

Reports

of

The Grand Master

The Grand Treasurer

The Grand Secretary

Boards, Commissions and Committees

at the

235th

Annual Communication

of

The Grand Lodge of

Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons

of North Carolina

Winston-Salem, North Carolina

September 30- October 1, 2022

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Report of the Grand Treasurer

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

I herewith submit my interim report as Grand Treasurer as of June 30, 2022, including projected expenditures for the year and suggested budget for calendar year 2023.

Total Funds available 01/01/2022

(General Funds & Special Funds) \$1,018,069

Total Receipts YTD 750,646

Total Disbursements YTD (345,720)

Total Cash To Be Accounted For \$1,422,995

Deposits: Amount

Petty Cash 100

First Citizens Bank (operating account) 61,291

Money Markets:

Alex Brown 546,708

North State Bank VARI 162,634

PNC Bank VARI 163,108

First Citizens Bank VARI 9,985

Investment: 12/31/2021 7/31/2022 Principle

Alex Brown investment \$785,058 \$697,160 \$479,169

Total Cash \$1,422,995

Special Funds Summary 12/31/2021 7/31/2022

Special Contingency Reserve 200,000 200,000

Emblems and Awards Reserve 21,592 21,592

Automobile Reserve 43,345 24,274

Operation Reserve 168,253 185,762

Building Reserve 144,253 138,287

Office Equipment Reserve 3,299 3,299

Legal Fees Reserve 6,000 9,000

Retirement/Health & Life Ins. 1,000 8,000

Charity Fund 78,033 79,293

World Conference Reserve _____ 4,000

Total Special Funds \$ 665,775 673,507

Total Special Funds 07/31/2022 673,507

Total General Funds Available 749,488

Total Of All Funds 07/31/2022 \$1,422,995

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 July 31, 2022, including projected expenditures for the year and suggested budget for calendar year 2023.

Grand Lodge of North Carolina 2023 Proposed Budget

| Account Name | Budget 2021 | Actual 2021 | Budget 2022 | Actual 2022 through July 31 | Proposed Budget 2023 |
|----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| INCOME | | | | | |
| 31,100 Actual | | | | | 808,600 |
| 4,200 | | | | | (109,200) |
| 26,900 Actual | | | | | 699,400 |
| 26,900 Actual | | | | | (26,900) |
| 800 | | | | | 16,800 |
| | | | | | 14,469 |
| | | | | | (4,700) |
| | | | | | (2,333) |
| | | | | | (2,333) |
| | | | | | (4,000) |
| | | | | | (4,000) |
| 1,489 | | | | | 32,069 |
| | | | | | 500 |
| | | | | | 12,000 |
| | | | | | 1,339 |
| | | | | | 750,750 |
| | | | | | 742,480 |
| | | | | | 31,000 |
| | | | | | 500 |
| | | | | | 12,000 |
| | | | | | 1,000 |
| | | | | | 541 |
| | | | | | 725,152 |
| | | | | | 718,800 |
| EXPENSE | | | | | |
| 800-00 | | | | | 29,000 |
| 800-01 | | | | | 0 |
| 800-04 | | | | | 250 |
| 800-06 | | | | | 0 |
| 800-07 | | | | | 4,250 |
| | | | | | 1,200 |
| | | | | | 1,200 |
| | | | | | 25,000 |
| | | | | | 0 |
| | | | | | 0 |
| | | | | | 4,250 |
| | | | | | 1,200 |
| | | | | | 1,200 |
| | | | | | 34,700 |
| | | | | | 30,200 |
| | | | | | 26,200 |
| | | | | | 29,000 |
| | | | | | 250 |
| | | | | | 4,250 |
| | | | | | 1,200 |
| | | | | | 1,200 |
| | | | | | 26,200 |
| | | | | | 34,700 |

Grand Lodge of North Carolina 2023 Proposed Budget

| Account Name | Budget 2021 | Actual 2021 | Budget 2022 | Actual 2022 through July 31 | Proposed Budget 2023 |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 810-00 | | | | | |
| Salaries and Fees | | | | | |
| 810-01 | 95,959 | 100,109 | 75,729 | 44,025 | 79,515 |
| 810-03 | 149,192 | 155,984 | 167,616 | 105,419 | 207,906 |
| 810-04 | 47,000 | 43,864 | 48,864 | 27,044 | 57,800 |
| 810-05 | 18,754 | 14,474 | 18,596 | 11,490 | 21,964 |
| 810-06 | 850 | 850 | 950 | 0 | 1,000 |
| 810-09 | 1,500 | 522 | 1,500 | 366 | 1,500 |
| 810-10 | (18,000) | (18,230) | (18,000) | (19,167) | (18,000) |
| Drewry Memorial Grand Secy. Fund | | | | | |
| NCMF Reimbursement for Services | (67,115) | (66,915) | (69,632) | (40,621) | (73,500) |
| Total | 295,255 | 297,573 | 225,623 | 128,556 | 278,185 |
| 820-00 | | | | | |
| Administration Costs | | | | | |
| 820-02 | 11,500 | 10,139 | 11,500 | 3,110 | 12,500 |
| 820-04 | 12,000 | 16,399 | 12,000 | 8,421 | 13,000 |
| 820-05 | 7,000 | 11,249 | 7,000 | 5,424 | 7,500 |
| 820-06 | 1,500 | 5,238 | 2,250 | 235 | 2,300 |
| 820-07 | 9,500 | 14,923 | 9,500 | 7,455 | 11,000 |
| 820-08 | 7,500 | 6,238 | 7,500 | 5,153 | 7,650 |
| 820-09 | 42,000 | 44,037 | 42,000 | 31,338 | 42,000 |
| Membership Services Expense (database) | | | | | |
| Membership Services Fees and Dues Cards | (45,000) | (43,524) | (45,000) | (43,205) | (45,000) |
| Auditing/Tax Services | 10,000 | 13,180 | 10,000 | 0 | 15,000 |
| 820-11 | 3,000 | 3,000 | 3,000 | 0 | 3,000 |
| 820-13 | 16,000 | 13,218 | 16,000 | 7,506 | 16,000 |
| 820-14 | (20,000) | (17,855) | (20,000) | (12,620) | (20,000) |
| Background check expenses | | | | | |
| Background check services income | | | | | |
| Initiate Packet @ 800 x \$38.00 expense | | | | | |
| Initiate Packet @ 800 x \$38.00 income | | | | | |
| Masonic Foundation Reimbursement | | | | | |
| Total | 55,000 | 60,242 | 55,750 | (2,286) | 48,950 |

Grand Lodge of North Carolina 2023 Proposed Budget

| Account Name | Budget 2021 | Actual 2021 | Budget 2022 | Actual 2022 through July 31 | Proposed Budget 2023 |
|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 830-00 | | | | | |
| Building Expenses | | | | | |
| 830-01 Utilities | 10,000 | 16,829 | 10,000 | 8,464 | 12,500 |
| 830-02 Building Grounds Maintenance | 20,000 | 16,377 | 20,000 | 20,093 | 20,000 |
| 830-03 Building Equipment Maintenance | 5,000 | 3,983 | 5,000 | 3,102 | 5,000 |
| 830-04 Hazard Insurance | 7,000 | 7,501 | 8,000 | 1,085 | 9,000 |
| 830-05 Bldg. Reserve (Transfer to Bldg. Reserve) | 20,000 | 20,000 | 25,000 | 14,583 | 25,000 |
| Total | 62,000 | 64,690 | 68,000 | 47,327 | 71,500 |
| 840-00 | | | | | |
| Membership Fees and Dues | | | | | |
| 840-01 Masonic Service Association | 2,250 | 1,864 | 2,250 | 0 | 2,250 |
| 840-02 Conference of Grand Masters | 750 | 750 | 750 | 402 | 750 |
| 840-03 GMC Committee on Recognition | 100 | 0 | 100 | 0 | 100 |
| 840-05 Northeastern Regional Masonic Conf. | 300 | 300 | 300 | 0 | 300 |
| Total | 3,400 | 2,914 | 3,400 | 402 | 3,400 |
| 850-00 | | | | | |
| Travel and Officers Expense | | | | | |
| 850-01 Grand Master's Travel | 8,000 | 10,043 | 8,000 | 4,367 | 9,500 |
| 850-02 Grand Master's Automobile Reserve | 6,500 | 6,500 | 6,500 | 3,792 | 8,000 |
| 850-03 Grand Master's Office | 250 | 0 | 250 | 0 | 250 |
| 850-04 Grand Secretary's Travel | 7,000 | 9,055 | 7,000 | 1,003 | 8,000 |
| 850-05 Grand Secretary's Automobile Reserve | 4,500 | 4,500 | 4,500 | 2,587 | 6,000 |
| 850-07 DDGM/DDGL Orientation, Travel-Other | 11,000 | 4,588 | 11,000 | 9,585 | 10,000 |
| Total | 37,250 | 34,686 | 37,250 | 21,334 | 41,750 |

Grand Lodge of North Carolina 2023 Proposed Budget

| Account Name | Budget 2021 | Actual 2021 | Budget 2022 | Actual 2022 through July 31 | Proposed Budget 2023 |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 860-00 | | | | | |
| Boards, Commissions, and Committees | | | | | |
| 860-01 Board of General Purposes | 5,000 | 11,479 | 5,000 | 1,158 | 7,500 |
| 860-02 Board of Custodians | 2,500 | 1,832 | 2,500 | 1,678 | 2,500 |
| 860-04 Masonic Public Relations | 3,500 | 0 | 3,500 | 264 | 500 |
| 860-05 Finance Committee | 500 | 0 | 500 | 0 | 500 |
| 860-06 Code Commission | 300 | 0 | 300 | 0 | 300 |
| 860-07 Lodge Service Commission | 100 | 0 | 100 | 1,034 | 100 |
| 860-08 Masonic Education | 3,500 | 0 | 3,500 | 0 | 3,500 |
| Middle Chamber Books expense | | 3,942 | | 8,223 | |
| Middle Chamber Books sale/Eventbrite Direct Deposit | | (7,200) | | (9,967) | |
| Membership Services | | | <u>20,000</u> | <u>4,647</u> | <u>0</u> |
| Total | 15,400 | 10,053 | 35,400 | 7,037 | 14,900 |
| 870-00 | | | | | |
| Out-of-State Visitation | | | | | |
| 870-01 Visiting other Grand Lodges | 3,000 | 4,333 | 3,000 | 1,750 | 4,000 |
| 870-02 Conference of Grand Masters | 7,500 | 740 | 7,500 | 7,112 | 7,500 |
| 870-03 Conference of Grand Secretaries | 2,000 | 0 | 2,000 | 2,115 | 2,000 |
| 870-05 Regional Conference (NE) | 4,000 | 300 | 4,000 | 1,693 | 3,750 |
| 870-06 World Masonic Conference | 4,000 | <u>4,226</u> | <u>4,000</u> | <u>4,000</u> | <u>4,250</u> |
| Total | 20,500 | 9,599 | 20,500 | 16,670 | 21,500 |

Grand Lodge of North Carolina 2023 Proposed Budget

| Account Name | Budget 2021 | Actual 2021 | Budget 2022 | Actual 2022 through July 31 | Proposed Budget 2023 |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 880-00 | | | | | |
| Annual Communication / GLO Installation | | | | | |
| Grand Lodge Officers | | 2383 | 0 | 0 | |
| Past Grand Masters | | 3286 | 0 | 0 | |
| DDGM Travel | | 2663 | 0 | 0 | |
| DDGL Travel | | 1047 | 0 | 0 | |
| Boards, Committees, & Comm. | | 1982 | 0 | 0 | |
| Guests | | 11367 | 0 | 0 | |
| Auditorium, Banquets, Etc. | | 31869 | 0 | 0 | |
| Printing | | 5902 | 0 | 0 | |
| Installation Expenses | | 15536 | 0 | 0 | |
| Lump sum totals | <u>68,000</u> | <u>76,035</u> | <u>68,000</u> | <u>0</u> | <u>80,000</u> |
| Total | 68,000 | 76,035 | 68,000 | | 80,000 |
| 890-00 | | | | | |
| Miscellaneous Expenses | | | | | |
| Awards, Aprons, and Emblems | 13,000 | 17,742 | 13,000 | 17,535 | 13,000 |
| Grand Master's Portrait | 500 | 1,066 | 500 | 0 | 1,000 |
| Miscellaneous | 1,000 | 700 | 1,000 | 225 | 1,000 |
| Grand Lodge Library & Archives | <u>3,500</u> | <u>5,507</u> | <u>6,000</u> | <u>3,106</u> | <u>5,500</u> |
| Total | 18,000 | 25,005 | 20,500 | 20,866 | 20,500 |
| 900-00 | | | | | |
| Communications | 120,000 | 120,000 | 120,000 | 70,000 | 120,000 |
| Total | 120,000 | 120,000 | 120,000 | 70,000 | 120,000 |

Grand Lodge of North Carolina 2023 Proposed Budget

| Acct. No. | Account Name | Budget 2021 | Actual 2021 | Budget 2022 | Actual 2022 through July 31 | Proposed Budget 2023 |
|-----------|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| | EXPENSE SUMMARY | | | | | |
| 800-00 | Philanthropy | 34,700 | 30,200 | 34,700 | 26,200 | 34,700 |
| 810-00 | Salaries and Fees | 285,255 | 287,573 | 225,623 | 128,556 | 278,185 |
| 820-00 | Administration Costs | 55,000 | 60,242 | 55,750 | 10,531 | 48,950 |
| 830-00 | Building Expenses | 62,000 | 64,690 | 68,000 | 47,327 | 71,500 |
| 840-00 | Membership Fees and Dues | 3,400 | 2,914 | 3,400 | 402 | 3,400 |
| 850-00 | Travel and Officers Expense | 37,250 | 34,686 | 37,250 | 21,334 | 41,750 |
| 860-00 | Boards and Committees Office and Travel | 15,400 | 10,053 | 35,400 | 7,037 | 14,900 |
| 870-00 | Out-of-State Visitation | 20,500 | 9,599 | 20,500 | 16,670 | 21,500 |
| 880-00 | Annual Communication | 68,000 | 76,035 | 68,000 | 0 | 80,000 |
| 890-00 | Miscellaneous Expenses | 18,000 | 25,005 | 20,500 | 20,866 | 20,500 |
| 900-00 | Communications/NC Mason | <u>120,000</u> | <u>120,000</u> | <u>120,000</u> | <u>70,000</u> | <u>120,000</u> |
| | Total Expenses (Series 800 - 910) | 729,505 | 730,997 | 689,123 | 348,923 | 735,385 |
| | Estimate Surplus/Deficit | 21,245 | 11,483 | 31,177 | 376,229 | (16,585) |

Business of the Grand Lodge

Brethren, I cannot begin to thank you enough for your friendship, encouragement, and insights over the course of the past year. It continues to be my goal and the goal of your Grand Lodge Office to ensure your Masonic experience is as positive as possible—whether through ritual, personal improvement, or lodge business.

Much of the success of our fraternity is due to your Grand Lodge Office's dedicated and competent staff. Many thanks to our Finance Manager Vicki Lam and Office Manager Hayley Moll for keeping the business of our fraternity moving. They are often the first voice heard on the phone, and the brunt of our day-to-day operations lands on their shoulders and we could not function without them. I also want to welcome and thank our new administrative assistant (but long-time Mason) Worshipful Brother Eric Greene for his enthusiasm in processing paperwork, and ability to take on ritual questions and operational questions. His efficiency and attentiveness have helped rebalance the work of the Office, for which I am grateful. Last, but not least, I'm proud to have appointed, with the permission of the Grand Master, Matthew Robbins as Assistant Grand Secretary as of April 1. An employee since August 2020, Worshipful Brother Robbins proves time and time again he is more than capable of managing any task thrown his way — from basic paperwork, to building repairs, to strategic planning. Thank you all for everything you do for Freemasonry in North Carolina.

I am also appreciative of the rapport and camaraderie with our Foundation's Chief Development Officer George Marut. Brother Marut's insights and strategic planning have greatly improved our organization's ability to define Masonic philanthropy and our path forward in improving Masonry's charitable presence within our jurisdiction. Likewise, his staff, which includes Brother Chris Richardson and Beth Grace, editor emeritus of the North Carolina Mason, are also due a hearty thanks for their timely intuition and dedication to our fraternity and the business of our Masonic philanthropy.

While Freemasonry is most certainly a philosophical and spiritual construct based upon esoteric principles of the Golden Rule, its corporate and physical body are fixed in the hard facts and realities of the business world. A key component of the Grand Secretary's duties, as chief agent of the Grand Lodge and the North Carolina Masonic Foundation, are to observe this corporate body and ensure it functions properly and successfully.

Modernization of Membership Management, Applications, and Business Processes

We recognize our lodge secretaries are often overburdened by an abundance of paperwork and minutia of processes required by tradition, The Code, and, sometimes, government. While the information required is arguably necessary to maintain the business and regularity of our Grand Lodge, we are seeking to modernize and improve the efficiency of our lodges' business practices; from membership management to facility administration to financial reporting.

In 2023 we plan to inaugurate an electronic petition and application process that is process-oriented and simple to use whereby petitions and applications become browser-based applications. We hope this process will benefit the lodge

secretary, standardize and speed up the petition and application process for petitioners, and securely capture financial transaction data for future debits. These new processes also distribute the workload of a lodge amongst its elected officers in order to best facilitate a petitioner's experience through committees of investigation and background checks.

We are also investigating options to better utilize our banking institution for electronic transactions between the Grand Lodge and our lodges, as well as providing a capability to centralize dues collection, diminishing the use of paper checks and potential for lost mail. Overall, we anticipate these automations to adjust and improve workflows between lodges and the Grand Lodge.

Lodge Size and Officer Tenure

We hope the modernization of business processes will contribute to a revival of fraternalism and camaraderie with our lodges. As noted in last year's report, the Grand Secretary's Office, the Grand Lodge Officers, and our District Officers continue to study the relationship between lodge size, fraternalism, and community outreach. We again strongly recommend lodges limit their size to between 50 and 75 members, keeping the atmosphere of the lodge intimate and personable. Lodges are meant to be groups of friends seeking internal improvement and societal betterment through self-reflection and charitable acts. Inasmuch, in consultation with a professional demographer, preliminary data based on demographics and sustainability illustrates lodges should be smaller and meet together in centralized urban locations. This is not to imply that rural lodges or suburban lodges are inadequate, but the nuance of lodge placement should be further studied in order to better understand Freemasonry's greatest impact on its members and our communities.

As was reported last year, the trend of lodge consolidation or demise continued into 2022, and we foresee several other lodges with dwindling membership and/or poor finances following suit. Some of these consolidations and closing are due to a culture of individualism instead of unity. This is a particularly devastating trend in cities and rural areas where multiple lodges occupy multiple locations which are sometimes less than 10 miles apart. While large urban centers might be able to justify multiple lodge sites spread across very broad geographic area, lodges in smaller urban centers cannot.

We further recommend strong Masters be retained in their chairs for more than one year. The annually progressive line of officers was begun in the mid-20th Century to accommodate the tremendous influx of members joining the fraternity. This practice can be detrimental to lodge health. The stability of our lodges' leadership could be much improved by retaining competent and capable Masters in the East, providing a longer duration of leadership training for Wardens, Deacons, and Stewards, as well as providing guidance for our secretaries in lodge policy, financial and strategic planning, and sustained community involvement. Much of this education may be reinforced and refined through enrollment in Wilkerson College, the nation's premier Masonic Academy for Masonic Lodge Leadership Training.

In summary, the Grand Secretary's Office encourages the creation of more lodges on a smaller scale with tenured officers to use centralized urban lodge facilities to best utilize our finances and further strengthen the bonds of our Masonic friendship.

Lodge Health, Finances, and Community Outreach

I continue to be concerned for the financial and operational health of this jurisdiction's lodges. Following an audit of our lodges' finances as reported by each lodge on our Group Return to the Internal Revenue Service, we have found in 2021:

- 42.5% (154) of those lodges ran a deficit or generated no income in the past 3 of 5 years
- 35% (125) of those lodges ran a pure deficit in the past 3 of 5 years
- 16% (58) of those lodges appear to run a significant trend in declining financial health
- 27% (99) of those lodges have lost greater than 5% of their net equity over the past decade

This loss of equity amounts to \$1,614,402.00. This loss is not due to distributed charitable funds nor fluctuating investment, but poor business management.

When compared, more than a quarter of the lodges in this jurisdiction are in dire financial straights, and another 20% (99 lodges) are in danger of sliding into financial difficulty. A further 36 appear to be locked in financial stasis, neither losing nor improving their equity.

While deficits are bound to run in any business, including our lodges and from time to time this Grand Lodge, the perpetual financial difficulties afflicting more than a quarter of our lodges is troubling. The root of these financial issues returns to an old theme — dues.

Per Chapter 77 of The Code, "Each lodge shall fix in its bylaws and shall collect annual dues from its membership as may be necessary to enable it to maintain itself and discharge all of its duties and obligations." The oft asked question, "what are the average dues in this jurisdiction?" is irrelevant. Dues are specific to each lodge based on the requirements to maintain all of its obligations. Upon review and comparison, most lodge dues within this jurisdiction are inadequate to cover the funding of lodge function and are approaching a nearly 200% deficit.

I am appreciative of the 43 lodges that took the initiative to raise their dues this past year. It is hoped the new Lodge Dues Calculator, which may be found electronically at <<https://tinyurl.com/4fwxzztr>>, has been helpful in assisting lodge officers in determining the value and costs associated with lodge building maintenance. The calculator takes into account the number of members of a lodge, its assets, income, building component needs (roof, HVAC, electrical, plumbing services) and produces the figure necessary to maintain the lodge building and save for its future. I encourage all lodge officers to use the calculator and be honest in the financial needs of your lodge in determining Freemasonry's physical sustainability in your community.

Inasmuch, the fees for the degrees in this jurisdiction are also proportionally too low. Following a 2019 report by Dr. David Browning, Ph.D, and subsequent evaluations of the ratio between candidate—lodge—future financial lodge/philanthropic security, it is my recommendation that careful consideration be given to the standardization of initiation fees across the state. This would bring the practice of one's entry into Freemasonry more equitable

to all men whether in rural regions or urban centers and align our processes with other appendant Masonic bodies (and the common practice among other membership-based organizations across the state, including hunting clubs, motorcycle clubs, social clubs, and civic organizations). Historically, until the late mid-20th Century, the initiation fee was equivalent to a week's wages. Today that amount falls between \$1,000 and \$1,400. When compared to the cost of initiation, passing, and raising, coaching, Masonic accoutrements "gifted" to the candidate, and the provision for thoughtful financial investment in the lodge and for charity, this amount accurately covers the expenses incurred by a lodge to raise a man to the sublime degree of Master Mason.

