selected two winners along with a third possible alternate for consideration. The scholarship winners all demonstrated strong academic performance balanced with extensive volunteer service and extracurricular activities on their communities. We are most excited to have been able to award 15 scholarships valued at \$1,000 each. We hope that, through the generosity of the brethren, additional scholarships can be awarded each year.

Respectfully submitted,  
Grand Lodge Scholarship Committee

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## Report of the AD HOC Grand Lodge Transition Planning Committee

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

This ad hoc committee was formed by Most Worshipful Speed Hallman in late 2017 to ensure that our Grand Lodge responds to the eventual retirement of our Grand Secretary quickly and with the benefit of thoughtful preparation. The Grand Master charged this committee with evaluating the current Grand Lodge management model, examining other models including those employed by the grand lodges of sister jurisdictions, and reporting to the Grand Master and Board of General Purposes with its recommendations for a transition process to be enacted upon the Grand Secretary's notification of his retirement.

The committee reported on its progress at Annual Communication in 2018, and Grand Master Sigmon, upon election and installation, reappointed the committee, adding Past Grand Master Speed Hallman as a member, and continued its work. The committee met on February 7, 2019, and reviewed its progress, reviewed the results of polling from other Grand Jurisdictions, and considered various models for measuring performance of the Grand Secretary and ensuring the best relationships with the Craft and its leadership. A more comprehensive review of the existing personnel policy and procedures and The Code has been undertaken to determine what can be done with policy changes and what will require legislative changes to The Code.

Our Committee has learned the following:

1. The responsibilities of the Grand Secretary are extensive, and require deep knowledge of The Code, the online membership management system (MORI), best practices for lodge management, real estate issues, and tax law compliance, together with fraternalism and other issues.
2. While an elected Grand Officer, the Grand Secretary in NC essentially carries the roles and responsibilities of the executive director of a large, statewide non-profit.
3. Experience and understanding of the many nuances and roles of the Grand Secretary and the Grand Lodge will be essential for us to have continuity of service to the Craft upon the retirement of our long-tenured Grand Secretary.
4. The Grand Secretary is an essential resource to Lodge Secretaries, Lodge Masters, and District Deputy Grand Masters, not to mention our elected and appointed Grand Lodge Leadership. His office answers numerous questions daily and ensures Lodges have the resources to comply with The Code and federal, state and local law.
5. Our Grand Secretary's office particularly stands out among its peer with regard to its handling of IRS filing requirements for our 370 lodges, avoiding the possibility that any lodge incur filing penalties or lose tax exempt status. Almost every other US jurisdiction leave this responsibility on the lodges and they regularly have problem with lodges losing their non-profit tax status.

Our Committee expects to make a recommendation to the Personnel Committee for a performance-based compensation structure for the future, to ensure that the Grand Secretary is enacting best management practices and is responsive to the needs of the Craft and its leadership.

Our Committee expects to put forward legislative recommendations before the December 31 filing deadline which will clarify the qualifications for holding office, to ensure that the Craft has a Grand Secretary capable of the efficient and orderly provision of services needed and expected by the Craft and its volunteer leadership

The committee is honing in on recommendations that will allow for best practices for our elected and appointed Grand Lodge leadership to work with the elected but employed Grand Secretary, and will cause The Grand Lodge of NC to be prepared in the event of the retirement of the incumbent Grand Secretary.

Fraternally submitted:

Kim Lyda

Lew Ledford

Gene Cobb

Shaun Bradshaw

David Wicker

Speed Hallman

Bryant Webster, Chair

## Report of the Masonic Renewal Committee

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

### Mission Statement of the Masonic Renewal Committee

*To work with lodges  
to reestablish the culture of the fraternity  
to one that values and exemplifies  
fraternalism, education, and the mystical aspect of our ritual  
for the self-improvement of the membership*

The Masonic Renewal Committee has met three times so far in 2019. During each of the meetings the focus has been on identifying goals for the committee and, by extension, the Grand Lodge as a whole, which can drive strategies and tactics over the next several years. Each meeting was facilitated by RWB P. Shaun Bradshaw, DGM, and included input from members of the committee as well as the Grand Lodge officers.

The first two meetings were held on January 11-12, 2019, and focused largely on brainstorming, discussing, and prioritizing key goals to renew a culture of fraternalism, education, and self-improvement within the fraternity. The discussions in these meetings resulted in the following five (5) key goals:

- **Increase diversity of membership in the fraternity.**

The fraternity currently suffers from a lack of diversity. As a result, men who might be attracted to the ideals of the fraternity are not exposed to members in similar social, economic, professional, political, religious, and racial stratifications. An underlying premise of the fraternity is one that's built on universal brotherhood, but our membership seems to be fairly one-dimensional. In order to understand how to attract and gain a more diverse membership we need to understand what our current membership looks like and identify ways to attract men from other backgrounds.

- **Improve/stabilize cash flow for lodges.**

Lodges currently collect the majority of their income once per year, which comes in over a 2-4 month period from mid-to-late October to mid-to-late January. Many lodges may not have sufficient cash reserves to “carry” them during the months leading to the annual receipts. Lodges may find it easier to budget and pay their bills if dues came in on a more regular basis (i.e. monthly or quarterly – prepaid). Assuming the ability to prepay the dues on a monthly/quarterly basis could be automated (ACH) then members may be less likely to NPD and dues and/or per capita increases wouldn’t seem so burdensome since the payment would be spread over several smaller increments.

- **Increase accountability of lodge officers, DDGMs, and DDGLs for lodge conditions.**

The Grand Lodge has some limited means of assessing lodge conditions, which are largely subjective and anecdotal. The Grand Lodge needs a way of identifying potential problems in lodges before they get to a point where they are unfixable. Our expectation is that the lodge officers should be held accountable to communicate these conditions to the DDGM, DDGL, and Grand Lodge on a regular basis and that the DDGM can routinely “audit” the lodges on the basis of certain criteria. Also, understanding the current conditions of lodges in general (both from a quantitative and qualitative standpoint) will allow us to identify programs that work to improve lodges across the state.

- **Increase the percentage of members who participate in lodge meetings/activities.**

Grand Lodge should encourage lodges to hold interesting meetings that encourage participation of the members, engage the community, increase charitable activities, etc.; however, we only have anecdotal evidence about what “works.” Which lodges have consistently high turn out? What do they do to drive participation? What’s the quality of that participation? Are there certain key indicators that can be seen in the data to help GL identify programs to promote across the state or warnings about doing/not doing certain things? We need better data to help drive our decisions and help our lodges improve.

- **Decrease member NPDs by half over the next 5-10 years.**

While NPDs occur for a variety of reasons, we suspect many of them are due to the member seeing a lack of “value” in their membership in the fraternity. The value of the fraternity could be improved if there were better quality and increased frequency of communications with the membership (fraternal communications – not just dues notices). We also believe a small, but not negligible number of members NPD because the dues payment process can be onerous. We’d like to understand how we can simplify and automate dues payments so members don’t have to think about and therefore forget or find themselves in a situation where they can’t make the payment because it’s a large burden at the time.

The third meeting was held on March 1, 2019, and revolved around ideas of how the Grand Lodge Officers could implement (or assist in implementing) specific activities related to increasing the diversity of the fraternity. The following activities and assignments were made during this meeting:

- Increase PR to the general public via presentations and speeches to external groups.

- WB Jonathan Underwood, Asst. to the Grand Secretary, was tasked with developing historical write-ups and presentations for Grand Lodge Officers to present to local historical groups.<sup>1</sup>
- Partner with communities on fundraisers and other activities to increase community awareness of the fraternity.
  - WB Robert Rideout, Grand Marshal, was tasked with identifying how we can promote a series of 5k fundraisers across the state. Target areas would be in Greensboro to promote Whitestone, Oxford to promote the MHCO, and Raleigh to promote the Grand Lodge office and/or the Pig Jig.
  - RWB Shaun Bradshaw, Deputy Grand Master, confirmed that he would include an incentive in the Lion and Pillar award for lodges to participate in more public ceremonies.
- Establish more affinity lodges aligned with specific professions.
  - WB Jonathan Underwood and RWB Shaun Bradshaw were tasked to collaborate on identifying professions that should be targeted, current members who might assist in establishing these lodges, and locations for the lodges to meet in. Initial discussions are underway to establish a lodge in or around the Capitol building so masonic members of the legislature can meet fraternally while they are in session.

In addition to continuing the efforts above, the committee expects to begin visiting “growing” lodges next year to be able to identify what, if any, common attributes contribute to the growth of a lodge in their community. Our hope is that by identifying what makes a lodge we can share real world, tangible actions other lodges can follow to potentially increase growth and minimize NPDs and demits in their own lodges.

Look for more to come over the next year.

Respectfully submitted,

P. Shaun Bradshaw, DGM

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Note that on June 5th, Jonathan Underwood shared historic tales of NC Freemasonry at the Museum of the Albemarle.

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**Final Report  
of  
Grand Master  
Speed Hallman  
to the  
Grand Lodge  
of  
Ancient, Free & Accepted Masons  
of  
North Carolina  
at  
Winston-Salem, North Carolina  
September 27, 2019**

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*Ignore the purple the fraternity may have draped across your shoulders, approach each Brother on the level, as an Entered Apprentice, and ask yourself, "What may I learn from my Brother?"*

"Why We All Should Begin 2018 as Entered Apprentices"

masonsleadbetter.com

With this profound guidance, and pursuant to Reg. 13-2.5 of our Code, I am pleased to offer my final report to the delegates at our Annual Communication on my acts as Grand Master and the general condition of Masonry within our jurisdiction.

I selected the hourglass as my symbol because I'm increasingly aware of the swift passage of time, and how the little particles contained in this machine are passing away almost imperceptibly for me, and for each of us. You entrusted me with a sacred duty for a limited time, and I'm grateful for the opportunity to serve as North Carolina's 165th Grand Master of Masons. My goal was to use every minute wisely and for the benefit of our Craft.

### **The state of the Craft**

Masonic light shines brightly in the Tar Heel State, with few exceptions, and Masonry within our borders is multifaceted. We have country lodges, city lodges, motorcycle lodges, university lodges, formal lodges and casual lodges. Our oldest lodge was chartered in 1755 and our newest received its charter this year. We have a Masonic education program that is the envy of the nation and we have brethren wholly dedicated to their lodges, appendant bodies, committee work, philanthropy, service, and most importantly, friendship, morality and brotherly love. I visited lodges from Murphy to Manteo and I can report that overall, our Masonry is vibrant and robust. Each of our 371 lodges has its own culture and personality. Many are active, visible and engaged in meeting the needs of their communities. Some face challenges such as declining and aging membership, an insufficient number of members willing to fill the chairs, revenue shortfalls and buildings in need of extensive repairs.

To members of lodges that are struggling, I want you to know that current and former Grand Lodge officers and the staff are dedicated to your success. We have seen lodges go through rough patches, only to emerge stronger, and we can help lodges that want to be successful. I urge you to call on us for assistance.

North Carolina Masonry is nearly as diverse as our state's growing population. I've met hundreds of Masons, young and old, who come from all over the globe and who are practicing Masonry's precepts. They remember and heed their obligations and charges, and they are a joy to encounter. As the aphorism above admonishes, I want to learn how to be a better man and a better Mason from these brethren.

I have also seen evidence of members who are not as mindful of our teachings. I said members, not Masons, because I consider some of these men to be no more than carriers of dues cards. By word and deed they loudly and proudly assert their indifference to our beautiful system of morality. When I encounter such brethren, I reflect on the quote above and strive to remember that the divine glows within all of us – in upright Masons as well as in those who appear to have slunk in through poorly guarded west gates. Ideally, those in the

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latter group, who may have been misled about Masonry's purpose or who may have misunderstood who and what we are, will see the light. My hope is that those who will not or cannot see the light will slink back out. We are better off without them. Masonry is not for everyone, and a dues card in your wallet doesn't make you a Mason.

We know the difference between a member and a Mason. A Mason embodies the characteristics we inculcate through ritual and symbolism. He cares for his brethren and seeks to improve himself so he can improve his home life, his community and the world.

Where were you first prepared? Look to your heart and answer honestly: Are you a Mason or a member?

### **The year in review**

Your 2018 Grand Lodge officers assumed their current duties on Dec. 2, 2017, in Chapel Hill, on the campus of the University of North Carolina. The University was founded by Masons as the first public university in the United States. For Masons, the ties connecting UNC and our Craft transcend game-day loyalties and are fascinating to explore.

Fittingly but coincidentally, my first visit to a lodge as Grand Master was to University Lodge #408 in Chapel Hill on Dec. 4 to see two UNC students raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason. I was delighted to be asked to play second base for the degree when that position needed to be filled at the last minute.

### **Honoring our veterans**

There were many days when I felt blessed to serve as Grand Master on account of the brethren I was able to meet. The times I spent with veterans are particularly memorable.

On Jan. 31, I visited Zion Lodge #81 in Trenton to present a 60-year award to Bro. Tom Harriett. Bro. Harriett was aboard the USS St. Louis in Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941. He and the St. Louis survived the aerial attack and a torpedo fired at the ship as she headed to sea. At 3 p.m. on a Wednesday afternoon, his lodge was full of brethren and townspeople who turned out to honor him, not only for his service to our nation but for being an outstanding friend, neighbor and citizen. It was deep regret that I learned Bro. Harriett entered the Celestial Lodge May 24.

I met Bro. Hubert Cadle, a WWII Army Air Corps veteran who served in the Pacific Theater, on March 7 at Columbus Lodge #102 during the District 20 meeting, and I had the honor of inviting to the East. He laid down his working tools April 25.

On April 11 at the District 1 meeting in Edenton, I recognized Bro. Marshall White, a D-Day veteran and member of Eureka Lodge #317. Bro. White landed on the beach at Normandy on June 6, 1944 as a sailor aboard LST-293. We learned of his passing on June 17, just after the 74th anniversary of the day Bro. White helped begin the liberation of Europe.

On April 30, I met Bro. Wayne Carringer, a survivor of the Bataan Death March, at the Charles George VA Medical Center in Asheville. Bro. Wayne greeted me in the lobby, driving a scooter flying an American flag and with a square and compasses emblem affixed to the rear. He locked eyes with me and asked a pointed question: "How come you guys (grand masters) only come here

once a year?" I didn't have an answer but I did have an idea. Before I left that day we had scheduled an emergent communication of Sonoma Lodge #472 for July 10 at the hospital. The meeting would honor Wayne and all brethren at the hospital. Sadly, Bro. Wayne laid down his working tools on July 1.

We held the emergent communication at the VA hospital in Bro. Wayne's memory and we were blessed to have a number of veterans with us in lodge, including WWII Navy veteran Bro. Edwin Horhorouny (AKA Bro. Hoho), who described his wartime experiences on the USS Montague.

We were honored to have two distinguished out-of-state guests at the meeting: MWB Michael D. Smith, Grand Master of South Carolina; and Simon LaPlace, Past Grand Master of Connecticut and Executive Secretary and Director of Hospital Visitation for the Masonic Service Association of North America.

I'm indebted to the brethren who visited Bro. Wayne with me in April and made something happen that to my knowledge has never been done: a North Carolina lodge meeting in a VA hospital. Thank you MWB Berry Rigdon, Sonoma Lodge #472 Master Butch Allison, WBs John Burchfield, Gene Canter, Bill McEntire, Ron Sortino, and the brethren of Sonoma Lodge.

On July 25, I visited the W.G. (Bill) Hefner VA Medical Center in Salisbury. WB Rick Starnes, our Masonic Services Association volunteer in Salisbury, is passionate about reaching out to and helping vets – Masons and non-Masons. Bro. Rick is well-known and well-loved by patients and staff. He needs help, and he and the patients would welcome your company. WB Bill Safrit, Bro. Jonathan Black and I made the rounds with Rick that day.

D-Day veteran and WB Mervin Hogg played a key role during the Battleship degree Sept. 8 in Wilmington. Even at the age of 93, he made a striking impression on three candidates. I was honored to invite him to the East before closing the lodge and I noted that the enemy never had a chance with men like him in the fight.

I urge lodges to visit to veterans in our VA hospitals in Asheville, Salisbury, Durham and Fayetteville, and support our dedicated MSA volunteers. For more on the Masonic Service Association of North America's Hospital Visitation Program, see [msana.com](http://msana.com).

### **Activities around the state**

On April 19, I spoke at Mosaic Lodge #762's open house in Chapel Hill. Mosaic meets in the beautiful Dialectic Society Chamber in UNC's New West building, and it's steadily making connections with students and the campus community.

Grand Line officers participated in the 13th Annual Carolina Masonic Pig Jig, held May 18-19, under the team name Grand Swine. Despite a torrential rain that caused teams of fainter heart to drop out of the competition, we enjoyed fellowship with the adventurous brethren assembled for competition at the State Fairgrounds. Grand Swine was led by our JGW and smoked-meat savant David Wicker. DGM Mack Sigmon, Grand Marshal Don Kehler and I rounded out the team. I encourage lodges and districts to join the fun and support Masonic charities by entering the Pig Jig, held every May in conjunction with the Got to be NC festival.

In June, I attended three community events benefitting the Masonic

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Home for Children at Oxford and at each one I enjoyed seeing WB Kevin Otis, administrator of the Home, and his wife, Kevin Otis.

On June 1, we attended a tractor pull as guests of WB Earl Wells at his GALOT Motorsports Park in Dunn. Kevin and Kevin brought a group of 30 children and staff from the Home. Earl made sure each had a T-shirt, money for concessions and ear protection. He invited one of the children to deliver the invocation before the tractors roared to life.

On June 21, Hamlet Lodge #532 held a gospel concert on the campus of Richmond Community college. Three outstanding quartets performed free of charge, and all proceeds from sponsorships and ticket sales benefitted our Home. Well done, WM David McCall and brethren!

June 29 is an especially memorable day. I went to the Denton FarmPark for the 48th Annual Southeast Old Threshers' Reunion. Bro. Brown Loflin created and owns the park. His nephew, WB Tim Loflin, helps manage events there. This year the 22-mile tractor ride and an auction benefitted the Home. It was an honor to ride at the front of the parade with Tim, who surprised me by switching seats and allowing me to take the wheel of his John Deere while we were moving. After the parade Denton Lodge #404 held an emergent communication in the FarmPark's church building. I presented three 50-year certificates and pins, including one to Bro. Brown Loflin. A highlight was the presentation of honorary memberships in Clyde Lodge #453 to WM Jason Parker and SW Chad Graham. Bros. Parker and Graham came to the aid of brethren from Clyde at the 2017 Annual Communication, and Clyde Lodge expressed its appreciation in a most fraternal manner. The spirit of brotherhood was powerful that day. Thanks to the Loflins for hosting us and designating our Home as the featured charity this year, to 27th District DDGM Jimmy Myers for his leadership, to WB Kirby Matthews for coordinating the Masonic activities, to Denton Lodge JD Matthew Holland and Tyler Jeff Kirkman for being my friends and brothers, and to all of the officers and brethren of Denton Lodge for making it a great day. I understand that 32 Masons, including 17 past masters, camped in the FarmPark campground that weekend, and that Masons have been camping at the Threshers Reunion for 40 years. Maybe I'll see you there next year.

On May 28, DGM Mack Sigmon and I participated in the North Carolina Memorial Day Parade and Celebration in Thomasville. Thomasville Lodge #214 represented Masonry well in their community that day. Lodge members, with sponsorship from Food Lion, handed out 1,900 hot dogs and drinks to spectators. After walking in the parade, I was happy to find a job in the kitchen working alongside WM Andy Thomas, Bro. Jem Wiles, a 19-year-old Mason raised in November, and Bro. Aguztin Benites-Reynolds, a fellowcraft. I returned to Thomasville June 30 to see Bro. Aguztin raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason.

On April 14, I participated in the Great Landscaping Day at the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford. Grand Tyler John Speed and I started the day in Shipman Cottage at an emergent communication of Andrew Jackson Lodge #576. After the meeting we joined brethren from Salisbury at the Home's beautiful cemetery, God's Half Acre, where we planted two dogwood trees and spread mulch. I look forward to returning when the dogwoods are in bloom. The landscaping day is a service and fellowship opportunity for lodges, and the Home appreciates the help. Next April, round up some brethren and tools, and go. You'll be glad you did. I suggested an outdoor Master Mason degree for the

2019 event and, at this writing, look forward to attending.

We celebrated North Carolina Weekend at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial in Alexandria, VA July 20-22. Saturday began with a trip to Mount Vernon, where Bro. Matt Parker, SW of Lodge of the Nine Sisters UD, and I laid a wreath at George Washington's tomb and placed an apron on his marble sarcophagus. That's a Masonic moment I'll never forget. That afternoon, during an emergent communication of Lodge of the Nine Sisters, in the memorial's beautiful lodge room, I was honored to play King Solomon for a Master Mason degree. I hope the Mount Vernon visit and North Carolina degree at the memorial will become an annual event.

I also enjoyed playing the role of King Solomon in Master Mason degrees for Spencer Lodge #543's Railroad Degree held April 21 at the NC Transportation Museum, at Eagle Lodge #19 on June 12, at Kernersville Lodge #669 on June 16 and at the District 28 Quarry Degree in Concord on Sept. 8. Cannon Memorial Lodge #626 supplied the candidate for three of the degrees: At the George Washington Memorial, the Railroad Degree and the Quarry Degree.

On Aug. 1 I convened a joint meeting of members from Gastonia Lodge #369 and King Solomon Lodge #704 to discuss the potential sale of their building and merger of the lodges. I approved the merger in October and asked the lodge leadership to provide a budget and plans for sale of the lodge building and relocation of the merged lodge.

On Aug. 9 I helped Goldsboro Lodge #634 celebrate its centennial. It was a festive evening attended by members and their families, with Eastern North Carolina barbecue on the menu, and a program including service awards and a presentation on the lodge's history.

June 4 was a great day to be Grand Master, as Susan and I watched brethren from Clemmons Lodge #755 and West Bend Lodge #434 give bicycles to the top readers in grades K through 5 at Morgan Elementary School. Old Town Lodge #751 was one of the first lodges to start a Bikes for Books program. If you had seen the faces of those children when we rolled their new bikes into their classrooms, you'd be starting a Bikes for Books program for your lodge.

Susan and I attended the 30th District St. John's Day worship service June 10 at Wesley Memorial United Methodist Church in Statesville, led by Rev. Chris Fitzgerald, a member of Harmony #299. The text for his sermon, "Building a temple in the heart," was from I Kings 8:12-19. All hymns were by Masonic composers. A Trestleboard Service (our Bible presentation) was offered by WB Bill Thompson, and the Benediction (our closing charge) was delivered by WB Keith Rash. We wore white aprons, and Masonry's light was shining brightly that day in a house of worship. Consider coordinating a similar service for your lodge or district.

I attended a St. John's Day feast on June 24 at Meadow Branch Lodge #578 in Wingate and enjoyed a program on the 300th anniversary of the United Grand Lodge of England presented by PGM Gene Cobb.

#### **Out of state visitations**

I was honored to represent you at communications of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the District of Columbia (December) and the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the State of New York (April). In March, I traveled at my own expense to attend a quarterly communication of the United Grand Lodge of England in London, and a lodge meeting in Lund,

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Sweden. RW Oscar Alleyne, WB Ric Berman and WB Andreas Önnorfors were indispensable in helping with arrangements for the international visits.

### District meetings

Hosting a district meeting requires a great deal of work and sometimes stresses the officers. I'm grateful to the 27 lodges that hosted our meetings this year. The brethren never failed to be welcoming, hospitable and attentive to my message. The opportunity to visit lodges across the state, see old friends and make new ones was immensely rewarding.

District meetings were held as follows:

<u>Date</u>	<u>District</u>	<u>Host Lodge</u>	<u>Location</u>
Jan 29	16	Granite 191	621 Bolling St, Clayton
30	6	Crown Point 708	1104 Charles St, Greenville
31	4	Lafayette 83	305 Chaney Ave, Jacksonville
Feb 27	11	Coharie 379	976 Autryville Rd, Salemburg
28	12	Shallotte 727	5072 Main Street, Shallotte
Mar 1	13	Millbrook 97	2400 New Hope Rd, Raleigh
5	24	Balfour 188	632 Sunset Ave, Asheboro
6	22	Dan River 129	110 Decatur St, Madison
7	20	Columbus 102	121 East St, Pittsboro
20	18	Maxton 417	123 S Florence St, Maxton
21	10	Harmony 340	108 S Railroad St, Pikeville
26	32	Phalanx 31	500 N Sharon Amity Rd, Charlotte
27	23	Revolution 552	802 16th St, Greensboro
Apr 2	33	Snow 363	240 Temple Dr, Boone
3	37	Cranberry 598	193 Main St, Elk Park
4	30	Harmony 299	143 E Memorial Hwy, Harmony
10	2	Manteo 521	101 Hwy 34/264, Manteo
11	1	Unanimity 7	215 E Water St, Edenton
12	8	Enfield 447	137 SE Railroad St, Enfield
23	28	Stokes 32	51 Brumley Ave, Concord
24	29	Beaver Dam 276	605 E Main St, Marshville
25	36	Gastonia 369	214 South St, Gastonia
30	39	Veritas 769	80 Broadway, Asheville
May 1	40	Oconee 427	62 Clifton Ave, Bryson City
2	38	Kedron 387	229 Fifth Ave W, Hendersonville
3	34	Hickory 34330	Catawba Valley Blvd SE, Hickory
15	19	Eagle 19	142 W King St, Hillsborough

Lodge representation at district meetings is an expectation, but 26 lodges were not represented in 2018. Five lodges were not represented in district meetings in 2017 or 2018: Winston #167, Creasy Proctor #679, Advance #710, Enterprise #752 and Clifford Duell #756. Lincoln #137 has been absent for three years. I asked these lodges to explain their absences.

### **Dispensations**

I issued the following dispensations:

I have approved the following 76 dispensations thus far:

1. Elect Senior Warden - Montgomery 426
2. Elect Officers - Rockingham 495
3. Other meeting Place - French Broad 292
4. Dispense with Stated - Shallotte 727
5. Elect Officers - Wilkerson College 760
6. Elect Officers - Marietta 444
7. Elect Officers - Orphans 761
8. Master of two Lodges - Knights of Solomon 768
9. Dispense with Stated - New River 736
10. Charter Restoration - St. John's 1
11. Elect Junior Warden - 624
12. Elect Officers - 418
13. Stated Communication - Knights of Solomon 768
14. Elect Officers - Adoniram 149
15. Dispense with Stated - J. J. Crowder 743
16. Elect Junior Warden - Knight of Solomon 764
17. Dispense with Stated - Orient 395
18. Dispense with Stated - Liberty 714
19. Dispense with Stated - Fallston 356
20. Elect Officers - Adoniram 149
21. Stated Communications - Knights of Solomon 768
22. Elect Junior Warden - Corinthian 230
23. Other meeting Place - Kernersville 669
24. Dispense with Stated - Currituck 463
25. Dispense with Stated - Spencer 543
26. Other meeting Place Railroad - Spencer 543
27. Other meeting Place - Ionic 583
28. Other meeting Place - Lodge of the Nine Sisters UD
29. Other meeting Place - Ionic 583
30. Elect Junior Warden - Knights of Solomon 768
31. Stated Communications - Knights of Solomon 768
32. Elect Senior Warden - Conover 709
33. Other meeting Place - Ionic 583
34. Dispense with Stated - J. J. Crowder 743
35. Other meeting Place - Corinthian 542
36. Dispense with Stated - Blackmer 127
37. Elect Treasurer - Allen-Graham 695
38. Other meeting Place WhiteStone - Bula 409
39. Dispense with Stated - Walnut Cove 629
40. Outdoor - King Solomon 138
41. Other meeting Place - Andrew Jackson 576
42. Stated Communications - Wilkerson College 760
43. Dispense with Stated - Wilkerson College 760
44. Stated Communications - Knights of Solomon 764



45. Dispense with Stated - Harmony 340
46. Other meeting Place - Kernersville 669
47. Other meeting Place - Mosaic 762
48. Outdoor - William Pitt 734
49. Dispense with Stated - Newport 706
50. Dispense with Stated/Other meeting Place - Lux Libe
51. Other meeting Place - Lux Libertas 772
52. Other meeting Place - Piedmont-Pioneer 685
53. Other meeting Place - Piedmont Pioneer 685
54. Other meeting Place - Ayden 498
55. Other meeting Place - Fellowship 687
56. Elect Senior Deacon - Bailey 411
57. Other meeting Place - Sonoma 472
58. Dispense with Stated - Berne 724
59. Other meeting Place - Denton 404
60. Other meeting Place - Lebanon 391
61. Other meeting Place - Wilkerson College 760
62. Dispense with Stated - Grifton 243
63. Other meeting Place - Temple 676
64. Other meeting Place - Lodge of the Nine Sisters UD
65. Elect Junior Warden - PP Turner 746
66. Other meeting Place - Lodge of the Nine Sisters UD GWNMM
67. Other meeting Place - Knights of Solomon UD Waynesville
68. Other meeting Place - Veritas 769
69. Dispense with Stated - Veritas 769
70. Dispense with Stated - Zion 81
71. Dispense with Stated - Wilkerson College 760
72. Outdoor degree - Casar 579
73. Other meeting Place - Knights of Solomon UD
74. Stated Communication - Knights of Solomon UD
75. Other meeting Place, Battleship - St. John's 1
76. Grand Lodge, Lynch Lodge
77. Other meeting Place - Lux Libertas 772
78. Other meeting Place - Wilkerson College 760
79. Other meeting Place - Ionic 583
80. Other meeting Place due to damage - Friendship 763
81. Other meeting Place - Knights of Solomon 766
82. Outdoor degree - Cranberry 598
83. Outdoor degree - Lillington 302
84. Other meeting Place - Charity 5
85. Other meeting Place - Laurinburg 305
86. Dispense with Stated - Berne 724
87. Dispense with Stated - Shallotte 727
88. Elect Secretary - P.P. Turner 746

### **Dispensations for physical disability**

When petitioners disclose physical defects or disabilities which may prevent them from conforming to the requirements of our three degrees, Reg. 66-2 requires the Grand Master's approval before lodges can accept their petitions. I received 18 such petitions. In each case the District Deputy Grand Master met with or contacted the petitioner, investigated his circumstances and recommended approval. I reviewed the DDGMs' recommendations, spoke with DDGMs in some cases, and approved these petitions with the notation "Ap-

proved for disability only.” Once approved by the Grand Master, the petition should be treated like every other petition. It is the responsibility of the lodges to follow the normal process of interviewing and investigating these petitioners before balloting.

### **Board of General Purposes**

The Board of General Purposes met in Raleigh on March 2 and May 18, in Winston-Salem Sept. 27 and in Hickory Nov. 30.

The board assists the Grand Master by providing oversight and management of Grand Lodge enterprises, activities and programs. A strong board made up of intelligent and independent thinkers is the Grand Master’s best source of advice, good counsel, expertise and wisdom. Its duties are enumerated in Chapter 28 of our Code.

Boards are meaningful only when there is diversity of experience and thought around the table, and when the members are able and willing to do their homework, question assumptions, speak their minds, hold staff accountable, demand excellence and vote their consciences. With these qualities in mind I appointed WBs Bill Faison of Hillsborough and Mike Register of Asheboro to terms ending in 2020, and WB Ben Wallace of Troy to an unexpired term ending in 2019. These outstanding men and Masons qualify on all counts, and I’m proud to have appointed them to the board. They bring intelligent perspectives to the work of the board and keep the good of Masonry at the forefront of every decision they make.

### **Montfort Medals**

The Joseph Montfort Medal is the highest honor a Grand Master may bestow for distinguished service or achievement. Our Code allows each Grand Master to present three Montfort Medals to Master Masons in good standing. The medal memorializes Joseph Montfort (1724 – 1776), a soldier, patriot, Freemason and Provincial Grand Master of and for America.

On April 12, 2018, within sight of Montfort’s grave and in Montfort’s home lodge, Royal White Hart #2 in Halifax, I presented the Montfort Medal to Past Grand Master Gene Cobb. MWB Cobb, a Halifax native and past master of Royal White Hart, has served Blue Lodge, Scottish Rite, York Rite and Shrine Masonry with freedom, fervency and zeal. His term as Grand Master in 2017 was marked by a relentless emphasis on our duty to support our charities. He conceived and launched the Lion and Pillar Lodge of Excellence program, which was inspired by the leadership his fellow Haligonian, PGM William R. Davie. The Lion and Pillar award has benefitted a number of lodges and raised the sights of brethren across the state. PGM Cobb helped start two lodges, MESH Lodge #771 and Lux Libertas Lodge #772, and he is also past master of Blackmer Lodge #127, where he was initiated, passed and raised. He is a 33rd degree Scottish Rite Mason, personal representative in the Greensboro Valley, past presiding officer in the Greensboro York Rite bodies, a KYCH and a Sudan Shriner. We were energized by his constant admonition of “Let’s go to work” and I will always be grateful for his mentorship and wise counsel.

I presented Montfort Medals to WB Gary Handy and WB Jim Medlin on Sept. 28, 2018 at the annual communication.

Gary Handy has a servant’s heart. He is absolutely dedicated to serving the Craft and his brethren, wherever and whenever he sees a need, and does so with grace and humor. During an awards night presentation at Walnut

Cove Lodge #629, his home lodge, I mentioned Gary's commitment to Masonry and pointed to where I had seen him in the audience. The seat was empty. A brother needed something that Gary had at home, and he left the lodge to go get it. As chairman of our annual communication he is instrumental to its smooth functioning, adept at managing numerous event details and the volunteer staff, and flexible and creative when the inevitable curve balls are thrown. I cannot convey the extent to which Gary Handy pours his heart and soul into service. He is quietly and superbly effective at everything he does. He is a past master of Walnut Cove and Wilkerson College lodges, JW in Lux Libertas Lodge, Marshal in Sophia Lodge, past member of the BGP, past DDGM, member of the Grand Lodge Finance Committee, a 33rd degree Scottish Rite Mason and secretary of the Greensboro Valley, a KYCH in the York Rite, Secretary of the York Rite College and an Oasis Shriner.

Jim Medlin is one of the most passionate, positive and hard-working Masons I know. He was a pioneer in building support and securing resources for our homes and our Foundation as the Grand Lodge's first development officer. Fund raising can be thankless work. It involves detailed research and planning, extensive travel, long days, patience, a great deal of interpersonal contact, and being told no more often than yes, but Jim has always been positive because he loves the cause he is advancing. He is generous in sharing his fund-raising experience with each year's Wilkerson College class. As chairman of the Grand Lodge Committee on Subordinate Lodge Special Activities he reviews all lodge fund-raising proposals. Rather than merely rejecting proposals that don't conform to the rules, he often helps lodges find a way to get a yes, and he consults with lodges that need fund-raising help. His workload is astounding and his dedication keeps lodges and the Grand Lodge within due bounds of the law and IRS regulations. Jim is a 33rd degree Scottish Rite Mason in the Valley of Asheville, an Oasis Shriner, a member of the York Rite and a National Sojourner. He served in the US Air Force and is a Vietnam veteran.

### **District Deputy Grand Masters and District Deputy Grand Lecturers**

Grand Lodges and Grand Masters cannot function without knowledgeable and engaged DDGMs and DDGLs. These men are on the front lines of service to lodges and individual brethren and I'm indebted to them for dedication and commitment. They maintain high standards ensure that we are operating according to the Code.

The DDGMS and DDGLs met with me Nov. 3 and 4 at WhiteStone to review and refine plans for 2018. After a joint session, the DDGMs and DDGLs met separately. On the DDGM side, I wish to thank WB Rob Morrell for his leadership in helping plan and execute the program, WB Chris Hall for presenting case studies and success stories from the districts, and WBs Charles Barrett, Jon Canupp and Mike Kenlan for sharing their insights with the group.

This year, the DDGMs and I communicated via videoconferences on Feb. 14 and Aug. 15. These conferences allowed me to provide up-to-date information for DDGMs to share in their districts, and enabled the district officers to discuss successes, concerns and activities in their regions.

### **Honorary Title of Past District Deputy Grand Master**

I recommended that the 2018 annual communication grant the honorary

title of Past District Deputy Grand Master to the brethren who were eligible in accordance of Reg. 12-5 of the Code:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Lodge</u>	<u>District</u>
Ronald T. Parrish	Belhaven Lodge No. 509	3
W. Dennis Campbell	Crown Point Lodge No. 708	6
Jimmie Bohannon	Royal White Hart Lodge No. 2	8
Todd H. Dyches	Holly Springs Lodge No. 115	15
Mike Kenlan	Mosaic Lodge No. 762	19
Terry E. Byrd	Lillington Lodge No. 302	20
Alvin Billings	Bula Lodge No. 409	22
Don Bulla	Biscoe Lodge No. 437	24
Jon A. Canupp	Clemmons Lodge No. 755	26
M. Derry Simson	Meadow Branch Lodge No. 578	29
Randy Sharpe	Catawba Lodge No. 248	34
Kenny Warlick	Casar Lodge No. 579	35
Dewey Webb	Forest City Lodge No. 381	38
Jack Barnett	Nichols-W. Asheville Lodge No. 650	39
Mike Gregory	Junaluskee Lodge No. 145	41

### **Emergent Communications of the Grand Lodge**

An emergent communication of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina was held at Eagle Lodge #19 in Hillsborough on Dec. 1, 2017, for the purpose of installing Grand Lodge officers.

An emergent communication of the Grand Lodge was held at Hominy Lodge #491 in Candler on June 3, 2018, for the purpose of dedicating a cornerstone at Hominy Baptist Church. The cornerstone graces an addition to the church that was made possible by WB Jack and Sister Carolyn Ferguson, whose philanthropy has enriched the lives of many in their region. We attended an inspirational Sunday service at Hominy Baptist for the church's graduating seniors, led by Rev. Joe Yelton, before dedicating the cornerstone. Special thanks to Rev. Yelton, MWB Bryant Webster, PGM Berry and Roseanna Rigdon, JW Chris Miller, DDGM Jack Barnett, DDGL Gus Sims, Dee Blake and the brethren of Hominy Lodge for working together to honor the Fergusons.

The officers of Eagle Lodge #19 opened an emergent communication of the Grand Lodge on Oct. 6, 2018, at the Lynch Lodge in Burlington for the purpose of Masonic education. This is not a chartered lodge, but we counted 57 Masons in attendance. On several Saturday mornings a year, Bro. Steve Lynch opens his "lodge" building, where he coaches candidates amid his collection of artifacts related to Masonry, George Washington, the military and law enforcement. Masons, prospective Masons and family members fill his porch, back yard and lodge building, and Steve and his wife Betsy provide the biscuits, juice and coffee. They make sure that everybody is greeted and makes new friends. We joke that the Lynch Lodge is clandestine. In reality, Steve is North Carolina's foremost Masonic host, goodwill ambassador and promoter of brotherly love and fellowship. I never fail to leave the Lynch Lodge thinking that I've experienced one of the real secrets of Masonry, and my purpose in holding this emergent communication was to celebrate his commitment to Masonry and the rare and wonderful sense of fellowship he creates. Every grand jurisdiction needs a Steve Lynch and a Lynch Lodge, but there's no one else in the world like our Bro. Steve.

### **Lodge charters and lodges under dispensation**

On July 7, we granted a dispensation to Knights of Solomon UD at Waynesville Lodge #259. This will be the fourth Knights of Solomon lodge to form since 2010, joining #764 in Charlotte, #766 in Jacksonville and #768 in Holly Springs. Members of the Knights of Solomon lodges are united by a love of motorcycle and a desire to support Masonic and community charities.

On Sept. 28, the Grand Lodge approved the issuance of a duplicate charter for St. John's Lodge #1 in Wilmington. The original charter, issued Jan. 2, 1794, and signed by Grand Master William R. Davie, had become illegible. I signed the duplicate charter as Grand Master – humbled to have my name nearby PGM Davie's – and delivered it to St. John's Dec. 11, shortly after my term ended.

I was honored to present a charter to the Lodge of the Nine Sisters #773 in Raleigh on Oct. 5. This is North Carolina's third traditional observance lodge to form since 2013, following Sophia #767 in Salisbury and Veritas #769 in Asheville. Members of traditional or observant lodges are motivated by a seriousness of purpose, an emphasis on excellence in ritual and a desire to promote learning and intellectual growth in Masonry. At this writing, planning is underway for a fourth traditional observance lodge to be located in Catawba County.

### **Summonses and Summary Trials**

This year I issued Masonic summonses to eight brethren.

One was summoned to discuss issues of concern relating to the management of his lodge. The brother appeared as required by the summons and after we had an opportunity to discuss the issues, the matter was successfully resolved. No Masonic charges were filed in that case.

Six bothers were summoned to discuss perceived un-Masonic conduct via social media. Four of these brethren appeared. I had a very productive discussion with each of these brothers. In three of the matters, the issues were successfully resolved and no Masonic charges were filed. With regard to a brother who made death threats against another brother, we had a full and frank discussion of his conduct. He agreed that his conduct was un-Masonic and a violation of the obligation he took as a Master Mason. He agreed that his conduct warranted expulsion, and the penalty of expulsion was entered.

Two of the six brothers who received Masonic summonses failed to appear, despite being given two chances. As a result of the failure of these brothers to obey a Masonic summons, the Judge Advocate issued a complaint for un-Masonic conduct. Each of the brothers was served with a complaint. Thereafter, each of these two brothers failed to appear before the Trial Commission. Before hearing evidence, the Trial Commissioners waited more than two hours for these brothers to appear. After hearing the evidence, the Trial Commission found each of the brothers guilty of un-Masonic Conduct. The CODE proscribes that the penalty for failure to answer a Masonic summons is expulsion, and that punishment was entered.

Delegates to the 2018 Grand Lodge upheld the three expulsions.

In November I received reports of un-Masonic and sophomoric behavior by the chairman of an investigating committee during the committee's meeting with a petitioner. I summoned the brother to appear before me at the Grand

Lodge office. Following this meeting I directed the master of his lodge to:

1. Read my letter of reprimand aloud in lodge at its next stated communication;
2. Re-obligate the brother on the Master Mason degree at the lodge next stated communication;
3. Bar the brother from investigating committees for the remainder of 2018 and all of 2019;
4. Choose members of investigating committees with care and admonish them that they are representing Masonry when they meet with a candidate and they are to act as such.

I also directed the brother to present a Masonic education program on investigating committees to his lodge, and to use the Grand Lodge Guidelines for Lodge Investigating Committees, available on the website, as his guide.

### **The Conference of Grand Masters of North America**

In February, I participated in the Conference of Grand Masters of North America meetings in Indianapolis, IN. Our delegation included DGM Mack Sigmon, SGW Shaun Bradshaw, JGW David Wicker and GS Walt Clapp. Our topics included databases, lodge finances, millennial apprentices, Masonic renewal, member retention, temple associations and youth organizations. Immediately after the conference adjourned I attended a meeting of Grand Masters Chapter #996 of the National Sojourners.

### **The Northeast Conference of Grand Masters**

In July, I participated in the Northeast Conference of Grand Masters, Deputy Grand Masters and Grand Secretaries in Warwick, RI, accompanied by DGM Mack Sigmon, SGW Shaun Bradshaw, JGW David Wicker, and PGM and Grand Treasurer Lew Ledford. This conference is an opportunity to network with Masonic leaders in our region, learn how other grand jurisdictions address issues that concern us and share ideas for better ways to serve the Craft. Every year I've brought ideas back home for us to try. At this conference I learned about Grand View, a Masonic membership database and Mori competitor that appears to be a good option for us to pursue; a program that helps struggling lodges; an amnesty program for members dropped for NPD; and a survey that identified issues of concern to newly-raised Masons.

### **The World Conference of Regular Masonic Grand Lodges**

In November, the Grand Secretary and I represented our Grand Lodge at the World Conference of Regular Masonic Grand Lodges in Panama. We were joined by GT and PGM Lew Ledford and PGMs Gene Jernigan and Bryant Webster. Our host, MWGM Roberto Cueto Cisneros of Panama, stated that the aim of the conference was to discuss topics that will continue to be relevant to our order and to humanity as we progress through Freemasonry's fourth century. If we can unite as a world fraternity, he said, we can help achieve positive changes. Conference topics included the roles of Freemasonry and individual Masons in society, the Masonic way toward the internal transformation of the individual, the attitude of Masons in the face of human rights violations, and Masonic action against inequity. The point was made that Freemasonry, which constitutes the world's only moral system of education that is free of religion

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and politics, has a responsibility to promote liberty of conscience, faith and intellect. Ninety-one grand lodges were represented at the conference.

### **The Masonic Home for Children at Oxford**

I encourage you to read the report of the administrator of the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford, and the report of the Grand Lodge committee on the Home, found elsewhere in this book. Our wonderful Home was founded as an asylum for orphans who lost their parents or were separated from their families as a result of the Civil War. It has nurtured more than 10,000 children in its nearly 150 years of existence. This is a stunning statement of the Home's impact on the life of our state. It has done so with the generous support of North Carolina Masons and by adapting to changes over time. We as Masons are justifiably proud of the Home's legacy, but we must realize that it's our turn to step up and support the Home in all of its worthy endeavors, and help it continue to adapt, before we turn it over to the next generation of Masons. The Home needs your financial support as well as your presence and your advocacy. If you haven't visited the Home, why not?

### **WhiteStone, the Masonic and Eastern Star Home**

I encourage you to read the report of the administrator of WhiteStone, and the report of the Grand Lodge committee on WhiteStone, for the most up to date information on our 107-year-old home for senior Masons and Stars. When you visit WhiteStone you'll find a beautiful and comfortable home, operated by a friendly and knowledgeable staff and managed by professionals. Masons who have been in the Craft a decade or more understand that WhiteStone is a success story almost beyond belief. Our gifts to WhiteStone and the MESH LLC help house and provide services to deserving fraternal residents, and support outreach services allowing brothers and sisters stay in their homes. I encourage you to visit, tour the facilities and see for yourself how Masons in North Carolina are helping brothers and sisters live their golden years in dignity and comfort. If you haven't visited WhiteStone, why not?