Philanthropy, Fundraising, and the Internal Revenue Service

The systematic review of our lodges' finances led to further investigation of our lodges' philanthropic endeavors and fundraising practices. Upon review and consultation with members of our fraternity who are also employed by the Internal Revenue Service it was discovered our lodges' fundraising practices do not align with Federal Regulations and, in some cases, moral obligations.

According to the 2021 Financial Returns completed by each Secretary, our lodges received:

- \$758,084 in contributions for the lodge
- \$396,179 in contributions for our Masonic Charities (MHCO, WhiteStone)
- and,
- \$1,179,435 was expended by the lodges for charity, which would appear to indicate \$783,256 was raised from the public for charity

Broken down, that appears to represent:

- \$22.75 contributed per member to each lodge
- \$11.85 contributed per member to our Masonic Charities through their lodges

According to our Lodge Special Activities Commissions preliminary report (Jan 1-Aug 1 2022):

\$292,035 has been netted through fundraising for Charity this year by 154 lodges. A further \$46,113 has been netted through fundraising for lodge buildings, approximately 16% of the funds raised to date. Unfortunately, only 53% of the lodges engaged in fundraising have filed their final reports.

The financial information gleaned from our Lodge Financial Returns, the Lodge Special Activities Commission Report, and the Donor Reports from our Foundation and from our Charities, appear to illustrate an imbalance between our membership's philanthropic endeavors and pecuniary obligations.

Fundraising internally among Masons can be freely conducted. However, when we ask for money from the public we cloud the purpose of our institution as a non-profit and MUST abide by Federal Regulation in order to maintain our non-profit status. When we raise money internally — when Masons give themselves—we are performing charitably. When we solicit the public for money for our endeavors, we become agents of charity. Though the difference is subtle, it is also important to understand, and one in which we're working with

our Masonic Foundation to clarify and improve both the planning, experience, and reporting methods as a centralized funding mechanism for our charitable activities.

Freemasonry's Public Perception

The final component of my report concerns Freemasonry's public persona and recognition throughout this jurisdiction and its affect on the business of our fraternity. In February of this year I was given the opportunity to present a paper before the Conference of Grand Secretaries of North America entitled "The Toleration of Intolerance and the Business of Grand Lodge." I took the opportunity to present many of the findings aforementioned as they relate to the business and sustainability of Freemasonry, i.e. lodges must improve their business acumen, establish financial reserves to permit building maintenance and philanthropic giving, reimagine the purpose and use of a progressive line to facilitate lodge leadership stability, and completely retool a long, but justified negative connotation in many public arenas — if Freemasonry is recognized at all. The basis of my thesis contented that our failure to acknowledge and discipline deviant behavior institutes an acceptance of that behavior, which in turn attracts further deviants and alters the mission of Freemasonry. The alteration of that mission maligns our fraternity's reputation within our communities and causes it to lose influential members, local leaders, and rational members who would otherwise be attracted to the tenets of our fraternity.

Aside from the operational and financial challenges ahead of our fraternity (which, I am confident can be overcome), there are other hurdles which compound our operational circumstances and prevent our lodges from achieving success. These include racism, homophobia, religious zealotry, and outspoken political rhetoric. While our Grand Jurisdiction is generally welcoming of men of all colors, ethnicities, creeds, persuasions, and opinions, sadly there remain exclusions of many qualified men based on prejudiced opinions of these qualities. As a simple qualifier, I asked the Grand Secretaries of North America to answer these questions:

- How many of you have sat in lodge with a brother who has used racial slurs?
- How many of you have sat in lodge with a brother who has made chauvinistic or sexual innuendos?
- How many of you have sat in lodge with a brother who has made a political slight against another brother or group of people?
- And, how many of you did anything to stop the brother and correct him of his errors?

The vast majority of respondents did not act, and thus the slurs, innuendos, and slights became enshrined and pervasive within the lodge.

While it is typically not the place of the Grand Secretary to dictate, nor make commentary on such subjects, I do find it incumbent upon me to report these occurrences as they relate to the business of our lodges and viability of our Grand Lodge. First, probably the most prevalent violation of Masonic norms is the exposition of political belief — typically though the visual association of political party affiliation on social media and car bumpers. This practice,

anecdotally, is abrasive to the public by associating varying sets of values and beliefs with Freemasonry. Masonic symbols, particularly the square and compass, must not be associated with other personal affiliations or ideology and it is strongly advised that such cross affiliations be terminated at once on social media, cars, or any other media used to advertise this fraternity.

Second, three (3) lodges lost and/or surrendered their charter in 2021 within a month due to the immediate or long term association with such pejorative associations. In two of these instances the lodge was the only lodge within their community. In aggregate, this amounts to a loss of 233 members, which equates a loss of \$15,957 in dues and a loss of \$6,058 in per capita paid to the Grand Lodge. While the public cost of these lodges is more subjective, in 2 of these 3 instances the communities in which these lodges operated were reported, anecdotally, to be closed-minded, unfriendly, and prejudiced. In late 2021 and early 2022 two (2) more lodges ran afoul of Masonic norms; in one instance by attempting to exclude people of color from a community event and in another by blackballing a candidate because of the color of his skin — a sentiment which was verbalized. Were those two lodges to close, 281 members would be lost and \$27,696 in Masonic income. Happily, both lodges appear to have improved their standing and continue to operate.

While Freemasonry can most certainly afford to lose all its racists and bigots, as a corporate body, it cannot afford to lose the basis of its operations (its productive members and lodges) and standing within the community if Freemasonry as an institution wishes to remain a viable business. For the sake of morality and the core tenet of Freemasonry's character — the Golden Rule — I encourage all members to actively aid a reformation of any and all wayward brethren whose actions, intentional or not, would tarnish the reputation of our fraternity and risk its business operations. If the good counsel of a friendly brother cannot dislodge the evil from a brother's words or actions, please remember there are Committees of Reference to aid and assist those wishing to reform their errant judgements. For those unable or unwilling to better comprehend the values of our institution, they may then happily meet with the Worshipful Judge Advocate or, daring to outshine his best companions in delinquency, the Grand Master.

Brethren, I thank you for your attention and will close with a firm belief that while we as a fraternity must address several modes of operation to facilitate success, this Grand Lodge and its members are second to none. I cannot be prouder of the temperance, prudence, fortitude, discretion, and justice you exhibit in your daily lives and interactions. It is a true honor to serve you as Grand Secretary, and I continue to seek your insight and guidance as we facilitate the business of our fraternity.

Membership Statistics

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|
| Membership 12/31/2020 | 34,088 |
| Initiated..... | 690 |
| Passed..... | 484 |
| Raised | 511 |
| Admitted..... | 397 |
| Restored..... | <u>253</u> |
| Total Gains..... | 1,161 |
| | |
| Expelled..... | 10 |
| Suspended UMC | 0 |
| Excluded NPD..... | 773 |
| Demitted..... | 333 |
| Died..... | <u>1,151</u> |
| Total Losses..... | 2,267 |
| | |
| Total membership 12/31/2021 | 33,364 |
| | |
| Number of lodges as of 1/1/2022..... | 365 |

Service Awards for 2022

| | |
|--|-----|
| Twenty-Five year Service Awards presented..... | 497 |
| Fifty Year Veteran Awards presented..... | 471 |
| Sixty Year Awards | 176 |
| Seventy Year Awards | 34 |
| Seventy-Five Year Awards..... | 7 |

Respectfully submitted,
Jonathan A. Underwood, Grand Secretary

Report of the Committee on Charity

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

Your Committee on Charity wishes to report there have been no charitable disbursements since our annual communication last year, as of July 31, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,
Johnny Surles, Chairman

Report of the Grand Historian

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

Endeavoring to Persevere

As your Grand Historian I tend to dwell upon people and events of the past, long past. It is true that folks are trying to drag me into the 20th century (and yes, I recall it is now the 21st). Our late Grand Historian Dr. Michael W. Brantley advised me to “follow your passion” thus my intrigue with the long ago past. However, over the last couple of years each of us has witnessed a most unusual time in our nation’s and Fraternity’s history: a global health crisis that took many lives and ground many businesses, institutions and nations to a halt. Yes, the United States has experienced similar sorrowful events (the 1793 yellow fever epidemic, the 1918 influenza plight); however, this is the first one we, ourselves, have encountered.

Difficult, as well as unpopular, decisions had to be made regarding our Fraternity in the Old North State. Three men answered the call to “stay the course” and to lead us forward - MWGM P. Shaun Bradshaw, MWGM R. David Wicker, and MWGM Larry B. Thompson, Jr. With prudence, caution and great thought for the safety and welfare of each North Carolina Freemason, they “held the line”. Now it appears that the nation, along with our Fraternity, has emerged from this perilous time. Without doubt these three most worthy Brothers’ names will be etched in North Carolina Masonic history. And yes, as in the past and present, we Freemasons, who are committed to our tenets, will endeavor to continue to make our nation and the world a better place for those who follow us.

Respectfully submitted,
Steven A. Campbell, Grand Historian

Report of the Committee on Permanent Building

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

Our Grand Lodge Office building continues to serve the brethren and community in an official capacity. Last year, we hosted a health screening event in the lower level of the building. This past spring, a framework was created to enable use of the multipurpose room on the Grand Lodge’s lower level for other community events and rentals.

The failure of another HVAC unit consumed the parts we had ordered last year in anticipation of a repair event and recommendation from Dail Mechanical, with whom we have a maintenance contract to secure parts ahead of time for future issues. The front steps have recently been re-caulked and sealed per recommendation last year. We have also rectified an issue with the City of Raleigh and right-of-way maintenance in front of the building. Due to conflicting service maps, the small strip of lawn in front of the sign was not being maintained. The City of Raleigh has added this section to its monthly mowing rota.

New landscaping has gone in on the front side of the building, highlighting the entrance and driveway. Taken from a landscaping plan that was previously approved by the Board of General Purposes, the entire project

will be done in two phases. The rear of the building will be completed in 2023. This landscaping plan was made possible by a bequest of late Brother George Allred of Friendship Lodge No. 763, for which the committee is most grateful.

The building is toured and visited frequently by brothers, their spouses, and those that are generally interested in Masonry. We have continued to update and rotate exhibits in the main hall. Currently, the museum has on display exhibits about: 1) the 250th Anniversary of the Founding of the Provincial Grand Lodge in 1771 and the first 9 lodges, 2) the history of textiles in Masonic aprons, 3) Blue Lodges of the Albemarle (on loan from the Museum of the Albemarle), and 4) detailing famous Masonic cartographers from the state along with their maps. We strive to rotate exhibits semi-annually with holdings from our in-house collections and items on loan from other institutions.

There are a few lodge secretaries and officers that bring their newest Master Masons by to get their signed dues cards in person and get a tour of Freemasonry in North Carolina from the historic murals as they begin their Masonic journeys. Please feel free to walk in or call the Grand Lodge office to book tours, walkthroughs, Masonic education for your lodges, and events — we are happy to help you set up a visit and conduct a tour for you.

Respectfully submitted,
Matthew C. Robbins, PM
Assistant Grand Secretary

Report of Lodge Service Commission

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The Lodge Service Commission respectfully submits the following report for the period beginning August 1, 2021, and ending July 31, 2022.

Manteo Lodge No. 521 applied for and received approval on November 19, 2021, to sell the Lodge building to Dare County, purchase a lot from the Dare County Shrine Club, and enter into a contract to build a one-story lodge building on that lot.

On December 13, 2021, the Commission confirmed the sale by Newell Lodge No. 739 of the Hunter-Sloan American Legion Post No. 739 property using owner financing. That confirmation led further inquiry by the Commission concerning a loan servicing agreement Newell Lodge No. 739 entered into with a third-party loan servicing firm.

South Fork Lodge No. 462 applied for and received approval on January 5, 2022, to purchase the property at 200 Oakland Street, Lowell, NC, as a first step in a relocation plan. On February 24, 2022, South Fork Lodge No. 462 applied for and received approval to enter into three-year lease with two churches that were tenants on the property at the time of the purchase and to engage a structural engineer as a part of its renovation and building plan.

On January 26, 2022, Rodgers Lodge No. 525 received approval to sell its lodge building and an adjoining lot it had received from an American Legion Post. Rodgers Lodge No. 525 merged with Bailey Lodge No. 411 and move to the Bailey Lodge building last year.

On March 18, 2022, the Commission received an email from MW R. David Wicker, Jr., with an application for approval to purchase a lot adjoining the

Oak Grove Lodge No. 750 for additional parking. The Commission voted to approve the application and so advised MW Wicker on March 22. On May 31, 2022, the Lodge Service Commission set formal approval of the purchase to Oak Grove Lodge No. 750.

On March 24, 2022, the Commission received an email form University Lodge No. 408 requesting approval, pursuant to Code section 31-44, for approval to use the square and compasses on a flyer promoting a breakfast the Lodge planned to host honoring First Responders in its community. The Commission granted approval of the proposed flyer in a responsive email.

On April 11, 2022, Derita Lodge No. 715 updated the Lodge Service Commissions on its efforts to develop as a Masonic Center or sell the property and the City of Charlotte's road widening project that impacts those efforts.

On May 10, 2022, on behalf of Stokes Lodge No. 32 the Commission Chairman wrote the Cabarrus County Tax Assessor affirming the Lodge's exempt status in response to County's Exempt Property Compliance Review.

On May 16, 2022, Friendship Lodge No. 388 made inquiry concerning the intention of Cleveland County Water and the Town of Boling Springs to acquire an Easement for Utilities over the Lodge's property.

Respectfully Submitted,
William L. Mills, III, PDGM, 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.

United Grand Lodge of Georgia

The Grand Lodge of the Republic of Georgia requested recognition on 20 November 2021. The Commission on Information for Recognition determined on 22 February 2022 that this Grand Lodge has not yet fully demonstrated that it meets the standards for recognition. The Committee on Fraternal Correspondence recommends this action be tabled until the Conference of Grand Masters has ruled on it in 2023.

Grande Loja Maçônica do Estado de São Paulo, Brazil

The Grande Loja Maçônica do Estado de São Paulo, requested recognition on 21 June 2022. The Commission on Information for Recognition lists this as a regular Grand Lodge in their 1987 proceedings. The Committee on Fraternal Correspondence recommends approving recognition to the Grande Loja Maçônica do Estado de São Paulo.

Grande Lodge Benemerito Ejercito de Oriente F&AM of the State of Puebla

The Grande Lodge Benemerito Ejercito de Oriente F&AM of the State of Puebla (Mexico) requested recognition on 7 April 2022. They are recognized by 3 Grand Jurisdictions in the US, however it is unclear that the Commission on Information for Recognition recognizes them as regular. The Committee on Fraternal Correspondence recommends tabling this request until further research can be done.

Grande Loja Maçônica do Amapá / Masonic Grand Lodge of Amapá

The Grande Loja Maçônica do Amapá (Brazil) requested recognition on 24 August 2021. There does not seem to be adequate evidence that the Commission on Information for Recognition has ruled on this Grand Lodge and they are not listed as a recognized Grand Lodge in the Acacia book. The Committee on Fraternal Correspondence recommends tabling this request until further research can be done.

Respectfully submitted,
Douglas L. Caudle, PGM
Fraternal Correspondent

Petitions for Restoration

JWM (Docket No. 949), formerly a member of West Gate Lodge No. 738, Charlotte, was expelled on March 11, 2020. He filed for restoration with the lodge on April 18, 2022, and with the Grand Secretary on June 14, 2022.

ZCM (Docket No. 950), formerly a member of West Gate Lodge No. 738, Charlotte, was expelled on March 11, 2020. He filed for restoration with the lodge on April 18, 2022, and with the Grand Secretary on June 14, 2022.

CTG (Docket No. 793), formerly a member of Carthage Lodge No. 181, Carthage, was expelled on August 13, 2009. He filed for restoration with the lodge on May 24, 2022, and with the Grand Secretary on June 14, 2022.

JEB (Docket No. 937), formerly a member of Proctorville Lodge No. 643, Proctorville, was expelled on October 16, 2019. He filed for restoration with the lodge on June 13, 2022, and with the Grand Secretary on June 16, 2022.

Report of the Judge Advocate

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

This report is prepared this 1st day of August 2022 and most respectfully submitted for your information and disposition.

1. Docket #962 – Brother BEG, a Master Mason and member of Eagle Lodge No. 19, was charged with multiple counts of Un-Masonic conduct by the Judge Advocate, after being summoned by the MWGM of Masons to appear and provide satisfactory answers to all questions of the Judge Advocate concerning the investigation of his involvement in a plan of electioneering prior to the Annual Communication of Eagle Lodge in December 2020. After failing to appear, respond, or answer the Grand Master’s Summons, the Judge Advocate brought charges of UnMasonic conduct against Brother BEG. He failed and refused to respond, answer or appear, therefore, the charges were deemed admitted. In the Decision of the Judge Advocate, Br. BEG was found guilty of Un-Masonic conduct and expelled from Masonry on October 6, 2021.
2. Docket #963 – Brother WES, a Master Mason and member of St. John’s Lodge No. 1, was charged by the Judge Advocate with multiple counts of Un-Masonic conduct. The Master of St. John’s Lodge No. 1 received reports that Br. WES engaged in Un-Masonic conduct during numerous confrontations with his contiguous property owner. Br. WES was alleged to have removed survey markers. Also, he was alleged to have made statements claiming that as a “Mason” he could do whatever he wanted. Br. WES was summoned to appear before the Reference Committee of the Lodge on the 19th day of August 2021. He failed to appear or respond. The Judge Advocate charged Br. WES with Un-Masonic conduct for his failure to comply with the Master’s Summons. Brother WES failed to answer, respond, or appear, and the charges were deemed admitted. In the Decision of the Judge Advocate, Br. WES was found guilty of Un-Masonic conduct and expelled from Masonry on October 6, 2021.
3. Docket #964 – Brother ASC, a Master Mason and member of Caswell Brotherhood Lodge No. 11, pled guilty to one count of Indecent Liberties with a Minor, a Class F felony, and 5 counts of Sexual Exploitation of a minor child, a Class H felony. The Judge Advocate charged him with multiple counts of Un-Masonic conduct. Brother ASC filed an answer admitting the charges. In the Decision of the Judge Advocate Br. ASC was found guilty of Un-Masonic conduct and expelled from Masonry on November 16, 2021.
4. Docket #965 – Dismissed without prejudice by the Judge Advocate for lack of clear, cogent and convincing evidence.
5. Docket #966 – Brother MDG, a Master Mason and member of French Broad Lodge No. 292, was summoned by the MWGM of Masons to appear for examination on the matter of a statement produced and published to multiple Lodges across the State of North Carolina. By his statement and actions, Br. MDG disrespected and violated the tenants of the Craft. Br. MDG was duly served and failed to appear before the MWGM of Masons. The Judge Advocate charged Br. MDG with multiple counts of Un-Masonic Conduct, including failure to appear

- and respond to the Summons of the Grand Master. Br. MDG filed a response, and the Judge Advocate brought the matter to trial before a duly appointed Trial Commission. The matter was tried on the single issue of Br. MDG's failure to appear and respond to the Summons of the Grand Master. At the hearing, evidence was presented by the Judge Advocate and a defense was presented by Br. MDG. The Trial Commission deliberated and found Br. MDG guilty of Un-Masonic conduct and expelled him from Masonry on February 4, 2022.
6. Docket #967 – Brother JEB, a Master Mason and member of Kilwinning Lodge No. 64, was charged by the lodge Secretary with Un-Masonic conduct. Upon investigation, the Judge Advocate charged Br. JEB with Un-Masonic conduct for, among other things, publishing an email statement to the lodge Secretary which contained a disrespectful and vulgar remark directed at the MWGM of Masons. Br. JEB filed a response, and the Judge Advocate brought the matter to trial before a duly appointed Trial Commission. Upon hearing the evidence presented by the Judge Advocate and the evidence presented by Br. JEB and his counsel, the Trial Commission deliberated and found Br. JEB guilty of Un-Masonic conduct. The Trial Commission suspended Br. JEB on April 1, 2022, for a period of one year and prohibited him from holding elected office in the Lodge for two years following the completion of his suspension.
 7. Docket #968 – Brother MEL, a Master Mason and member of Henry F. Grainger Lodge No. 412, was charged with Misdemeanor Sexual Battery and Assault on a Female. Br. MEL plead not guilty, and a Trial was held in the District Court. Br. MEL was found guilty. An appeal was entered to the Superior Court Division. The Judge Advocate charged Br. MEL with multiple counts of Un-Masonic conduct. Br. MEL failed to respond, answer, or appear and the charges were deemed admitted. The Judge Advocate entered a finding of guilty and expelled Br. MEL from Masonry on March 16, 2022. [Mr. MEL entered a plea of guilty in the Superior Court Division to the charge of Misdemeanor Assault on a Female. He was found guilty and sentenced accordingly.]
 8. Docket #970 – Brother CAS, a Master Mason and member of Liberty Lodge No. 45, was charged by the Judge Advocate with multiple counts of Un-Masonic conduct related to his conduct as the former Treasurer of Liberty Lodge No. 45. In particular he was charged for his failure and refusal to return various records and accounts in a timely manner and his handling of the Lodge funds entrusted to his care. Br. CAS was also charged with organizing, planning, facilitating, and conducting a clandestine meeting with other members of Liberty Lodge No. 45 without the knowledge of the Master, Secretary, and Treasurer. Br. CAS failed to respond or answer the charges, and they were deemed admitted. In the Decision of the Judge Advocate, Brother CAS was found guilty of Un-Masonic conduct and expelled from Masonry on July 20, 2022.
 9. Docket #971 – Brother ACL a Master Mason and member of Liberty Lodge No. 45, was charged by the Judge Advocate with multiple counts of Un-Masonic conduct relating to his action in organizing, planning, conducting, and participating in the clandestine meeting with other
-

members of Liberty Lodge No. 45 without the knowledge of the Master, Secretary, and Treasurer. Br. ACL failed to respond or answer the charges and they were deemed admitted. In the Decision of the Judge Advocate, Br. ACL was found guilty of Un-Masonic conduct and expelled from Masonry on July 20, 2022.