### **The North Carolina Masonic Foundation**

A report from the North Carolina Masonic Foundation is found elsewhere in this volume, but I wish to add my observations. The Foundation was created in 1929, months before the market crash that wiped out fortunes and destroyed lives, and it has withstood depression and recession thanks to generous Masonic support and wise leadership over the past 70 years. The Foundation is a bulwark. It has stood beside and behind our homes and has made it possible for them to thrive. The Foundation also holds and manages funds for the Charles Cathey Scholarship, which helps bright young North Carolinians pursue higher education, and the Hinton James Masonic Scholarship for UNC students, endowed by Lux Libertas Lodge #772. Under the leadership of Chairman Mike Faulkenbury and board members, the Foundation stepped up its efforts to encourage all of us to provide philanthropic support for the programs we hold dear. It's also offering new services to lodges, such as professional fund management and opportunities for lodges in historic buildings to receive support for renovations and restoration. For us as individuals, the Foundation provides opportunities for planned giving that allow us to support Masonic charities and provide income to us and our beneficiaries, thereby creating our legacies while providing for our families. I made my planned gift and I'm happy to report that in 2018, every Grand Lodge line officer committed to making a planned gift. I hope you'll give every year to both homes and our Foundation

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and consider how you can create your own Masonic charitable legacy with the Foundation's help.

### **The Scottish Rite**

This year I've been unable to participate in my Greensboro Scottish Rite Valley as much as I would like. On Dec. 13, I attended the Valley's Ring Ceremony and dinner and made brief remarks. On June 13, the Valley held its Feast of the Consistory and a table lodge in my honor. I appreciated the presence of PGMs Cobb, Webster, Ledford and Jernigan, and PGM/SGIG Brunk, as well as several members of the Grand Lodge line. I attended a stated meeting on May 9. On March 23, I dropped by the Valley of New Bern's spring reunion, and on June 8, I enjoyed fellowship with brethren playing in the Valley of Winston-Salem's golf tournament. On April 5-6 SGIG Brunk and I attended the Dr. G. Wesley Allen Council of Deliberation meetings in Cary. I appreciated the warm welcome and generous hospitality provided by North Carolina Deputy for the Orient and SGIG James H. Upchurch and the brethren in attendance. On Aug. 24, I attended and addressed the Scottish Rite Orient of North Carolina Summer Meeting at the Winston-Salem Masonic Center.

### **The York Rite**

On March 19, I addressed the York Rite Grand Conclave in Greensboro. On July 8-10, I attended the 81st annual Great Smokies Assembly of York Rite Masons in Maggie Valley, where I delivered the keynote address. I enjoyed the address delivered by MWB Michael D. Smith of South Carolina at the Masonic Marker near the Blue Ridge Parkway and the address by RW Oscar Alleyne. I also attended a York Rite College degree in Waynesville July 7. Every North Carolina York Rite Mason should experience the Summer Assembly, which attracts brethren from all over the country. On June 6, accompanied by former Grand Commander Pete Cook, I attended a meeting of the Greensboro York Rite bodies and was honored to receive a certificate of lifetime membership presented by Chris Wright, Illustrious Master.

### **The Shrine**

I'm proud to be a North Carolina Mason and Shriner. The Shrine's philanthropy and service through Shriners Hospitals is unparalleled, and Masonry would profit by adopting the Shrine's approach to involving spouses and families. In January, I attended the installations of our three Shrine potentates and their divans: John Burgess of Oasis in Charlotte on Jan. 6; Bob Downen of Amran in Raleigh on Jan. 24; and Teeny Jones of Sudan in New Bern on Jan. 27. I attended the Imperial Shrine sessions in Daytona Beach, FL, in July. Our JGS and Past Potentate of Sudan Shrine, Steve Norris, was president of the South Atlantic Shrine Association (SASA) this year, and I participated in SASA's meetings in New Bern in March. The SASA meeting scheduled for Myrtle Beach Sept. 21-22 was cancelled on account of Hurricane Florence.

Oasis Shrine held a black-tie ceremonial in my honor Aug. 25 at the Winston-Salem Shrine Club. It was an evening of fellowship that I'll never forget, highlighted by the lesson of the apron and the fez presented to the new Nobles. I thank Illustrious Sir John Burgess, the Divan and Nobles of Oasis Shrine, for this honor and for their fellowship and support all year.

I'm grateful to our Shrine temples and potentates for their hospitality at every event I attended, for their friendship, and for their dedication to Masonry and Shrinedom.

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### **National Sojourners and Heroes of '76**

On Feb. 5, at Semper Fidelis Lodge #680 in Jacksonville, I was honored to be installed as an honorary member of National Sojourners. WB Ron Sortino, who at the time was national president of Sojourners, participated in the ceremony. I returned to Semper Fi on Aug. 4 for initiation into the Heroes of '76, an affiliate and auxiliary organization of the Sojourners. Susan accompanied me and was made a Camp Follower. The Heroes degree was inspiring, patriotic and memorable, and I'm grateful for the confidence of the members who sponsored and initiated me into this outstanding organization. The Heroes of '76 participated in the opening ceremonies of the 2018 Annual Communication.

### **The North Carolina College of SRICF**

My membership in the North Carolina College of Societas Rosicruciana in Civitatibus Foederatis (SRICF), made possible by the sponsorship of our late Grand Historian Michael Brantley, provides Masonic light and fellowship with brethren from across the state. I attended the SRICF dinner in Raleigh Jan. 12 and degrees in Monroe June 22.

### **The Order of the Eastern Star**

I appreciated the invitation from the Grand Chapter of North Carolina Order of the Eastern Star to address delegates at its opening in Durham on June 11, and I enjoyed seeing many good friends there.

### **DeMolay**

On Jan. 13, I attended DeMolay initiations and a DeMolay degree held at my home Lodge, Eagle #19 in Hillsborough. I found the young men to be impressive and the ritual to be beautiful and meaningful. Delegates to the 2018 annual communication saw the DeMolay Ceremony of Light performed by State Master Councilor Quentin Surace. This public ceremony summarizes DeMolay's teachings and offers an explanation of the seven candles surrounding the altar in a DeMolay Chapter. Quentin suggested that the ceremony would have a greater impact on our delegates than remarks from the stage, and I agreed. I encourage every Mason to reach out to DeMolay, learn more about this outstanding organization and support its growth in our grand jurisdiction.

### **Rainbow**

The Grand Assembly of North Carolina International Order of the Rainbow for Girls invited me to its meeting June 25 in Raleigh, where I was received and made remarks. Worthy Grand Adviser Summer Clifford attended the open section of our annual communication, updated us on Rainbow's activities and shared plans for the Supreme Session of the International Order of the Rainbow for Girls, which North Carolina is hosting in 2024. This will be the 50th biennial stated communication for Grand Assemblies from around the world and the NC Grand Assembly needs our help to make it happen. My home lodge has hosted Hillsborough Assembly #77 for decades, and we are proud of their successes. Lodges that do not host Assemblies would profit by doing so.

### **The Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of North Carolina**

This year, this Grand Lodge and the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina held our annual communications simultaneously, interrupting our tradition of attending each other's annual meetings. I was honored, as Grand Master-elect, to attend the Prince

Hall 2017 annual communication with MW Gene Cobb. November marked the 10th anniversary of mutual recognition between our Grand Lodges, a relationship that has been rewarding and enlightening for North Carolina Masons.

### **Masonic Education**

North Carolina's Masonic education programs are the envy of the nation. I expounded on this in my column in the July-August 2018 issue of *The North Carolina Mason*. Anyone seeking to learn and improve himself in Masonry has the tools at his fingertips, thanks to the dedication and labor of many, many brethren. Our progress over the last decade has been breathtaking. Spend some time on the Grand Lodge website, under the Education Resources tab, and look at Wilkerson College, the Davie Academy, the Middle Chamber, the Speakers Bureau and other offerings.

Three Masons in particular have led our educational renaissance: WB Ben Wallace, past chairman of the Committee on Masonic Education; WB Tony Rathbone, the current chairman; and PGM Doug Caudle, whose inspiration and perspiration helped launch the Davie Academy, and who ensured that the Academy would offer outstanding programs in each region of the state. MWB Caudle turned the Davie Academy reins over to WB Rob Morrell in 2018. I'm grateful to MWB Caudle for all that he has done to spread light and I know WB Morrell well enough to know that the Academy will grow and offer even greater service to our Craft in the years ahead.

### **Wilkerson College**

On April 28, I had the honor of addressing 38 graduates of Wilkerson College at their commencement ceremony in Raleigh. The 2018 class was named for WB Morty Jayson, a friend and a fine man and Mason who was instrumental in Wilkerson College's creation and development. WB Morty was a past master of Cary Lodge #198 and Wilkerson College Lodge #760. He left us, much too soon, in October. On Aug. 17, I participated in the meeting of the College's Board of Regents in Greensboro.

### **The Lion and Pillar Lodge of Excellence award**

The Lion and Pillar Lodge of Excellence award was launched in 2017 by MW Gene Cobb. I'm grateful for his assistance in running this outstanding program for a second year. Lodges qualified for the award by meeting requirements in five categories: Education, Patriotism, Philanthropy, Masonic Membership and Affiliated Connections. The program works. An officer from a lodge that had been struggling told me that achieving the Lion and Pillar requirements revitalized his lodge. In 2018, 34 lodges qualified for the distinction, with eight first-time winners (denoted below by asterisks) and 26 second-timers. I was delighted to present certificates to the winners on Friday afternoon at the annual communication. Congratulations to the 2018 Lion and Pillar Lodges of Excellence.

Eagle 19	Oxford 122
Zion 81	Mingo 206
Jerusalem 95	William G. Hill 218
Fulton 99	Kenly 257
Columbus 102	Bingham 272
Mt. Lebanon 117 *	Pleasant Hill 304

Wilmington 319	Andrew Jackson 576
Granite 322 *	Cannon Memorial 626
Campbell 374 *	Semper Fidelis 680
State Line 375	Piedmont-Pioneer 685 *
Jefferson Penn 384	Albemarle 703
Bald Creek 397	Berne 724
Bula 409 *	Steele Creek 737
Elkin 454 *	Mosaic 762
Thomas M. Holt 492	Ashlar 765
Pilot 493	Lux Libertas 772
Mooresville 496 *	* denotes first-time recipient
Mount Holly 544 *	

### “The Lynch Lodge”

I attended the famed “Lynch Lodge” in Burlington twice this year: On Feb. 3 with 65 Masons and friends present, and again on Oct. 6, when we opened an emergent communication of the Grand Lodge on the premises.

### Necrology

This year our Grand Lodge lost two giants: PGM Charles Edward Cathey of Canton (April 19, 1938 – March 3, 2018) and Grand Historian Michael Wiley Brantley of Raleigh (Aug. 11, 1938 – Aug. 15, 2018). North Carolina Masonry lost an internationally prominent leader in David Lee Hargett of Monroe (June 23, 1939 – July 26, 2018).

We are grateful for the service of these prominent brethren, and we cherish our memories of every brother within our circle who has traveled to that undiscovered country.

### Hurricane Florence and disaster relief

Hurricane Florence made landfall at Wrightsville Beach Sept. 14. Rain-fall of more than 30 inches, a record-breaking storm surge of 9 to 13 feet and winds gusting to 106 miles per hour caused an estimated \$17 billion in damage in North Carolina, more than the damage from hurricanes Floyd and Matthew combined. Flooding and wind damage were pervasive, and 43 deaths in our state are attributed directly and indirectly to Florence. The amount of human suffering and property losses is unimaginable.

On Sept. 14, MWB Simon LaPlace of the Masonic Service Association of North America opened a fund for NC disaster relief immediately upon my request. As the storm raked our coastline and moved inland I received messages of support and offers of assistance from the Grand Masters of South Carolina, Virginia and Ohio, and the Imperial Potentate of the Shrine. Each of these Masonic leaders encouraged his members to contribute to the MSANA fund, and ultimately gifts to MSANA totaled \$275,000. The Grand Lodge of Texas contributed \$100,000 directly to our Grand Lodge for relief. The Grand Lodge of Wisconsin provided gift cards for use in the hardest-hit areas. Our Grand Lodge and the NC Masonic Foundation contributed \$25,000 each for disaster relief.

On Sept. 19, I appointed a committee to review applications for assistance and distribute relief funds to individuals and lodges. Chaired by PGM and Grand Treasurer Lewis Ledford, the committee included WB Donald Hufham; 18th District DDGM William McRae; 7th District DDGM Bobby Meadows; 4th District DDGM Rob Morrell; Bro. Greg Salmon; and WB Johnny Surles, chairman of the Grand Lodge Charity Committee. In the Grand Lodge office, Vicki Lam managed the accounting and Hayley Moll handled correspondence and distribution of relief checks.

On Sept. 22, WB Surles issued an urgent appeal for Masons attending the Annual Communication to bring relief supplies and cleanup tools for use in the affected areas. Our brethren answered the call and dropped off their donations at the designated collection point in the Embassy Suites lobby. Johnny and WB Bobby Meadows collected enough supplies to fill a 12-foot trailer, and the inside and bed of Johnny's truck, with an estimated value of \$4,000.

Five-gallon buckets were placed at the entry to the Grand Pavilion for cash donations. We also passed the buckets through the crowd on Saturday morning. These collections totaled \$4,658.81.

At this writing, a total of \$474,095.11 has been received for hurricane relief, and we have paid out \$402,763.57 to victims.

Three entities in Florence's bullseye – St. John's Lodge #1 in Wilmington, Semper Fidelis Lodge #680 in Jacksonville and Sudan Shrine in New Bern – appear on the donor list. They gave even as they were in danger of losing everything.

Disasters bring out the best in humanity, and more especially among Masons. I'm grateful to every donor of money, materials and time who helped bring relief to our fellow Tar Heels.

### **Masons Can**

This marked the third year of our Masons Can food drive, conceived by MW Bryant Webster for the 2016 Annual Communication and continued by MW Gene Cobb and myself. Our point man for the drive is Bro. Bob Blair of West Bend Lodge #434. Bob collects the food and cash donations that brethren bring to the Annual Communication and coordinates with the Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest NC for pickup and distribution. I appreciate his dedication and great work on our behalf.

In 2018, Masons donated 1,644 pounds of food and \$2,510 in cash. In 2017, Masons gave 2,333 pounds of food and \$3,043. In 2016, we collected 7,000 pounds of food and \$6,221.

The Food Bank tells us that every dollar contributed helps it obtain and deliver an average of seven meals. I hope our Grand Lodge will continue this partnership.

### **Gun raffle directive**

In 2017 GM Cobb appointed an ad hoc committee to study the issue of gun raffles in our Craft. WB Howard Kahn chaired the committee. Members were WBs Jim Medlin (chair of the Committee on Subordinate Lodge Special Activities), Currie Pendleton, Graham Pervier (PGM), Tom Redmon, Robert Rideout (JGS) and Dee Blake from the NC Masonic Foundation.

On Feb. 20, after consulting with the ad hoc committee, I issued a directive on gun raffles. I was happy to discuss the directive with every brother who

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approached me with concerns, and I heard from an equal if not greater number who expressed their support.

The committee thoroughly reviewed the topic, consulted brethren from all over the state, and provided expert as well as common sense gun raffle recommendations to the Commission on Special Activities. The commission successfully implemented those recommendations. It has assisted a number of lodges with their raffles and it stands ready to help any lodge looking for guidance on the issue.

Many thanks to WB Kahn and the ad hoc committee, and WB to Medlin and members of the commission, for their diligence and leadership on this issue.

The directive was my most controversial, and I would add most misunderstood, action this year. A number of brethren who contacted me with concerns, or who spoke out in opposition to the directive, had not read it.

To give every brother an opportunity to read and make up his own mind about the directive, I'm putting three key documents on the record: My Feb. 20 directive, the March 4 report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Gun Raffles, and my April 6 response to the committee report.

#### **Background:**

On Nov. 14, 2017, following a mass shooting at the First Baptist Church in Sutherland Springs, TX, GM Cobb appointed the ad hoc committee to study the issue of gun raffles in our Craft.

On Feb. 14, the day after the committee's final meeting, a mass shooting occurred at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, FL. I consulted with committee members, determined that we were aligned in our thinking, and felt strongly that I needed to act before the committee could issue its report.

#### **The Feb. 20 directive:**

To the Masters, Wardens, Secretaries, DDGMs and Members of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina:

The Grand Lodge task force on gun raffles met recently and is preparing its report, which I expect to receive in the next few weeks. When I receive its report I will consider its recommendations and act accordingly.

In the meantime, as Grand Master it is my duty to act for the good of Masonry and do my best to ensure that our gentle Craft is held in the highest public esteem. I'm concerned that when we seek public support for our charities by raffling military-style weapons such as the AR-15, in the aftermath of shootings inextricably linked in the public mind with these weapons, we invite a public judgment of guilt by association. Images of the gun are invariably juxtaposed with scenes of carnage and grief. Masons and Masonic lodges are focused on brotherly love, relief and truth. That should be our constant role and image in the community.

Several lodge-sponsored gun raffles are currently underway. I trust that our brethren in charge of these raffles will understand that Masonry benefits when we take a reasonable and common-sense approach to how we present ourselves to the public. Masons should exemplify the gold standard of citizenship and strive to always do the right thing at the right time.

As a precedent, consider the action of the Mecklenburg County sheriff, who in the wake of the Florida school shootings canceled a gun raffle benefiting his re-election bid and gave refunds to ticket buyers. The sheriff is a Mason.

Therefore, it is my directive that Masons and Masonic lodges currently engaged in raffles of military-style weapons will remove images of AR-15s and similar military-style weapons from any and all raffle promotional materials yet to be circulated or distributed in public.

It is my further directive to eliminate AR-15s and similar military-style weapons from all future raffles. This applies to any raffle that has not received approval from the Commission on Subordinate Lodge Special Activities as of this date. I am directing the Commission to enforce this directive and consult with me should there be any question about my intent or how best to enforce this directive.

Given under my hand and seal this 20th day of February, CE 2018; AL 6018.

Speed Hallman  
Grand Master

**The March 4 committee report:**

Grand Lodge of Ancient Free & Accepted Masons of North Carolina  
Ad Hoc Committee on Gun Raffles  
To the Most Worshipful Grand Master:

Most Worshipful Hallman, as Chairman of this Ad Hoc Committee on Gun Raffles I am proposing for your consideration the following recommendations from our committee's findings. These recommendations are presented here after careful and diligent research and study of the gun raffles held in our jurisdiction. We have heard and received comments and concerns from all quarters of the state and concurrently factored these many thoughts and apprehensions into our recommendations.

Please feel free to contact me or any member of the committee if you have any questions or concerns.

It has been an honor Sir.

Respectfully submitted on this date March 4, 2018  
Howard Kahn, Chairman

Recommendations:

1. Introduction

In the past few years, gun raffles have raised significant sums for our charities - - approximately \$246,000 in 2017 alone. However, concerns have been raised about the appropriateness of using gun raffle proceeds for our charities, and, in particular, about including "AR type" (military assault) rifles in Masonic raffles. AR type rifles are fully legal and used by many responsible

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gun owners for target shooting, “plinking”, hunting and home defense. However, they have also been the type of firearm used in almost all of the horrific mass shooting incidents in the recent days/months/years.

## 2. Raffle Results

As of February 18, 2018, 206 Lodges participated in fund raisers in 2017 and generated \$953,098 in Net Proceeds for our charities and lodge building funds:

Masonic Home for Children	\$392,024
Whitestone	185,216
NC Masonic Foundation	98,594
Other charities chosen by lodges	102,796
Lodge building funds	\$174,469

Gun raffles generated more Net Proceeds than any other type of fund raiser:

Gun raffles (50)	\$ 245,989
Other raffles (37)	91,622
Golf tournaments (20)	137,024
Breakfasts (19)	38,093
BBQ (41)	108,400
Dinners, chicken, fish (46)	133,611
Other, auctions, etc. (75)	198,360

Upon research of other Grand Lodges, Gun raffles seem to be commonplace in many other jurisdictions.

3. Properly run gun raffles are not a way for a prohibited person to obtain a firearm.

Gun raffles winners must take possession of their firearm from a gun shop or sporting goods store that has a Federal Firearms License (FFL). The winner must be cleared with a National Instant Criminal Background Check System check (for a rifle or shotgun) or have a Pistol Permit from a NC Sheriff (for a handgun). A NC Concealed Carry permit can substitute for the NCIS check or Pistol Permit.

## 4. About AR type Rifles.

The AR type rifle was originally designed for military use in the late 1950's. (AR actually stands for Armalite, the company that first designed this type of rifle). The military version of the AR is a true “assault rifle”. Assault rifles are equipped with a “select fire” feature. The rifle can be set to fire in semi-automatic mode; in three-shot bursts, or; fully automatic. Sale and possession of fully automatic weapons are very tightly regulated by the BATF.

There are between 5 million and 10 million AR type rifles in civilian ownership in the United States. These are semiautomatic rifles, not fully automatic assault rifles. Semiautomatic rifles, pistols and shotguns have been around since the early 20th century. A semiautomatic firearm is ready to fire again after each shot has been fired. It is not necessary to manipulate a bolt, lever action, pump action or hammer to prepare for the next shot.

Nevertheless, semiautomatic AR type rifles can be fired very quickly and they are usually equipped with high capacity magazines (30 rounds or more). (The so-called “Clinton gun ban”, 1994-2004, did not ban semiautomatic firearms. It prohibited guns with two or more features that were “too similar” to military weapons. High capacity magazines were also banned).

#### 5. Task Force Findings.

Individual members have heard a variety of opinions for and against gun raffles, and; for and against including AR type rifles in gun raffles.

Informal communications with our charities indicate that they would prefer to leave this matter with the Grand Lodge.

A rough consensus seems to be that gun raffles are fine, but that AR type rifles should not be included in our raffles.

We simply must distance the Craft and our charities from the horror of these mass shootings...with apologies to those who own and enjoy this type of firearm legally and responsibly.

#### 6. Recommendations.

Do not include AR type firearms or other military type firearms in Masonic gun raffles.

Winners should receive a gift card in the amount of the firearm that he/she has won. The winner may use the gift card for that firearm, or apply the amount to the purchase of another gun (which could be a type-change if the winner so chooses).

Best practices: The best practice is the use of a Master/Visa gift card, which could be converted to anything anywhere. The second best practice is to raffle gift cards to firearm shops and allow images of the firearms (with the exception of the above mentioned weapons). The, third best practice and last would be to directly raffle previously purchased weapons that are held by a FFD, these dealers will comply with all state and federal law (with the above mentioned firearms excluded). Including a gift card to a firearms shop of sufficient amount should allow the winner to be able to purchase their weapon of choice.

Further, and final thoughts: the committee would like to emphasize that all fund raising activities should be in addition to the individual members' donations to our Masonic Charities. Our members should support our Masonic charities with their own personal contributions, to the best of their abilities, and not over rely on the contributions of others through fund raising events.