10. Docket #974 – Brother KMH, a Master Mason and member of Liberty Lodge No. 45, was charged by the Judge Advocate with multiple counts of Un-Masonic conduct relating to his action in organizing, planning, and participating in the clandestine meeting with other members of Liberty Lodge No. 45 without the knowledge of the Master, Secretary, and Treasurer. Br. KMH failed to respond or answer, and the charges were deemed admitted. In the Decision of the Judge Advocate, Br. KMH was found guilty of Un-Masonic conduct and expelled from Masonry on July 20, 2022.
11. Docket #975 – Brother JEB, a Master Mason and member of Liberty Lodge No. 45, was charged by the Judge Advocate with multiple counts of Un-Masonic conduct relating to his action in organizing, planning, and participating in the clandestine meeting with other members of Liberty Lodge No. 45 without the knowledge of the Master, Secretary, and Treasurer. Br. JEB failed to respond or answer, and the charges were deemed admitted. In the Decision of the Judge Advocate, Br. JEB was found guilty of Un-Masonic conduct and expelled from Masonry on July 20, 2022.
12. Docket #979 – Brother JLF, a Master Mason and member of Liberty Lodge No. 45, was charged by the Judge Advocate with multiple counts of Un-Masonic conduct relating to his conduct with the annual fundraising project for the Lodge renting camp sites for the “Merle Fest” Bluegrass Music Festival. Br. JLF was summoned by the Master of Liberty Lodge to produce an accounting and other records related to the project. Br. JLF failed to appear and refused to produce the account and other records. The Judge Advocate charged Br. JLF and he failed to respond or answer, and the charges were deemed admitted. In the Decision of the Judge Advocate, Br. JLF was found guilty of Un-Masonic conduct and expelled from Masonry on July 20, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,
T. Marcus Browne, III
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 2021-2022. They are as approved.

| Lodge Name | No. | Article | Remarks |
|------------|-----|---------|---|
| St. John's | 1 | 10 | Dues increased to \$125 plus per capita |
| Eagle | 19 | 19 | Special voting procedures |

| | | | |
|---------------|-----|----|---|
| Statesville | 27 | | Complete Revision |
| Phalanx | 31 | 3 | New Seal |
| | | 8 | Meeting day moved to second Thursday |
| | | 11 | Affiliation fee increased to \$30 |
| Hiram | 40 | 1 | Location of lodge updated |
| | | 9 | Initiation fee increased to \$325 |
| | | 10 | Dues increased to \$126 plus per capita |
| | | 11 | Affiliation fee increased to \$50 |
| | | 13 | Charity amount increased to \$500 |
| | | 19 | Special lodge procedures |
| Concord | 58 | 9 | Initiation fee increased to \$150 |
| | | 10 | Dues increased to \$110 plus per capita |
| Kilwinning | 64 | | Full Revision |
| Skeewarkee | 90 | 10 | Dues increased to \$94 plus per capita |
| | | 11 | Affiliation fee increased to \$26 |
| Joseph Warren | 92 | 9 | Initiation fee increased to \$205 |
| | | 10 | Dues increased to \$115 plus per capita |
| | | 10 | Affiliation fee increased to \$125 |
| | | 13 | Charity amount increased to \$500 |
| Fulton | 99 | | Full Revision |
| Columbus | 102 | 11 | Affiliation fee increased to \$100 |
| Person | 113 | 8 | Meeting day moved to second Tuesday |
| Holly Springs | 115 | 10 | Dues increased to \$260 plus per capita |
| Holly Springs | 115 | 16 | Revision of Trustee election procedure |
| Mill Creek | 125 | 10 | Dues increased to \$85 plus per capita |
| Mocksville | 134 | 10 | Dues increased to \$110 plus per capita |
| Knap of Reeds | 158 | 10 | Dues increased to \$100 |
| | | 22 | No tobacco use within the lodge |
| | | 8 | Meeting time moved to 7p |
| Carthage | 181 | 8 | Annual meeting in November |
| | | 9 | Initiation fee increased to \$150 |
| | | 10 | Dues increased to \$124 plus per capita |
| | | 19 | Guidelines for lodge and facility usage |
| | | 22 | Rules for the consumption of alcohol on premises |
| | | | |
| Cleveland | 202 | 8 | Annual meeting in November |
| | | 9 | Initiation fee increased to \$150 |
| | | 11 | Affiliation fee increased to \$100 |
| | | 18 | Obsolete |
| Pythagoras | 249 | 10 | Dues increased to \$125 |
| Pythagoras | 249 | 13 | Charity amount increased to \$400 |

| | | | |
|-------------------|-----|----|--|
| Fuquay | 258 | 9 | Initiation fee increased to \$150 |
| | | 11 | Affiliation fee increased to \$125 |
| | | 22 | Prohibition of alcohol in lodge made obsolete |
| Fuquay | 258 | 3 | New Seal |
| Dunn's Rock | 267 | 10 | Dues increased to \$120 plus per capita |
| | | 11 | Affiliation fee increased to \$75 |
| Bingham | 272 | 10 | Dues increased to \$80 plus per capita |
| | | 11 | Affiliation fee increased to \$50 |
| French Broad | 292 | 9 | Initiation fee increased to \$280 |
| | | 10 | Dues increased to \$50 plus per capita |
| | | 13 | Charity amount increased to \$300 |
| | | 19 | Special voting proceedings |
| Raeford | 306 | 10 | Dues increased to \$125 |
| Eureka | 317 | 9 | Initiation fee increased to \$150 |
| | | 10 | Dues increased to \$150 plus per capita |
| | | 11 | Affiliation fee increased to \$50 |
| Selma | 320 | 8 | Annual meeting in November |
| | | 9 | Initiation fee increased to \$200 |
| | | 10 | Dues increased to \$200 plus per capita |
| | | 11 | Affiliation fee increased to \$150 |
| Hickory | 343 | | Full Revision |
| Numa F. Reid | 344 | 10 | Dues increased to \$194 plus per capita |
| Snow | 363 | 10 | Dues increased to \$80 plus per capita |
| Ashler | 373 | 9 | Initiation fee increased to \$125 |
| | | 10 | Dues increased to \$84 plus per capita |
| State Line | 375 | 10 | Dues increased to \$100 plus per capita |
| Seaboard | 378 | 8 | Meeting day moved to second Monday at 7:30p |
| | | | General Revision |
| Lebanon | 391 | | General Revision |
| Joppa | 401 | 8 | Meeting day moved to second Monday at 7p |
| | | 8 | Annual meeting in November |
| Stokesdale | 428 | | Total Revision |
| Seaside | 429 | 10 | Dues increased to \$105 plus per capita |
| Elkin | 454 | 19 | Special voting proceedings |
| Dillsboro | 459 | 9 | Initiation fee increased to \$150 |
| Grassy Knob | 471 | 10 | Dues increased to \$100 plus per capita |
| Polk County Unity | 482 | 10 | Dues increased to \$74 plus per capita |
| | | 22 | No alcohol on premises |
| Royal Hart | 497 | 8 | Meeting time moved to 7p |
| | | 11 | Obsolete |

| | | | |
|------------------|-----|----|--|
| Red Springs | 501 | 8 | Meeting moved to second Thursday at 7p |
| Elise | 555 | 8 | Meeting time moved to 7p |
| | | 9 | Initiation fee increased to \$150 |
| Neill S. Stewart | 556 | 8 | Meeting day moved to second Monday at 7:30p |
| | | 10 | Dues increased to \$100 plus per capita |
| Ararat | 558 | 10 | Dues increased to \$100 plus per capita |
| | | 11 | Affiliation fee increased to \$30 |
| Wendell | 565 | 9 | Initiation fee increased to \$175, with \$50 increase annually through the year 2027 |
| | | 10 | Dues increased to \$150 plus per capita, with \$50 increase annually through the year 2027 |
| | | 11 | Affiliation fee equal to amount of pro-rated annual dues |
| Doric | 568 | 8 | Meeting time moved to 7p |
| Doric | 568 | 16 | Election of Trustees |
| Snow Creek | 571 | 10 | Dues increased to \$175 plus per capita |
| Stony Point | 593 | 10 | Dues increased to \$150 plus per capita |
| Home | 613 | 8 | Meeting time moved to 6:30p |
| Round Peak | 616 | 10 | Dues increased to \$75 plus per capita |
| Round Peak | 616 | 9 | Initiation fee increased to \$180 |
| | | 10 | Dues increased to \$75 plus per capita |
| St. Patrick's | 617 | 10 | Dues increased to \$150 plus per capita |
| Belmont | 627 | 10 | Dues increased to \$175 plus per capita |
| Guilford | 656 | 8 | Meeting time moved to 7:30p |
| Semper Fidelis | 680 | 9 | Initiation fee increased to \$225 |
| | | 10 | Dues increased to \$175 plus per capita |
| WG Arnold | 683 | 10 | Dues increased to \$103 plus per capita |
| East Gate | 692 | 8 | Meeting day moved to second Tuesday |
| Shallotte | 727 | 8 | Meeting day moved to second Tuesday at 7p |
| Steele Creek | 737 | 10 | Dues increased to \$155 plus per capita |
| Oak Grove | 750 | 10 | Dues increased to \$80 plus per capita |
| | | 19 | Special voting procedudres |
| Oak Island | 758 | 19 | Local matters concerning reimbursements and payments |
| Prometheus | 775 | 3 | New Seal |

Respectfully submitted,
Jonathan Underwood, Chairman

Report on the Committee on WhiteStone

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The restrictions on visitation, created by continued variants of COVID-19, prevented the committee from visiting the campus of WhiteStone as well as the Board of Directors needing to move a quarterly meeting to Winston-Salem and the most recent Q3-2022 meeting to Zoom.

In lieu of being able to visit the WhiteStone campus the committee met virtually to review a program of education on the MESH Foundation, LLC as well as the Outreach program. Each member of the committee was challenged to present the educational program in a lodge or virtually to a group prior to the end of 2022.

COVID-19

The events we have experienced during a time of national emergency have certainly been unprecedented. At WhiteStone, the health and safety of both residents and staff have remained top priority throughout the pandemic, while taking all precautions to reduce the community's exposure to COVID-19.

The COVID-19 situation continues, and as such, the staff at WhiteStone remains in constant communication with local health officials and following the guidance provided by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Department of Health and Human Services. WhiteStone has implemented a number of measures to improve infection control and preventative practices, and as new information comes available, safety measures are evaluated and updated as necessary — all while remaining focused on supporting residents with compassion and serving with professionalism.

COVID-19's variants unfortunately seem to continue. Please know that the health and safety of the WhiteStone community remains our main focus and top priority.

Charity Summary

WhiteStone is proud to carry on the tradition of providing aid to fraternally affiliated seniors both residing on the campus of WhiteStone and living independently throughout North Carolina. In 2021, charitable care and services worth approximately \$1.6 million was delivered to more than 60 and as of June 30th, 2022, approximately \$1.1 million was delivered to 60 fraternally affiliated seniors through the partnership of the MESH Foundation LLC and WhiteStone.

Total donations received at Whitestone for 2022 as of June 30th were \$1,757,514.

Assistance through our new NC Masonic and Eastern Star Outreach Program is available by calling (336) 601-5593.

Campus Development Project

In 1912, twenty-six acres of land were purchased in Greensboro, and construction began on the site of a former tree nursery to create the beautiful WhiteStone community. Over the next 109 years, our Home would continue to

grow and fulfill its mission by serving thousands of seniors. We are extremely proud of our history, but in the fall of 2020 WhiteStone broke ground on a project that will transform the campus and support industry best care and housing for current and future residents.

The repositioning and expansion project seeks to meet four goals: first, to provide a full continuum of care to its residents with the addition of assisted living apartments; second, to significantly renovate the beloved Care and Wellness Center originally built in 1999; third, to continue improving the independent living opportunities on campus to meet the expectations of today's residents; and fourth, to add commons and amenities for the enjoyment of its current residents and to meet the expectations of its prospective residents.

Project Progress:

- **Sales** – the sales of existing inventory and expansion spaces has been accelerating through the partnership with advertising partner SageAge. Website traffic is up 204%, and television commercials are being aired locally on Fox and CBS Affiliates. WhiteStone articles are now regularly included in the Scottish Rite Journal, North Carolina insert, and Amran Today, and opportunities for local interest stories are also being picked up by Spectrum News and other tv affiliates.
- **Construction** – Great progress is being made. The new independent living building is being framed on the 4th floor, which is ahead of schedule. The Care and Wellness Center phase one of the four phase plan, is nearing completion. The NC Department of Health Service Regulation has approved phase one, and now the certificate of occupancy with the city of Greensboro is being sought. The assisted living building is also scheduled to begin framing of the first floor. Finally, the wellness pool renovation is making progress, although a delay in receiving mechanical equipment has been significant. The project is on budget to date.

This project will ensure the long-term sustainability for the WhiteStone community, so that future generations of Masons and Stars can look to our home in Greensboro in their time of need.

I challenge each of you who have never visited “your” home, to schedule a visit once local health guidelines allow, either individually or as a lodge.

Fraternally submitted,
Gilbert Bailey, Chairman
Asa Buck
Tracey Collins
Jonathan Cranford
Chris Canipe
James Taylor
David Daniels
Todd Frye
Stephen Adams

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

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

Your committee on the Masonic Home for Children had the opportunity to visit our home in June. We met with our administrator for an informative work session, after which we toured the facility and met and spoke with several house parents as well as “our” children. We submit the following for your information:

Like everyone, MHCO continues to make adjustments to address the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. MHCO has had an outbreak this summer as children went home to visit and we saw the levels increase in Granville County. Two cottages had to go into isolation for a brief period. Six employees and four residents were positive, exhibited symptoms, and are recovering. The development of the vaccine for children under five has been received well. Most children are vaccinated, and MHCO continues to work with guardians to allow the others to become vaccinated. This is an extremely sensitive and challenging concept. In response events, activities, and other gatherings and visits are altered as needed. MHCO appreciates everyone’s understanding of our attempts to keep everyone as safe as possible.

The MHCO census has begun to rebound, and we have had a 46% increase in the census from the end of last year. The stay of children can be dramatically less than in past years due to other resources available to families and a more mobile society. MHCO served a total of 76 residents in 2021. The average length of stay is roughly three years for the children in Direct Care and two years for those in the Independent Living Program.

Marketing initiatives seem to contribute to an increase in referrals and general knowledge about MHCO. MHCO has been purchasing TV commercials on WRAL and WGHP. The marketing concept has been to develop an audience and increase referrals. MHCO is experiencing a shortage of Child Care Worker Houseparent Couples and is currently hiring. The commercials have been revised to help recruit Houseparents. Currently the Direct Care Program is almost full and the Independent Living Program has several openings. The ILP helps young adults 18-21 continue their education, become gainfully employed, obtain their own transportation, and learn important independent living skills. If you know of any couples who would be interested in working together in a live-in structure to make a positive impact in children’s lives or families in need of services, please have them call 919-693-5111 or visit <mhc-oxford.org>.

Income was 30% above projections, and operating expenses were 2% below budget. Income was above projections due to one legacy gift. MHCO needs to increase recurring and annual gifts to avoid relying on a decades-long practice of using wills, estates, and planned gifts for operations. The NCMF has provided funding for MHCO’s Annual Giving Officer. This initiative has been extremely beneficial. In 2021 MHCO had an increase in recurring gifts of 147% and that growth continues. If you or others are interested in providing a recurring or annual gift, visit the website at <mhc-oxford.org> and hit donate now. You can also call 919-693-5111 and work with the staff to set up a recurring or annual gift. MHCO did receive the second installment toward

the CARE Trauma Informed Model through Cornell University. This gracious gift was provided by the Triangle North Healthcare Foundation. In addition, TNHF provided two additional grants to MHCO: one to support Summer Academics and one to promote Academic Wellness. MHCO also received grants from the John William Pope Foundation. The children have greatly benefited from these grants. Please share possible Foundation and Grant resources with MHCO as we continue to solicit grants for important initiatives.

The children again achieved at impressive levels this school year. Six students graduated High School for a graduation rate of 100%. Three are going to VGCC to study automotive or HVAC, cosmetology, and child development. One is attending Western Carolina University and received the Jeanie Eller Scholarship. One ILP resident graduated with an Associate Degree in Biotech. She recently left the ILP program, plans to work in the field and then pursue a four degree. One young man left the program in May and has joined the Army. For the fourth quarter six students are on honorable mention, thirteen on honor roll, and eight had a GPA increase of at least five points from the previous quarter. The campus average at year end was 82. Several are attending summer school and others are involved in various academic programs such as Summer Quest and Summer Adventures.

Your Children's Home continued to return to a sense of normalcy over the past year. School was in session, and the main adjustment was the students being driven to school instead of riding the buses. The students were able to participate in sports, band, and other extracurricular activities. Two students finished in the top ten in State in wrestling. In February the H. Lloyd Wilkerson DeMolay Chapter was started on campus. The Girl Scouts meet on campus, and several of our young ladies participate. Boy Scout Troop 629 closed at the end of last year due to lack of parental leadership availability. During that time 40% of the Troop earned Eagle Scout Awards! The residents went back to work in the community and on campus. In 2021 89.7% of the residents aged 16 and older were employed off campus. Currently 19 youth are working on campus in Kid\$Earn.

MHCO was reaccredited by the Council on Accreditation through 10/31/2025. MHCO was also relicensed for two years. In the review the licensing representative described the renewal as a "really, really good review." Due to Covid the relicensure process was done in phases. In the final phase all the cottages passed with 100%. We are very proud of these accomplishments and that our reviewing bodies believe MHCO is doing extremely good work with the children.

Mark your calendars for October 7th and 8th as we celebrate Homecoming. East Coast Rhythm and Blues performs on Friday night. The Shrine parade steps off at 11am on Saturday. Immediately after, Too Much Sylvia takes the stage. Also mark your calendars for these special events in 2023 to celebrate MHCO's 150th Anniversary. The special events will highlight the Appendant Bodies, but emphasis all year is on Masons as the Cornerstone of the children's success. On February 11, 2023, a Black-Tie dinner will be held in the cafeteria to celebrate the Scottish Rite. On Saturday June 24, 2023, St. John's Day will celebrate the Order of the Eastern Star and other groups. Homecoming will be on October 13-14, 2023, and celebrate the Shrine and Alumni. Finally, the annual celebration will officially conclude on December 10, 2023, with the York Rite Christmas Observance Ceremony in the York Rite Chapel. Please

consider attending any or all of these events and look for other ways to be involved in this historic milestone for North Carolina's first Children's Home – YOUR Children's Home.

Please refer to the Monthly Lodge Email that is sent to your Lodge Secretary and the Master for current information. Please help invite MHCO to talk to groups in your area who are working with families in need. Please consider making a monthly recurring gift. Please continue to pray for your Children's Home. We feel your prayers and believe we are Blessed. Thank you Brethren for being the Cornerstone of the Home's strong 150 year Foundation. Your support helps children become confident and self-assured. They are Masonic Foundations you build who go on to support others.

The committee on The Masonic Home for Children would like to express our gratitude to Kevin Otis, Administrator, for affording us such an enjoyable visit and for providing the majority of the information contained within this report. We are fortunate that our children's home is in such capable hands. In addition, we encourage all of our members to visit this beautiful facility. We, as Masons in North Carolina are blessed to have MHCO as one of our charities.

Cordially and fraternally,
 Steve M. Norris, Jr, SGD, Chairman
 James F. Brandt
 William T. Bridges, Jr
 Danny E. Britt, Jr
 Rory J. Byers
 Kyle S. Carlson
 Eugene T. Ferrell, III
 Christopher L. Hall
 Matthew B. Moore

Report of the Committee on Committee on Youth Organizations

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

Rainbow Girls

The past year has been great. The Rainbow Girls were able to meet at Campbell University where a professor talked to the girls about the stars, and they were able to observe some "cool" experiments. The official visit occurred in Raleigh where some of the new members were initiated. The Grand Officer and Grand Rep retreat was held in January. In March several Rainbow and DeMolay members from across the state gathered at MHCO to help with the Great Landscape Day. At the Grand Assembly Alana Bridges went in as Grand Worthy Advisor. GWA Alana and several Assemblies attended the Supreme Assembly and represented NC well. The Supreme Assembly was held in Oklahoma City. Kay Letterman the past Supreme Inspector of NC was installed as Supreme Worthy Advisor. North Carolina will host the Rainbow Supreme Assembly in 2024. The NC Ritual Team placed third overall.

DeMolay

The H. Lloyd Wilkerson DeMolay Chapter was chartered in February at MHCO. Brothers and MHCO Houseparents Prime Miley and Charlie Porter were installed as advisors. Nine MHCO residents were initiated. The learning curve has been steep, but a core group of residents are participating. Special thanks to all who have helped provide support and education, and participated so the Chapter can open and operate. The DeMolay is gathering interest from friends and teachers who the residents know at school. We look forward to more developments over the coming year.

MHCO

Six students graduated high school in 2022. Three are going to VGCC to study automotive or HVAC, cosmetology, and child development. One is attending Western Carolina University. One has enlisted in the Army. One ILP resident graduated with an Associate Degree in Biotech. She recently left the ILP program and plans to work in the field, then pursue a four-year degree.

The residents are getting ready for school and continue to be involved in extracurriculars. Two of our young men were ranked fourth and eighth in State Wrestling! Of note MHCO's census at the time of this report is 65. The Direct Care Program is at 98% capacity. MHCO is currently seeking married couples to be Child Care Worker Houseparents. MHCO currently has space for Independent Living Program residents. If you know any young adults in need of help or anyone who would be interested in becoming Houseparents, please have them call 919-693-5111. The help we provide youth in all these programs today impact for generations.

Summary

Youth programming is strong in North Carolina and continues to develop. Please help to support the various groups that help our children learn, grow, and develop. Special thanks to Russell and Stephanie Bridges and Bill and Mandy McMillan for their support in this report. Special Thanks to PGM Gene Cobb and WB John Walston for their support in chartering the H. Lloyd Wilkerson DeMolay Chapter. Thanks to all.

Respectfully submitted,
Kevin Otis, MHCO Administrator

Resolution for Wendell Lodge 565 to Receive a Duplicate Charter

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

WHEREAS, Wendell Lodge No. 565, AF & AM, located in Wendell, North Carolina, is a regular lodge chartered January 13, 1909, by the Grand Lodge of North Carolina, and

WHEREAS, the chartered history of Wendell Lodge No. 565, AF & AM, remains unbroken, and

WHEREAS, the charter of Wendell Lodge No. 565, AF & AM, has deteriorated and has become illegible, and

WHEREAS, the required fee of \$150 has been submitted to the Office of the Grand Secretary for payment thereof.

NOW THEREFOR BE IT RESOLVED: Wendell Lodge No. 565, AF & AM, Wendell, 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,
Benjamin R. Griffin, Master

Resolution for Salem Lodge 289 to Receive a Duplicate Charter

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

WHEREAS, Salem Lodge 289, located at Winston-Salem, North Carolina, is a regular lodge chartered December 10, 1868, by the Grand Lodge of North Carolina, and

WHEREAS, the chartered history and service of Salem Lodge 289, AF & AM, is continuous and remains unbroken, and

WHEREAS, the charter of Salem Lodge 289, AF & AM, has deteriorated and has become illegible, and

WHEREAS, the required fee of \$150.00 has been submitted to the Office of the Grand Secretary for payment thereof.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that Salem Lodge 289, AF & AM, Winston-Salem, 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,
Neal T. Holladay, Master

**Resolution for Winston Lodge 167
to Receive a Duplicate Charter**

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

WHEREAS, Winston Lodge 167, AF & AM, located at Winston-Salem, North Carolina, is a regular lodge chartered December 8, 1854, by the Grand Lodge of North Carolina, and

WHEREAS, the chartered history and service of Winston Lodge 167 is continuous and remains unbroken, and

WHEREAS, the charter of Winston Lodge 167 has deteriorated and has become illegible, and

WHEREAS, the required fee of \$150.00 has been submitted to the Office of the Grand Secretary for payment thereof.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that Winston Lodge 167, AF & AM, Winston-Salem, 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,
Edward B. Fleming, Master

**Petition for a Charter from
Knights of Solomon Lodge (Under Dispensation),
Yadkinville, NC**

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina:

The subscriber hereto respectfully represent that, on the twenty-third day of October, CE 2021, AL 6021, 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 Yadkinville in the County of Yadkin, by the name of Knights of Solomon Lodge, and that said lodge has worked regularly since that time as appears from the transcript of its 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 Arthur Gary MacMillian, Master; Brother Paul Arnold Aulbach, Senior Warden; and Brother John Derwin Woodard, 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 6th day of August, CE 2022, AL 6022.

Respectfully submitted,
Members of Knights of Solomon Lodge (Under Dispensation)

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 R. David Wicker, Jr., PGM, and Grand Master Larry B. Thompson, Jr., are to be considered during this Annual Communication.

Wicker Order No. 17

To the Master, Wardens, and Secretary of Holly Springs Lodge No. 115:

It has been brought to my attention by the Grand Secretary's office that Holly Springs Lodge No. 115 received the application for affiliation of MRM on July 13, 2021, and elected him to membership on August 24, 2021, without the application having been first certified by the Grand Secretary's office and returned to the lodge.

The ballot taken on August 24, 2021, to elect Brother MRM is clearly illegal under the positive language of Regulation 68-1.2 of The Code, and is, therefore, NULL and VOID.

Since the Grand Master is empowered to order another ballot in cases of this kind, I hereby order a rebalot to Holly Springs Lodge No. 115 at the stated communication to be held on October 26, 2021. If this cannot be accomplished by October 26, 2021, the lodge shall then ballot on this application at the stated communication to be held on November 9, 2021.

This Order shall be read to the lodge at the next stated communication, entered on the minutes of that communication and a proper notation made on the margin of the minutes for August 24, 2021, referring to this Order and the date it was recorded in the minutes.

Given under my hand and seal at Oxford, North Carolina, this 4th day of October, 2021.

Wicker Order No. 18

THAT WHEREAS, Br. MDG is the current Secretary of French Broad Lodge No. 292;

AND WHEREAS, on multiple occasions, Br. MDG has been counseled by not less than at 3 Grand Masters and other Grand Lodge Officers that, although Freemasonry is religious, Freemasonry is not a religion. Each and every Freemason's religious beliefs are personal to him and an attempt to force one's personal religious beliefs onto another brother is both improper and un-Masonic;

AND WHEREAS, Br. MDG has failed and refused to heed the wise counsel given to him by the Grand Master, Past Grand Masters and other Grand Lodge Officers and he has continued to insist that his personal religious beliefs are the only true and correct religious beliefs;

AND WHEREAS, it has come to the attention of the Grand Master of Masons that, in Br. MDG circulated a chain letter to the Masters and/or Secretaries of every Masonic Lodge in the State of North Carolina, said action being in violation of Regulation 86-2.51;

AND WHEREAS, the chain letter sent by Br. MDG was, in part, for the purpose of improperly soliciting brothers to his personal religious beliefs in violation of the ancient landmarks of Freemasonry and contrary to the advice, counsel and instruction of the Grand Master, Past Grand Masters and other Grand Lodge Officers;

AND WHEREAS, in violation of Regulation 52-3.11, the chain letter sent by Br. MDG also offered disrespectful commentary directed toward the Grand Master, the Grand Line Officers and the Grand Lodge in General;

AND WHEREAS, the Grand Master is informed and believes that Br. MDG sent the chain letter to the Masters and/or Secretaries of every Masonic Lodge in the State of North Carolina through the use of the Grand Lodge data base system which he was given access to by way of his service as the Secretary of French Broad Lodge No. 292;

AND WHEREAS, the use of the Grand Lodge database system to secure the contact information of the Masters and Secretaries of the Masonic Lodges in North Carolina is a violation of the permitted use by him and constitutes un-Masonic conduct;

AND WHEREAS, Br. MDG also sent a letter to the Grand Secretary regarding actions taken by the Grand Lodge Committee on Bylaws wherein he again made disrespectful comments directed toward the Grand Master, the Grand Line Officers and the Grand Lodge in General, again in violation of Regulation 52-3.11;

AND WHEREAS, the Grand Master of Masons issued a Masonic Summons to Br. MDG to appear before the Grand Master, affording Br. MDG an opportunity to discuss with the Grand Master the chain letter sent by him, his disrespectful statements directed toward the Grand Master and the Grand Lodge and his additional acts of un-Masonic conduct;

AND WHEREAS, Br. MDG was served with Summons issued to him and acknowledged the service of same to the District Deputy Grand Master for the 39th Masonic District;

AND WHEREAS, in violation of his obligations as a Master Mason, Br. MDG failed and refused to comply with the Summons of the Grand Master directing him to appear and discuss with the Grand Master his un-Masonic conduct;

AND WHEREAS, Br. MDG did not contact the Office of the Grand Lodge or Grand Master to explain his absence or offer any reason or excuse for his failure to comply with the Summons sent to and received by him;

AND WHEREAS, Regulation 13-3.5 grants to the Grand Master of Masons the authority to suspend the Master or any other officer of a subordinate lodge from the exercise of the powers and duties of his office for official misconduct, neglect, malfeasance or un-Masonic conduct;

AND WHEREAS, the circulation of a chain letter, failing to comply with the directions and counsel of the Grand Master, improper use of the Grand Lodge database system and the failure to comply with the obligations of a Freemason constitutes acts of official misconduct, neglect, malfeasance and un-Masonic conduct;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that Br. MDG should be and is hereby removed from the office of Secretary of French Broad Lodge

No. 292;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that MDG shall surrender all the books, records and other documents relating to or associated with the office of Secretary of French Broad Lodge No. 292 to the District Deputy Grand Master of the 39th Masonic District within 72 hours of the entry of this Order;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that a complete audit of the secretary's records, including records related to financial matters be completed by the District Deputy Grand Master, with such assistance as they may deem necessary, immediately upon receipt of the documents from Br. MDG relating to or associated with the office of Secretary, and provide a report of the same to the Office of the Grand Secretary;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Br. MDG should be and is hereby removed as a Trustee or committee member of French Broad Lodge No. 292;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Br. MDG shall surrender all the books, records and other documents relating to or associated with being a Trustee or committee member of French Broad Lodge No. 292 to the District Deputy Grand Master of the 39th Masonic District within 72 hours of the entry of this Order;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this matter should be and the same is hereby referred to the Judge Advocate for such other and further action as the Judge Advocate may deem appropriate;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this Order shall be maintained as a permanent record of French Broad Lodge No. 292;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that pursuant to Regulation 76-3.4 Br. MDG shall not be entitled to receive a demit from Masonry until such time as all charges of un-Masonic conduct against him have been appropriately resolved.

Given under my hand and seal in the City of Oxford, North Carolina, on this the 11th day of November, 2021.

Thompson Order No. 1

Brother CAS,

It has been brought to my attention by the District Deputy Grand Master of the 33rd Masonic District that, although you no longer hold the office of Treasurer of Liberty Lodge No. 45, AF & AM, the lodge officers have yet to be informed of the combination of the safe located in the lodge.

As the safe and its contents are property of Liberty Lodge No. 45, AF & AM, it is hereby ORDERED that you, in your capacity as past Treasurer of the aforementioned lodge, deliver both the keys to the safe and its combination to the District Deputy Grand Master of the 33rd Masonic District.

It is further ORDERED that you return any and all keys to the lodge building, filing cabinets, or any other items within the lodge building.

Given under my hand and seal in the City of Salisbury, North Carolina, on this the 28th day of February, 2022.

Thompson Order No. 2

I hope this message finds you and your families well. For two full years we were vigilant in our efforts to prevent the spread of COVID-19. I want to thank each of you for your patience and fortitude in following the orders and guidance of our Past Grand Masters in addition to local, state, and national government and health officials. The COVID-19 virus is not gone, but at the moment its power is much diminished thanks to science and, of course, the guiding hand of the Great Architect. With this information in hand, I believe it is time to ease the restrictions heretofore required of us to prevent the spread of the virus and now take on more personal responsibility in dealing with this virus and interacting with each other.

Therefore, it is my ORDER, that as of March 1, 2022, all health precautions and safety measures previously ordered be repealed, and that the Masters of our various lodges be empowered to promote the health, safety, and well-being of their members at their own discretion.

Each lodge and each Mason shall govern himself accordingly. I will reemphasize that those who are able to be vaccinated should consider doing so. Those who are sick shall not attend lodge. And those who wish to wear a mask shall not be impeded from doing so. By way of this order, it is now the decision of each lodge Master to determine whether the members of his lodge shall continue to follow the health precautions heretofore required by all lodges in this state. It is every Mason's duty to follow the Orders of the Master of his lodge without exception.

Now, brethren, let us take advantage of this time to recommit to our mission as Masons to care for the elderly, provide for children, and improve our communities. Let's make 2022 the year of Masonic revival!

Given under my hand and seal in the City of Salisbury, North Carolina, on this 28th day of February, 2022.

Thompson Order No. 3

To the Master, Wardens, and Secretary of Dunn's Rock Lodge No. 267:

It has been brought to my attention by the Grand Secretary's office that Dunn's Rock Lodge No. 267 balloted on the petition of DMF on January 27, 2022, rejected said petitioner, and the Secretary failed to report the action on the petition within five (5) days, as required by Regulation 59-12.19(B) of The Code.

The ballot taken on January 27, 2022, regarding Mr. DMF is clearly illegal under the language of Regulation 59-12.19(B) of The Code, and is, therefore, NULL and VOID.

Since the Grand Master is empowered to order another ballot in cases of this kind, I hereby order a rebalot to Dunn's Rock Lodge No. 267 at the stated communication to be held on April 28, 2022. If this cannot be accomplished by April 28, 2022, the lodge shall then ballot on this application at the stated communication to be held on May 12, 2022.

This Order shall be read to the lodge at the next stated communication, entered on the minutes of that communication and a proper notation made on the margin of the minutes for January 27, 2022, referring to this Order and the date it was recorded in the minutes.

Given under my hand and seal at Salisbury, North Carolina, this 15th day of March, 2022.

Thompson Order No. 4

To the Master, Wardens, and Secretary of Millbrook Lodge No. 97:

It has been brought to my attention by the Grand Secretary's office that Millbrook Lodge No. 97 balloted on the petition of CH on November 16, 2021, and failed to follow the proper procedure according to the lodge's bylaws upon finding a blackball in the ballot box.

The ballot taken on November 16, 2021, regarding Mr. CH is clearly illegal under the language of Regulation 59-12.19(B) of The Code, and is, therefore, NULL and VOID.

Since the Grand Master is empowered to order another ballot in cases of this kind, I hereby order a rebalot to Millbrook Lodge No. 97 at the stated communication to be held on May 5, 2022. If this cannot be accomplished by May 5, 2022, the lodge shall then ballot on this application at the stated communication to be held on May 19, 2022.

This Order shall be read to the lodge at the next stated communication, entered on the minutes of that communication and a proper notation made on the margin of the minutes for November 16, 2021, referring to this Order and the date it was recorded in the minutes.

Given under my hand and seal at Salisbury, North Carolina, this 8th day of April, 2022.

Thompson Order No. 5

To the Master, Wardens, and Secretary of Rockingham Lodge No. 495:

It has been brought to my attention by the Grand Secretary's office that Rockingham Lodge No. 495 received the application for affiliation of CHG on April 4, 2022, and elected him to membership on May 2, 2022, without the application having been first certified by the Grand Secretary's office and returned to the lodge.

The ballot taken on April 4, 2022, to elect Brother CHG is clearly illegal under the positive language of Regulation 68-1.2 of The Code, and is, therefore, NULL and VOID.

Since the Grand Master is empowered to order another ballot in cases of this kind, I hereby order a rebalot to Rockingham Lodge No. 495 at the stated communication to be held on June 13, 2022. If this cannot be accomplished by June 13, 2022, the lodge shall then ballot on this application at the stated communication to be held on July 11, 2022.

This Order shall be read to the lodge at the next stated communication, entered on the minutes of that communication and a proper notation made on the margin of the minutes for April 4, 2022, referring to this Order and the date it was recorded in the minutes.

Given under my hand and seal at Salisbury, North Carolina, this 1st day of June, 2022.

Thompson Order No. 6

To the Master, Wardens, and Secretary of Rockingham Lodge No. 495:

It has been brought to my attention by the Grand Secretary's office that Rockingham Lodge No. 495 received the application for affiliation of CJT on April 18, 2022, and elected him to membership on May 16, 2022, without the application having been first certified by the Grand Secretary's office and returned to the lodge.

The ballot taken on April 18, 2022, to elect Brother CJT is clearly illegal under the positive language of Regulation 68-1.2 of The Code, and is, therefore, NULL and VOID.

Since the Grand Master is empowered to order another ballot in cases of this kind, I hereby order a rebalot to Rockingham Lodge No. 495 at the stated communication to be held on June 13, 2022. If this cannot be accomplished by June 13, 2022, the lodge shall then ballot on this application at the stated communication to be held on July 11, 2022.

This Order shall be read to the lodge at the next stated communication, entered on the minutes of that communication and a proper notation made on the margin of the minutes for April 18, 2022, referring to this Order and the date it was recorded in the minutes.

Given under my hand and seal at Salisbury, North Carolina, this 1st day of June, 2022.

Amendment Group 1

The following amendment has been submitted by the Grand Secretary.

This amendment would permit lodges to change their "stated" meeting night with due and timely notice, and allow lodges to meet virtually based on guidelines established by the Board of Custodians, and adopted by this Grand Lodge in 2020.

REG. 13-3 PERTAINING TO SUBORDINATE LODGES.

Some, but not all, of the powers and duties of the Grand Master pertaining to subordinate lodges are as follows.

...

8. ...

I. To permit a lodge to hold emergent communications with due and timely notice to conduct essential business for the benefit of the Craft.

J. To permit a lodge to meet on the appropriate degree to conduct its business and education.

REG. 45-3 EMERGENT COMMUNICATIONS.

...

3. ...

4. A lodge shall not transact the following business at an emergent communication, without

dispensation:

- A. Election of officers, [54-1; 54-1.2; 54-1.1; 54-1.3]
- B. Receipt of petitions for the degrees or action thereon, [65-1; 68-1]
- C. Receipt of applications for affiliation or restoration or action thereon, [68-1; 75-8; 78-2.2.D; 101-6]
- D. Receipt of applications for advancement or action thereon, [68-1; 73-6]
- E. Amend the by-laws of the lodge, [44-7 (Art.24)]
- F. Grant a demit, [76-4]
- G. Exclude a member for non-payment of dues, [77-20.7]
- H. Grant a waiver of jurisdiction, or [42-9]
- I. Transact any business which is required by law, or by order of the Grand Master, to be transacted at a stated communication.
(*This regulation amended, effective upon adoption*)

Amendment Group 2

The following amendment has been submitted by William G. Hill Lodge 218.

This amendment would permit the purchase of an endowed membership by bequest by a deceased member and increases the Veteran and Memorial Endowed membership fees to align with inflation.

REG. 77-25 ENDOWED MEMBERSHIPS.

...

20. An endowed membership may be purchased by a bequest in a will by any member in good standing and possessing a current dues card in a particular lodge of this grand jurisdiction at the time of his death or may be purchased in memory of a member by family or loved ones.

REG. 77-26 VETERAN'S (FIFTY YEAR SERVICE AWARD) ENDOWED MEMBERSHIPS.

A Veteran's Endowed Membership may be purchased by any Master Mason of a North Carolina lodge who has received his Veteran's Award (80-3). The minimum purchase fee for a Veteran's Endowed Membership is ~~five hundred dollars (\$500.00)~~ seven hundred fifty dollars (\$750.00). The proportionate ratio distribution for a Veteran's Endowed Membership is fixed at seventy-five per cent (75%) for the subordinate lodge and twenty-five per cent (25%) for the Grand Lodge.

REG. 77-27 MEMORIAL ENDOWED MEMBERSHIPS.

A Memorial Endowed Membership may be purchased by any person for a deceased Master mason of a North Carolina lodge. The minimum purchase fee for a Memorial Endowed Membership is ~~five hundred dollars (\$500.00)~~ seven hundred fifty dollars (\$750.00). The proportionate ratio distribution for

a Memorial Endowed Membership is fixed at seventy-five per cent (75%) for the subordinate lodge and twenty-five per cent (25%) for the Grand Lodge.

Amendment Group 3

The following amendment has been submitted by Lux Libertas Lodge No. 772.

This amendment would facilitate lodges conducting some meetings virtually and permitting some brothers to attend stated communications virtually.

Chapter 38 Subordinate Lodge Defined

REG. 38-3 DISPENSATION, CHARTER OR WARRANT.

2. At each communication the charter shall be in the lodge room or in an adjoining anteroom thereof, except at divine services, Masonic funerals, or the celebration of St. John's Day, or by dispensation of the Grand Master pursuant to Regulation 41-2 in the case of loss. If the communication is virtual, the Master or the Secretary shall be in possession of the Charter or a photographic copy as provided in Regulation 38-3.3, which need not be displayed unless any brother shall request to see the same.

Chapter 43 Subordinate Lodge Powers and Duties

REG. 43-2 POWERS AND DUTIES.

Amend to add:

Reg. 43-2

18. A lodge may conduct 34% of its stated communications virtually annually. During any period of pandemic, state or national emergency a lodge may meet virtually until the pandemic, state or national emergency has ended, and these meetings will not be counted in determining the number of lodge meetings conducted virtually. In addition to state and national elected officials acting within the course and scope of their authority, the Grand Master may declare the existence of pandemics and state or national emergencies.

19. The Master of a lodge, or the lodge may allow a brother under a disability to attend lodge meetings virtually until such time as the disability passes. For the purposes of this section disabilities may include, among others: age, health, sickness, injury, travel, and anything else which might make it unduly difficult or impractical for a brother to attend a lodge meeting. A brother attending virtually under a disability shall participate in votes and shall be considered as in attendance when determining if all brothers have voted, provided that at least two Masons must participate virtually for either to participate in a secret ballot or be counted as present for a secret ballot. Neither the Master nor the Lodge shall use the provisions of this paragraph to increase the number of permitted virtual stated communications by declaring all brothers disabled to attend lodge meetings, and violation of this provision is a Masonic offense.

20. A lodge may provide for virtual meetings in its By-laws, by order of its Master or by majority vote of its brothers present and voting, and such a

virtual meeting shall be deemed to take place at the lodge hall.

21. A lodge may select the virtual meeting platform so long as the platform permits polling and secret ballots as discussed in Reg. 68-3, and complies with US National Institute of Standards and Technology's (NIST's) or its successor's standards for preventing eavesdropping by unauthorized parties.

22. During a virtual meeting, at appropriate times, images of columns, the letter "G", the Holy Bible, an altar, the Three Great Lights, and the Flag of our Country shall be displayed.

REG. 43-3 LIMITATIONS.

21. A lodge shall not confer degrees virtually.

22. Members of the lodge shall be given reasonable and timely notice of virtual lodge meetings as provided in Reg. 45-4 Notices. Notice shall also be sent to the lodge's District Deputy Grand Master and District Deputy Grand Lecturer.

23. Brothers attending a lodge meeting virtually must at all times tile their space, have a video camera on without a virtual background so that all attendees may observe their space, and be aproned.

Chapter 44 Uniform Code of By-Laws for a Lodge

REG. 44.7 UNIFORM BY-LAWS

Article 8

Third Alternative form for Section 3

All communications shall be held at the lodge hall in (or near) _____ in the County of _____ North Carolina, at such other place as the Master of the lodge may order or the lodge by majority vote may agree including virtually, and if virtually then the meeting shall be deemed to take place at the lodge hall.

Chapter 45 Communication of a Lodge

REG. 45-7 PLACE OF COMMUNICATIONS.

The communications of a lodge shall be held in the meeting place or hall within the city, or town, or place of its location as the lodge shall name in its by-laws, or virtually. [13-3.8.G; 38-4; 38-4.1; 38-4.2; 38-5; 42-3; 71-12; 71-14; 82-9].

REG. 45-22 FLAG AND PLEDGE.

The flag of the United States shall be displayed on a suitable standard in the East at the right hand of the Master, at every communication of each lodge; unless the meeting is virtual in which event an image of the flag shall be displayed prior to and during the pledge of allegiance. A pledge of allegiance to the flag shall be given at the opening of every communication of a lodge.