#### **My April 6 response:**

Dear Brethren,

I have received the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Gun Raffles (also referred to as the Task Force on Gun Raffles), and I wish to thank the committee members for their work:

Howard Kahn, PM, chairman	Semper Fidelis #680
Dee Blake	NC Masonic Foundation, MESH #379 OES
Jim Medlin, PM	Fairview #339
Currie Pendleton, PM	Andrew Jackson #576

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Graham Pervier, PGM	Forsyth #707
Tom Redmond, PM	Snow #363
Robert Rideout, PM	White Stone #155

The committee was formed by then-Grand Master Gene Cobb on Nov. 14, 2017, for the purpose of:

Finding ways to better educate the Craft regarding firearms;

Interacting with our Masonic charities in ways that promote our principles, rather than political or religious positions or persuasions related to guns or raffles;

Thoughtfully studying the full breadth and scope of the issue toward being able to have healthy and effective conversation that reflects the gentle nature of our Craft rather than anything that could possibly be perceived as hostile;

And engaging in productive discussions on moral, legal, and Masonic implications of the issue toward whatever can provide best work and most agreement.

The committee held meetings and conducted additional work through phone and email. Each member of the committee heard from brethren who wished to share their opinions about the issue at hand. The last committee meeting was held in February, at which time the members agreed on the details of the report and began to draft and assemble sections of the report via email. Their final report was due by July 1.

The Parkland shootings occurred the day after the committee's last meeting. I consulted with committee members and decided to act before the committee submitted its report, and I issued a directive on Feb. 20. I indicated that I would consider the recommendations of the committee upon receiving its report and act accordingly. Thereafter, the committee submitted its report for my consideration.

The committee makes two recommendations, advises on best practices for raffles and offers its thoughts on lodge fundraising and our individual responsibility to support our charities. I accept and endorse the committee's report.

After listening to and talking with Masons who agree with, and disagree with, the directive, and reviewing the committee report, I will add these observations to the record:

Some members have commented that my directive constitutes an abuse of the Grand Master's authority. That is not the case. I urge anyone with this concern to review Chapter 13 of the Code.

Some members feel the directive injects politics into Masonry. Nothing could be further from the truth. My action, and the actions of the committee, are motivated by a heartfelt concern over the image and reputation of Masonry in our communities.

Some members feel their Constitutional rights are being infringed. There is no Constitutional issue here. No one's right to lawfully own a gun is affected.

To those who feel that an effective fundraising tool has been taken away, I reiterate that gun raffles may continue. Only certain types of guns are prohibited. Furthermore, the use of gift cards, as recommended by the committee, allows raffle winners to buy whatever guns they want so long as they meet the

legal requirements.

The committee report cites a dollar amount raised for our charities in 2017 through gun raffles. This is for all gun raffles. Our data doesn't distinguish between proceeds for the military-style weapons covered by my directive and proceeds from other types of guns raffled by lodges. Furthermore, I am convinced that neither my directive nor the committee's recommendations will reduce the amount of funds raised by gun raffles.

North Carolina Masons helped form the most innovative system of government in the world, launched the first state university and built the first continuing care retirement community in the state. If we are to grow and develop as a fraternity and overcome the challenges we face, we must channel our energy into advancing the Craft and finding better ways to operate. We must work together to achieve better results from everything we do, including supporting our charities, and we must preserve our reputation unscathed.

I call your attention to the committee's final point: Masonic fund raising should complement our personal philanthropic support for our charities. As the report says, "Our members should support our Masonic charities with their own personal contributions, to the best of their abilities, and not over rely on the contributions of others through fund raising events."

I am grateful to the members of the committee for their diligence, wisdom and service. Every Mason on the committee has firearms affinity and experience, through military service, law enforcement work or sporting and hobbyist activities. The one non-Mason, a member of the Eastern Star, is a fundraising professional charged with increasing philanthropic support for our charities. We could not have assembled a finer or more experienced group for this task.

In his charge to the committee, Grand Master Cobb said, "To even enter into a discussion or debate about these matters could be divisive because emotions and beliefs have become so polarized. May this not be so among us."

Unfortunately, his concern was well founded.

Reasonable men, whether or not they are Masons, should be able to debate ideas without lowering themselves to the use of insults, derogatory labels and threats. Masons are sworn to higher standards of conduct, especially when interacting with one another. Unfortunately, that has not been the case with regard to this issue. We will certainly disagree at times, but we must always live by our obligations. Masons meet on the level, act by the plumb and part on the square. When we do not, do we deserve to call ourselves Masons?

Speed Hallman

### **Conclusion**

With these materials on the record you have the full story. I also wish to add:

The term "military style" raised questions and caused confusion. My goal was to define modern assault-type weapons, such as the AR-15, that were designed for military use but produced for the civilian market. To ensure that the spirit of the directive could be enforced, I directed the Commission on Subordinate Lodge Special Activities to enforce the directive and consult with me should there be any questions about definitions or intent. It should be clear to anyone who reads the directive that raffing an AR-15 is prohibited and raf-

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fling a musket is not.

I believe that reasonable people can discuss ideas without sinking to the use of insults or applying derogatory labels. As Masons, we are obligated to interact with one another at a higher level. I ask every brother to remember and live by our obligations.

### **Order #2**

On Nov. 29, after hearing that a proposed Code amendment was ruled out of order on account of a misunderstanding, I issued Order #2, pursuant to Reg. 13-1 and 13-2.12 of the Code:

It has been brought to my attention that a proposed amendment to the Code was ruled out of order by the Code Commission this year because the Commission did not have access to the full amendment proposal as presented by the author of the amendment. I believe that any Mason or any lodge submitting an amendment for the Craft's consideration should have an opportunity to be present or to be represented when such amendments are being discussed by the Code Commission and the Committee on Masonic Jurisprudence.

Therefore, it is my order that whenever the Code Commission and the Committee on Masonic Jurisprudence schedule a meeting or conference call to discuss or consider a proposed amendment, the Commission and Committee shall notify the propounder of the amendment (the lodge or brother within the lodge, or current or past Grand Lodge Officer) of the meeting or conference call and provide an opportunity to speak to the Commission and Committee about the proposed amendment, which shall at least include the opportunity to present and discuss the proposed amendment.

Given under my hand and seal this the 29th day of November, 2018.

### **Initiatives in 2018 and the definition of insanity**

My mantra this year has been that we will not keep doing things the same way, just because that's the way we've always done them. I've enjoyed quoting the old bromide that says, "The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results." We looked critically at everything we do in the Grand Lodge and innovated everywhere we could.

At the Nov. 9 meeting of the MHCO Board of directors, I charged the home's staff to hold the board accountable for supporting the home financially and opening doors to others who can provide support. I charged the board to hold the staff accountable for providing a warm and caring place within a challenging budget environment. And I charged the staff and the board to hold the Grand Lodge's feet to the fire for providing information and resources needed to do the job. This applies to everything we do. We will thrive when we demand the very best effort of ourselves and those around us and work together in a spirit of true cooperation and collaboration.

One of the benefits of attending the Northeast, North American and World Masonic conferences and visiting other Grand Lodges is the certainty of encountering new ideas that can be adapted to benefit North Carolina Masonry. One example is accepting applications for committee appointments, an idea I borrowed from the Grand Lodge of Michigan.

### **Grand Lodge committee appointments**

The Deputy Grand Master is charged with making appointments to Grand Lodge boards and committees in anticipation of his election as Grand

Master. There are more than 100 positions to be filled. Grand officers typically have seven years in the progressive line before serving as Deputy Grand Master. During their travels they meet Masons around the state and make depth charts, as one Past Grand Master said, for these appointments. I had six years in line before the year as deputy and had my own depth chart, but I knew that there were many worthy and well-qualified Masons I had not had the opportunity to meet. Last year I borrowed an idea from Michigan and implemented an application process for slots on 10 Grand Lodge committees and boards: Charters and Dispensations, Education, Jurisprudence, Library, Masonic Home for Children at Oxford, Miscellaneous Ceremonies, Public Relations, Publications, Youth Organizations and WhiteStone.

The application process was announced June 6 with a deadline of July 1. We received 43 applications (from 42 Masons, one of whom applied for slots on two committees). Seventeen submitted their resumes, which was optional.

The Committee on Education was the most popular choice, with 12 applications for three slots. Jurisprudence had 9 applications for four slots. The remaining committees had one to four applications for each.

From this applicant pool, 22 were assigned to committees, with 15 assigned to the committee of their first choice. I was delighted to discover new talent in every area of the state and give those Masons an opportunity to serve the fraternity.

Strong and active committees are crucial to our success as a Grand Lodge. This year I revised the committee appointment letter and directed chairmen to call their committees together and begin work immediately, and provide their reports in a timely manner.

### **Budget transparency**

I've thought for a long time that our budget reporting should be clearer and more complete, and that the budgeting process should be more transparent. I wanted Masons to see the budget, comment and ask questions well before we present it for approval at the Annual Communication. This year I asked WB Kevin Combs, chairman of the Finance Committee, to hold an open committee meeting and work session on the proposed 2019 budget. The Aug. 3 meeting, at the Grand Lodge building in Raleigh, attracted 30 Masons. Kevin went through the budget line by line and answered all questions. The Masons in attendance gained a better understanding of Grand Lodge finances, and Finance Committee members and Grand Lodge officers heard comments and concerns first-hand that contributed to the final budget presentation in September. I appreciate the dedication of all who took time away from work and traveled great distances to engage in this work: individual Masons, Finance Committee members and Grand Lodge officers.

For brethren who could not attend the meeting in Raleigh, we presented the budget and answered questions during webinars held Sept. 11 (with 25 participants registered) and Sept. 12 (with 15 registered).

The success of the budget webinars inspired Grand Secretary Walt Clapp to hold a webinar on Sept. 19 to discuss the proposed Code amendments. Eighteen Masons participated. The Grand Secretary described each of the proposed amendments and answered questions. In some cases the proposers of amendments were on the line to respond to questions.

I hope open meetings and webinars will become a tradition, and that fu-

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ture Grand Masters will find new ways to keep lines of communication open with the Craft.

At my direction, the budget document presented in the open meeting, during webinars and the annual communication provided more information than previous budgets, with additional details added to line items and figures for actual expenditures from the previous year.

I also directed the Finance Committee to develop a policy for reimbursements of Grand Lodge officer and committee member travel expenses. The Code provides direction for some, but not all, such expenses. Enacting a uniform policy is fiscally responsible and a sound business practice. Officers and committee members will benefit by knowing the rules before they accept their positions. The Board of General Purposes approved the policy at its Nov. 30 meeting.

I commend WB Combs and the committee members for their outstanding work on the budget and reimbursement policy, and WB Combs for his thorough and informative budget presentation at the annual communication.

### **Masonic Renewal Committee**

In 2017, Grand Master Cobb convened an ad hoc Membership Committee to research and report on membership trends, provide initial analysis as to how these trends have impacted the entire fraternity (including appendant bodies), ensure that we will continue to explore and address these matters, and provide recommendations for the future. In 2018 I renamed the group the Masonic Renewal Committee, and its focus was on analyzing membership data, an effort led by SGW Shaun Bradshaw.

This analysis revealed that we are shedding twice as many new Masons within their first two years, by demit or NPD, than we did 20 years ago. Of the Masons raised in 1995, 2.7 percent quit by 1997. Of the Masons raised in 2015, 6.1 percent quit by 2017. Rather than guess at or assume we know the reasons, Grand Lodge officers called and interviewed a random sample of these men. Their results were published in the 2018 Reports book. The committee, led in 2018 by JGS Steve Norris, is continuing its important work.

### **Grand Lodge Transition Planning Committee**

Grand Secretary Walt Clapp is the longest-serving grand secretary in the United States. We benefit from and appreciate his experience and institutional knowledge, and we know that he will retire in the near future.

In the spirit of not doing things the way we've always done them because we've always done them that way, I formed the Ad Hoc Grand Lodge Transition Planning Committee and asked MWB Bryant Webster to serve as chairman. This committee is helping to ensure that our Grand Lodge will respond to the retirement of our Grand Secretary quickly with the benefit of thoughtful advance preparation. It was charged to evaluate the current Grand Lodge management structure, examine other grand lodge administrative structures, and make recommendations for a transition process to be enacted upon the Grand Secretary's notification of his retirement.

The committee, still at work as of this writing, is considering the fraternity's current and future needs, incorporating membership and financial trends and forecasts in its deliberations, and considering best management and business practices for a non-profit, membership-based organization of our

type and size.

Recommendations may include proposed amendments to the Code that are needed to effect any desired changes for the future. The report and its recommendations are not to be considered binding upon the Grand Master at the time of transition. My intention was that the Grand Lodge leadership will be prepared to implement, if necessary, a new operational model that's appropriate for the smooth and efficient functioning of our Grand Lodge, at the time the transition occurs and into the future.

### **Membership Services Committee**

We've seen a substantial increase in members exiting Masonry by NPD. Meanwhile, our system for issuing dues notices and collecting member payments has changed very little since the time of our grandfathers.

As a member of six lodges, I see a variety of dues notices. One lodge sends a friendly and informative letter with its notice, detailing lodge events and accomplishments during the year and inviting me to renew my membership. The message is that my continuing support is important. Another lodge sends only a return envelope with amount payable written on it. One is a friendly request. One is a bill. Which lodge is doing more to reduce its NPDs?

There will always be some who are determined to exit Masonry via NPD, but common sense tells me that many will pay their dues if they are contacted appropriately and encouraged to remain in the Craft, and if they are invited, not billed.

The appendant bodies may offer a model for us. I receive dues notices from them in the form of warm, positive and attractively designed letters or flyers. They also provide the opportunity for members to pay dues and update contact information online. Outdated address information exacerbates the NPD situation, and we need new and convenient ways for members to update their records.

To examine these issues, recommend new ways to communicate with members at dues time and make it easier for them to pay, I appointed an Ad Hoc Committee on Membership Services, chaired by WB Bill Faison and consisting of current and former lodge secretaries. Their recommendations will be based on an analysis of the costs versus the benefits of implementing a new system and a determination whether such a system benefits lodges and members.

The committee was charged to consult with other grand jurisdictions to determine if best practices in other states can be adopted for our benefit. It was also encouraged to offer other ideas and examples for how lodges can reduce NPDs and improve member services and retention.

While we will benefit from improved communications and processes at dues time, note well that the best ways to reduce NPDs are to keep brethren engaged, stay in touch with them and hold meetings that make them want to come to lodge.

I also asked the committee to find more convenient ways for us to pay dues. Monthly bank and credit card drafts are commonplace for bill payments. Why can't we pay monthly, and automatically? As a member of multiple lodges, I'd appreciate the option to pay monthly. Of course, members will always have the option to stand in line to pay at the secretary's desk or mail their

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checks at dues time.

I added an additional charge for the committee after attending the Northeast Conference of Grand Masters in July, where I saw officers from another grand jurisdiction accessing their membership database, provided by one of Mori's competitors, on their phones. After looking at this system and seeing innovative features and a user-friendly format not offered by Mori, I scheduled a demonstration of the competing system for the committee, Grand Lodge officers and office staff for Nov. 8, 2018. I also asked the committee chairman, WB Bill Faison, to review any contracts and all business arrangements with Mori to determine if we were receiving the best possible service at a fair price.

My concerns were that after 11 years with Mori we were not receiving the best service at the best price, and the product had not kept pace with technological innovations and user needs. After seeing the other product, I believed that our familiarity with Mori had led to complacency. Given that the review process started late in the year, the committee and the 2019 Grand Lodge officers are continuing their evaluations and a resolution is expected before this annual communication. This decision will be based on costs, benefits, ease of use and convenience for our members.

The Craft will benefit, financially as well as operationally, if we seek competitive proposals and bids for services at least every five years, negotiate contracts in a businesslike manner, maintain businesslike relationships with vendors, and vigilantly keep watch over vendors to ensure that we have the best and most up to date service at the lowest possible cost.

I thank WB Bill Faison and the members of the committee for the hours they have invested in this important work.

#### **Committee coordination**

I charged four committees – the Committee on Masonic Education, the Board of Publications, the Public Relations Committee and the Committee on Masonic Ceremonies – to confer, discuss their priorities for the year and work together to achieve their goals. In previous years these committees, whose interests and missions overlap, have worked in isolation, but the Craft would benefit if they collaborate on strategies and share resources. The result has been impressive, with the production of an updated More Light in Masonry brochure for Entered Apprentices and development of an interactive new member packet. My thanks to the committee chairs and members for embracing this concept and working so well together.

#### **Grand Lodge communications**

NC Mason Editor Beth Grace and photographer Melody McBride brought to fruition an idea I've wanted to pursue for years. They asked lodges to send photos of their Letter Gs, and they visited lodges and shot photos themselves. The result is a beautiful and award-winning 16 x 20 poster printed by the School of Graphic Arts in Oxford and featuring 70 Gs from across the state. The tagline is "The Letter G: A Force for Good in North Carolina." The poster, published in March, comes with a key that identifies each G by lodge. It sells for \$30, and proceeds benefit historic lodge preservation in North Carolina.

The same creative team published a book in August, "Sacred Retreats: A Tour of Historic Lodges of North Carolina Freemasonry." Featuring McBride's beautiful photographs, the book showcases cherished lodge buildings and lodge rooms across the state. It also features essays and quotations from North

Carolina Masons who share thoughts about their lodges and their Masonry.

The poster, the book and *The North Carolina Mason* won national awards for excellence this year.

In October the Board of Publications, under the leadership of Bro. Kenneth Lambert, launched *The Buzz*, an email newsletter sent between issues of the *NC Mason*. *The Buzz* is invaluable for sharing timely news and showcasing information that doesn't fit in the *Mason's* limited space, such as photos of service awards, updates from the districts and news from appendant bodies. Bro. Dwight Decoskey created and edits *The Buzz*. If you aren't receiving it, contact your lodge secretary to make sure the Grand Lodge has your correct email address.

Grand Lodge publications and communications have shown vast improvement in recent years. Congratulations to Beth Grace, Melody McBride and the Board of Publications for their innovative spirits and their excellent work.

#### The Statewide Traveling Degree Gavel

We introduced the Statewide Traveling Degree Gavel Jan. 29 at the 16th District meeting at Granite Lodge #191 in Clayton. The gavel promoted fellowship across the state and encouraged brethren to attend degrees in other lodges. A lodge-room full of brethren from a wide area makes the degree even more special for the candidate and it has the potential effect of aiding the host lodge with degree work. A journal accompanied the gavel to chronicle its stops and record the names of candidates.

WB Brother Gregg Phillips, PM of Eagle Lodge, made the gavel from a floor joist removed from the lodge during renovations in 2004, the year I was master. The wood is from a North Carolina oak that was fully grown before the American Revolution. The joist supported the dining room floor for 181 years, during which time the room served as a community meeting hall, a venue for concerts and lectures, and the site of countless Masonic functions. WB Phillips produced a classic Masonic gavel and made a traveling case out of cherry and black walnut from the Bladen County home place of his wife, Carolyn. I returned the gavel to Eagle Lodge at the end of my term.

The gavel was in circulation from Jan. 29 through Nov. 27 and was used, by my count, for the initiation of 20 Entered Apprentices, the passing of 10 Fellowcrafts and raising of 26 Master Masons, and was used in stated communications for lodges not hosting degrees. In one instance, it was used in lodge's degree practice for a degree held elsewhere. The gavel came into contact with 39 lodges, a Shrine temple and Shrine club. It was used in a quarry degree, a battleship degree, a railroad degree, a degree at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial in Alexandria, Va., and the Grand Lodge annual communication. Through the good offices of DDGM Alvin Billings, it visited every lodge in the 22nd District. I was delighted to wield it in the conferring of five Master Mason degrees, and RW SGW Shaun Bradshaw employed it during his son's Master Mason degree. It was used by our oldest lodge and our newest lodge. The gavel visited or was associated with the following lodges:

<b>Lodge</b>	<b>Degrees</b>
St. John's 1	MM MM MM
Caswell Brotherhood 11	FC FC FC FC
Eagle 19	MM MM



Statesville 27	EA EA EA FC
Kilwinning 64	FC MM
Greensboro 76	MM
Blackmer 127	
Dan River 129	
Leaksville 136	
Granite 191	
William G. Hill 218	MM
Kenly 257	MM
Bingham 272	
Green Level 277	
Eureka 283	
Jefferson Penn 384	MM MM
University 408	
Bula 409	EA
Stokesdale 428	MM
Thomas M. Holt 492	EA MM
Mooreville 496	MM EA EA
Lucama 527	
Stony Point 593	FC
St Patrick's 617	EA
Cannon Memorial 626	MM MM EA MM MM
Yadkin Falls 637	EA EA FC
Kernersville 669	MM
Creasy Proctor 679	EA EA EA EA
Mt. Moriah 690	EA
Allen Graham 695	MM MM
Albemarle 703	MM MM EA EA EA
Forsyth 707	
Wilson 712	MM
Cabarrus 720	
James B. Green 735	MM
Steele Creek 737	FC FC
Mosaic 762	EA
State College 770	MM
Nine Sisters 773	

The Grand Lodge of North Carolina Annual Communication

**The North Carolina Masonic Calendar**

The North Carolina Masonic Calendar debuted on our Grand Lodge web-

site under the News and Calendar of Events tab. The calendar features Grand Lodge, Blue Lodge, Scottish Rite, York Rite, Shrine, Eastern Star and youth organization events. The calendar helps all of us know about events around the state and can help us avoid conflicts. Please ensure that your organization's events are on the calendar.

### 2017-2018 schedule

During the year I logged 36,040 highway miles and spent 93 nights away from home. My happiest moments were when I was getting behind the wheel to participate in a Masonic event. One of the best days was Sept. 8, when I conferred a third degree in Concord at the bottom of a quarry and drove to Wilmington for a third degree on the battleship. My philosophy was to accept the invitation for every Masonic event I could attend, and I deeply regretted having to cancel several trips on account of health issues.