Chapter 59 Duties of Officers of a Lodge

REG. 59-2 MASTER.

30. He shall make the work and ritual practiced in his lodge conform to the authorized work adopted by the Grand Lodge and to no other system, and to preserve carefully the Official Standard of the Work received for by him; except that when meeting virtually the pass shall be taken up and communicated as if at Grand Lodge. [24-5; 24-5.3; Chapter 24].

Chapter 63 Voting in a Lodge

REG. 63-2 WRITTEN BALLOT.

When a vote by written paper ballot is ordered, the Master shall appoint not more than five tellers, and they shall be provided with ballot slips by the Secretary and shall immediately commence distributing them to the members present who are entitled to vote. The Master shall announce that each member voting shall prepare his ballot by writing clearly thereon the nature of his vote and shall order the tellers to collect the votes. When all have voted, he shall declare the ballot closed and order the tellers to count the ballots and announce the result. Other business may be transacted while the tellers are counting the ballots if the lodge consents. [54-3; 54-3.1; 100-1.4; 100-1.7]. Except that when meeting virtually, the written ballot shall be by Poll launched by the Master as a Host or Co-Host; the Master shall approve the Poll before launch, and shall both share the results with the brethren and declare the results. The Master may delegate these duties as a Host or a Co-host. Polls shall be anonymous at the request of any brother.

REG. 63-5 SECRET BALLOT.

Secret ballot shall be taken as follows. [87-17].

1. Wherever the term secret ballot is used in THE CODE, it shall mean the use of white balls and black cubes but not black balls, and with a ballot box so arranged that the character of an individual ballot shall not become known; and, may be conducted virtually using virtual white balls and black cubes so long as anonymous. [Chapter 68].

Chapter 68 The Secret Ballot

REG. 68-3 PROCEDURE

21. Except that when conducting a secret ballot virtually; the Master, Senior Warden and Junior Warden shall be Co-Host and as such shall determine that the Poll is anonymous and the question to the brethren is correct and that the only answers are “White Ball” and “Black Cube” and shall observe that no votes have been cast before launching the Poll; the Master shall launch the Poll and when all have voted shall order the ballot closed; the Junior Warden shall then report how he finds the ballot, then the Senior Warden shall report how he finds the ballot and then the Master shall announce how he finds the ballot. If there is any disagreement between the three principal officers as to how they find the ballot then they shall proceed under Reg. 68-3.14 as if the Poll results were the ballot box. When the voting process is complete the Master shall destroy the Poll. All procedural steps of Reg. 68-3 not inconsistent with this paragraph apply to virtual secret ballots.

Chapter 72 Proficiency

REG. 72-2 CANDIDATE MUST PASS PROFICIENCY.

9. A candidate may be examined within a virtual communication so long as he and his coach are at the same physical location within sight and reach of each other.

Amendment Group 4

The following amendment has been submitted by the Commission on Special Activities.

This amendment increases the number of members of this committee from 5 to 7 members, and removes the requirement that a member be a Past Master.

REG. 32-1 MEMBERS. The Commission on Special Activities shall consist of ~~five~~ seven members to be nominated by the Board of General Purposes and elected by the Grand Lodge as follows. (27-1.3.P; 27-6; 27-7.8).

1. Each member of the Commission shall be a ~~Past Master~~ member of a subordinate lodge in this jurisdiction well versed in the law of this Grand Lodge and in the usages and customs of the Craft and shall be experienced in handling business matters pertaining to subordinate lodges.

...

Amendment Group 5

The following amendments have been submitted by the Junaluskee Lodge 145.

This amendment permits Entered Apprentices and Fellowcrafts to wear lodge emblems and logos when representing the lodge during public events.

REG. 86-2 SPECIFIC MASONIC OFFENSES.

...

44. To wear the square and compasses, or any other Masonic emblem, or the emblem of an organization composed exclusively of Masons, when he stands excluded, suspended, or expelled, or when he is an Entered Apprentice or a Fellow Craft, with the exception that an Entered Apprentice or Fellowcraft may be permitted to wear a lodge shirt while participating in lodge functions such as degrees, fundraisers, and community events when accompanied by one or more Master Masons for the duration of the specific event.

Amendment Group 6

The following amendments have been submitted by Past Grand Master P. Shaun Bradshaw.

This amendment clarifies that Freemasonry brings together men of different races, colors, creeds, and opinions to unite in the objectives of our Craft as defined in our Preamble.

Preamble

III 9. It believes that the attainment of these objectives is best accomplished by laying a broad basis of principle upon which men of various races, colors, creeds, and opinions may unite.

(This regulation amended, effective upon adoption)

Amendment Group 7

The following amendment has been submitted by Past Grand Master P. Shaun Bradshaw.

This amendment increases the minimum initiation fee from \$50 to \$75.

REG. 64-1 MINIMUM INITIATION FEE. No lodge in this state shall confer any of the Symbolic degrees in Masonry for less than ~~fifty~~ seventy-five dollars (\$75.00). [5-2.1; 49-10.1].

Amendment Group 8

The following amendment has been submitted by Past Grand Master P. Shaun Bradshaw.

This amendment increases the portion of the initiation fee that goes to benefit our Masonic charities.

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.

...

2. The sum of ~~twenty-one~~ seventy-five dollars (~~\$21.00~~ \$75.00) for each Entered Apprentice initiated by or for the lodge, whether initiated therein or by another lodge for it as a courtesy, ~~ten~~ sixty dollars (~~\$60.00~~ \$60.00) of which is for charity, five dollars (\$5.00) of which shall represent a contribution to The George Washington Masonic National Memorial, five dollars (\$5.00) to the Grand Lodge Building Endowment and ~~one dollar~~ five dollars (~~\$1.00~~ \$5.00) is an initiation fee to be applied to the general fund. [5-1.4; 5-1.7; 5-5; 20-1].

...

Amendment Group 8 Substitute

The following amendment has been submitted by the Finance Committee.

This amendment increases the portion of the initiation fee that goes to benefit our Masonic charities.

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.

...

2. The sum of ~~twenty-one~~ seventy-five dollars (\$75.00) for each Entered Apprentice initiated by or for the lodge, whether initiated therein or by another lodge for it as a courtesy, ~~ten~~ twenty dollars (\$20.00) of which is for charity, five dollars (\$5.00) of which shall represent a contribution to The George Washington Masonic National Memorial, ~~one dollar~~ five dollars (\$5.00) to the Grand Lodge Building Endowment and ~~one dollar~~ forty-five dollars (\$45.00) is an initiation fee to be applied to the general fund. [5-1.4; 5-1.7; 5-5; 20-1].

Amendment Group 9

The following amendment has been submitted by Albemarle Lodge No. 703.

This amendment would allow the Grand Master, upon appeal from the consolidated lodge, to determine whether a higher or lower lodge number takes precedence when lodges consolidate.

REG. 48-3 CONSOLIDATED LODGE. The name and number of the consolidated lodge ~~shall~~ should be that of the oldest lodge consolidated considering the date of charter, and no new charter shall be necessary, nor shall it be necessary to constitute the lodge again.

1. The officers of the ~~senior~~ lodge shall be determined by resolution (Form 16) ~~the officers of the consolidated lodge~~ and serve until the next annual communication, and no installation is required.

...

3. The bylaws of the consolidated lodge shall be determined by resolution (Form 16) ~~be those of the senior lodge which were in effect at the time of consolidation~~, and the stated communication of the consolidated lodge, until properly changed, shall be at the time fixed in those bylaws.

...

(This regulation amended, effective upon adoption)

Amendment Group 10

The following amendment has been submitted by Past Grand Master R. David Wicker, Jr.

This amendment clarifies the relationship between the Grand Lodge and the North Carolina Masonic Foundation and defines the jurisdictional authority of the Grand Lodge.

REG. 35-1 BOARD OF DIRECTORS. The North Carolina Masonic Foundation, Incorporated, a corporation under the laws of the State of North Carolina, shall be managed by a board of directors as provided in its by-laws, the Grand Lodge, at each annual communication, shall nominate a director to succeed the director whose term will next expire and shall nominate a director to serve the remaining term of any director whose seat has become vacant for any reason. [27-4; 27-7; 21-5]. (This regulation amended, effective January 1, 2016.)

1. The period of service of the members of this board is arranged in such manner that the term of one of them expires at each successive annual communication, at which time the Grand Lodge shall elect his successor. Each director shall continue to serve until his successor shall have been elected and shall have assumed his duties as a director.

2. Each director shall be and remain a resident of the State of North Carolina and a member in good standing in a subordinate lodge holding charter under the Grand Lodge. Removal from the State of North Carolina or ceasing to be a member in good and regular standing in a subordinate lodge shall be equivalent to resignation from the Board of Directors. (27-6).

3. Any vacancy on the Board of Directors shall be filled by appointment of the Grand Master until the next regular annual communication of the Grand Lodge at which time the Grand Lodge shall fill the vacancy for the unexpired term.

4. The Grand Lodge may at any time by a two-thirds majority vote declare vacant the office of any or all members of the Board of Directors and may elect successors to serve the unexpired term of any member whose office shall be declared vacant.

(This regulation amended, effective upon adoption)

Amendment Group 11

The following amendment has been submitted by Past Grand Master R. David Wicker, Jr.

This amendment clarifies the designation of defunct lodge funds placed within the North Carolina Masonic Foundation.

REG. 49-7 PROPERTY OF DEFUNCT LODGE

...

9. If anything remains after the just debts of the defunct lodge are paid, the balance shall be transferred to the Grand Lodge's account(s) within the North Carolina Masonic Foundation, Inc. (This regulation amended, effective

upon adoption January 1, 2002).

...

(This regulation amended, effective upon adoption)

Amendment Group 12

The following amendment has been submitted by Past Grand Master R. David Wicker, Jr..

This amendment would require lodges to appoint a committee of investigation for delinquent members prior to excluding them for non-payment of dues to determine if there is a mitigating factor to their delinquency.

REG. 77-19 OFFICIAL NOTICE OF DELINQUENCY AND APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE OF INVESTIGATION.

During the third quarter of each year the Secretary shall forward to each member of the lodge who then owes any amount for dues an Official Notice of Delinquency by first-class mail in a sealed envelope with return address thereon. *(This regulation amended, effective 1/1/2004)*

1. This notice shall be over the name of the Master and the seal of the lodge, attested by the written signature of the Secretary, and sent to the last known address of the member informing him of the amount of dues then unpaid, and notifying him that unless the same is paid by the first stated communication of the lodge in October next following the date of notice, or unless he shows cause at that stated communication why he should not be excluded for nonpayment of dues, the lodge will at that time take action on his delinquency at a stated communication during the fourth quarter of that year. [Official Form 23]. *(This section amended, effective 1/1/2010)*

2. A list of the names of each member of the lodge to whom the Secretary has sent an Official Notice of Delinquency shall be read out during the first stated communication of the lodge in September. This list of members shall be referred by the Master to a special Committee of Investigation to consist of not less than three members of the lodge who are appointed by him. The Committee of Investigation shall diligently attempt to make personal contact with each member and speak with him directly to determine the basis of his failure to pay his dues. The Committee of Investigation shall inquire as to the member's health and financial status to determine if the brother is unable to pay his dues and if his dues should be cancelled as provided by Regulations 77-5 and 77-14.

~~32. A certificate of the Secretary to be read and entered on the minutes of the lodge, at the next stated communication following the mailing and the appointment of a special Committee of Investigation, to the effect that the provisions of this Regulation have been fully complied with, shall be conclusive thereof. and the lodge shall then have jurisdiction to act as provided in Regulation 77-20:~~

43. Payment in full of the entire amount due by the member on or before the first stated communication in October will satisfy and make void the said notice.

54. If no response is made to the Official Notice of Delinquency, the member shall not for that failure or omission be subject to charges of un-Masonic conduct. [77-21]. *(This section amended, effective 1/1/2004)*

REG. 77-20 ACTION BY THE LODGE, EXCLUSION.

During the fourth quarter of each year the Secretary shall report to the lodge the name of each delinquent member who at that time owes any amount for dues together with his certificate to the effect that the provisions of Regulation 77-19 have been fully complied with in respect to each member reported by him.

1. The report and certificate of the Secretary shall be entered on the minutes of the lodge.

2. At the same communication, the Committee of Investigation shall make its report in writing as favorable or unfavorable with regard to any action to be taken to exclude a member for nonpayment of dues. The members of the Committee shall confer in advance of making this report. The members of the Committee shall take into consideration the health and/or financial hardship of the member. The Master may grant a Committee of Investigation more time but not more than twenty-seven days. If the members of the Committee are unable to personally contact the member, their report shall state all actions taken by them with regard to their attempts to contact the member. The Master shall have the discretion to determine if the efforts made to contact the member are sufficient to permit the lodge to take any action to exclude the member for nonpayment of dues.

~~32. Before~~ At the same communication, the lodge may take any action to exclude a member for nonpayment of dues, the report of the Committee of Investigation shall be received by the Master and read to the lodge, shall take action on each delinquent member whose name has been reported by the Secretary:

~~43.~~ For good cause, of which the lodge shall be the judge, it may cancel all or any part of the dues of any such member as provided for in Regulation 77-5.

~~54.~~ The lodge may exclude him for nonpayment of dues, subject, however, to the provisions of Regulations 77-15, ~~and 77-14.2, and 77-19.~~ [59-12.10; 77-5.2; 77-5.3].

~~65.~~ After due notice as required in Regulation 77-19 and during the fourth quarter of each year, each subordinate lodge shall take definite action on those of its members who at that time owe dues by either canceling the dues of any such member as provided for in Subdivision 77-20.3 of this regulation or by excluding him for nonpayment of dues, *subject, however,* to the provisions of Regulations 77-15, ~~and 77-14.2, and 77-19.~~

~~76.~~ The Secretary shall mail a notice to each member excluded for nonpayment of dues within ten days of such exclusion.

~~87.~~ A lodge may exclude a member for nonpayment of dues only at a stated communication in the fourth quarter by a majority vote of the members present and as hereinbefore set forth. [45-3.4]. *(This regulation amended, effective 1/1/2004)*

Respectfully submitted,
Matthew C. Robbins, 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.

The Masonic Home for Children School of Graphic Arts now prints and distributes the MSA's *Short Talk Bulletin* and *Emessay Notes*.

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, 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.

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>).

Respectfully Submitted,
Robert W. Rideout, JR, JGW
MSANA Representative

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

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

As the Representative to the George Washington Masonic National Memorial Association, I am pleased to report that after two years of closure due to the COVID-19 pandemic, your Memorial is again open for visits. One hour tours are being conducted on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays. Additionally, if you visit the GWMemorial.org website, you can take a virtual tour of this historic edifice, and explore the other educational offerings of this significant site.

The George Washington Masonic National Memorial is located in Alexandria, Virginia, outside of Washington, DC. It is dedicated to the memory of George Washington, the first President of the United States, and a Mason.

In 2015, this Memorial was added to the United States government's official list of National Historic Landmarks and National Register of Historic Places. This is an exclusive status, reserved only for buildings and sites that possess extraordinary significance to our nation's history.

At the urging of the lodge, Joseph W. Eggleston, the Grand Master of Virginia, invited every Grand Master in the United States to assemble in Alexandria-Washington Lodge on February 22, 1910. Their purpose was to form an Association that would plan and build a suitable Memorial Temple to George Washington, the Mason.

Representatives from twenty-six Grand Lodges gathered on that day to endorse the erection of the Memorial, and the George Washington Masonic National Memorial Association was formed. Ten years after the first official meeting of the Association, the concept of a colossal building as a Memorial lighthouse to Washington was approved by the Grand Lodges of the United States. The Memorial Association was determined not to borrow money for

this undertaking. Construction only proceeded as money was collected for each stage of the project.

The groundbreaking ceremony took place on June 5, 1922. On November 1, 1923, the Memorial's cornerstone was dedicated, with President Calvin Coolidge, Chief Justice William H. Taft, among others, performing the Masonic ceremony before a crowd of thousands of Freemasons from around the nation. On May 12, 1932, the bicentennial year of George Washington's birth, the dedication of the Memorial took place with President Herbert Hoover participating.

After World War II, work on the Memorial's interior began in earnest. By 1970, the George Washington Masonic National Memorial was complete. In 1999, the large Square and Compasses emblem was added to the front lawn; a visible sign to the Masonic nature of the Memorial.

A repository of many artifacts and the history of American Freemasons, the Memorial remains a lasting monument to George Washington, the Man, the Mason, and Father of our Country.

At its 232nd Annual Communication, the Grand Lodge of North Carolina voted to join the George Washington Masonic National Memorial Association's \$1 per member program to support the upkeep and preservation of this important historic structure. The George Washington Masonic National Memorial Association, Inc. is a non-profit organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, and all contributions are tax-deductible to the full extent permitted by law.

I urge each Mason to travel and visit this lasting monument to Masonry in general and George Washington in particular.

Respectfully submitted,
Donald E. Kehler, SGW, Representative

Report of the Board of Publications

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The following brothers were appointed by Grand Master Thompson to the Board of Publications:

Michael Register
Alvin Billings Jr.
Tony Rathbone
Thomas Pope Jr.
Phillip Miller

The board held its first meeting on January 13, 2022.

The meeting was called to order by Grand Master Thompson. Michael Register was nominated and elected as chairman. After introductions, Grand Master Thompson discussed his vision for the future of the *NC Mason*. He proposed that the board research changing the *Mason* to a magazine format

as he felt that this would be a significant improvement in how we deliver our message.

After a lively discussion, Chairman Register asked the members to look at the pros and cons of this proposal and be ready to discuss and come to a decision at our February meeting.

Brother Alvin Billings said that he would have Barry Long from the print shop at MHCO do a mockup of the current *Mason* in a magazine form for the members to look at before the next meeting.

At the next meeting in March, Chairman Register asked the board to give their input for the transition of the Mason to magazine format.

All members said that they had received their copy of the mockup magazine and were very pleased with the format and were in favor of moving forward with the change. The board also discussed changing distribution to quarterly and increasing to 24 pages. The board was favorable with this decision.

George Marut updated us on the status of Beth Grace and advised that her work assignments with the North Carolina Masonic Foundation had been changed, and she would no longer be able to act as the editor of the *NC Mason* but would still be available for writing stories.

Grand Master Thompson advised the board that he and Chairman Register had met with Signal Marketing company to discuss re-design and formatting for the magazine layout and to obtain estimates for this process. He also talked about the importance of our print and digital media being combined to properly market our fraternity. The company agreed to send us a quote for their services.

Barry Long from the MHCO Print Shop, gave us current pricing for printing cost and mailing and wanted us to know that he would work up a new pricing for a 24 page magazine.

It was decided by the board that we should try to publish the magazine format in June/July time frame. It was agreed that there would be no March edition to give time for the switchover.

Over the next couple of months, the board gathered articles and content for the new magazine. The content was sent to Signal Marketing in early June for the layout to be completed. After several reviews and edits the final product was sent to the Print Shop in July for publication and distribution.

The decision was made to distribute “The Mason” magazine with issues for Summer, Fall, Winter, and Spring. As I write this report the summer issue is being distributed.

The board will meet over the next few months to prepare the fall edition that will come out after the annual communication of the Grand Lodge.

We are currently seeking writers to work with the board in supplying content for future editions. Resumes can be submitted to ncmason@glnc.us.

The board would like to thank all of those dedicated individuals who assisted us with this process.

The board would also like to thank Grand Master Thompson for the giving us this opportunity to work on this project.

As we have said many times in our meetings “Great things are happening in North Carolina Masonry.”

Let the revival continue!

Respectfully submitted,
Michael Register, Chairman
Alvin Billings Jr.
Tony Rathbone
Thomas Pope Jr.
Phillip Miller

Report of the North Carolina Masonic Foundation, Inc

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

2021 was a very good year for the North Carolina Masonic Foundation. The Foundation continued its mission of ensuring continued operations at both of our charities, the Masonic Home for Children, and WhiteStone, our retirement home in Greensboro.

In 2021 the Foundation distributed \$620,136 all together or \$310,068 to each of the homes we support. In 2022 we will distribute \$654,864 or \$327,432 to each of the homes, a 5.6% increase from 2021.

2021 was a superb year for our investments. The Equity Fund was up 18.2% and the Income Fund was up 0.1%. The 5 year average annual rate of return on the Funds are: Equity Fund +13.4% and the Income Fund is +3.6%.

The first half of 2022 has been marked by a significant bear market in both stocks and bonds. The Equity Fund is down 20.2% and the Income Fund is down 7.9%. We believe our investments are resilient and will recover over time.

Development:

- The NCMF put forth an exhaustive search to find the new “face of the foundation.” The search committee was expansive and inclusive of all parts of Masonry. Brother George Marut was chosen to be our new Chief Development Officer.
- Brother George has begun to implement the recommended steps to strengthen our Development Program from the Assessment Report given to us from JGA and Associates back in 2021.
- The Board of Directors of the NCMF was expanded from 5 to 7 members.
- The Foundation continues to work on the Campaign for WhiteStone and led a record-setting one-night campaign for the Grand Lodge’s Resist and Restore campaign for Ukraine. It is preparing a 2022 rebranding campaign for the Foundation itself online, on social media and in widespread outreach to the Craft and to the public.
- The NCMF Board of Directors’ partnership with MHCO to fund the position of Annual Fund Officer for two years at the home, which resulted in the hiring of Worshipful Brother Alvin Billings, has been a

spectacular success. MHCO agreed at the last NCMF Board of Directors meeting to take over all financial responsibilities for this position.

- In-person visits have begun again in earnest and our Development Team has been busy, meeting one-on-one in person, visiting lodges and appendant bodies, and attending district meetings and Harmonies. The Development Team has remained in communication with the Craft via email, social media, and old fashion hand-written thank you notes.
- The Foundation partnered with the Grand Master and the Grand Lodge to revive Harmonies this year to celebrate fraternally and to offer a way for the non-initiated to attend, observe, and be inspired by Masonry.
- As lodges reviewed their current financial stability and future planning, 11 new building funds and five new Historic Masonic Property Funds were established with lodges and appendant bodies in 2020-2021. These investment opportunities are a part of the Foundation's ongoing commitment to help our lodges consider their future needs for operation.
- Thank you all for your generous gifts made in support of the people of Ukraine. Through your generosity, we raised \$21,330 in support of our brethren in Ukraine. Additionally, NCMF and the Grand Lodge of North Carolina have contributed \$10,000.00 each, bringing the total support to \$41,330. The Board of Directors of the Foundation will be working with MSA and the Grand Lodge of Ukraine to ensure these funds are delivered in where they are needed most with trusted and vetted organizations.
- The award-winning North Carolina Mason has been transformed into a new magazine format by the Board of Publications, in partnership with Editor Beth Grace and the Foundation team. Beth will move from a successful six-year run as editor to a full-time slot working on Foundation communications, lodge relations, and other challenging and exciting duties. She will continue to contribute philanthropic stories to the Mason.

As always, it is a great pleasure to serve with you in our work to keep Freemasonry strong, to grow our charities and to make good men better. We look forward to connecting with you in the coming year.

Respectfully submitted,
Board of Directors
North Carolina Masonic Foundation

Report of the Committee on Masonic Education

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

This year has been an exciting one for the Committee on Masonic Education. Through our various programs, we have seen firsthand the enthusiasm and passion that the brethren of our jurisdiction have for Masonic education. As the world began to open up at the end of 2021, we wanted to harness the interest of the many brothers who were hungry for “more light” in our state. Through both in-person and online sessions, we have had the opportunity to teach (and learn from) hundreds of brothers in our Davie Academy and Middle Chamber programs. Likewise, the Speakers Bureau continues to receive requests every week, which shows that lodges are taking

an active interest in education.

With the influx of new brothers who petitioned before or immediately after the lockdown, we are in a great position to effectively engage new Masons through Masonic education. To this aim, Grand Master Thompson instructed us to create a new piece of literature which every new Mason would receive upon being raised to help them better understand our fraternity. In cooperation with the Committee on Public Relations, we are pleased to announce the publication of the New Master Mason's Handbook.

In addition to providing explanations of the structure of our lodges and Grand Lodge, this booklet contains tips on Masonic etiquette, a reading list, information about our charities, the many programs our Grand Lodge offers, and much more. It is my hope that with this knowledge, new Masons will find it easier to get involved and thus stay as engaged with Masonry as they were while going through the degrees.

I want to thank the members of our Grand Lodge and its officers for their assistance this year in maintaining the excellent education programs we have in North Carolina. I have received correspondence from Masons across the country who look to our jurisdiction as an example of what we can accomplish in Masonry, and this is due to the efforts and experience of Masons in North Carolina who take such an active interest in education. I am grateful for the opportunity to have served you all this year, and I am excited to see what comes next for our Grand Lodge.

Respectfully submitted,
Noah Goode, Chairman

Report of the NC Eagle Scout Task Force

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The Grand Lodge Eagle Scout Task Force had a good 2022. We have supplied certificates, letters, and patches for 36 Eagle Scouts across the state through their local Lodge. This year has been about spreading the word about the program and letting Lodges know how to utilize it. The Grand Lodge has let us know about several Lodges who were interested in the program, and we let them know how to do it.

Additionally, we are continuing to try to get details on the program added to the Grand Lodge website. WB Eric Newton was recognized with the Daniel Carter Beard Masonic Scouter Award. WB Newton has done a couple education presentations for Lodges, facilitated certificate presentations to Eagle Scouts and patch design/purchase, and assisted with the administration of the recognition program.

If you have any questions, please let us know. We can be reached at <glnceagles@gmail.com>.

Fraternally,
Will Highsmith, Chairman
Will Chriscoe
Matthew Collins

Todd Fyre
Jonathan Johnson
Eric Newton
Jeremy Powell
Michael Saviak

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 2022 were as follows:

MWB Larry B. Thompson, Jr., Grand Master, Chairman Ex-Officio; Randy Browning, Grand Lecturer; Earl Wells, Chairman; Tom Dolinger, Secretary; Stephen McCraw, Assistant Secretary; Matt Cockman; Russ Jones; and Christopher Wright.

This has been another challenging year due to the Covid-19 virus. The fraternity is slowly rebounding as we see lodges becoming more active than they have been in the last several years. The Board has instituted a couple of new opinions which are as follows:

- Opinion #4 amended to read as follows: Catechism coaching must be done only by Master Masons. A Master Mason must pass his proficiency on the MM degree before coaching the MM catechism.
- Opinion #12 adopted which reads: To clarify the definition of the word “work,” as referenced in the General Rules. It is the opinion of the Board of Custodians, that any activity performed between the time the lodge is officially opened until the lodge is officially closed is considered “Work.” If a lodge desires to use the OSW for the purposes of Masonic Education or Instruction, the options for these activities would be 1) prior to opening, 2) after closing, or 3) calling from Labor to Refreshment and then from Refreshment back to Labor after the use of the OSW, for these purposes, have been completed.
- Opinion #13 adopted which reads: The presiding officer of a lodge must uncover during any prayers from opening to closing the lodge. (Exception – The presiding officer may remain covered if required by his religious beliefs)
- The five-hour lecture service as well as the schools of instruction have been replaced by the Modified Ritual Instruction Program (MRIP). Up to three lodges may meet at the same time to complete this requirement. All lodges will be required to complete the MRIP annually.

Certified brethren qualifying for the Laudamus Certificate in 2022 are as follows:

- Jimmy Dean Blair, Hominy Lodge No. 491
 - Homer Eugene Burroughs, Jr., Tabor Lodge No. 563
 - James Patrick Fitzgibbons, Lafayette Lodge No. 83
 - David Patrick Grimes, Thomasville Lodge No. 214
-

- Lloyd Hise, Jr., Vesper Lodge No. 554
- Todd Jeffrey McCranie, East Gate Lodge No. 692
- William Gary McKinney, Mount Holly Lodge No. 544
- Tommy Reavis Mills, Jr., Green Level Lodge No. 277

District Deputy Grand Lecturers qualifying for the Past District Deputy Grand Lecturer certificate in 2022 are as follows:

| <u>District</u> | <u>Name</u> | <u>Lodge</u> |
|-----------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 2 | Christopher Scott East, Sr | Manteo Lodge No. 521 |
| 3 | Hylar Wayne Cox | Atlantic Lodge No. 294 |
| 6 | Charles Maris Chapman | Jerusalem Lodge No. 95 |
| 10 | Michael Conrad Saviak, III | Mount Olive Lodge No. 208 |
| 13 | Ronald Casey Pearce | Youngsville Lodge No. 377 |
| 14 | Phillip Christopher Lee | Wendell Lodge No. 565 |
| 15 | Christopher Michael Ryan | Green Level Lodge No. 277 |
| 16 | Matthew Britt Moore | Relief Lodge No. 431 |
| 17 | Daniel Lee Short | Phoenix Lodge No. 8 |
| 18 | Justin Dolphus Parker | Fairmont Lodge No. 528 |
| 23 | Jeffrey David Martin | Tabasco Lodge No. 271 |
| 26 | Dylan Cody Lewellyn | Greensboro Lodge No. 76 |
| 30 | Keith Bradley Rash (PGL) | Harmony Lodge No. 299 |
| 34 | Brett Albert Huffman | Lovelady Lodge No. 670 |
| 35 | William Royce Peeler | State Line Lodge No. 375 |
| 36 | Michael Lee McGinnis | Gaston Lodge No. 263 |

WB Michael Monroe Bolen, Sr, received a certificate for fifty years or more of service as a Certified Lecturer.

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

- Jackie Carol Nixon, Gate City Lodge No. 694 - 5 years
- Dillard Wade Loflen, Granite Lodge No. 322 - 57 years
- James Lloyd Moss, Pigeon River Lodge No. 386 - 39 years
- James Beauford Kiser, Charles M. Setzer No. 693 - 53 years
- Donald Wayne Helton, PGL, Eagle Lodge No. 19 - 31 years
- William Dennis Combs, Sr, Lafayette Lodge No. 83 - 38 years

The total number of Certified Brothers are currently:

277 Class A

36 Class B

313 Total

The fraternity has had 107 Coaches apply for and receive recognition as having passed the Coaches Proficiency Exam. Once passed, the Coach receives a certificate and card. There is no expiration date on the card as this is a one-time only exam. To pass the exam, the coach must recite both the questions and answers to the three catechisms.

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 Board of Custodians expresses its appreciation to Grand Master Larry B. Thompson for his enthusiastic support of the Board and the Certified Lecturer Program. The Board also wishes to thank the team at the Grand Lodge which assists the Board all year round. They are Jonathan Underwood, Grand Secretary; Matthew; Hayley; Vicki, and Eric.

The Board also expresses its appreciation to Grand Lecturer Randy Browning for his hard work as the Grand Lecturer for 2022. 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 and Certified Instructors Program.

Respectfully Submitted,
Earl Wells, Chairman
Thomas P. Dolinger, Secretary
Stephen McCraw, Asst. Secretary

Report of the Committee on Subordinate Lodge Special Activities

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

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 22, 2022 and a final recap of 2021:

Vital Statistics for 2022

| | | |
|--|-----|-----|
| Number of Active Lodges in NC | 373 | |
| Lodges Participating in Fundraisers | 154 | 41% |
| Applications Received: | 195 | |
| Final Reports Received: | 104 | 53% |

Total Applications &

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------|-----|--------------------------------|
| Final Reports Processed: | 299 | | |
| Final Reports Past Due: | 16 | | <u>Avg / Fundraiser</u> |
| Total Gross Receipts: | \$ 513,008.26 | | \$ 4,932.77 |
| Total Expenses: | \$ 174,307.53 | 34% | \$ 1,676.03 |
| Net Proceeds: | \$ 338,700.73 | | \$ 3,256.74 |

Net Proceeds by Fundraiser Category

| <u>Category</u> | <u>#</u> | <u>Amount</u> | <u>ROI</u> | <u>Avg / Category</u> |
|------------------------|------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| Gun Raffles | 10 | \$ 64,165.63 | 59% | \$ 6,416.56 |
| General Raffles | 13 | \$ 20,343.02 | 75% | \$ 1,564.85 |
| Golf Tournaments | 7 | \$ 74,214.54 | 77% | \$ 10,602.08 |
| BBQ | 16 | \$ 36,368.42 | 61% | \$ 2,273.03 |
| Breakfasts | 6 | \$ 13,777.98 | 59% | \$ 2,296.33 |
| Dinners | 9 | \$ 28,915.08 | 55% | \$ 3,212.79 |
| Food Sales - Other | 15 | \$ 49,170.50 | 61% | \$ 3,278.03 |
| Merchandise Sales | 4 | \$ 4,885.80 | 83% | \$ 1,221.45 |
| <u>Other</u> | <u>20</u> | <u>\$ 46,859.76</u> | <u>79%</u> | <u>\$ 2,342.99</u> |
| Total | 100 | \$ 338,700.73 | 51% | |

Net Proceeds by Charity Category

| <u>Charity</u> | <u>#</u> | <u>Amount</u> | <u>Avg / Category</u> |
|--|-----------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| MHCO | 59 | \$ 104,564.51 | \$ 1,772.28 |
| MESH, LLC | 33 | \$ 40,995.93 | \$ 1,242.30 |
| WhiteStone | 20 | \$ 27,166.96 | \$ 1,358.35 |
| NCMF | 30 | \$ 52,449.82 | \$ 1,748.33 |
| Other Charities | | | |
| Chosen by Lodges | 20 | \$ 66,858.20 | \$ 3,342.91 |
| Lodge Building Funds | 20 | \$ 46,113.82 | \$ 2,305.69 |
| <u>10% Retained Raffle Proceeds</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>\$ 551.50</u> | <u>\$ 275.75</u> |
| Total | 182 | \$ 338,700.74 | |

Summary for 2022

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Total Gross Receipts: | \$ 513,008.26 |
| Total Expenses: | \$ 174,307.53 |
| Net Proceeds: | \$ 338,700.73 |
| Total Funds to Charity for 2022: | \$ 292,035.42 |
| Total Funds to Lodge Building Funds for 2022: | \$ 46,113.82 |

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 2022 final reports must be submitted to the Commission by December 31, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,
Charles Barrett, Chairman

Report of the Library Committee

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

Your library committee has been hard at work enhancing and moving the library into the future. Digitization continues to be a key objective as we move towards accessibility. With the help of Eric Greene, PM (Cary 198 and KOS 768) we have completely digitized all of the Grand Lodge proceedings from 1787 - 2011. They are available on the Grand Lodge site under the Center for Members at: <<https://www.grandlodge-nc.org/center-for-members/proceedings-and-past-grand-masters>>.

This also has allowed us to refine the collection of the library and to remove un-needed duplicates. If your lodge is interested in any of these extra historic proceedings, we would be happy to give you as many as you'd like. We just ask a donation be made to the Grand Lodge's Library Fund.

New books acquired include:

- *History of Printing in North Carolina, 1749-1800* by George Paschal, 1946
- *North Carolina Schools and Academies 1790-1840, A Documentary History* by Charles Coon, 1915
- *The Rare Books of Freemasonry*, by Lionel Vibert, 1923
- *The Ahiman Rezon and Masonic Ritual*, by the Grand Lodge of NC and TN, 1805 (digital copy)

The Ahiman Rezon was the Grand Lodge's very first published ritual. It was one of the first books to ever be published and printed in the state; there were only ten printing presses active in North Carolina when it was done. The proceedings state there are 50 copies in existence (1803 Proceedings, p.13): 32 for lodges in 1806 and 18 for future lodges (Raleigh Minerva Newspaper, 27 Jan 1806, p.3).

The second half of the Lodge Service Commission files have been digitized for the committee's use. These contain applications, deeds, and historical data on various Masonic Temple Corporations across the state.

Ongoing digitization continues for old paper lodge returns from 1970-2008. This allows lodges to maintain an accurate historic record of members. Returns for previous years and defunct lodges are kept in a repository at the UNC Southern Historical Collection in Wilson Library at UNC Chapel Hill at: <<https://finding-aids.lib.unc.edu/05309/#d1e259>>.

Library visitors are able to request to view these in person or have them digitized for viewing remotely by contacting wilsonlibrary@unc.edu.

Papers of the Historic Grand Master's Correspondence Collection

(1771-2010) have begun digitization as well. This collection includes letters, papers, newspaper clippings, notes, and documents pertaining to recognition, statistics, dispensations, committees, and reports of Past Grand Masters.

WB Paul Vincent, Master of Widow's Son 75, continues to assist us in transcribing historic Grand Lodge proceedings for future republication. We continue to be appreciative of his time, talent, and dedication to the preservation of our early history.

WB Alex Wilson of Guilford 656 regularly posts historic information from the Greensboro Masonic Museum on the Grand Lodge's Facebook page. Please request to join the page to see these snippets of Masonic history.

Both Alex and Paul, and members of this committee, seek creative ways to bring the history of Masonry in North Carolina alive to you through your archive at the Grand Lodge and its connected libraries at UNC, the Greensboro Masonic Temple, and the archive at the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford. We invite you to the various repositories across the state for further light in your Masonic journey.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kenneth W. Wical, Chairman

Report of the Grand Lodge Committee on Personnel

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The Grand Lodge Committee on Personnel continued to work under REG. 34-23 of the Code, as it was approved by this Grand Lodge in 2017. The Committee was established 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. In 2022, the Personnel Committee met on three occasions following the established protocols with regard to its duties and obligations. These included the Committee meeting privately 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. These reviews were shared with the Grand Secretary who was also interviewed and asked to complete a self-evaluation that was shared with the committee. All employees were interested in making the Masonic experience first class, and expressed their gratitude for a work environment that was not only challenging, but also fulfilling. The Grand Secretary praised the staff for their dedication, work ethic, and job performance.

Upon completion of its work, the Committee met with the Grand Secretary to share the Committee's evaluation of him and of the office staff, as well as to discuss his goals and objectives for the coming year. The Committee's recommendations for compensation adjustments were provided to the Grand Lodge Committee on Finance, and are included as part of the 2023 budget.

As this Grand Lodge has transitioned into a new era in management of our business affairs, this team has been tasked with the responsibility of carrying forward the traditions of the Craft, at the same time keeping pace with the ever-changing business environment. As we move to complete the

first quarter of the twenty-first century, each brother should thank the staff for their dedication, work ethic, and job performance during this unique time in our history. Grand Secretary, Right Worshipful Jonathan Underwood, named WB Matthew Robbins as Assistant to the Grand Secretary in April 2022, transitioning him from the role of outreach coordinator. As we lost two of our long-time employees to retirement, the staff has been stretched thin at times, leaving inadequate phone coverage, and at times only one employee to staff the office. WB Eric Greene was hired part-time in May to cover this shortfall, but one more full-time position needs to be filled in order to provide proper coverage to meet and exceed the expectations of this Grand Lodge.

The Committee thanks Grand Secretary Jonathan Underwood, and the Grand Lodge staff for their outstanding work and dedication to our Fraternity.

Respectfully submitted,
 Donald Kehler, SGW, Chairman
 Robert Rideout, JGW
 Douglas L. Caudle, PGM
 Gene Cobb, Jr., PGM
 William Dill, PGM

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. Well over one hundred applications were received. The scholarship winners all demonstrated strong academic performance balanced with extensive volunteer service and extracurricular activities within 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
 Joseph B. Walls, Chairman
 Rory J. Byers
 William L. Dill
 James D. Richardson
 Jeffrey J. Troccoli

Report of the Committee on Necrology

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

While we pause to reflect upon the number of reported deaths each year, we recognize that many of our brothers did not receive Masonic Rites for one reason or another. The Grand Lodge of North Carolina takes the time each year to remember them all. During the last year, we have witnessed many brothers travel to that undiscovered country from whose borne no traveler returns, including Most Worshipful Pete Thomas, PGM 1988, who has now

joined the celestial lodge above where the Supreme Architect of the Universe presides.

We celebrate their lives and contributions to the Craft through faithful years of service and continue encouraging Masonic Rites' observance when families across the state request. While we encourage these services to be done from memory, we discourage denying a brother these rites if the only solution is that they are read. If they are read, make sure it is done with the dignity and honor it deserves.

Since our last Annual Communication, there has been an increase in combined Blue Lodge, Scottish Rite, and Military Memorial Services. We always encourage it to be done with full agreement and support of religious, fraternal, military, and family involvement. For more information, please contact the Committee on Necrology for further information.

We cannot emphasize strongly enough the importance of every brother who desires Masonic Rites to inform their family and their lodge of their desires before it is too late.

We light candles, place roses, give eulogies, and remember the lives of friends, brothers, coaches, leaders, and men who have made our lives better. We continue to remember their families, especially their widows and children.

As the working tools of life have fallen from their hands, eternal peace for them and comfort for their families is our constant prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
A. Gene Cobb, Jr., PGM
Committee Chairman

Final Report
of
Grand Master
R. David Wicker, Jr.
to
the
Grand Lodge
of
Ancient, Free & Accepted Masons
of
North Carolina
at
Winston-Salem, North Carolina
September 30, 2022

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina, Grand Lodge Officers, Past Grand Masters, Past Grand Officers, Officers of Constituent Lodges, Voting Delegates to the Annual Communication and Brethren all:

Behold, how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! I am so glad to be back in Winston-Salem with you for the annual communication of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina.

Regulation 13-2.5 requires that the Grand Master “present a written report on the first day of the annual communication of the Grand Lodge setting forth all of his acts of Grand Master and the general condition of Masonry within this jurisdiction and recommending such legislation and such action as he may deem necessary.” In compliance with the CODE, I present this Final Report setting forth my actions as your Grand Master during 2021, as well as my assessment of the Craft, the general condition of Freemasonry in North Carolina and the legislation that I have recommended for consideration by the Craft.

2021 Initiatives

Sadly, we are still continuing to battling the remnants of Covid-19. But in 2021, as we emerged from the worst of the pandemic, my primary objective was to bring to the attention of the Craft the need to rekindle an interest in Freemasonry. I believe we do this by marketing our Fraternity. Before everyone gets upset, I am not talking about canvassing the neighborhood and handing out petitions to solicit members. We never ask men, even good men, to join our ranks. Each must come to knock at Freemasonry’s door of his own free will and accord. By marketing, I am referring to the realization that everything we do and everything we say, even what we fail to do or fail to say, is marketing. Sometimes our words and actions serve us well. But at other times, we are our own worst enemy. We must understand that our very actions, our appearance, and our words provide an opportunity for us to attract the best men the world has to offer. Conversely, they can just as easily discourage someone from even considering joining this great Fraternity.

My focus on marketing was in three areas. First, community involvement, second, Lodge stability and third, reestablishing fraternalism. Community involvement has been discussed by prior Grand Masters and I am certain it will continue to be discussed by future Grand Masters. However, it cannot be stressed enough. When our lodges are out in the community in a positive way, we are relevant to today’s society. Failure is not an option. Failure to engage our communities is failure for our Fraternity in the future. As I have discussed during my district meetings, the lessons taught in our Masonic ritual, and in the ritual of the Shrine and Appendant Bodies, makes us better men. But it is not intended to do so in a vacuum. Freemasonry is intended to make you better so that you can make our communities, our state, and our nation better.

Community involvement is marketing. There are endless ideas and opportunities to help in your community. Sponsor a kid’s athletic team, sponsor a Boy Scout or Girl Scout Troop, adopt a highway, sponsor a blood drive,

volunteer at a soup kitchen or Meal on Wheels or Habitat for Humanities. Find something your community needs and provide that support. Let the people in your community know that you are there to make a difference. Let them see that you are engaged in helping make the community better. It is through your actions that you will attract the good men you want to join your Lodge. However, if you are just the old men in the building with no windows, understand that you are still marketing. But you are marketing yourself out of existence.

Next, we must provide for Lodge stability. This is done by making certain your Lodge is financially secure. Brethren, we must be good stewards of our homes. As Grand Master, I want to know that your Lodge has sufficient funds to make the necessary repairs, renovations, and improvements going forward. Too many times I have stood in a puddle of water in a lodge because the roof leaked. Too many times I have worn an overcoat because there was no heat or had to take off my jacket because there was no air conditioning. This is because the Lodge had no money to make the necessary repairs need to maintain their building. Yes, the Grand Lodge Officers want to know if you have money in the bank. Because if you don't, you are one roof replacement or one HVAC replacement away from having to close the doors.