Dec. 2	Chapel Hill	Grand Lodge installation at the Carolina Inn
Dec. 4	Chapel Hill	MM degree, University 408
Dec. 5	Mt. Gilead	Stated communication, Blackmer 127
Dec. 6	Wadesboro	Finance Committee conference call
Dec. 8-10	Washington, DC	Grand Lodge of DC
Dec. 11	Oxford	Officer installation, Oxford 122
Dec. 12	Hillsborough	Stated communication, Eagle 19
Dec. 13	Greensboro	Scottish Rite dinner and 14° ring ceremony
Dec. 14	Oxford	MHCO Christmas party and dinner
Dec. 15	Asheville	District 39 masters and wardens meeting
Dec. 16	Kernersville	Installed officers, presented 50-year award,
	Kernersville 669	
Dec. 17	Graham	Installed officers, Thomas M. Holt 492
Dec. 26	Hillsborough	Stated communication, Eagle 19, delivered Masonic education
Dec. 28	Wadesboro	Attended Masonic funeral
Dec. 30	Raleigh	Installed officers, James B. Green 735
Jan. 5	Statesville	Donated at Masonic blood drive
	Mebane	Funeral home visitation
Jan. 6	Wadesboro	Installed officers, Kilwinning 64
	Charlotte	Oasis Shrine installation
Jan. 7	Albemarle	Installed officers, Albemarle 703
Jan. 8	Greenville	Installed officers, Greenville 284, Jerusalem 95, Grifton 243, Ayden 498, Farmville 517, Bethel 589, Crown Point 708 and William Pitt 734

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Jan. 9	Raleigh	NC Masonic Foundation meeting
	Marshville	Stated communication, Beaver Dam 276
Jan. 11	Wadesboro	MHCO Executive Committee conference call
	Wadesboro	Stated communication, Kilwinning 64
Jan. 12	Raleigh	Board of Custodians, Masonic Renewal Committee, NC College of SRICF dinner
Jan. 13	Hillsborough	DeMolay initiation and degree, Eagle 19
	Durham	Installed officers, Mosaic 762
Jan. 16	Hillsborough	Meeting to discuss MHCO Ambassador program
	Asheboro	Stated communication, Balfour 188
Jan. 19-21	Hendersonville	Grand Lodge officer retreat
Jan. 24	Raleigh	Work at Grand Lodge, Amran Shrine installation
Jan. 26-28	New Bern	Sudan Shrine ceremonial and installation
Jan. 29	Raleigh	Meeting with Raleigh Temple board
	Clayton	16 <sup>th</sup> District meeting, Granite 191
Jan. 30	Greenville	6 <sup>th</sup> District meeting, Crown Point 708
Jan. 31	Trenton	60-year award presentation, Zion 81
	Jacksonville	4 <sup>th</sup> District meeting, Lafayette 83
Feb. 1	Hillsborough	Stated communication, Lux Libertas 772 at Eagle 19
Feb. 2	Burlington	Funeral home visitation
	Charlotte	Screening of film <i>33 &amp; Beyond</i>
Feb. 3	Burlington	Lynch Lodge
Feb. 5	Jacksonville	National Sojourners installation, Semper Fidelis 680
Feb. 8	Raleigh	Finance Committee meeting
	Oxford	MHCO board dinner
Feb. 9	Oxford	MHCO board meeting
	Greensboro	Grand Lodge officer meeting, WhiteStone board dinner
Feb. 10	Greensboro	WhiteStone board meeting
Feb. 12	Raleigh	Meeting with Foundation staff, meeting with Prince Hall representatives to discuss mutual recognition 10 <sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration

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Feb. 14	Wadesboro	DDGM conference call
Feb. 17-21	Indianapolis, IN	Conference of Grand Masters of North America, Grand Masters Chapter 996 of National Sojourners meeting
Feb. 22	Roanoke Rapids	Stated communication, Widow's Son 519
Feb. 24	Yanceyville	FC degree, Caswell Brotherhood 11
Feb. 27	Raleigh	Summary trial, Grand Lodge
	Salemburg	11 <sup>th</sup> District meeting, Coharie 379
Feb. 28	Shallotte	12 <sup>th</sup> District meeting, Shallotte 727
March 1	Raleigh	14 <sup>th</sup> District meeting, Millbrook 97
March 2	Raleigh	Board of General Purposes meeting
March 5	Asheboro	24 <sup>th</sup> District meeting, Balfour 188
March 6	Madison	22 <sup>nd</sup> District meeting, Dan River 129
March 7	Pittsboro	20 <sup>th</sup> District Meeting, Columbus 102
March 13	Lund, Sweden	Dinner and stated communication, Frimurareföreningen (Freemason Society) Lodge EOS, delivered address, <i>Challenges in Contemporary Freemasonry in the US.</i>
March 14	London, England	Quarterly Communication of the United Grand Lodge of England
March 19	Greensboro	Addressed NC York Rite Grand Conclave
March 20	Maxton	18 <sup>th</sup> District meeting, Maxton 417
March 21	Pikeville	10 <sup>th</sup> District meeting, Harmony 340
March 22	Cove City	Visited Ionic 583 to see building damage
	New Bern	South Atlantic Shrine Association (SASA) dinner
March 23	New Bern	SASA meetings Visited New Bern Valley Scottish Rite reunion
March 24	New Bern	Spoke at SASA banquet
March 26	Charlotte	32 <sup>nd</sup> District meeting, Phalanx 31
March 27	Greensboro	23 <sup>rd</sup> District meeting, Revolution 552
March 30	Rockingham	Lunch with OES WGP, visited Rockingham 495 blood drive
April 2	Boone	3
April 3	Elk Park	37 <sup>th</sup> District meeting, Cranberry 598
April 4	Harmony	30 <sup>th</sup> District meeting, Harmony 299

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April 5-6	Cary	Visited and addressed Dr. G. Wesley Allen Council of Deliberation
April 7	Mt. Gilead	Dedication of renovated lodge room at Blackmer 127, presented service awards
April 10	Manteo	2 <sup>nd</sup> District meeting, Manteo 521
April 11	Edenton	1 <sup>st</sup> District meeting and award presentations, Unanimity 7
April 12	Halifax	PGM Gene Cobb portrait unveiling and Montfort medal presentation, Royal White Hart 2
	Enfield	8 <sup>th</sup> District meeting hosted by Enfield 447, presented service awards
April 14	Oxford	MHCO Great Landscaping Day, emergent Communication of Andrew Jackson 576
April 17	Wingate	Presented Masonic education at Meadow Branch 578
April 19	Chapel Hill	Mosaic 762 Open House at UNC
April 21	Stokesdale	Attended MM degree at Stokesdale 428
	Spencer	Conferred MM Railroad Degree at NC Transportation Museum for Spencer 543
April 23	Concord	8 <sup>th</sup> District meeting, Stokes 32
April 24	Marshville	29 <sup>th</sup> District meeting, Beaver Dam 276
April 25	Gastonia	70-year award presentation in brother's home 36 <sup>th</sup> District meeting and service award presentations, Gastonia 369
April 28	Hillsborough	Spring barbecue, Eagle 19
	Raleigh	Wilkerson College commencement address
April 30	Asheville	VA Hospital visit 39 <sup>th</sup> District meeting at Veritas 769
May 1	Bryson City	40 <sup>th</sup> District meeting, Oconee 427
May 2	Hendersonville	38 <sup>th</sup> District meeting at Kedron 387, presented 60-year CL certificate
May 3	Hickory	34 <sup>th</sup> District meeting at Hickory 343
May 6-8	New York, NY	Grand Lodge of New York

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May 9	Winston-Salem	Annual Communication planning meeting with hotel staff
		Stated communication, Greensboro Scottish Rite
May 10	Oxford	MHCO Financial Development Committee meeting and board dinner
May 11	Oxford	MHCO board meeting
	Greensboro	Grand Lodge officer meeting, WhiteStone board dinner
May 12	Greensboro	WhiteStone board meeting and family day, MESH 771 stated communication, 50-year award presentation
	Walnut Cove	Walnut Cove 629 past masters and ladies night, presented service and 50-year CL awards
May 14	Franklinville	Hanks 128 stated communication and fish fry, presented service awards.
May 15	Raleigh	Meeting at Grand Lodge
	Hillsborough	19 <sup>th</sup> District meeting, Eagle 19
May 17	Wilmington	Foundation event
May 18	Raleigh	Board of General Purposes, Carolina Pig Jig with Grand Swine team
May 19	Raleigh	Carolina Pig Jig with Grand Swine
May 20	Oxford	MHCO baccalaureate service, awards ceremony and luncheon
May 21	Raleigh	Meeting at Grand Lodge
	Rockingham	Stated communication, Rockingham 495, honored DDGL Frank Wanko
May 28	Thomasville	Memorial Day parade with Thomasville 214
May 29	Raleigh	Summary trials at Grand Lodge
June 1	Benson	Tractor pull at GALOT with MHCO group
June 2	Asheville	Foundation dinner meeting
June 3	Candler	Grand Lodge opened at Hominy 491, Cornerstone dedication at Hominy Baptist Church
June 4	Clemmons	Bikes for books giveaway with Clemmons 755 and West Bend 434

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June 5	Fayetteville	EA degree, Creasy Proctor 679
June 7	Hillsborough	Degree practice, Eagle 19
June 8	Winston-Salem	Scottish Rite golf tournament
June 9	Wadesboro	FC degree at Kilwinning 64
June 10	Statesville	30 <sup>th</sup> District St John's Day service, Wesley Memorial United Methodist Church
June 11	Raleigh	Work at Grand Lodge, addressed OES Grand Chapter
June 12	Hillsborough	Conferred MM degree at Eagle 19
June 13	Greensboro	Scottish Rite Consistory Feast and Table Lodge
June 16	Kernersville	Conferred MM degree at Kernersville 669
June 19	Kannapolis	Presented Masonic education at Cannon Memorial 626
June 21	Hamlet	MHCO gospel benefit concert sponsored by 532
June 22	Monroe	SRICF meeting and degrees
June 24	Wingate	Meadow Branch 578 St. John's Day dinner
June 25	Raleigh	Work at Grand Lodge, meeting with Foundation staff, addressed Rainbow Annual Assembly
June 26	Pilot Mountain	Attended MM degree at Pilot 493
June 27	Salisbury	Stated communication, Sophia 767
June 29	Denton	Southeast Old Thresher's Reunion tractor parade and MHCO benefit, emergent communication of Denton 404, presented awards
June 30	Thomasville	MM degree at Thomasville 214
	Greensboro	Wilkerson College Symposium
July 5	Graham	Thomas M. Holt 492 past masters and ladies night, presented awards
July 7	Waynesville	Presented dispensation for Knights of Solomon Lodge UD, York Rite College meeting, Waynesville 259
July 8-10	Maggie Valley	York Rite Summer Assembly, delivered keynote address
July 10	Asheville	Emergent communication of Sonoma 472 at Asheville VA Hospital

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July 12	Wadesboro	Stated communication, Kilwinning 64
July 14-19	Daytona Beach FL	Imperial Shrine
July 20-22	Alexandria VA	NC weekend at George Washington Masonic National Memorial, conferred MM degree for Lodge of the Nine Sisters UD and laid wreath at Washington's tomb at Mount Vernon
July 24	Hillsborough	Annual Steak for Jake dinner in honor of WB Jake Jacobs, stated communication at Eagle 19
July 25	Salisbury	VA Hospital visit
July 27-28	Warwick RI	Northeast Masonic Conference
Aug. 1	Gastonia	Meeting with members of Gastonia 369 and King Solomon 704 about proposed merger and building sale
Aug. 2	Hillsborough	Stated communication, Lux Libertas 772 at Eagle 19
Aug. 3	Raleigh	Open meeting of Grand Lodge Finance committee
Aug. 4	Jacksonville	Heroes of '76 initiation at Semper Fidelis 680, addressed Davie Academy class at Lafayette 83
Aug. 6	Andrews	Toured Andrews 529
	Ranger	Stated communication, Cherokee 146
Aug. 7	Highlands	Toured Blue Ridge 435
	Ranger	Stated communication at Montgomery 426, presented awards
Aug. 9	Goldsboro	Centennial celebration at Goldsboro 634, presented 62-year CL certificate and 60-year service award, MHCO Finance Committee conference call
Aug. 10	Oxford	MHCO board meeting
	Greensboro	WhiteStone Resident Council meeting, Grand Lodge officer meeting, WhiteStone board dinner
Aug. 11	Greensboro	WhiteStone board meeting
	Monroe	Attended Masonic funeral
	Charlotte	Awards night at Steele Creek 737, presented service awards

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Aug. 14	Marshville	Stated communication, Beaver Dam 276
Aug. 15	Wadesboro	DDGM conference call
Aug. 16	Charlotte	Stated communication at Temple 676, visited Bro. Walter Klein
Aug. 17	Greensboro	Wilkerson College Regents meeting
Aug. 18	Salisbury	Emergent communication, Sophia 767
Aug. 22	Raleigh	Amran Shrine meeting
Aug. 24	Winston-Salem	Summer meeting, Scottish Rite Orient of NC
Aug. 25	Raleigh	WB Michael Brantley memorial service
	Winston-Salem	Oasis Black Tie Ceremonial
Aug. 27	Burlington	Awards night at Bula 409
Aug. 28	Raleigh	Meeting at Grand Lodge
	Wendell	Stated communication, Wendell 565, honored 60-year member
Aug. 29	Wadesboro	Attended Castle Island Virtual Lodge meeting
Sept. 2	China Grove	Quarry Degree practice, Eureka 283
Sept. 4	Cary	Stated communication, Green Level 277
Sept 5	Winston-Salem	Stated communication, Forsyth 707, presented Masonic education
Sept 8	Concord	Conferred MM degree for Cannon Memorial 626 at 28 <sup>th</sup> District Quarry Degree
	Wilmington	Attended St John's Lodge 1 Battleship Degree aboard the USS North Carolina
Sept 11	Wadesboro	Finance Committee webinar
Sept. 12	Wadesboro	Finance Committee webinar
Sept 13-16	Alexandria VA	Attended Quatuor Coronati Lodge 2076 American Conference, <i>Freemasons in the Transatlantic World</i> , at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial
Sept. 18	Mt Gilead	Stated communication, Blackmer 127
Sept. 19	Wadesboro	Grand Secretary's webinar on Code amendments
Sept. 20	Wadesboro	Conference call with Foundation staff
Sept. 21	Wadesboro	WhiteStone Finance Committee conference call

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Sept. 25-29	Winston-Salem	231 <sup>st</sup> Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of North Carolina
Oct. 4	Concord	Foundation event
Oct. 5	Burlington	Fish fry at Burlington Shrine Club
	Raleigh	Meeting at Grand Lodge
	Raleigh	Consecrated Lodge of the Nine Sisters 773 at Millbrook 97
Oct. 6	Burlington	Opened the Grand Lodge of NC at the Lynch Lodge
	Wadesboro	MM degree, Kilwinning 64
	Greensboro	Attended 100 <sup>th</sup> birthday party for Past Potentate Sticky Burch at Revolution 552
Oct. 9	Raleigh	Foundation meeting
Oct. 10	Asheville	Spoke at Norburn Hyatt Day Dinner sponsored by the 39th Masonic District and the Scottish Rite Valley of Asheville at Nichols West Asheville 650
Oct. 12	Chapel Hill	Opened Lux Libertas 772 on the UNC campus and attended University Day convocation
	Oxford	Shrine-Grand Lodge officer dinner, Granville County Shrine Club
Oct. 13	Oxford	Emergent communication of Andrew Jackson 576, MHCO homecoming, dedicated cornerstone for MHCO pool
Oct. 26	Charlotte	Charlotte Valley Scottish Rite Reunion at Phalanx 31
Oct. 30	Asheville	Meeting with Foundation prospects
	High Point	York Rite College meeting
Oct. 31	Rockingham	Albert Pike Scottish Rite Club meeting
Nov. 1	Hillsborough	Meeting with Foundation staff, installed Lux Libertas 772 officers at Eagle 19
Nov. 2	Raleigh	Work at Grand Lodge
Nov. 3	Jacksonville	Masons United Veterans Day parade and Empty chair degree at Semper Fidelis 680
Nov. 7	Concord	Visited brother in nursing home

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Nov. 8	Raleigh	Grand View membership database demonstration at Grand Lodge
	Oxford	MHCO Financial Development Committee meeting and board dinner
Nov. 9	Oxford	MHCO Board meeting
	Greensboro	WhiteStone Resident Council meeting, Grand Lodge officer meeting, WhiteStone board dinner
Nov. 10	Greensboro	WhiteStone board meeting, Lux Libertas 772 football viewing party with WhiteStone residents
Nov. 12-18	Panama City, Panama	World Conference of Grand Masters
Nov. 21	Oxford	Thanksgiving luncheon at MHCO
	Wadesboro	WhiteStone LLC managers conference call
		Membership Service Committee videoconference
Nov. 24	Nashville	PM and ladies night dinner at Morning Star 85, presented 60-year award
Nov. 26	Albemarle	PM and awards night at Albemarle 703
Nov. 27	Raleigh	Summary trial at Grand Lodge
	Hillsborough	GM portrait dedication, Eagle 19
Nov. 28	Salisbury	EA degree, Sophia 767
Nov 30-Dec 1	Hickory	Grand Lodge installation

### Acknowledgements

When you see a turtle on the fencepost, you know it didn't get there by itself. That goes for lodge officers and Grand Lodge officers. Each of us has been lifted and inspired by others.

Thank you, Susan, Jason and Thomas, for your love, support, good counsel and patience from Aug. 10, 1999 to the present and beyond.

On Sept. 25, 2010, and Sept. 23, 2017, the day I was appointed to the Grand Line and the day I was elected Grand Master, I cited three unforgettable Masonic mentors: My coach, Jake Jacobs; my friend, Walter Klein; and my cousin, Tom Speed.

Our Grand Lodge always seems to have been led by the right Grand Master at the right time. Time will tell if that holds true for this year, but I'm thankful for my apprenticeships with Grand Masters Ledford, Gresham, Preslar, Mayo, Caudle, Webster and Cobb. They are exemplary leaders and I've done my best to apply what I learned from them.

I'm dazzled by the diverse skills, the knowledge and dedication that our Grand Line officers bring to the table, to address whatever tough issue was before us. I'm grateful for every one of them. Each brings unique skills and

perspectives, and brains and heart and soul, to the job, and I remain thankful that I can call on them at any time for any reason. I've been with these men many times, late at night, in all kinds of weather, in meetings well over a hundred miles from home. We communicate by phone, text and email at all hours. They are always giving their best, whether it's working through a Grand Lodge problem, or helping a subordinate lodge, or lifting a brother in crisis. Brethren of the Grand Line, I sleep better at night knowing you are there and I'm very excited about our Grand Lodge's future under your leadership.

My Masonic brethren have given me much more than I have given them. The brethren of Eagle Lodge, in particular, lifted me and kept me grounded at the same time. That is Masonic magic.

It was at Eagle where I discovered the indissoluble chain of sincere affection. The words are familiar to all of us – Masonry unites men of every country, sect, and opinion, and conciliates true friendship, among those who might otherwise have remained at a perpetual distance. It's true. Peace and harmony can come naturally, and easily, to men of diverse political outlook and religious practice. I would like for the rest of the world to have what we have at Eagle and in all of our lodges. Recently in the small town of Hillsborough, I sat in lodge with men from four continents, good men I would never have known otherwise, and we met on the level and parted on the square.

It was also at Eagle, in that great old building, where I realized that the building is not the lodge. We are the lodge. The building is merely our classroom for insight, our laboratory for self-awareness, our locus for warm memories of departed brothers.

To my brethren at Kilwinning Lodge in Wadesboro, thank you for welcoming Susan and me back home with open arms. I attended lodge at Kilwinning the day we moved to Wadesboro, thanks to Mike Register, who was speaking there that night and took me to lodge well before we had all of our belongings in the house. From the day we landed in Wadesboro Chesley Greene and Pete Cook have been valued coaches, traveling companions and friends.

I've known for some time that our Grand Lodge has an outstanding, professional and dedicated staff. This past year I discovered how utterly indispensable each member of the team really is to the orderly and efficient functioning of this sprawling and complex enterprise of 371 lodges and 38,000 members. Thank you, Walt Clapp, Jonathan Underwood, Cornelia Doherty, Vicki Lam and Hayley Moll.

As I progressed through the Grand Line, I thought that improving our communications and fund-raising capabilities would be my highest priorities as Grand Master. By the time I took this job, that work had been done. The North Carolina Mason has become an outstanding, well-written and attractive publication under the leadership of Beth Grace, with the assistance of John Pea and Melody McBride. The North Carolina Masonic Foundation boasts a professional and dedicated staff in Jeff Hensley, WB Chris Richardson and Dee Blake. This investment in staff is guaranteed to pay dividends. My thanks to the staff and volunteers for their great work, and to the board of the NCMF for its proactive and far-sighted leadership in helping to accomplish these tremendous gains.

In 2010, Grand Master Ledford asked me to join the Grand Line. When I discussed it with Susan that night she said, if you love the organization, you

don't say no to this. It is all about love: brotherly love, relief and truth; faith, hope and charity.

The day I was elected Grand Master, I said some things from the heart. I talked about my concern that a coarsening in society is creeping into our sacred retreat of friendship and virtue. I'm seeing, in places, an erosion of fraternalism. I'm not feeling, in places, the brotherly love. That's a turning point.

We are a fraternity – with the rewarding social dimensions – and we are also the greatest philosophical and self-improvement organization ever conceived. As members of a fraternity we need never bowl alone, and with the wisdom that's well within our reach we're given the tools to illuminate our minds and to soar above the commonplace, just as the cathedrals of the Middle Ages soared above the primitive landscapes around them.

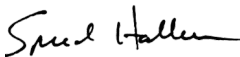
Masonry is rare. It is special. It is not for everyone. And it has been entrusted to us for only brief time. We choose to build and practice it, or not. I see vast potential for growth in quality and quantity. We have something that good men seek – and the world needs – if we will only practice our precepts and take pride in the special nature of our Craft. As we are at a turning point, our fraternity needs our very best efforts before our time is up, and before we hand Freemasonry to the next generation.

When the operative masons who built the cathedral at Chartres neared the end of construction, they knew that their stone walls would stand for thousands of years, but the timber structure supporting the roof would last about a century. So the builders planted trees alongside the cathedral. Trees that would serve as timbers in a hundred years, when a new generation of builders would renew the cathedral for it to serve future generations.

Consider how you can build Masonry for the next generation or Masons, and the next, as the particles flow through your hourglass. How are you using your remaining time?

Brethren, the world's greatest fraternity is now in our care, and we will determine its future. We do not need to look to our history to see our best days. We know what we need to do to be successful. We just need to do it. I'm excited by the possibilities of the next year and the next decade, and I'm absolutely convinced that the best is yet to come. Thank you for the opportunity to serve this fraternity that I love, and that has been so important to my family as well as to our state, our nation and the world.

Fraternally and respectfully submitted,



Speed Hallman, Grand Master, 2018

**Interim Report  
of  
Grand Master  
Dwight M. Sigmon  
to  
the  
Grand Lodge  
of  
North Carolina  
of  
Ancient, Free and Accepted  
Masons  
of North Carolina  
at  
Winston-Salem, North Carolina  
September 27, 2019**

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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, and Brethren all:

Welcome to the 232nd annual communication of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina. It has been my privilege and most humbling honor to have served as the 166th Grand Master since our inception in 1787. We again welcome you to Winston-Salem, NC, which has been our home away from home for many years and host for our annual communication for 2019.

I thank you for the opportunity to travel our grand jurisdiction encouraging our members to focus on the lessons of Freemasonry, implement those lessons in their daily lives, and be an example for others to emulate.

Pursuant to the requirements of The Code, I present my Interim Report for 2019. Listed below is a brief overview of various events and activities that have occurred through late August 2019.

### **State of the Craft**

It has been my privilege to visit sixty-five lodges throughout our grand jurisdiction as of the end of August. I have many more lodge visits planned for the remaining time of my tenure which ends on December 7, 2019. It has been a great and humbling experience to serve the brethren of North Carolina. Many of our lodges are healthy and performing well. Their ritual work is very good, and they are fully engaged in community involvement and holding successful fundraisers for our three charities. However, we have some lodges that are struggling to reinvent themselves as a successful lodge. Two lodges merged earlier this year, and two other potential mergers could be completed before the end of the year. This is a very difficult process especially when a lodge has to struggle with giving up their historical identity. For some, major repairs required for their lodge building drives much of the discouragement. My lodge was in a similar position until earlier this year. After struggling for a few years on how to raise funds for a new roof, we decided on a different approach for our ninety-two year old building. We decided to send a letter to all our members explaining the need for investing in our building and our future. We had sent letters in the past asking for charitable contributions with success. This also gave an opportunity for those not as active to participate in contributing to the success of our lodge. We were amazed at the response. One brother stepped up and offered a matching fund challenge which was well received. Our oldest member, who is 104 years of age, sent a check for the project. The result of our efforts, with a total cost of less than \$100 for stamps and printing, raised enough money to replace the roof with some additional funds left over for future renovations. I encourage all lodges to look for creative ways to set your lodge course on a more positive journey. On a positive note, we will be voting on a new lodge receiving its Charter during our annual communication. We congratulate them on their efforts in establishing the newest lodge in our grand jurisdiction.