If you own your lodge, you should have sufficient funds on hand to be able to pay for the replacement of the roof and the HVAC system. In my Interim Report, I suggested that if there were not sufficient funds in place to pay for these repairs, you should plan a fundraiser for the Lodge. This may no longer be an option. As has occurred during 2022, changes in the tax code may no longer permit us to raise funds for our buildings without taxable consequences. In speaking with Grand Master Thompson, I know that the Grand Lodge Officers are consulting with experts and advisors to be certain that as we go forward, we will not run afoul of the state or federal tax laws. Nevertheless, we must still take responsibility for the ongoing maintenance and repairs to our Lodges. That may involve an increase in the dues structure for your Lodge. Although that is never a popular topic to address, we must do what is necessary to keep the Lodges in good shape. I realize financial security will not happen overnight. But, you must make plans and move forward to make it happen. Otherwise, you are destined to lose your building.

Fifty (50) years ago, every important businessman in town was a Freemason. Does your Lodge look like a place that an important businessman would like to go? Is the grass a foot tall? Have the bushes been allowed to become overgrown? Does the building need painting? Are the gutters rusted out and the fascia boards rotted and falling off the building? If this is the condition of your Lodge, why would anyone want to come inside? It's like selling a house. If there is no curb appeal, there is no sale. If you are not doing regular maintenance to keep lodge looking good, you are marketing; it's just bad marketing.

Lastly, and most importantly, we must re-establish fraternalism within Freemasonry. You must keep up with your members. You have to contact them when you are not asking for money. You have to let them know they are important. It's not hard. Set goals that you can easily attain and then expand from there. At the beginning of my term of office, I asked the District Officers to have their Lodges contact each member two (2) times per year. However, that contact could not be related to money. It did not count if you asked them to pay

their dues, contribute to a charity or buy a raffle ticket. But this was an easy goal, send them a birthday card and a Christmas card. Simple and attainable. Follow the same procedure with the widows.

Update your database & member profiles. Get phone numbers, get addresses, and get email addresses. You cannot contact a member if you don't have their information. Update the spouse's information. Send her a birthday card. Let her know she is important as well. Remember, she is the one that will be contacting you for funeral rites. Many times, she is the one who pays the bills. Keep in contact with your widows. We took an obligation to aid and assist our widows and orphans. See that she is well. She shared her husband with the lodge for years, do not forget her now that he is gone.

When you contact your members, their spouses, their widows, my brothers, you are marketing. You are marketing that we are a caring fraternity. But when you fail to do this, you are also marketing. You are sending a message that we care for nothing but the payment of dues. You are saying that we are here only to initiate, pass, and raise someone to send us a check. If you fail at fraternalism, you are marketing yourself out of existence.

By way of example, I called your attention to and offered my personal thanks to Snow Lodge No. 363 and to Br. F. Lynn Castle and Br. Frank E. Guy. While I was attending the Imperial Shrine Session in Houston, Texas, I received a telephone call. I recognized the caller as a brother from Person County. However, I was engaged in the session and could not take the call. I sent a text message asking if I could call later. I received a text in response saying that the brother, his wife and grand children were stranded in Boone due to car trouble. I sent a text message to RWB Jonathan Underwood. RWB Jonathan contacted Br. Guy, secretary of Snow Lodge. Br. Guy contacted Br. Castle and in less than thirty (30) minutes from the original call, the brother and his family were being picked up by Br. Castle and taken to a local hotel while the car was being repaired. My brothers, Br. Castle and Br. Guy are shining examples of good men living up to their obligations. I am proud to be in a fraternity with men such as this. Well done, my brothers.

The choice of how you choose to represent yourself is a direct reflection on our Fraternity. Each and every one of you is someone's idea and understanding of what Freemasonry is. Freemasonry is meant to be practiced in everything we do and say. Be the positive example that lets the world know we are good men, made better by what we are taught in our Lodges

State of the Craft

Despite being closed for most of the first quarter of the year as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, by the end of my term as Grand Master I was able to visit well over forty (40) lodges in thirty (30) different Masonic Districts. As I have stated many times, it has been a truly humbling experience to serve the brethren as Grand Master of Masons. I have been received with kindness and respect by the Lodges, Shrine Temples, and the Appendant Bodies. I have enjoyed the opportunity to meet with so many of our brethren from across the state.

What is the state of the Craft in North Carolina? In offering my assessment as to the state of the Craft, I intend to be as direct and honest. To quote Charles Dickens, it is the best of times and the worst of times. Many

of our lodges are strong and healthy. Their ritualistic work is superior. Their engagement among their members, other lodges in the District and in their communities is excellent. Sadly, others are struggling to survive, sometimes barely having enough attendance to open the Lodge.

As I travel the state, I am more convinced that there is no problem with Freemasonry. Our tenants, our principles, our teachings are as true today as they have ever been. The sad realization is that the problem is with the Freemasons. I realize that it is easy to get discouraged. Membership continues to decline. The costs of maintaining lodge buildings continues to go up. But my brothers, if it were easy, everyone would do it. Masonry is work. It must be approached as work. Much of our problems are as a result of the fact the we fail to work.

During my District Meetings, I used examples of where we needed to improve our engagement with the Craft and with others. We must have a fraternal relationship with each and every one of our members. On a day when I thought I was off duty, I was approached by a brother at the barber shop. I have since learned that the Grand Master is never off duty. The brother sat down and asked me what I thought was the most important part of Masonry. We talked about fraternalism and how we are a society of friends and brothers, even if we haven't yet met. The brother thanked me and explained he could not see me in lodge because he did not have a current dues card. He stated that he did not have a dues card because the secretary would not mail it to him. He was a fifty (50) year member and no longer paid dues. In essence, the secretary was telling the brother that he was no longer worth a \$.50 stamp because he was now exempt from paying dues.

I told of how my uncle could not attend my Master Mason's Degree because after he moved from Greensboro to Middlesex, and unknown to him, he was been dropped by the Lodge for nonpayment of dues. You see, no one from his Lodge had contacted my uncle for years and my aunt decided that paying the Lodge dues was not an important bill to pay. Instead of reaching out to my uncle to see if he needed assistance, to see if there was an issue with his health or well-being, the Lodge just dropped him from the rolls. But for me calling him to attend my 3rd Degree, he would have never known he was NPd and likely would never have been reinstated.

I addressed the need for taking care of our petitioners and our candidates. We continue to lose almost thirty percent (30%) of the candidates who are initiated, but never passed to the Fellowcraft Degree. I told the story of how I did not receive a coach after initiation. I thought that extreme, but a good tool to use to explain my point. However, on five (5) occasions during my twenty-one (21) District Meetings, brothers came to me and told of how, after initiation, they were not provided a coach or their coach failed to meet with them. One of these brothers was WB Russell Bridges, Past Illustrious Grand Master of the York Rite Council. Only because the candidates forced the Lodge to coach them on the next degree did Freemasonry not lose two (2) Grand Officers: a Grand Master and a Grand York Rite Officer. The candidate should never have to wait. The Lodge should be ready to conduct him through the Degrees and coach him along the way. The message you send to the candidate must be that we welcome you and look forward to you joining our fraternity. It should not be that we will get to you when we can and when it is the easiest for us.

Lastly, I have read two (2) letters that I received from widows who

reached out to me as a result of the loss of their husbands. In both cases, their husband's Lodge failed to address their loss. The Lodge failed to send a card, failed call to check on how she was doing, failed to provide her comfort in her time of trouble. Sadly, my brothers, as of the date of this report, I have now received four (4) such letters from the families of brothers whom we failed. I have no doubt that these families have not only shared our failures with me, but they have shared it with their family members, friends and neighbors. Freemasonry must be a story of success, not failure.

These issues must be something that the lodges address in the coming years. Many of us came into Freemasonry as a result of knowing someone that was a Mason. Try and engage your inactive members. Send them a card or a letter. Call them on the telephone. Invite them to a lodge meeting. If they can no longer drive, offer to pick them up and take them to the meeting. Always make them feel welcome when they return. They may be looking for a way to reengage the lodge, but need a little assistance with getting in and meeting the newer members.

I am confident that you and your lodge can make a difference in this world. As you implement plans to reverse the membership trends, remember that you must always guard the west gate. We must not focus only on raising the number of members we have in our lodges. We do not need members, we need masons. For too long, we have lowered our standards, and ourselves, to defend the indefensible; we have allowed ourselves to accept the unacceptable and we have learned to tolerate the intolerable. Freemasonry is and must be better than this. We must attract those who truly want to be transformed by our fraternity.

Lodge Losses and Gains

During 2021, three (3) lodges surrendered their Charter to the Grand Lodge, those being Farmville Lodge No. 517, White Stone Lodge No. 155, and Balfour Lodge No. 188. In addition, there have been two (2) separate consolidations of lodges, Rodgers Lodge No. 525/Bailey Lodge No. 411 and Corinthian Lodge No. 542/P.P. Turner Lodge No. 746. Hopefully these consolidations will result in stronger lodges. There were discussions with regard to additional consolidations. Fortunately, those Lodges were able to increase their membership and participation to continue working without the present need for consolidation. This trend may continue as the Covid-19 pandemic slowly goes away. However, I am convinced that what our Freemasonry offers to the world is of such significance that these losses will be temporary.

In addition to the surrender of Charters and consolidation of Lodges, in November 2021, I found it in the best interest of Freemasonry to arrest the Charter of French Broad Lodge No. 292. For a number of years, French Broad Lodge had fallen under the control of its secretary. The secretary, having no education or training in theology or religious studies, insisted on using his office to promote what he perceives to be the only "correct" form of Christianity. As a result, he and a few members who supported his position made attending French Broad Lodge intolerable. So bad was the Lodge experience that more members were traveling to sit in other Lodges than were attending French Broad. I learned from a DDGM that the secretary's reputation was such that when he would try and visit in other Lodges, he would be excluded by the Master.

Over the past several years, the secretary was counseled in this matter by not less than five (5) Grand Masters and two (2) Grand Secretaries, one of whom has a PhD in theology and has been a pastor for almost 40 years. In addition, I spoke with the secretary for over 2 hours by telephone early in the year trying to advise him on this matter. But ignoring the wise counsel he had been given for many years, the secretary, using his access the Grand Lodge MORI database, sent a power point presentation regarding his personal views of Christianity and its relationship to Masonry to Lodges all across the state. I learned of his actions when the Grand Lodge Office, the Grand Line Officers, and I started receiving telephone calls and emails from all across the state, inquiring who sent the presentation and what was the intent for doing so. One response I received was from a brother who said “I am not sure he understands either Christianity or Masonry... Actually... I am sure he understands neither!” The secretary’s insistence that his distorted view of Christianity was the only “correct” form of Christianity is likely the reason that French Broad had been in such a decline. There are good men of all races, all religions, and from all countries in the world. But blinded by his bigotry, intolerance, and hatred of others, the secretary could not and will not accept this to be true.

In my opinion, the timing of the issuance of his manifesto was intentional. Having ignored the advice and counsel of five (5) prior Grand Masters, as well as counsel I provided to him, he chose to send this presentation across the state just before my term as Grand Master was to end. In doing so, I believe he felt that I would coast through the end of my term and would not take any action. This was not a wise decision on his part. I immediately ordered his access to MORI to be suspended, removed him from office and arrested the Charter. He was summoned to appear before the Grand Master to give an account of his actions. While he had the “courage” to sit behind a keyboard and sent out his message of hate, he did not have the courage to abide by our Masonic obligations, comply with the summons to appear before the Grand Master and provide an explanation of his actions. As a result, I referred that matter to the Judge Advocate for such action as he deemed appropriate. Further discussion with regard to that matter will be left to the report of the Judge Advocate.

My arrest of the Charter of French Broad Lodge was done in consultation with Deputy Grand Master Thompson. I was not going leave him with such an unpleasant matter to address after he took office. In our discussions, Deputy Grand Master Thompson and I were of the opinion that the arrest of the Charter would allow the members of French Broad Lodge to reflect upon their Masonic obligations and assess whether the Lodge was living up to those obligations. After allowing sufficient time to contemplate the Masonic principles that every Mason should be demonstrating toward all mankind, it may then be possible to save the Lodge. After taking office, Grand Master Thompson and I continued to discuss this matter. We discussed the remedial actions he believed the Lodge needed to take before he would restore the Charter. I fully supported his action plan. Earlier this year, Grand Master Thompson restored the Charter of French Broad Lodge. I supported him with regard to that action. I will leave any further discussion of the restoration of the Charter for Grand Master Thompson to address as he may deem to be necessary and proper.

Although there were losses due to consolidation, surrender, and arrest of Charters, there were also gains. At our annual communication on September 24, 2021, the Grand Lodge voted to grant a Charter to Prometheus Lodge No. 775. On October 15, 2021, at Catawba Lodge No. 248 in Newton I opened a

Master Mason's Lodge in Ample Form. After the Lodge was opened, I proceeded to constitute and consecrate Prometheus Lodge No. 775. After the ceremony of consecration was completed, I installed the Officers of Prometheus Lodge No. 775. After the Officers were duly installed, I surrendered the gavel to WM Julian Setzer and the other officers who proceeded with the work of the Lodge. Prometheus is our newest traditional observance lodge, and I wish them great success in the future.

On October 23, 2021, I traveled to Harmon Lodge No. 420 in Yadkinville for the purpose of issuing a dispensation to institute a lodge under dispensation. At the appointed time, the brethren assembled and the names of the officers were read out. The ceremony for the institution of a lodge under dispensation was performed, and I issued a Charter to Knights of Solomon Lodge, UD. At the conclusion of the ceremony, I surrendered the gavel to WB Arthur G. McMillian and the other officers of the Lodge. This will be our fifth Knights of Solomon Lodge, and I look forward to observing their work in the future.

On a personal note, I am honored to have been able to both grant a dispensation for the institution of a new lodge as well as constituting and consecrating a new lodge in the same year. As noted earlier, yes there were losses in lodges and membership, but with Prometheus Lodge No. 775 and Knights of Solomon Lodge, UD, I believe that our future is bright.

Necrology

During 2020, The Grand Lodge of North Carolina lost to death five (5) Past Grand Masters, the most in a single year in our history. To date, we have not suffered the loss of any additional Past Grand Masters. Unfortunately, each year it is our sad duty to report the number of deceased brethren that have been called into that Celestial Lodge Above. During 2021, we lost 1,151 brethren to death. We grieve the loss of our brothers and know that they are now in a better place. We offer our continued thoughts and prayers to their families and thank them for sharing their loved ones with our fraternity during each of their Masonic journeys.

District Deputy Officer Conferences

As Grand Master-Elect, I held five (5) area planning meetings with the District Deputy Grand Masters and the District Deputy Grand Lecturers. These meetings are critical for the Grand Master-elect to have the opportunity to meet with the District Officers in advance of his term as Grand Master. The Grand Master cannot be everywhere all the time. This meeting affords the Grand Master-elect an opportunity to get to know each of these officers. The District Officers are the eyes and ears of the Grand Master across the State. The Grand Master must know that he has the support of his District Officers and that he can rely on them to assist the lodges and the craft in their respective districts. In turn, it also allows the District Officers to know that they have the full confidence and support of the Grand Master. The meeting allows the Grand Master to preview his message with the district leaders and allows us to learn best practices between districts and answer any questions the officers may have.

Unfortunately, the Covid-19 pandemic prevented me from having any of these planning meetings at the Masonic Home for Children in Oxford or

WhiteStone as has been done in recent years. The campuses of the Masonic Home for Children in Oxford and WhiteStone remained closed to the public, as well as to their respective Boards of Directors, until mid-2021. Hopefully the District Officers will be able to again meet on our campuses in the years to come.

Because the campuses were closed, the area planning meetings on the following dates and at the following locations:

| Date | Host | Location |
|-------------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| November 16 | Greenville Lodge No. 284 | Greenville |
| November 17 | Hiram Lodge No. 40 | Clinton |
| November 18 | Sanford Lodge No. 151 | Sanford |
| November 23 | Waynesville Lodge No. 257 | Waynesville |
| November 30 | Statesville Lodge No. 27 | Statesville |

Honorary Title of Past District Deputy Grand Master

After I issued a statement denouncing the violence that occurred at our Nation's Capital on January 6, WB Todd Trivette resigned his position as District Deputy Grand Master. To fill the vacancy, I was honored to appoint to a three (3) year term, WB Mark Alexander as District Deputy Grand Master of the 33rd Masonic District. WB Alexander is a member of North Wilkesboro Lodge No. 407 and Wilkerson College Lodge No. 760, as well as an honorary member of Mt. Pleasant Lodge No. 573. WB Alexander is a Past Master of North Wilkesboro Lodge and the Past District Deputy Lecturer of the 33rd District. I have full confidence that in WB Alexander, the 33rd Masonic District will have an officer that is able to fill this position with honor and distinction. WB Alexander has done just that. Well done my brother.

It was my privilege to recommend that this Grand Lodge grant the honorary title of Past District Deputy Grand Master to the following Brethren who completed their respective terms of service as DDGM and who are now eligible in accordance with The Code:

| Name | Lodge | District |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| Norman Eugene Hiatt | Orr Lodge No. 104 | 3 |
| Brian Keith Phelps | Perseverance Lodge No. 59 | 5 |
| James Wilbert Futrell | Bethel Lodge No. 589 | 6 |
| Lester Howard Knight | Johnston Caswell Lodge No. 10 | 8 |
| Ronald Thomas Bowling | Durham Lodge No. 352 | 19 |
| Jonathan Shannon Johnson | Palmyra Lodge No. 147 | 20 |
| Daryl Nathan Crowder | Dan River Lodge No. 129 | 22 |
| David Keith Eddins | Hanks Lodge No. 128 | 24 |
| Mark Douglas Thorpe | King Lodge No. 722 | 26 |
| Harold Martin Brewer | Albemarle Lodge No. 703 | 29 |
| Dan Bryant Beal | Cookville Lodge No. 502 | 34 |

| | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|----|
| Jeffrey Webb Ward | Fairview Lodge No. 339 | 35 |
| Claude Ray Harrill | Kedron Lodge No. 387 | 38 |
| Anthony Joseph Rathbone | Nichols-West Asheville Lodge No. 650 | 39 |
| Ronald Hensley | Blue Ridge Lodge No. 435 | 41 |

Honorary Title of Past District Deputy Grand Lecturer

Likewise, I was privileged to 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:

| Name | Lodge | District |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|----------|
| James Warren Cook, Jr. | Widow's Son Lodge No. 519 | 8 |
| Harold Vernon Stafford | Corinthian Lodge No. 230 | 9 |
| Edward Earl Wells | Hiram Lodge No. 98 | 11 |
| Fredrick Alexander Szakasits | Orient Lodge No. 395 | 12 |
| John Wesley Watkins | Oak Grove Lodge No. 750 | 19 |
| Mathew William Cockman | Bula Lodge No. 409 | 22 |
| Michael Stephen Kerhoulas | Mt. Pleasant Lodge No. 573 | 33 |
| Michael Lee McGinnis | Gaston Lodge No. 263 | 36 |

District Meetings

I was able to hold twenty-one (21) district meetings during 2021. The district meetings ranged from Franklin to Manteo. I can attest to each of you that this is a large state to cover. Twenty-one (21) district meetings is slightly less than I had originally planned. Typically, the Grand Master begins his district meetings in late January and concludes at his home lodge by late May or early June. This allows about four (4) months for the Grand Master to complete his district meetings. However, because the Covid-19 pandemic remained with us, restrictions on gatherings the size of a district meeting would not allow us to meet until mid-June. As such, I had limited time to complete my district meetings and, as a result, there were about five (5) fewer meetings than I had hoped to make.

Nevertheless, I was able to get across the entire state in eight (8) weeks, with a visit to the Imperial Shrine Session squeezed in between. The first meeting was held on June 15 in Wilmington at St. John's Lodge No. 1. The last meeting was on August 16 at the stated communication of Oak Grove Lodge No. 750, my home lodge. I enjoyed traveling the state and meeting with so many of my brothers that I may not have otherwise had the opportunity to meet. I was humbled by the large turnout at my district meetings, several of which had well over one hundred (100) brothers in attendance. I have been received warmly and enjoyed the kindness of the Craft, as well as the many wonderful meals that were served.

During my district meetings, I explained that the only trepidation I had with regard to being Grand Master was having to write six (6) articles and speak with the Craft. Not that I could not write the articles or speak to a group,

but that I needed to impart something that was of significant importance for the Craft to take time to read and to hear. I hope that the messages I brought to you were worthy of your time.

In an effort to show our support for the appendant bodies, I was pleased and honored to have each Shrine Center, the Scottish Rite, and the York Rite Bodies co-host a District Meeting. I believe this to be of great importance. My brothers, being transformed by the lessons taught in the Blue Lodge, the Shrine, the Scottish Rite, and the York Rite that makes us better men. For too long, we have failed to unite with our brethren in the appendant bodies. We are not in a competition. The Scottish Rite is not stealing members from the York Rite, and the Shrine is not stealing members from the Blue Lodges. Every brother must find the right quarry in which to labor. The quarry that is of most interest to us as individuals may differ, but so long as we labor in unity, we can accomplish much. You will note from the list below which of the District Meetings was co-hosted by the appendant bodies. A special thanks to each for their support.

As I crossed the State, I was pleased to have RW Jonathan Underwood with me. RWB Jonathan has done an excellent job assuming the role of Grand Secretary. He has become a good friend, and I enjoyed his company and his humor. He served me and the Craft with distinction this year. When RWB Underwood could not be present, RWB Donald E. Kehler, JGW, and Ill. Sir C. Alvin Billings, Jr., PP filled in admirably. I wish to thank each of them for their service.

Also in my travels, I was honored to have WB Calvin A. Rogers, Jr., Grand Tyler, and WB Herbert C. “Dicky” Lyon, Grand Lecturer, travel with me as well. Whether I was in Manteo or Franklin, or somewhere in between, they traveled the state with me. Of all my District Meetings, I believe neither missed more than two (2) meetings total. Both are true and trusty friends, and I appreciate all they did for me. It was also a privilege to travel with WB Kevin Otis, Administrator of the Masonic Home for Children, Br. Mark Lewis, Administrator for WhiteStone, and WB Chris Richardson with the North Carolina Masonic Foundation. The year was difficult for all our charities, both financially and from the stand point of safety during a pandemic. Nevertheless, they were able to not only work tirelessly for our widows and orphans, but also travel the state to give the Craft a firsthand account of the condition of our Homes.