It is easy to get discouraged, but great results can happen when you involve all members of your lodge. As indicated in my district meetings, I was an inactive member for twenty-one years. I was known to many as a “card carrying Mason.” I never liked this term and prefer the status of being an inactive

member. I paid my dues on time, which contributed to the financial needs of our lodge. Your lodge has members like that as well. Get you inactive members involved and always make them feel welcome when they return. Many attempt to return only to be harassed when walking through the door. Be the member who offers welcoming remarks and takes the lead on introducing them to new members. One of the new mandatory items I added to the Lion and Pillar program for 2019 focused on contacting a minimum of 50% of their inactive members. These are members that had not attended any lodge activities/meetings in one year. This could be accomplished by calling the brother or making a visit. Leaving a voice message did not satisfy the requirement. I feel we can get many of these inactive members active again if we reengage them by making contact, by just having a simple conversation. That is what worked for me. My best friend who was instrumental in my joining our fraternity in 1975 reached out again in 2003 and asked me to give the third degree lecture for his son. He challenged me to relearn the lecture that I had not given in over twenty-one years. That challenge hooked me just like the ritual work did for me in the very beginning. I encourage each of you to reach out to our inactive members and get them involved. Sometimes, it is just that simple.

Finally, have faith that your lodge can improve with just a little more effort. Keep striving to be the best you can be in any of your laudable undertakings, both Masonically and personally. Always be the best Mason you can possibly be. Leading by example is one of the easiest things we can do to help attract others of good character to our fraternity which can make a positive impact in helping correct our membership decline. And always remember to “guard our West Gate” to ensure the well-being of our fraternity for generations to come.

### **2019 Initiatives**

My main initiatives for 2019 focused on being better Masons, to be who we say we are, and more community involvement. I also implemented some new items in the Lion and Pillar program that focused on reconnecting with our inactive members and strengthening some areas in our ritual work where we need more resources. During my year I felt it extremely important to encourage more of our brethren to learn the Masonic Funeral Rites. Many lodges and districts are struggling to find enough brethren qualified or available to perform Masonic Rites, when asked. Many of the brethren now performing those services are elderly, and we need to prepare for the future when they are no longer able to perform this function. We do not want a Brother to choose not to have a Masonic service because he feels it is too much trouble for the lodge to fulfill his wishes when that time arrives. I am hopeful we will continue to find more Brethren willing to be the next generation that serves our craft in this capacity.

I feel it is extremely important to be seen more in our communities. My second article in the NC Mason addressed this concern. Consider this, what if we worked harder at letting our communities know who we are and what we are? Many of our lodges are out in their communities. Some do great work with community events but mainly when combined with their fundraising activities. Our charities are critical to our homes' existence, and our fundraising activities are greatly appreciated but what else can we do above our charitable work in our communities? Some lodges are involved in periodic blood drives, both locally and on the district level. Others participate in local community

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parades. Consider contacting your local Chamber of Commerce for ways to get active in your community. Habitat for Humanity is a great community project. While a financial donation would benefit them, as it would to all non-profit organizations, participating in a building project as a lodge or district would also be of great value. Imagine lodge members wearing their lodge shirts and working side by side with other organizations on a building project. These types of activities provide the means of introducing yourself as a local Masonic lodge while crossing paths with someone new. You would be letting other groups or individuals experience the fellowship you enjoy as members of our fraternity while doing a worthwhile project for the community. Happiness and having fun while doing good deeds could be contagious! The same could apply to working with local schools, scouting programs, and the list goes on. We all have limited time and resources, but I encourage you as a lodge or district to have a goal of improving your visibility in the community.

Finally, and most importantly, and as I have mentioned on many occasions and throughout my twenty-six district meetings, I feel it is time the Freemasons lead the way in showing others how live, act and treat each other. Masonry is “Work” but important work. The thing that sets us apart from all other organizations is our ritual work and the lessons they teach. Every day we have an opportunity to make this world a better place to live. No one can make that choice for us. As Freemasons, we need to constantly strive to be who we say we are and hold ourselves to a higher standard. The majority of us joined this fraternity because of someone we looked up to, a father, a grandfather, a member of our church, or maybe a community leader. As Freemasons, it is now our turn to be the person others would want to emulate. The choice of how you choose to represent our fraternity is one that you must make every day. More importantly, always remember your own actions, appearance, and words provide an opportunity for us to attract the best of the best this world has to offer in becoming a part of our historical fraternity, or they can just as easily discourage someone from exploring further an opportunity to be a part of the world’s greatest and oldest fraternity. Practice Freemasonry in everything you do and say. Be the example, be part of the solution in guiding this world on a more positive journey.

### **Necrology**

Each year it is our sad duty to report the number of deceased brethren that have been called home by the Supreme Architect of the Universe. As of mid-August 2019, we have experienced 558 members who have transitioned and gained entrance “through the gates into the Temple and City of our God” during 2019. An additional 287 passed after the 2018 annual communication through the end of 2018. This yields a total of 845 members that have passed since our last annual communication session in late September 2018.

We had our annual necrology service on Friday of our 2019 Annual Communication and were pleased that Father Richard A. Williams, Grand Chaplain, offered the eulogy. We did not know each brother who went on to his final resting place, but we can remember them and contemplate their many valuable contributions to our great fraternity. They have lived respected and died regretted by all those who knew them as brothers. May they all rest in peace.

### **District Deputy Officer Conferences**

For the fifth consecutive year our district planning meeting was held at one of our Masonic Campuses. Continuing the practice established at the end

of 2014 by Most Worshipful Douglas L. Caudle, PGM 2014, these sessions are now rotated between WhiteStone: a Masonic and Eastern Star Community; the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford; and the Grand Lodge Office in Raleigh. The planning session for 2019 was held on November 2-3, 2018, at the Masonic Home for Children in Oxford, NC. It marked the third time we have met at our Children's Home for this district officer orientation.

This session allows us to communicate a consistent message with our district leaders, learn best practices between districts, and get these Brethren to our campuses, some for the first time. A thorough tour of the MHCO campus was held on Friday evening, followed by dinner. After dinner, time was allowed for casual conversation and good fellowship. On Saturday we spent over six hours discussing many topics of concern with our District Officers. In addition to the leadership team from the MHCO, we were joined by leaders from WhiteStone and the North Carolina Masonic Foundation.

I also chose to travel the state on two separate occasions holding town hall type meetings with our district officers in eight separate locations. Four sessions were held in late April – early May near the conclusion of my district meetings, and four additional meetings were held in late August prior to our annual communication. This provided an excellent opportunity to discuss the state of the Craft as it evolved throughout the year. Individual calls with the DDGMs were held when the necessity dictated. Early in my tenure, I made clear to the DDGMs and DDGLs — which also applied to the entire membership — that I operated with an open-door policy, always willing to try to address a Brother's concerns.

Listed below are DDGMs who have been given the honorary title of Past District Deputy Grand Master:

#### **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

<b>Name</b>	<b>Lodge</b>	<b>District</b>
Benjamin Griggs Roberts	Hall Lodge No. 53	1
Robert James Morrell, Jr.	Semper Fidelis Lodge No. 680	4
Bobby Lynn Meadows	Zion Lodge No. 81	7
Christopher James Weaver	Mount Olive Lodge No. 208	10
Perry Harlee Sellers	Shallotte Lodge No. 727	12
William Curtis Chriscoe	Youngsville Lodge No. 377	13
Craig Jones Horton	J. J. Crowder Lodge No. 743	14
Jonathan Allen Underwood	State College Lodge No. 770	15
Michael Leon Wyatt	Bladen Lodge No. 646	17
William Archie McRae, II	Maxton Lodge No. 417	18
Jeffrey Lynn Bullington	Corinthian Lodge No. 542	23
Samuel Joseph Carson	Pilot Lodge No. 493	25
Jimmy Laird Myers	Farmington Lodge No. 265	27
Timothy Allen Jones	Campbell Lodge No. 374	30
Dwight Edwin Church	Mt. Pleasant Lodge No. 573	33
Christopher Lee Hall	Gastonia Lodge No. 369	36
Steve Walter Gouge	Cranberry Lodge No. 598	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:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Lodge</b>	<b>District</b>
Christopher Scott East, Sr.	Manteo Lodge No. 521	2
Hylar Wayne Cox	Atlantic Lodge No. 294	3
Charlie Leonard Hall, Sr.	Jerusalem Lodge No. 95	6
Richard Lee Smith	Berne Lodge No. 724	7
Michael Conrad Saviak, III	Mount Olive Lodge No. 208	10
Christopher William Dement	John H. Mills Lodge No. 624	13
Daniel Lee Short	St. Paul's Lodge No. 474	17
Herbert Currie Lyon	Eno Lodge No. 210	19
Christopher Lee Wright	Stokesdale Lodge No. 428	23
Stephen Matthew McCraw	Granite Lodge No. 322	25
David Carroll Simmons	Salem Lodge No. 289	26
Andrew Ray Hartman	Allen-Graham Lodge No. 695	28
Lance Baxter Hegler	Mooreville Lodge No. 496	30
Brandon Lee Penley	Riverside Lodge No. 606	34
Charles Andrew Hicklin	Fairview Lodge No. 339	35
Leonard Ray Cherry, Jr.	Mount Holly Lodge No. 544	36
Charles Elmo McCowan	Andrews Lodge No. 529	41

### District Meetings

Twenty-six district meetings were held in 2019 and scattered throughout our great state from Robbinsville in the mountains to Swansboro and Swan Quarter on the coast. Our first meeting was held on January 28th in Tarboro and the final one on May 15th in my home lodge, Catawba Lodge No. 248 in Newton, NC. I thoroughly enjoyed traveling the state bringing my message of kindness and brotherly love. I have always been clear in my opinion that the best part of our Masonic journeys are the people we meet along the way. The overwhelming majority of us would have never crossed paths had it not been for our active participation in this fraternity. Traveling throughout the state allowed me to meet new members, renew old acquaintances, and enjoy the best fellowship possible. I am thankful for the strong attendance I experienced at our meetings and grateful for the warm hospitality and great food.

As with my predecessors, I attempted to impart some “words of wisdom” to the brethren with a major focus on how to live, act, and treat others in life. I stressed the difference in being a member versus being a Mason. This year I chose to have a closed tyled meeting. I allowed non-members from our various Masonic families to make remarks during our dinner hour. This was necessary in order for me to re-emphasize the importance of some of our Masonic ritual lessons. This year I also chose to include an attachment to my lapel pin. This attachment included a short interpretation of what each degree and order has meant to me, a takeaway from each that I use to guide my life and actions and a reminder of what the true purpose of Freemasonry was intended to be.

Throughout my travels I was pleased to experience all the good work tak-

ing place in our grand jurisdiction. Many thanks to Right Worshipful Brother-Walt Clapp and Worshipful Brother Jonathan Underwood for their time and support in attending these meetings. As in the past, we had strong participation from each of our charitable entities. A special thanks to now Brother Mark Lewis, Executive Director for WhiteStone: A Masonic and Eastern Star Community; Worshipful Brother Kevin Otis, Administrator of the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford; and Mr. Jeff Hensley, Chief Financial Development Officer for the North Carolina Masonic Foundation, and his staff of Worshipful Brother Chris Richardson, Sister Dee Blake, and Beth Grace for their support and messages provided at our district meetings. We cannot thank each of you enough for the services you provide to our grand jurisdiction. It was also a pleasure having past Executive Director, Brother Mark Kolada, join us for a couple of our meetings. Brother Mark now serves as Director of Operations Management for Life Care Services which assists in the management of our home in Greensboro. If you have not been to our campuses in Greensboro and Oxford, I encourage you to do so. It will truly warm your hearts to interact with the residents of both homes.

Following is a list of the 2019 district meetings:

<b>Date</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Host</b>	<b>Location</b>
Jan 28	9	Concord 58	Tarboro
Jan 29	5	American George 17	Murfreesboro
Jan 30	1	Widow's Son 75	Elizabeth City
Jan 31	3	Atlantic 294	Swan Quarter
Feb 5	10	Richard Caswell 705	Kinston
Feb 6	4	Seaside 429	Swansboro
Mar 4	29	Meadow Branch 578	Wingate
Mar 12	26	Forsyth 707	Winston-Salem
Mar 13	27	Thomasville 214	Thomasville
Mar 14	22	Bingham 272	Mebane
Mar 20	20	Sanford 151	Sanford
Mar 25	41	Robbinsville 672	Robbinsville
Mar 26	40	Sonoma 472	Canton
Mar 27	37	Burnsville 717	Burnsville
Mar 28	33	Mt. Pleasant 573	Wilkesboro
Apr 1	18	Fairmont 528	Fairmont
Apr 2	12	Waccamaw 596	Rieglewood
Apr 3	17	Stedman 730	Stedman
Apr 10	13	John H. Mills 624	Henderson
Apr 11	15	State College 770	Raleigh
Apr 15	24	Troy 718	Troy
Apr 17	28	Cannon Memorial 626	Kannapolis
Apr 22	36	Mt. Holly 544	Mt. Holly
Apr 23	32	Charles M. Setzer 693	Charlotte
May 14	38	Western Star 91	Rutherfordton
May 15	34	Catawba 248	Newton

Due to a conflict with their Maundy Thursday observance, many members in the 14th and 15th districts and the Valley of Raleigh Scottish Rite were unable to attend the district meeting in their area held on April 11, 2019. I would

like to thank the members of the Valley of Raleigh for allowing me to bring my district meeting message to their stated meeting on June 13th, 2019.

Finally, I would like to thank my grand lodge officers and many of our Past Grand Masters for attending my meetings. I offer a special thanks to Most Worshipful Gene T. Jerningan, PGM 2006, for allowing me to use his music stand which offered an easier way for me to bring my message on the lodge room floor among my brethren.

### Lion and Pillar Lodges for 2019

#### *Platinum L&P Level*

*(required a member to give his first ever Fellow Craft-Degree Lecture or conduct his first ever Masonic Funeral Service)*

Lodge	District	Location	Yrs. Achieving Std. L&P	Qualifier
Mingo 206	11	Dunn	3	(Funeral)
William G. Hill 218	14	Raleigh	3	(FC Lecture)
Kenly 257	16	Kenly	3	(FC Lecture)
Wilmington 319	12	Wilmington	3	(FC Lecture)
Pilot 493	25	Pilot Mountain	3	(Funeral)
Cannon Memorial 626	28	Kannapolis	3	(FC Lecture)
Albemarle 703	29	Albemarle	3	(FC Lecture)
Steele Creek 737	32	Charlotte	3	(FC Lecture)
James K. Polk 759	32	Pineville	3	(FC Lecture)
Bula 409	22	Burlington	2	(Funeral)
Greensboro 76	23	Greensboro	1	(FC Lecture)
Charles M. Setzer 693	32	Charlotte	1	(Funeral)
Forsyth 707	26	Winston-Salem	1	(FC Lecture)

#### Standard L&P Level

Lodge	District	Location	Yrs. Achieving L&P
St. John's 4	10	Kinston	3
Eagle 19	19	Hillsborough	3
Columbus 102	20	Pittsboro	3
Oxford 122	13	Oxford	3
Pleasant Hill 304	10	Deep Run	3
Bald Creek 397	37	Burnsville	3
Thomas M. Holt 492	22	Graham	3
Semper Fidelis 680	4	Jacksonville	3
Berne 724	7	New Bern	3
Ashlar 765	12	Hampstead	3
Lux Libertas 772	19	Hillsborough	3
Copeland 390	25	Dobson	2
Mount Holly 544	36	Mount Holly	2
Acacia 674	23	High Point	2
Stump Sound 733	4	Sneads Ferry	2
Royal White Hart 2	8	Halifax	1
Statesville 27	30	Statesville	1
Granite 191	16	Clayton	1
Corinthian 230	9	Rocky Mount	1
Meadow Branch 578	29	Wingate	1
Waccamaw 596	12	Riegelwood	1
Riverside 606	34	Catawba	1
Walnut Cove 629	26	Walnut Cove	1
Federal Point 753	12	Carolina Beach	1

In the history of the Lion and Pillar program, seventy-one lodges have received the award at least once. In 2017, there were fifty-six initial recipients of the award. In 2018, there were seven new lodges added to the all-time roster and twenty-nine lodges not repeating for a total of thirty-four lodges receiving the award. In 2019, there are twelve new lodges added to the roster as well as thirteen Platinum level recipients. Four met the requirement doing Masonic Funerals and nine doing the Fellow Craft Degree Lecture for the first time. The total number of lodges applying for 2019 is thirty-seven. 100% of those who applied met the requirements. Thirty-five percent received the new Platinum Award established for 2019. I would like to offer a special thanks to Most Worshipful A. Gene Cobb, Jr., PGM 2017, for his continued support of the program he initially implemented and for again serving as the Chairman of the Lion and Pillar Lodge of Excellence Awards for 2019.

### **Joseph Montfort Medals**

Each Grand Master has been given the privilege by The Code since April 17, 1940, to present three Joseph Montfort Medals. Immediately after being installed as Grand Master, I presented my first medal to Worshipful Brother Fred Lee Sherrill, Jr., (PM, PDDGM) of Conover Lodge No. 709. Worshipful Brother Sherrill is a charter member of Conover Lodge and Orphans Lodge No. 761. He served as Master of Conover Lodge No. 709 in 1960 afterwards transitioning to secretary, a position he has held for the past fifty-eight years. It would be extremely difficult to count the number of masters and members he has mentored in his sixty-four years of Masonic service. Worshipful Brother Fred is a past Harris-Dudley Grand Secretary award recipient. He is a true example of the definition of a Mason.

I will be presenting one Medal during our annual communication and my last Medal before my term ends on December 7, 2019.

### **Physical Disabilities**

In the case of petitioners having physical disabilities, The Code requires the District Deputy Grand Master to conduct an investigation and advise the Grand Master as to whether the petition should proceed through its normal process. To date, there has been only one investigation, and in this case, based on the information provided by the DDGM, the petition was approved for processing. The Code provisions are in place to assist in determining whether an applicant is physically able to go through the initiation process and whether he would become an immediate financial burden to the Lodge. My thanks go to the District Deputy Grand Master who thoroughly investigated this specific instance and made a proper report which helped to expedite my final decision.

### **Dispensations**

To date at the printing of this report, I have granted 74 dispensations for various Lodge needs and situations. Listed below are the Dispensations granted:

1. Knights of Solomon Lodge No. 766 to hold their four stated meeting at various locations for 2019. Issued 12-3-18.
  2. Blackmer Lodge No. 127 to dispense with their stated meeting on 1-1-19 which is a legal holiday. Issued 12-3-18.
  3. Mosaic Lodge No. 762 to hold their installation of 2019 officers in University Lodge 408. Issued 12-3-18.
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4. Terry L. Washam to serve as Master of Orphans Lodge No. 761 & James B. Green Lodge No. 735. Issued 12-4-18.
  5. Balfour Lodge No. 188 for permission to elect a Secretary on December 18, 2018, since one was not previously elected. Issued 12-5-18.
  6. Spencer Lodge No. 543 for permission to elect a Secretary on December 11, 2018, since one was not previously elected. Issued 12-5-18.
  7. Pilot Lodge No. 493 to move annual meeting to December 17, 2018, due to inclement weather. Issued 12-7-18.
  8. Numa F. Reid Lodge No. 344 to move annual meeting to December 17, 2018, due to inclement weather. Issued 12-7-18.
  9. Keller Memorial Lodge No. 657 to move annual meeting to December 18, 2018, due to inclement weather. Issued 12-7-18.
  10. Hominy Lodge No 491 to move their December stated meeting to December 15, 2018, due to inclement weather. Issued 12-11-18.
  11. Apex Lodge No. 584 to move annual meeting to January 14, 2019, due to inclement weather. Issued 12-11-18.
  12. Person Lodge No. 113 to move annual meeting to December 18, 2018, due to inclement weather. Issued 12-11-18.
  13. Royal Hart Lodge No. 497 to move annual meeting to December 17, 2018, due to inclement weather. Issued 12-11-18.
  14. Durham Lodge No. 352 to move annual meeting to December 19, 2018, due to inclement weather. Issued 12-11-18.
  15. Long Creek Lodge No. 205 to move annual meeting to December 18, 2018, due to inclement weather. Issued 12-11-18.
  16. Winston Lodge No. 167 to move their December stated meeting to December 17, 2018, due to inclement weather. Issued 12-11-18.
  17. Lillington Lodge No. 302 to move annual meeting to December 18, 2018, due to inclement weather. Issued 12-11-18.
  18. Wake Forest Lodge No. 282 to move annual meeting to December 18, 2018, due to inclement weather. Issued 12-11-18.
  19. Union Lodge No 618 to move their December stated meeting to December 12, 2018, due to inclement weather. Issued 12-11-18.
  20. Maiden Lodge No. 592 to move annual meeting to December 18, 2018, due to inclement weather. Issued 12-11-18.
  21. Gate City Lodge No. 694 to move annual meeting to December 15, 2018, due to inclement weather. Issued 12-11-18.
  22. Catawba Lodge No. 248 to move their December stated meeting to December 18, 2018, due to inclement weather. Issued 12-11-18.
  23. Bula Lodge No. 409 to move annual meeting to December 14, 2018, due to inclement weather. Issued 12-11-18.
  24. Hanks Lodge No. 128 to move annual meeting to December 17, 2018, due to inclement weather. Issued 12-15-18.
  25. Bush Hill Lodge No. 732 to move annual meeting to December 18, 2018, due to inclement weather. Issued 12-15-18.
  26. Pigeon River Lodge No. 386 to move annual meeting to December 18, 2018, due to inclement weather. Issued 12-15-18.
  27. Lovelady Lodge No. 670 to move their December stated meeting to December 17, 2018, due to inclement weather. Issued 12-17-18.
  28. Cherokee Lodge No. 146 to hold their 2019 officer installation at Tri County Community College, 12-17-18. Issued 12-13-18.
  29. William G. Hill Lodge No. 218 to move their December stated meeting to December 19, 2018. Issued 12-17-18.
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30. Knights of Solomon Lodge No. 764 to hold their four stated meetings at various locations for 2019. Issued 1-7-19
31. Allen-Graham Lodge No. 695 for permission to elect a Junior Warden on January 17, 2019, since one was not previously elected. Issued 1-7-19
32. Cliffside Lodge No. 460 for permission to elect a Senior Warden on January 14, 2019, since the one previously installed resigned. Issued 1-9-19.
33. Mosaic Lodge No. 762 for permission to hold their stated meeting of February 19, 2019, at University Lodge No. 408. Issued 1-17-19.
34. Charles M. Setzer Lodge No. 693 for permission to hold an emergent communication at the MHCO on March 30, 2019. Issued 1-17-19.
35. Lux Libertas Lodge No. 772 for permission to hold their February 7, 2019, stated meeting in Stokes Lodge No. 32 in Concord, NC. Issued 1-17-19.
36. Stump Sound Lodge No. 733 for permission to elect a Junior Warden on January 22, 2019. Issued 1-22-19.
37. Greensboro Lodge No. 76 for permission to cancel their stated meeting of February 14, 2019, due to its falling on Valentine's Day. Issued 1-30-19.
38. Harmony Lodge No. 340 for permission to elect a Junior Warden on February 14, 2019, since the one previously installed resigned. Issued 2-1-19.
39. Waxhaw Lodge No. 562 for permission to dispense with stated meeting due to loss of power in the building. Issued 2-4-19.
40. Wilkerson College Lodge No. 760 to hold their six stated meetings at various locations for 2019. Issued 2-5-19
41. William T. Bain Lodge No. 231 for permission to hold all stated and emergent communications without a charter until such time as theirs has been refurbished and returned. Issued 2-7-19.
42. Knights of Solomon Lodge UD for permission to hold their stated meeting of February 16, 2019, at Nichols-West Asheville Lodge No. 650. Issued 2-8-19.
43. Acacia Lodge No. 674 for permission to hold an emergent communication on June 15, 2019, at WhiteStone to confer the Master Masons Degree. Issued 3-13-19.
44. Radiance Lodge No. 132 for permission to hold an emergent communication on May 11, 2019, at a different location to confer the Master Masons Degree. Issued 3-13-19.
45. West Gate Lodge No. 738 for permission to elect a Senior Warden on March 18, 2019. Issued 3-18-19.
46. Mount Vernon Lodge No. 359 for permission to elect a Junior Warden on March 26, 2019. Issued 3-18-19.
47. Knights of Solomon Lodge No. 768 for permission to hold their stated meeting of May 4, 2019, at Blackmer Lodge No. 127. Issued 3-18-19.
48. Knights of Solomon Lodge UD for permission to hold their stated meeting of May 18, 2019, at Vesper Lodge No. 554; July 20, 2019, meeting at Robbinsville Lodge No. 672; and September 21, 2019, at Montgomery Lodge No. 526. Issued 3-18-19.
49. Acacia Lodge No. 674 for permission to elect a Senior Warden on April 4, 2019. Issued 3-18-19.
50. St. John's Lodge No. 1 for permission to hold an emergent communication on September 14, 2019, at a different location (Battleship) to confer the Master Masons Degree. Issued 3-22-19.
51. Orphans Lodge No. 761 for permission to hold an emergent communication on April 13, 2019, at a different location (Alumni Picnic Shelter) to confer the outdoor Master Masons Degree. Issued 3-29-19.
52. Mosaic Lodge No. 762 for permission to hold an emergent communication on April 25, 2019, at a different location (University Lodge No. 408) to confer the Master Masons Degree. Issued 4-5-19.



53. State College Lodge No. 770 for permission to hold an emergent communication on April 11, 2019, at a different location (McKimmon Center) to host the Grand Master district meeting. Issued 4-5-19.
54. Yadkin Falls Lodge No. 637 for permission to hold an emergent communication on July 1, 2019, at a different location (Denton Farm Park) for business and receiving the Grand Master. Issued 4-5-19.
55. Unanimity Lodge No. 7 for permission to hold their stated meeting of April 25, 2019, at Providence Lodge No. 678. Issued 4-10-19.
56. Kilwinning Lodge No. 64 to dispense with their stated meeting on 4-11-19 due to the funeral service of their Master, W. Dennis L. “Pete” Cook. Issued 4-11-19.
57. Grassy Knob Lodge No. 471 for permission to hold an emergent communication on April 30, 2019, at a different location, Statesville Lodge No. 27, to confer the Fellow Craft Degree. Issued 4-17-19.
58. Camp Call Lodge No. 534 for permission to hold their stated and emergent communications in Lawndale Lodge No. 486 until such time as their roof is repaired and declared safe. Issued 4-18-2019.
59. Spencer Lodge No. 543 for permission to hold an emergent communication on May 25, 2019, at a different location (NC Transportation Museum) to confer the Master Mason Degree. Issued 5-8-19.
60. Orphans Lodge No. 761 for permission to hold their stated communication on June 8, 2019, at a different location (MESH Lodge No. 771). Issued 5-9-19.
61. Belmont Lodge No. 627 for permission to hold their stated and emergent meetings at Mt. Holly Lodge No. 544 until their lodge is repaired as a result of vandalism on May 11, 2019. Issued 5-13-2019.
62. Grifton Lodge No. 243 for permission to dispense with their stated meeting on July 3<sup>rd</sup> due to conflicts with the July 4<sup>th</sup> Holiday. Issued 5-31-2019.
63. Marietta Lodge No. 444 for permission to dispense with their stated meeting on June 7, 2019, due to conflicts with lodge officer schedules. Issued 5-31-2019.
64. P.P. Turner Lodge No. 746 for permission to elect a Junior Warden on June 6, 2019. Issued 6-6-19.
65. Mosaic Lodge No. 762 for permission to hold an emergent meeting on July 9<sup>th</sup> in Olive Lodge No. 36, PHA, for conferral of the Entered Apprentice Degree. Issued 6-18-2019.
66. Mosaic Lodge No. 762 for permission to hold all stated and emergent meetings at Olive Lodge No. 36, PHA, until their by-laws are updated to reflect this address. Issued 6-18-2019.
67. Andrew Jackson Lodge No. 576 for permission to dispense with their stated meeting on July 4, 2019. Issued 6-21-19.
68. Vance Lodge No. 293 for permission to attend the Tri-State River Degree in TN and confer the NC Master Mason Degree. Issued 6-27-19.
69. Widow’s Son Lodge No. 75 for permission to dispense with their stated meeting on July 4, 2019. Issued 7-2-19.
70. Lodge of the Nine Sisters No. 773 for permission to confer the Master Mason Degree at the George Washington National Masonic Memorial in Alexandria, VA, on August 3, 2019. Issued 7-30-2019.
71. Harmon Lodge No. 420 for permission to hold an emergent communication on August 24, 2019, at a different location (Brother Allan Norman’s cabin in East Bend) to confer the Master Mason Degree. Issued 8-1-19.
72. North Wilkesboro Lodge No. 407 for permission to attend the 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Moonlight Degree in Dixon Springs, TN, and confer the Master Mason Degree on September 14, 2019. Dispensation also received by the Grand Master of Tennessee, M. W. Robert T. Reed. Issued 8-5-2019.

73. Wendell Lodge No. 565 for permission to hold their stated and emergent communications in Zebulon Lodge No. 609 until such time as their floor has been repaired. Issued 8-5-2019.
74. Zion Lodge No. 81 for permission to dispense with their stated meeting on August 15, 2019 in order to have a fraternal with Doric Lodge No. 568 in New Bern, NC, whose stated meeting is also on that same date. Issued 8-5-2019.

### **Orders**

To date at the printing of this report, I have issued two Orders for various Lodge needs and situations. Listed below are the Orders issued:

1. Stedman Lodge No. 730 for the purpose of a rebalot due to an il legal ballot held on July 1, 2019. Rebalot to occur on August 5, 2019. Issued 7-22-19.
2. Whetstone Lodge No. 515 for the purpose of a rebalot due to im proper conduct unbecfitting of a Mason after election and before notification of the petitioner’s election. Rebalot to occur on August 27, 2019. Issued 7-29-19.

### **Emergent Communications**

One emergent communication of the Grand Lodge of North Carolina was conducted during my term as of the time of this submittal.

1. November 29, 2018, in Newton for the purpose of installing the 2019 Grand Lodge Officers on December 1, 2018. The grand lodge was opened with the officers of Catawba Lodge No. 248 acting as grand lodge officers pro tempore.

### **The North Carolina Masonic Foundation, Inc.**

For an overview of the activities of the North Carolina Masonic Foundation, Inc., I refer you to their report found elsewhere in the book of Reports submitted by The Board of Directors and Staff and lead by Michael Faulkenbury, Chairman.

I was honored to participate in three events sponsored by the Foundation at the time of this printing. One additional event is planned in October in the Asheville area.

On February 21, 2019, I attended and participated in honoring a founding member of the Bridge Builder Society for the North Carolina Masonic Foundation. Worshipful Brother William Pete Franklin, PM, of Charles B. Newcomb Lodge No. 740 was recognized for his contribution. This event was well attended by members of his lodge and district. We thank Worshipful Brother Pete for his many years of dedicated service to our fraternity, especially his support of our annual communications.

Worshipful Brother E. Earl Wells, Past Grand Lecturer and his staff at the GALOT Motorsports Park in Dunn, NC, hosted a thank-you celebration for supporters of the NCMF on May 21, 2019. Many in attendance shared stories about our Masonic charities. Those brave enough were able to take a ride down the dragstrip as a passenger in an official bracket-style race car. We thank

Worshipful Brother Earl for his continued support of our North Carolina Masonic charities and his leadership service to our fraternity.

On August 5, 2019, my wife Linda and I attended and participated in honoring additional founding members of the Bridge Builder Society for the North Carolina Masonic Foundation. Brother Robert “Bobby” Broughton Carr of Mingo Lodge No. 206 and Mrs. Loray Carr were recognized for their contributions. This event was well attended by members of his community, lodge and district. We thank the Carr family for their many years of dedicated service to our fraternity.

### **WhiteStone: A Masonic and Eastern Star Community**

WhiteStone, our Masonic and Eastern Star Home Community in Greensboro turned 107 years old in 2019. If you have never visited our home in Greensboro, I encourage you to do so and see what your donations are supporting. Several years ago, we established a foundation called the Masonic and Eastern Star Home LLC. Please note that a donation to this foundation, made out to MESH Foundation LLC, qualifies as a 501(c)3 tax deductible donation. Donating to this foundation guarantees that your contributions will go to support only Masonically connected residents both internally and those served through the Outreach program.

Exciting activities are happening at our campus in Greensboro. On May 11th we celebrated a ground-breaking ceremony in the Rotunda area of our campus. The Long-Range Committee/Development Team is working hard to finalize plans for the new expansion. This will add additional Independent Living units, provide an Assisted Living option that is not currently available, relocate the Memory Care area, and renovate the Care and Wellness Center providing for some private accommodations.

I would like to thank Chairman, Most Worshipful Gene T. Jernigan, PGM 2006, and the entire team of Board of Directors for their many hours of service and continued support to ensure our home in Greensboro continues to be successful.

Many of our lodges are donating to the MESH Foundation, LLC, but I am disappointed that many are still choosing not to donate. I encourage each of you to consider, as a priority, your own personal financial support of our retirement community. As Masons we are obligated individually to support our elderly brothers and their widows. However, as indicated in my district message, lodge fundraisers are greatly appreciated, and I hope they will continue but should be considered a bonus in our charitable giving.

To the Masons of our grand jurisdiction, I thank you for your continued support of our home in Greensboro. Someday you too, like me, may want to call this place your residence as well. We have much to offer our residents and having a Masonic Lodge, MESH Lodge No. 771, and OES Chapter, MESH Chapter No. 379, allows your WhiteStone experience to be even more fulfilling. Remember we are one of only four grand jurisdictions that still operate both a children’s home and a retirement community. I hope that never changes.

For more detailed information concerning our home in Greensboro I refer you to the report found elsewhere in the book of Reports submitted by Worshipful Brother Donald E. Kehler, Junior Grand Deacon and Chairman of the Committee on WhiteStone for 2019.

### **Masonic Home for Children at Oxford**

Our Masonic Home for Children at Oxford turned 146 years old in 2019. If you have never visited our home in Oxford, I encourage you to do so and see what your donations are supporting. Donations to our Children's Home can be made out to MHCO, which qualifies as a 501(c)3 tax deductible charity.

Exciting activities are also happening at our Children's Home. On May 10th we celebrated the ribbon cutting to open our new swimming pool. I would like to thank all who supported the efforts of raising funds to support this project. Our old pool had become unsafe, but thanks to the support of many we now have a new swimming pool for decades to come. Opportunities still exist to contribute to this important project.

I would like to thank Chairman, Most Worshipful Dewey R. Preslar, Jr., PGM 2013, and the entire team of Board of Directors for their many hours of service and continued support to ensure our home in Oxford continues to be successful. We have a team of district Ambassadors working to update lodges in their district on activities and needs for operating our home. I offer a special thanks for your continued support. I would also like to thank lodges who not only support the home financially but offer additional support in labor, materials, and financial scholarships for our graduates. All your efforts are greatly appreciated.

If you have never attended the annual Masonic Homecoming Festival, I strongly encourage you to consider making the upcoming 9th annual festival the one to begin that practice. This year's festivities begin on Friday evening October 11th. The annual parade and delicious barbecue will be cooked during the night and will be available on Saturday the 12th. The parade featuring our three Shrine Temples in North Carolina — Sudan, Amran, and Oasis — begins this year at 11 am. Invite your family and friends to attend and experience the activities on our campus. Orphans Lodge will also meet at 8:00 am on Saturday morning. This will allow you to enjoy a brief lodge meeting with Masons statewide.

One of my most special moments this year was having the opportunity to be with the graduates of the Masonic Home for Children in Oxford at their annual Baccalaureate service on May 19th. This was a unique experience for me as it occurred nine days prior to the fiftieth anniversary of my high school graduation in 1969. I wish each of our four graduates a very successful journey, and I am thankful to the Masons of our grand jurisdiction for leading the way in ensuring their success.

To the Masons of our grand jurisdiction, I thank you for your continued support of our home in Oxford. We are fortunate to have a chartered lodge on our campus, Orphans Lodge No. 761, and I encourage you to visit at any of our meetings. As indicated in my overview above of WhiteStone, I encourage each of you to consider, as a priority, your own personal financial support of our Children's Home as well. Again, as Masons we are obligated individually to support our orphans. Always remember, lodge fundraisers are greatly appreciated, and I hope they will continue, but should be considered a bonus in our charitable giving.

For more detailed information concerning our home in Oxford I refer you to the report found elsewhere in the book of Reports submitted by Worshipful Brother Kevan D. Frazier, Senior Grand Deacon and Chairman of the Commit-

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tee on the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford for 2019.

### **Veterans' Hospital Visits**

The Veteran's Administration Hospital Visitation Program, sponsored by the Masonic Service Association, is carried on entirely by voluntary contributions. Contributions are received from Grand Lodges throughout the United States who vote special funds or assessments. Our Grand Lodge contributes \$5.00 per initiation yearly to the Masonic Service Association for use in such programs as the Hospital Visitation program. Visitation is limited by the fact that veterans who are Masons must volunteer that information because privacy rules do not allow us to ask.

North Carolina has four Veteran's Administration Hospitals: Asheville, Salisbury, Durham, and Fayetteville. I was able to arrange a visit to the hospital in Salisbury on August 15th and visit with three Masons. I had the honor of presenting one of my lapel pins to each of these Masonic Veterans. I would like to offer a special thanks to Worshipful Brothers Richard D. Starnes of Andrew Jackson Lodge No. 576 and David L. Wyatt of Riverside Lodge No. 606 for their support in serving as Masonic Service Association volunteers for the Salisbury location. Sadly, on August 6th, Brother William "Bill" McEntire, Sonoma Lodge No. 472, our Masonic Service Association volunteer for the Asheville Hospital, passed away. We thank Brother Bill for his many years of service to this worthy cause.

I am still hopeful to visit the Asheville Hospital before my term as grand master is completed, provided we can fill the current volunteer vacancy. The hospitals in Durham and Fayetteville do not have a Masonic Service Association volunteer to assist with visitations therefore I was unable to make a visit to those locations.

### **Conference of Grand Masters of North America**

The Grand Lodge of North Carolina is a member of the Conference of Grand Masters of North America. This conference consists of recognized Grand Jurisdictions in all fifty U.S. states, Provinces of Canada, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the states of Mexico, and the American Canadian Grand Lodge of Germany. The Conference is the largest gathering of Grand Masters in the world and assembles Grand Masters to learn items currently affecting the Craft, discuss best practices, and learn of new programs that can assist grand jurisdictions in operating more efficiently.

The annual meeting for 2019 was held February 16-19 in Rapid City, South Dakota.

I was privileged to have been elected at the 2018 conference to serve as an officer and member of the Planning Committee for the Conference in 2019 along with Grand Masters from four other grand jurisdictions. It was even more special to serve on this committee since Past Grand Master Bryant Webster served as its Chairman in 2016. His committee was responsible for making incremental changes to improve the annual program and interaction between Grand Lodges while attending. Those improvements continue to be practiced today. The conference also realized significant improvements beginning in mid-2018 led by our new conference secretary, Most Worshipful Michael DeWolf, PGM, and current Grand Secretary of Wisconsin. Most Worshipful DeWolf implemented a new website which has streamlined communi-

cations and provides on-line registration for the various conference activities.

Also attending with me were Deputy Grand Master, Right Worshipful Brother Shaun Bradshaw; our Senior Grand Warden, Right Worshipful Brother David Wicker; our Junior Grand Warden, Right Worshipful Brother Larry Thompson; and our Assistant to the Grand Secretary, Worshipful Brother Jonathan Underwood. We had a great conference despite temperatures ranging from plus eight degrees to minus ten degrees, not counting the wind chill factor. This was a bittersweet conference for me as it was my last as an elected grand lodge officer.

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

The Grand Lodge of North Carolina is a member of the Northeast Conference which consists of Grand Lodges in the states of: Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Indiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, and Wisconsin.

This year's conference was held in Bangor, Maine, on July 19-21 and featured one main presentation and two separate afternoon breakout sessions. The main presentation by Brother Christopher Howard, PHD, focused on *The Modern Social Landscape*. Breakout sessions were held for Grand Masters and Deputy Grand Masters/Wardens providing each group an opportunity to discuss a variety of topics affecting the Craft. Ample time was also given for informal communication with counterparts from other states to discuss various Masonic issues. Also attending with me were Deputy Grand Master, Right Worshipful Brother Shaun Bradshaw; our Senior Grand Warden, Right Worshipful Brother David Wicker; our Grand Treasurer, Most Worshipful Lewis R. Ledford; and our Grand Secretary, Right Worshipful T. Walton Clapp, III. Separate breakout sessions were held for the grand secretaries.

### **Membership Services**

Our Membership Service Committee, co-chaired by Worshipful Brother William "Bill" Faison and Right Worshipful Brother P. Shaun Bradshaw, Deputy Grand Master, were part of an experienced group of lodge secretaries charged to evaluate current industry market software packages and make recommendations on what would best serve our grand jurisdiction for the future. This committee began their evaluation task in late fourth quarter of 2018. Two suppliers were evaluated, our current vendor MORI located in New York and another experienced vendor, Grand View, located in Louisiana.

After an extensive process of reviewing what the market currently had to offer, the committee recommended at this time that we negotiate a new contract with MORI, including enhancements to their product which are to be implemented as part of the new package. A new two-year contract was signed in July 2019 providing expected near term software enhancements. I would like to thank each member of this committee for their efforts in completing this project. Another evaluation of both companies is expected to take place again in early 2021.

### **Board of Custodians and Grand Lecturer**

It was an honor to attend the first Board of Custodians meeting on Janu-

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ary 11, 2019, as grand master and initially preside as Chairman ex-officio as required by our Code. I had the privilege to serve on this Board from 2006-2014, serving as its twelfth secretary from 2007-2013. This was my first ever grand lodge board or committee appointment, having been a member for thirty-one years at the time of my appointment. I wish to once again thank Most Worshipful Gene T. Jernigan, PGM 2006, for this appointment. I quite often describe this as a life changing experience. Serving in this capacity allowed me to cross paths with many Masons across our grand jurisdiction. I appreciate the kindness and respect I have always received, especially during this time.

I was also honored to have had the opportunity of appointing my long-time mentor, Most Worshipful Dalton W. Mayo, PGM 2014, as my Grand Lecturer. Most Worshipful Dalton completed his forty-ninth year as a Certified Lecturer in 2019. He became only the second member of our Grand Jurisdiction to have served as Grand Master, Grand Lecturer, and Chairman and Secretary of the Board of Custodians. The only other to serve in each of these capacities was Most Worshipful Leon Cash, PGM 1925, completing this series of services in 1934.

I would like to offer a special congratulations to two of our Certified Lecturers who during 2019 were presented fifty-year Certified Lecturer certificates. It was my honor to make both of those presentations, first to Worshipful Brother James Beauford Kiser (Charles M. Setzer No. 693) on July 7th at his home and second to Worshipful Brother Robert Glenn Capps (Creasy Proctor No. 679) at his lodge on July 9th. Only twenty-one other Brothers have previously accomplished this milestone since the Certification Program, as we now know it, was instituted on January 24, 1941.

### **In-State Visitation and Special Activities**

Order of the Eastern Star – Sister Debbie Owen, Worthy Grand Matron; Worshipful Brother J. Allen Hughes, Worthy Grand Patron; and our grand lodge hosted a joint cookout on May 25th at Camp Gray Rock in Foscoe, NC. This event was held to continue to strengthen the bond between Masons and Eastern Stars. I was honored to speak at the Grand Chapter OES Annual Session June 10th in Durham. Later in the week on June 12th, Sister Louise Taylor was elected Worthy Grand Matron and Worshipful Brother Cutler Dillon was elected as Worthy Grand Patron for the 2019-2020 calendar. At their annual session a check from the OES Ruck fund was presented to Brother Mark Lewis, Executive Director of WhiteStone: a Masonic and Eastern Star Community in the amount of \$290,333. I enjoy my membership in the Eastern Star, and it should be of no surprise of my fondness of their initiation ritual work and the lessons therein portrayed. I had the honor of serving as Associate Patron Pro Tem for Kernersville Chapter No. 205 and Lincoln Chapter No. 114 for their initiations and gave the full lecture for these degrees.

Shrine – North Carolina has and continues to enjoy excellent relationships with all three Shrine Temples. The dedicated Masons who are members of Amran, Oasis, and Sudan Shriners are doing great work in supporting their 22 Shriners Hospitals for Children. Our Temples in 2019 are led by Ill. Sir Donald Slaughter (Amran), Ill. Sir Kenneth Jarrett (Oasis), and Ill. Sir Carl Smith (Sudan). I was fortunate to attend the installations for each Potentate and his Divan officers. Having been a member of the Oasis Ritual team since 2008, it was extremely special for me to fill the position of Potentate as the sitting Grand Master at two of the 2019 Oasis ceremonials.

Scottish Rite – We are fortunate to continue to enjoy the great leadership of Illustrious and Most Worshipful Brother William B. Brunk, Past Grand Master, Sovereign Grand Inspector General for the Orient of North Carolina. Supporting their language disorders clinics is the main charity of this group with clinics at the universities of East Carolina and Appalachian State. My home Valley, the Valley of Charlotte, honored me with a Table Lodge meeting on August 23rd. We enjoyed an evening of good food, fellowship, toasts, and singing.

York Rite Bodies – For the majority of my term as Grand Master, the Grand York Rite Bodies of North Carolina were led by Most Excellent Thomas Bridges (Grand Royal Arch Chapter), Most Illustrious Kevin Wood (Grand Council Royal and Select Masters) and Right Eminent Michael Daniels (Grand Commandery Knights Templar). These dedicated Brothers work diligently to promote and support all York Rite Masons in North Carolina. I was honored to attend their Annual Communication in Clemmons beginning March 17th-19th, 2019, and offer remarks as the keynote speaker. During the Grand Encampment annual Easter observance weekend in Alexandria and Arlington, VA, I had a very special opportunity to be part of a wreath laying ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldiers. The following morning an Easter Sunrise service was held at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial. I appreciate the invitation allowing me to participate in these special events extended to me by our NC Grand Commandery. In July, I participated in the activities of the 82nd Summer Assembly in Maggie Valley from July 13th-July 16th, 2019. On Saturday prior to the beginning of this session a statewide Royal Arch degree was conferred with participants from several York Rite bodies, including one out-of-state body from Georgia. I was honored to be allowed to fill the part of the Principal Sojourner for the Royal Arch degree. Twenty-five candidates participated in the conferral of this degree. Finally, it was a very special treat to be asked to confer, serving as Eminent Commander, the Order of the Temple at a statewide event. This special Order is to be conferred at Castle McCulloch in the Jamestown community on October 9, 2019.

Youth Organizations - In late March I attended the annual North Carolina Masonic Youth Leadership Conference at the Winston-Salem Masonic Center. What a great experience to spend time with our future leaders. Anyone concerned about the future of our fraternity needs only to attend one of our youth meetings. You will have a different perspective after spending time with our Masonic youth. I had the privilege of witnessing the Rainbow Girls initiation and the DeMolay Degree. I was very impressed with the dedication and performance of their ritual work. Outstanding!! On June 23rd I attended and spoke at the eighty-second Grand Assembly of NC, International Order of Rainbow for Girls in Raleigh. This was another great experience to be with our future leaders.

National Sojourners – On February 4th, 2019, I was inducted as an Honorary Member of the National Sojourners, Camp Lejeune Chapter No. 329 in Jacksonville, NC, and became a Member in Perpetuity. I want to thank all members who made this special honor possible. I offer a special thanks to Brother MGYSGT Denny Norris, National Third Vice President who sponsored me. This induction occurred at their annual stated meeting held at Semper Fidelis Lodge No. 680 in Jacksonville, NC. After the induction, I was honored to receive a framed copy of the Toast to the Flag.

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On January 4th, I attended five blood drives in my area. I made brief stops at Statesville Lodge No. 27 in Statesville, Andrew Jackson No. 576/Fulton Lodge No. 99 in Salisbury, Hickory Lodge No. 343 in Hickory, Conover Lodge No. 709 in Conover, attempted Lee Lodge No. 253 in Taylorsville but I was mistaken on the location, and Snow Creek Lodge No. 571 in the northern Statesville area. My congratulations to all who participated in this annual event. We are working with the Red Cross to promote additional locations throughout the state in 2019. We welcome representatives from the Red Cross to our 2019 annual communication and look forward to their brief message at the public session Friday afternoon. They will have a display table in the vendor area during our session.

Through the end of August, I have participated in several fundraisers, notably the 62nd annual Brunswick Stew Fundraiser in late February at Andrew Jackson Lodge in Salisbury, NC, and the 56th annual Ham Day in early March at Riverside Lodge in Catawba, NC.

Also, through the end of August I participated in several degrees, installations and many award presentations as follows:

A summary of other activities at the time of this report include the following;

- Visitation to sixty-five lodges
- Attended two Scottish Rite Reunions participating in multiple ritual parts
- Attended two York Rite festivals participating in multiple ritual parts
- Conferred one complete Master Mason degree
- Filled the station of the East for conferring the Second Section of the Master Mason degree for three lodges
- Gave the Master Mason Degree lecture for three lodges
- Gave the Associate Patron lecture for two OES chapters
- Installed lodge officers for 2019 for twenty-five lodges (ten at one time for the 6th district)
- Conducted eight Masonic funerals and
- Presented service awards to forty-three brethren: (6) twenty-five, (18) Fifty, (7) Sixty and (12) Seventy Year awards. It was a very special treat for me to present Most Worshipful Richard G. Moore, GM 1993, with his sixty year Diamond Jubilee award on April 22nd at the district meeting in Mount Holly. Several of the seventy year awards were presented at the Brother's home due to health issues.

I thank all Lodges, Eastern Star Chapters, Scottish and York Rite bodies, Shrine Temples for giving me the opportunities to participate in your special events. This has been a wonderful journey, and as a ritualist it has been a great honor to have been invited to participate. I look forward to more of these activities for the remaining part of my term in office.

Each of these events and many more gave me the opportunity to cross paths with many members of our fraternity and their families. The best part of our journeys has been, is now, and will forever be the people you meet along the way. Never take these opportunities lightly or for granted. Each occurrence is a special and unique memory.

### **Out of State Visitations**

My first out of state trip after installation was to represent North Carolina at the 82nd annual Shrine Bowl of the Carolinas held in Spartanburg, SC. It was a pleasure being on the field at halftime with Worshipful Brother Tommy Watson, Grand Marshal of South Carolina. Since the first game in 1937, over \$75 million dollars has been raised from this event supporting the Shriners Hospital in Greenville, SC, and twenty-one other Shriners hospitals across the United States.

I was invited to several out of state annual communications. Regretfully my schedule would not allow me to attend many. I did have the opportunity to attend the annual communications of South Carolina in late April and Oregon in early June. At each event, I was warmly received and experienced generous hospitality during my visit. It is a valuable experience seeing how other grand jurisdictions conduct their business and manage the challenges and successes concerning their Craft. My thanks to Most Worshipful Michael D. Smith, Grand Master of South Carolina, and Most Worshipful James L. Morgan of Oregon for making Linda and me feel welcome at the various events we attended.

As customary, the three Shrine Temples Amran, Oasis, and Sudan invited Linda and me to attend the 145th Imperial Session from June 30th through July 4th in Nashville, Tennessee. We certainly can be thankful for the support we continue to receive from our North Carolina Temples.

We appreciate the hospitality received, and I am delighted in the message promoted by the Imperial Shrine of encouraging their members to be active in their blue lodges. We can also learn a lesson from how well the Shriners effectively market and implement their programs.

I was honored to be a part of a large number of Grand Masters in attendance supporting Shriners International at their annual session. At this session, Imperial Sir Jeffrey L. Sowder was elected and installed as the new Imperial Potentate becoming the first Past Grand Master ever elected to this position. Most Worshipful and Imperial Sir Jeff is a Past Grand Master of Kansas.

From August 17th through August 21st, I attended the Biennial Session of the Supreme Council in Washington, DC. This event was well organized and well attended as usual. What an honor to be officially received with thirty-four other Grand Masters worldwide at the opening session. This communication witnessed a changing of the guard with Illustrious Ronald A. Seale stepping down after sixteen years as Sovereign Grand Commander and Illustrious James D. Cole, 33°, Lieutenant Grand Commander, becoming the new Sovereign Grand Commander. Illustrious and Most Worshipful Cole is also a Past Grand Master of Virginia, with North Carolina roots from the Asheville, NC, area.

### **Honorary Memberships**

It was my distinct pleasure to have received honorary memberships from four lodges, one grand lodge, and one Eastern Star Chapter during my tenure

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as Grand Master through August. Certainly, none were expected, and all are appreciated more than words can adequately express.

Meadow Branch Lodge No. 578, Wingate

Veritas Lodge No. 769, Asheville

Kernersville Chapter No. 205, Order of the Eastern Star

Grand Lodge of Oregon

Numa F. Reid Lodge No. 344, High Point

Andrew Jackson Lodge No. 576, Salisbury

### **Wilkerson College, the Davie Academy, and the Middle Chamber**

Wilkerson College is sponsored jointly by the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, Orient of North Carolina, and the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina. The college was created with a single mission in mind: to provide Freemasonry with the best trained leaders possible. It was named in honor of retired General H. Lloyd Wilkerson who was formerly Sovereign Grand Inspector General of the Scottish Rite in North Carolina.

The 2019 class was very special this year for two special reasons. First, it is the largest class ever conducted, with sixty students attending. This year served as an evaluation process whereby we structured our classes in a manner allowing us to serve more students in each location. Previous classes were limited to thirty-six students until 2017 and 2018 when forty students were accepted. Prior to the 2020 class, we will evaluate adjustments that may be necessary, and structure the program to consistently meet higher demands when necessary. With the completion of the 2019 class we now have five-hundred eighty-four graduates since the college first began in 2002.

Second, it marks the year of the 100th birthday of Worshipful Brother, Major General H. Lloyd Wilkerson, USMC (retired) for whom the school was named. He was also the first Master of Wilkerson College Lodge No. 760. Since 2012 I have been honored to have served as the Dean of Admissions of the College. I am a part of a great team of officers fully dedicated to the mission of the College. Prior to 2019, we had one-hundred fifty lodges take advantage of the special training provided to deacons of lodges across the state. Fourteen new lodges attended and sent students to the college for the first time in 2019. However, that means two-hundred seven lodges still have not experienced the benefits of the leadership training that the college provides. Being master of a lodge can be challenging at times. The curriculum set forth by the college is an excellent resource to better prepare principle officers to face those challenges head-on.

The Davie Academy is another resource offered by our grand jurisdiction that is available for other non-deacon officers and any member not currently eligible to attend Wilkerson College. Their curriculum provides similar training but in one-day segments specializing in subjects to help manage the operation of a lodge.

If you are looking to improve your knowledge of allegory and symbolism, the Middle Chamber program is available a few times each year. In 2019 sev-

eral of our Masons visited other grand jurisdictions to present this program and offer guidance on how they can implement similar education programs for their members.

North Carolina is blessed to have wonderful training and education programs available for its members. I hope you will choose to take advantage of some of these while traveling on your Masonic journey.

### **Summons and Summary Trial**

At the time of this report, I have not issued any summonses or summary trials as grand master. I hope that trend continues for the rest of my tenure. There were, however, several summonses issued by the Judge Advocate for non-masonic conduct for his action or that of a Trial Commission. I refer you to the Report of the Judge Advocate for details of those actions. Each item will be reviewed, and a recommendation made to the delegates at our 2019 annual communication for their consideration.

### **Recommended Legislation**

I am currently evaluating two areas of recommendations on future Legislation modifications that I believe appropriate and beneficial to our craft. A decision will be made before my term as grand master is finished and if applicable will be submitted before the December 31st deadline.

### **Acknowledgements and Special Appreciations**

I am deeply honored and humble to have been elected on September 29, 2018, and officially installed as the 166th Grand Master of Masons in North Carolina on December 1, 2018, in my hometown of Newton.

Serving as Grand Master is not a journey you make alone. There are many Masons whose wise counsel becomes an extremely valuable necessity in helping guide our craft on a proper and positive course. Words cannot adequately express my appreciation for all the support given to me, not just this year, but the entire eight-year journey.

I offer a special thanks to all members of my home lodge, Catawba Lodge No. 248. There are too many names to mention individually. Their efforts were a key factor in making my installation weekend a success. Words cannot adequately express what your friendship means to me. I apologize that I was not available to attend many meetings this year. Many Masonic events occur on Tuesdays, which made attending lodge extremely difficult. With a much lighter schedule next year, I look forward to attending and participating on a more regular basis as I have in the past.

On May 15th my final district meeting was held at our lodge, Catawba Lodge No. 248, as is customary in our jurisdiction. Again, each member rose to the challenge to help make this last meeting a huge success. Countless hours were spent cleaning, painting, and preparing for visitors statewide. Despite attempting to cool our lodge room to a very low level, one hundred thirty-five dedicated Masons quickly elevated the temperature to a much warmer level. Not one attendee complained to be but instead offered their appreciation for being a part of this special evening. I will never forget this homecoming experience. It will remain with me forever as vivid as it was that evening.

During my installation on December 1, 2018, I was honored to have as part of my Installing Officers every Grand Master that I served under since I began this journey in late 2011: PGMs Bob Gresham; Dewey Preslar, Jr.;

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Dalton Mayo; Doug Caudle; Bryant Webster; Gene Cobb, Jr.; and Speed Hallman. I was also privileged to have two other Past Grand Masters who played a special part in my journey. Past Grand Master Gene Jernigan and Past Grand Master Leonard Safrit, my Masonic Grandfather who appointed Past Grand Master Gresham. I thank each of you for your wise counsel and continued support and look forward to being part of such a fine group of Past Grand Masters when my term is completed.

For many years Worshipful Brother Johnny Surlis and Worshipful Brother Bobby Meadows have helped direct many of our annual grand lodge installation ceremonies. Linda and I want to thank both of these fine Masons for their help in making our installation ceremony a less stressful experience. Both of you were readily available any time we had a question or needed some help. Your many years of service in directing these installation ceremonies and your support of other Masonic events is greatly appreciated.

On September 24, 2005, I was appointed to the Board of Custodians for my first term (2006 to 2008) by Most Worshipful Gene T. Jernigan. This was my first appointment to a Grand Lodge Board or Committee in my thirty-first year as a member. This specific board governs the ritual work of our grand jurisdiction and was a great fit for me due to my love of the ritual. I had the pleasure to serve a total of nine years (three separate terms) on this board, seven as their Secretary. I quite often refer to this as a life changing experience as it gave me the opportunity to meet many members of this fraternity statewide. I want to thank Most Worshipful Gene, Most Worshipful Dalton W. Mayo, and Worshipful Brother Robert D. Street, Past Grand Lecturer, for this special opportunity and their support of me during my time on the Board of Custodians. That support continues to this day and I am very grateful.

I would like to thank my Grand Lodge Officers for their continued support of my year as grand master. Your patience with my many details and suggestions was and continues to be greatly appreciated. It was important to me to provide historical information based on my experience serving as a grand lodge officer, and I am hopeful it becomes useful during your journey to the grand east. You have my continued support of your journey, and you can be assured I will help each of you with any task that you may need.

Our Past Grand Masters and their families continue to support us in many ways. They have laid the solid foundation that makes us thrive and have done so since our inception as a Grand Lodge in 1787. Words cannot adequately express our appreciation for all that they have done and continue to do for us. Each past and current Grand Lodge Officer is proud to be a part of this grand line family.

Our District Deputy Grand Masters/District Deputy Grand Lecturers, Board/Committee members provide a voluntary service that is essential in managing our grand jurisdiction, many donating their time and expenses for the betterment of North Carolina Freemasonry. I thank each of you for serving on our team for 2019.

Again, I want to thank those lodges and chapters that gave me honorary memberships. These are listed earlier in this report. I consider these memberships as special gifts which I will always treasure. I also extend a thank you for all the other gifts that were so generously presented to me throughout my travels. I will treasure your special generosity and thoughtfulness forever.

A special thank you to all Masters, Wardens, Secretaries, officers, and members of the lodges across North Carolina. Your service to our fraternity does not go unnoticed. You are the Grand Lodge of North Carolina, and without your work, fundraisers, support of our distressed Brother Master Masons, widows, orphans and many others we would not be able to continue as the oldest and greatest fraternity in the world.

At my installation, I displayed a lighted candle in memory of all those Mentors no longer with us but who played a special part in my Masonic Journey, which began in 1975 as mentioned many times in my travels throughout our jurisdiction. I continued the current tradition started, I believe in recent years, by Most Worshipful Bryant D. Webster, PGM 2016. It would have been extremely difficult, if not impossible, for me to have had the opportunity to serve as your grand master had it not been for the wise counsel and the guidance those Mentors provided, especially in my early years. Those include Worshipful Brothers Dewey L. Butler, Master of my lodge when I joined; Dr. John F. Sinnett, who appointed me to my first office in our lodge, Grady F. Beck; Curtis R. Sharpe, Sr.; Charles C. Campbell; Michael L. Butler, who I will mention more later in this report; J. Glenn Henline; Jack C. Lutz; Jacob R. Abernathy, Sr.; Jimmy L. Griffin; F. Foy Williams; Jack H. Elmore; and Brother Dr. William T. MacLauchlin (one of my namesakes, who brought me into this world and three days before his passing in 2006, I was honored to present him with his Sixty Year Diamond Jubilee Veteran's Award). There are many more Masons in my life not mentioned here, no longer with us, that I am glad our paths crossed. I thank each of them for the positive influence they had on my life during our time together.

To the Butler family, Sherry (Executive Director for the Old Post Office Playhouse/Green Room Community Theater where my installation was held), Pam, Garry, and William I offer you special thanks for your continued support. Without Dewey and Mike none of this would have been possible. Especially Mike, my best friend in school which continued until his final days in August of 2008. It was his enthusiasm in late 1974 and early 1975 that piqued my interest in becoming a member of this fraternity. He helped coach me on my catechisms and taught me the first and second degree lectures. He was like the true brother I never had. I am honored that his sons, Garry and William, both members of our lodge in Newton, could be a part of my installation representing their father. Your dad would have been extremely very proud of you.

It would be extremely difficult for our grand jurisdiction to be successful without the work of our office staff at the Grand Lodge Office. Right Worshipful Brother Walt Clapp is presently the longest tenured Grand Secretary in the United States, and he has a great team located in Raleigh. My continued thanks to Walt, Worshipful Brother Jonathan Underwood, Cornelia Doherty, Vicki Lam, and Hayley Moll for all that they continue to do for the approximately 36,000 members of our fraternity. I appreciate your efficiency, patience, and help in supporting my many questions and requests. We can never thank each of you enough! I would like to offer a special thanks to Worshipful Brother Jonathan Underwood for his assistance in helping with design of my grand master lapel pin. The final layout/design reflected exactly what I wanted to indicate in supporting my message for 2019. It reminds us that the Supreme Architect is watching over all our actions as taught in our many ritual lessons and our own specific Books of Faith. I hope this will continue to serve as a constant reminder to everyone for the rest of our life's journey.

None of this journey would have been possible without the support of many throughout our grand jurisdiction. I would like to offer a very special thanks to Most Worshipful Robert E. Gresham, Jr. (my Masonic father who appointed me to the grand lodge line in late 2011), and his wife Carolyn (Linda's Masonic mother). Not only did you afford us this very special opportunity, but we can never thank you enough for your continued support and wise counsel during our journey. We hope we have made you proud parents!

Finally, I owe a deep gratitude to all members of my family both at home and abroad in Malaysia for their many sacrifices during this journey, especially Linda. You have been more than patient in my many absences over the past decade. I am glad that you have been able to travel with me at times and establish your own relationships with many Masonic families across this state and other grand jurisdictions as well. Before accepting and starting this journey, we discussed that this would be a long journey and we would need to start this journey together or not at all. She has been and continues to be my biggest supporter. I love you and thank you for all that you have done for me for the past forty-eight years!

So, I end this report as I have most of my Masonic events for 2019 with a deep appreciation for the opportunity to serve the Masons of our grand jurisdiction and the kindness and respect shown not just to me but to the office of Grand Master. It has been a wonderful experience with many memories of special events that will last forever. I have enjoyed crossing paths with many of the brothers and friends established over the years and grateful for the opportunity allowing me to establish new connections that I hope will last until my journey in this life is completed.

I truly am blessed that our paths crossed!

Fraternally and respectfully submitted,  
Dwight M. "Mack" Sigmon  
Grand Master, 2019

## Necrology Service

### Opening the Grand Lodge of Sorrow

**Grand Master:** Brother Junior Grand Warden, what is the hour?

**Junior Grand Warden:** Low Twelve: time to call the Craft to remembrance of our deceased brethren.

**Grand Master:** Brother Grand Marshal, You will present the Chair of the Masonic Necrology, the Grand Chaplain, and other persons as necessary so that this Grand Lodge may prepare to remember our deceased brethren.

**Grand Marshal:** Most Worshipful Grand Master, your order has been obeyed. All are in place.

**Grand Master:** Brother Rick Williams, Grand Chaplain will lead our Necrology Service.

*The Grand Master calls up the Grand Lodge for prayer by the Grand Chaplain. The Grand Master seats the Grand Lodge and the Acting Master proceeds to open the Grand Lodge of Sorrow: He begins:*

**Acting Master (Grand Chaplain):** What man is he who lives, and shall not see death? Shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave? (Psalm 89:48)

**Response:** Man walks in a vain shadow; he heaps up riches and cannot tell who shall gather them.

**Acting Master (Grand Chaplain):** When a man dies, he shall carry nothing away; his glory shall not descend after him.

**Response:** Naked he came into the world, and naked he must return.

**Grand Master:** I now declare the Grand Lodge of Sorrow for the Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina open. Let all who are present join with us in remembering our deceased brethren.

**The Homily/Oration** Reverend Richard A. Williams, Grand Chaplain

Acting Master (Grand Chaplain): We now remember all Master Masons, all Fellow Crafts, and all Entered Apprentices. Each one was loved. Each one was special. We bow our heads to remember them and, as we are called, remember each one silently in our hearts with thanksgiving for their life among us.

**Acting Master (Grand Chaplain):** In memory of all deceased Entered Apprentices (*lays first rose on the altar as Senior Grand Deacon lights first candle*)

**Acting Master (Grand Chaplain):** In memory of all deceased Fellow Crafts (*lays second rose on the altar as Senior Grand Deacon lights second candle*)

**Acting Master (Grand Chaplain):** In memory of all deceased Master Masons (*lays third rose on the altar as Senior Grand Deacon lights third candle*)

*At this time, brethren may say aloud the names of deceased brethren until the Acting Master (Grand Chaplain) begins the act of closing the Grand Lodge of Sorrow as follows.*

**Acting Master (Grand Chaplain):** The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. "Let us live and die like the righteous, that our last end may be like His!"

**Response:** God is our God forever and ever. He will guide even unto death!

**Acting Master (Grand Chaplain):** Almighty God, into your hands we leave with humble submission the souls of our deceased brethren.

**Grand Master:** Brethren, join me in giving the Funeral Grand Honors.

*Both arms are crossed on the breast, the left over the right, and the pen palm sharply striking the shoulders; the hands are raised above the head, the palms striking each other, and then made to fall smartly upon the thighs.*

*The first and second times:*

**(All saying):** The will of God is accomplished! So mote it be. Amen

*The third time:*

**(All saying):** We cherish his memory here. We commend his spirit to God who gave it, and commit his body to the tomb.



**Song**..... God Our Help in Ages Past

**Grand Master:** Brethren, the purpose of the Committee on Necrology having been accomplished, we will now close this Grand lodge of Sorrow. Before I declare this Grand Lodge of Sorrow closed, Brother Grand Chaplain lead our devotions.

**Grand Chaplain:** Most Glorious God, you have made all things and called them good. With You, a new day comes and with it, eternal hope, peace, and joy. Be present with us this day and cause us with confidence to pray: *The Grand Chaplain prays as led in spirit.*

**Grand Master:** I now declare the Grand Lodge of Sorrow for the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina opened and closed for the year 2019. Let us not forget those we have remembered today.

*The Grand Officers return to their places and the Grand Master seats the Grand Lodge.*

**Lyrics:**

1. O God, our help in ages past,  
Our hope for years to come,  
Our shelter from the stormy blast,  
And our eternal home.
  
  2. Before the hills in order stood,  
Or earth received her frame,  
From everlasting Thou art God,  
To endless years the same.
  
  3. Time, like an ever-rolling stream,  
Bears all its sons away;  
They fly, forgotten, as a dream,  
Dies at the opening day.
  
  4. O God, our help in ages past,  
Our hope for years to come,  
Be thou our guard while life shall last,  
And our eternal home.
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