I would like to thank my Grand Lodge Officers and many of our Past Grand Masters for attending my meetings and offering me words of encouragement and support.

Following is a list of the 2021 district meetings:

| Date | District | Host | Location |
|-------------|-----------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------|
| June 15 | 12 | St. John’s No. 1 | Wilmington |
| June 16 | 4 | Semper Fidelis No. 680 | Jacksonville |
| June 17 | 11 | Hiram No. 98 | Clinton |
| June 22 | 15 | William T. Bain No. 231/Amran Shrine | Raleigh |
| June 23 | 23 | Corinthian No. 542 | Greensboro |

| | | | |
|-----------|----|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| June 24 | 31 | Derita No. 715/Oasis Shrine | Charlotte |
| July 12 | 16 | Mt. Lebanon No. 117 | Wilson |
| July 13 | 17 | Creasy Proctor No. 679/Sudan Shrine | Fayetteville |
| July 14 | 21 | Roman Eagle No. 550 | Southern Pines |
| July 19 | 2 | Manteo No. 521 | Manteo |
| July 20 | 1 | Gatesville No. 126 | Elizabeth City |
| July 21 | 3 | Orr No. 104 | Washington |
| July 26 | 28 | Fulton No. 99 | Salisbury |
| July 27 | 8 | Royal White Hart No. 2 | Halifax |
| August 2 | 41 | Junaluskee No. 145/Scottish Rite | Franklin |
| August 3 | 39 | Mt. Herman No. 118 | Asheville |
| August 4 | 34 | Hickory No. 343 | Hickory |
| August 9 | 33 | Snow No. 363 | Boone |
| August 10 | 25 | Elkin Lodge No. 454 | Elkin |
| August 11 | 13 | Oxford Lodge No. 122/York Rite | Oxford |
| August 15 | 19 | Oak Grove Lodge No. 750 | Durham |

Grand Lodge Annual Communication

On Friday, September 24, 2021, I opened the Grand Lodge of North Carolina at the Benton Convention Center in Winston Salem, North Carolina. The purpose for opening Grand Lodge was to conduct our Annual Communication. After Grand Lodge was opened, we received the Past Grand Masters and Past Grand Line Officers, the various dignitaries from the Scottish Rite, the York Rite Bodies, the Shrine, the Prince Hall Grand Lodge, and visiting Grand Line Officers from other states. We then heard the oration from our Grand Orator, RW E. Oscar Alleyne. RWB Alleyne was also the Junior Grand Warden of the Grand Lodge of New York. RWB Alleyne is well known as a speaker on Masonic topics, and I was honored that he agreed to serve as my Grand Orator.

After oration by RWB Alleyne, it was my honor to present to MW Daniel T. Thompson, Grand Master of the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of North Carolina a portrait of Prince Hall. The portrait was an original oil on canvas and was 4 foot by 6 foot in size. It was painted by Br. Ryan Flynn, a member of Blackmer Lodge No. 127. RWB Alleyne assisted with the presentation. After a few tears, GM Thompson made appropriate remarks, thanking Br. Flynn, RWB Alleyne and the Grand Lodge of North Carolina.

It was also my honor to present to RW Jonathan Underwood a Fez from Amran Shrine as Grand Secretary. A special thanks to Ill. Sirs C. Alvin Billings, Jr., PP and J. Ray Fields, PP, Recorder Emeritus in getting the Fez and assisting in the presentation to our Grand Secretary. After RWB Underwood was presented with his Fez, I uncovered and allowed the Grand Secretary to cover with his Fez. To the best anyone can remember, this is the only time the Grand Secretary has presided over Grand Lodge.

During our Annual Communication, the delegates to Grand Lodge received and approved the reports of the various Committees, considered 15

various Amendment Groups and approved Grand Master Bradshaw's Orders 10, 11 and 12, Grand Master Bradshaw's Opinions 2 and 3 as well as Grand Master Wicker's Orders 1 through 16. On Saturday, September 25, the delegates approved the budget, and the election of officers was held. RW Larry B. Thompson, Jr., DGM was elected Grand Master for the ensuing year. Each of the other progressive Grand Lodge Officers were elected and appointed to advance. RWB Thompson announced that his appointment for Junior Grand Steward would be C. Alvin Billings, Jr. At the conclusion of all business, I closed Grand Lodge in Ample Form.

Lion and Pillar Lodges for 2021

Despite the fact that we were closed for much of the first half of the year, the Lion and Pillar program continued in 2021. Since its inception in 2017, this program has been utilized by lodges for their continued growth and pursuit of excellence. Below is a list of lodges that have achieved excellence in 2021.

Platinum Level Lion and Pillar

| Lodge | District | Location |
|---------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Lux Libertas Lodge 772 | 19 | Hillsborough |
| Semper Fidelis Lodge 680 | 4 | Jacksonville |
| Fuquay Lodge 258 | 15 | Fuquay-Varina |
| Eagle Lodge 19 | 19 | Hillsborough |
| Thomas M. Holt Lodge 492 | 22 | Graham |
| Zion Lodge 81 | 7 | Trenton |
| Kenly Lodge 257 | 16 | Kenly |
| Ashlar Lodge 765 | 12 | Hampstead |
| William G. Hill Lodge 218 | 14 | Raleigh |
| Cannon Memorial Lodge 626 | 28 | Kannapolis |
| Mingo Lodge 206 | 11 | Dunn |
| Bula Lodge 409 | 22 | Burlington |

Standard Level Lion and Pillar

| Lodge | District | Location |
|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Shallotte Lodge 727 | 12 | Shallotte |
| Cleveland Lodge 202 | 35 | Shelby |
| Wilmington Lodge 319 | 12 | Wilmington |
| Guilford Lodge 656 | 26 | Greensboro |
| Oxford Lodge 122 | 13 | Oxford |
| Corinthian Lodge 230 | 9 | Rocky Mount |
| Hibriten Lodge 262 | 34 | Lenoir |

As others have done, I would like to offer a special thanks to Most Worshipful A. Gene Cobb, Jr., PGM 2017, for his continued support of the Lion and Pillar Program. It was PGM Cobb that developed and implemented this Program. It has done nothing but help improve the quality of the Blue Lodge experience for those that chose to participate. If we came here to work and to improve ourselves in Masonry, the Lion and Pillar Program provides lodges with the tools to work with so that each lodge can become a success.

Joseph Montfort Medals

Pursuant to Regulation 80-1, each Grand Master has been given the privilege to present not more than three (3) Joseph Montfort Medals during his term in office. The Montfort Medal can be presented by the Grand Master to “any Master Mason in good standing...who in the opinion of the Grand Master is deserving thereof because of distinguished Masonic service or achievement.” It was my honor to present three (3) Montfort Medals to brothers I believe fit that description.

On August 13, 2021, I presented my first Joseph Montfort Medal to MWB Dewey R. Preslar, Jr., Past Grand Master. MWB Preslar was raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason on October 1, 1988, in Andrew Jackson Lodge No. 576 in Salisbury, North Carolina. He served as Master of Andrew Jackson Lodge in 1993. MWB Preslar is a member of Rockingham Lodge No. 495, and a charter member of both Orphans Lodge No. 761 and Sophia Lodge No. 767. In addition, MWB Preslar is an honorary member of 16 other lodges across this great State. Over the course of his Masonic journey, MWB Preslar has served on numerous Grand Lodge Committees and Boards, some of which include Finance, Jurisprudence, Committee on the Masonic Home for Children, Committee on WhiteStone, Board of General Purposes, Board of Directors of WhiteStone, and the Board of Directors of the Masonic Home for Children. PGM Preslar is currently serving on the Board of General Purposes and as the Chair of the Board of Directors for the Masonic Home for Children where he was conferred Emeritus Board Member status, one of only four (4) Masons to have ever been so honored. It was only fitting that PGM Preslar received the Montfort Medal at the Board of Directors meeting at the Masonic Home for Children. MWB Preslar is well-respected for his many contributions to Masonry.

On August 16, 2021, at my last district meeting, I presented my second Joseph Montfort Medal to WB Herbert C. “Dicky” Lyon. WB Lyon was raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason on November 22, 1982, in Eno Lodge No. 210 in Durham, North Carolina. WB Lyon is a charter member of Mosaic Lodge No. 762 and is an honorary member of Eagle Lodge No. 19, Knap of Reeds Lodge No. 158, and Oak Grove Lodge No. 750. WB Lyon served as Master of Eno Lodge in 1990 and Master of Mosaic Lodge in 2013. WB Lyon has served as Secretary of Eno Lodge for thirty (30) years and has been a Class A Certified Lecturer for 21 years. WB Lyon has served as both the District Deputy Grand Master and the District Deputy Lecturer for the 19th Masonic District. WB Lyon’s service as DDGL has been for more than ten (10) years. In addition, he has served on the Grand Lodge Board of Custodians and as Grand Lecturer. For many years, WB Lyon has assisted the various lodges in the 19th Masonic District, as well as the surrounding districts, with their degree work and provided countless schools of instruction and lecture services. He is a true

example of the definition of a Mason.

On September 24, 2021, during the Annual Communication of Grand Lodge, I presented the third Joseph Montfort Medal to WB Calvin A. Rogers, Jr. WB Rogers was raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason on February 14, 1981, in Hiram Lodge No. 40 in Raleigh, North Carolina. WB Rogers is a charter member of William T. Bain Lodge No. 231, Millbrook Lodge No. 97, and Orphans Lodge No. 761. WB Rogers has served as Master of Masters Lodge No. 754 (demised into Millbrook Lodge No. 97) on two (2) occasions — once in 1985 and again in 2008 — as well as Master of Millbrook Lodge No. 97 in 2011 and Master of Orphans Lodge No. 761 in 2022. In addition, WB Rogers has served two (2) separate terms as secretary of William T. Bain Lodge No. 231, totaling approximately 10 years. WB Rogers served as Grand Tyler during 2021. WB Rogers is a member of the Scottish Rite Valley of Raleigh where he is a Knight Commander Court of Honour (KCCH). He is a member of the Raleigh York Rite Bodies and is a member of the Royal Arch Chapter Grand Line where he holds the office of the Grand Master of the First Veil. WB Rogers regularly cooks for the York Rite, Scottish Rite, the Masonic Lodges meetings, and even cooks for Masonic bodies in which he is not a member. He regularly supports our charities by promoting fundraising events and cooking at the Pig Jig, Homecoming for the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford, and Masonic Lodge fundraisers. WB Rogers is a Mason's Mason.

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. 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.

During 2021, there were eighteen (18) such requests submitted to me. In each case an investigation was conducted by the District Deputy Grand Master, with such assistance as he deemed necessary. Based on the information provided to me by the DDGMs, I approved the request of sixteen (16) petitioners to proceed with the Degrees in Masonry with their physical disability. Unfortunately, two (2) of the petitioners suffered from physical and/or mental disabilities that were too severe to be approved. In those cases, I could not approve for the individuals to proceed.

I would again like to thank each of the District Deputy Grand Masters who thoroughly investigated these specific instances. Their assistance and the reports that were provided to me were invaluable and helped to expedite my final decisions.

Dispensations

During my term as Grand Master, I issued one hundred thirty-five (135) Dispensations for various Lodge needs and situations. Listed below are the Dispensations as issued by me:

1. **To Andrews Lodge No. 529** to postpone the election of officers until their 2021 annual communication. Issued December 8, 2020.

2. **To Perseverance Lodge No. 59** to postpone the election of officers until their 2021 annual communication. Issued December 8, 2020.
3. **To Roman Eagle Lodge No. 550** to postpone the election of officers until their 2021 annual communication. Issued December 8, 2020.
4. **To Mount Holly No. 544** to postpone the election of officers until their 2021 annual communication. Issued December 8, 2020.
5. **To Goldsboro Lodge No. 634** to move the annual communication and election of officers to the December 28, 2020, stated communication. Issued December 8, 2020.
6. **To Piedmont-Pioneer Lodge No. 685** to hold an election for Treasurer at the January 7, 2021, stated communication. Issued December 8, 2020.
7. **To Wilkerson College Lodge No. 760** to hold the December 12, 2020, stated communication virtually. Issued December 8, 2020.
8. **To Lincoln Lodge No. 137** to postpone the election of officers until their 2021 annual communication. Issued December 8, 2020.
9. **To Allen-Graham Lodge No. 695** to postpone the election of officers until their 2021 annual communication. Issued December 8, 2020.
10. **To Snow Lodge No. 363** to postpone the election of officers until their 2021 annual communication. Issued December 9, 2020.
11. **To South Fork Lodge No. 462** to postpone the election of officers until their 2021 annual communication. Issued December 9, 2020.
12. **To Robbinsville Lodge No. 672** to postpone the election of officers until their 2021 annual communication. Issued December 9, 2020.
13. **To Marble Springs Lodge No. 439** to move the annual communication and election of officers to the January 2, 2021, stated communication. Issued December 9, 2020.
14. **To Ocean Lodge No. 405** to hold an election for Senior Warden at the December 22, 2020, stated communication. Issued December 9, 2020.
15. **To New Lebanon Lodge No. 314** to move the annual communication and election of officers to the December 8, 2020, stated communication. Issued December 7, 2020.
16. **To Pilot Lodge No. 493** to hold the December 14, 2020, stated communication virtually and to elect a Senior Warden at said meeting. Issued December 10, 2020.
17. **To Whetstone Lodge No. 515** to move the annual communication and election of officers to the December 15, 2020, stated communication and to move the location of said meeting to Gaston Lodge No. 263. Issued December 11, 2020.
18. **To Mt. Lebanon Lodge No. 117** to move the annual communication and election of officers to the December 21, 2020, stated communication. Issued December 11, 2020.
19. **To Elkin Lodge No. 454** to postpone the election of officers until their 2021 annual communication. Issued December 15, 2020.
20. **To Numa F. Reid Lodge No. 344** to postpone the election of officers

- until their 2021 annual communication. Issued December 15, 2020.
21. **To Mocksville Lodge No. 134** to postpone the election of officers until their 2021 annual communication. Issued December 15, 2020.
 22. **To East LaPorte Lodge No. 358** to move the annual communication and election of officers to their next communication. Issued December 15, 2020.
 23. **To St. John's Lodge No. 4** to move the annual communication and election of officers to the December 28, 2020, stated communication. Issued December 23, 2020.
 24. **To Hiram Lodge No. 40** to hold the January 4, 2021, stated communication at J. J. Crowder Lodge No. 743. Issued December 23, 2020.
 25. **To Stanley Lodge No. 713** to postpone the election of officers until their 2021 annual communication. Issued December 23, 2020.
 26. **To Forest City Lodge No. 381** to postpone the election of officers until their 2021 annual communication. Issued December 23, 2020.
 27. **To Lucama Lodge No. 527** to postpone the election of officers until their 2021 annual communication. Issued December 23, 2020.
 28. **To Bailey Lodge No. 411** to postpone the election of officers until their 2021 annual communication. Issued December 23, 2020.
 29. **To Jefferson Penn Lodge No. 384** to perform Masonic Graveside Rites on January 2, 2021, with certain safety protocols in place, during a period of time where gatherings are prohibited due to Covid-19. Issued December 30, 2020.
 30. **To Kernersville Lodge No. 669** to open a Lodge of Sorrow and perform Masonic Graveside Rites on January 1, 2021, with certain safety protocols in place, during a period of time where gatherings are prohibited due to Covid-19. Issued December 30, 2020.
 31. **To Corinthian Lodge No. 230** to hold the January 11, 2021, stated communication virtually. Issued January 8, 2021.
 32. **To Pee Dee Lodge No. 150** to postpone the election of officers until their 2021 annual communication. Issued January 11, 2021.
 33. **To Fairview Lodge No. 339** to move the January 11, 2021, stated communication to January 25, 2021. Issued January 11, 2021.
 34. **To Lux Libertas Lodge No. 772** to hold the February 6, 2021, stated communication virtually. Issued January 11, 2021.
 35. **To Relief Lodge No. 431** to hold the January 26, 2021, stated communication virtually. Issued January 11, 2021.
 36. **To Kenly Lodge No. 257** to hold the January 19, 2021, stated communication virtually. Issued January 11, 2021.
 37. **To Knights of Solomon Lodge No. 764** to hold the annual communication and election of officers on January 16, 2021, at Hibriten Lodge No. 262 and, thereafter, to hold stated communications at the following dates and at the following locations: April 17, 2021, at Salem Lodge No. 289; June 19, 2021, at North Wilkesboro Lodge No. 407; September 18, 2021, at Andrew Jackson Lodge No. 576;
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- and, November 13, 2021, at Charles M. Setzer Lodge No. 693. Issued January 11, 2021.
38. **To Mingo Lodge No. 206** to perform Masonic Graveside Rites on January 10, 2021, with certain safety protocols in place, during a period of time where gatherings are prohibited due to Covid-19. Issued January 10, 2021 and signed January 11, 2021, nunc pro tunc.
 39. **To Wake Forest Lodge No. 282** to hold the January 12, 2021, annual communication and election of officers virtually. Issued January 11, 2021.
 40. **To Knights of Solomon Lodge No. 766** to move the January 16, 2021, stated communication to February 20, 2021. Issued January 12, 2021.
 41. **To Eagle Lodge No. 19** to install officers virtually. Issued January 12, 2021.
 42. **To Liberty Lodge No. 45** to move the January 7, 2021, stated communication to January 21, 2021. Issued January 12, 2021.
 43. **To Junaluskee Lodge No. 145** to move the January 5, 2021, stated communication to January 19, 2021. Issued January 12, 2021.
 44. **To Enterprise Lodge No. 752** to move the January 11, 2021, stated communication to January 18, 2021. Issued January 15, 2021.
 45. **To Jefferson Penn Lodge No. 384** to hold a special election of officers at the January 19, 2021, stated communication due to the death of the Master-elect prior to installation. Issued January 15, 2021.
 46. **To J. J. Crowder Lodge No. 743** to install officers virtually. Issued January 19, 2021.
 47. **To Yadkin Falls Lodge No. 637** to hold a special election for Junior Warden at the February 1, 2021, stated communication. Issued January 19, 2021.
 48. **To Mosaic Lodge No. 762** to hold the February 16, 2021, stated communication virtually. Issued January 21, 2021.
 49. **To Person Lodge No. 113** to hold a special election for Treasurer at the January 26, 2021, stated communication. Issued January 22, 2021.
 50. **To Kenly Lodge No. 257** to hold all stated communications virtually until April 1, 2021. Issued January 26, 2021.
 51. **To University Lodge No. 408** to install officers virtually. Issued January 26, 2021.
 52. **To J. J. Crowder Lodge No. 743** to hold the February 4, 2021, stated communication virtually. Issued January 26, 2021.
 53. **To Shelby Lodge No. 744** to hold the February 1, 2021, stated communication virtually. Issued January 27, 2021.
 54. **To Forsyth Lodge No. 707** to hold the February 3, 2021, stated communication virtually. Issued January 27, 2021.
 55. **To Fairview Lodge No. 339** to hold a special election for Master at the February 8, 2021, due to the death of the previously elected and

- installed Master. Issued February 2, 2021.
56. **To Currituck Lodge No. 463** to hold a special election for Senior Warden at the February 8, 2021, stated communication due to the Senior Warden-elect declining to office. Issued February 2, 2021.
 57. **To Belhaven Lodge No. 509** to hold a special election for Junior Warden and Secretary at the February 9, 2021, stated communication. Issued February 2, 2021.
 58. **To Knights of Solomon Lodge No. 768** to hold the February 6, 2021, stated communication at J. J. Crowder Lodge No. 743. Issued February 4, 2021.
 59. **To Holly Springs Lodge No. 115** to hold all stated and emergent communications at Fuquay Lodge No. 258. Issued February 4, 2021.
 60. **To Holly Springs Lodge No. 115** to hold the annual communication and election of officers on February 23, 2021. Issued February 4, 2021.
 61. **To University Lodge No. 408** to hold all stated communications virtually until May 1, 2021. Issued February 4, 2021.
 62. **To Wilkerson College Lodge No. 760** to hold the February 13, 2021, stated communication virtually. Issued February 9, 2021.
 63. **To State College Lodge No. 770** to hold the February 17, 2021, stated communication virtually. Issued February 9, 2021.
 64. **To Fallston Lodge No. 356** to hold the annual communication and election of officers on the March 8, 2021, stated communication. Issued February 9, 2021.
 65. **To Knights of Solomon Lodge No. 774** to hold the February 20, 2021, stated communication at Mystic Tie Lodge No. 237. Issued February 16, 2021.
 66. **To Eagle Lodge No. 19** to hold an emergent communication on February 27, 2021, at Durham Lodge No. 352 to confer a Master Mason Degree. Issued February 16, 2021.
 67. **To Mt. Hermon Lodge No. 118** to operate without a Charter being displayed in the Lodge while the original Charter is undergoing historic restoration. Issued February 16, 2021.
 68. **To Mosaic Lodge No. 762** to postpone the election of officers until their 2021 annual communication. Issued February 17, 2021.
 69. **To King Lodge No. 722** to move the February 18, 2021, stated communication to February 25, 2021. Issued February 18, 2021.
 70. **To Youngsville Lodge No. 377** to move the February 18, 2021, stated communication to March 1, 2021. Issued February 18, 2021.
 71. **To J. J. Crowder Lodge No. 743** to hold the March 4, 2021, stated communication virtually. Issued March 2, 2021.
 72. **To Hanks Lodge No. 128** to postpone the election of officers until their 2021 annual communication. Issued March 2, 2021.
 73. **To Hibriten Lodge No. 262** to hold a special election at the March 4, 2021, stated communication for Junior Warden due to the death of the installed Junior Warden from Covid-19. Issued March 3, 2021.

74. **To Forsyth Lodge No. 707** to hold the March 3, 2021, stated communication virtually. Issued March 3, 2021.
 75. **To Eagle Lodge No. 19** to hold an emergent communication on March 13, 2021, at Durham Lodge No. 352 to confer a Master Mason Degree. Issued March 9, 2021.
 76. **To Neill S. Stewart Lodge No. 556** to postpone the election of officers until their 2021 annual communication. Issued March 9, 2021.
 77. **To Oak Island Lodge No. 758** to move the March 18, 2021, stated communication to March 22, 2021. Issued March 18, 2021.
 78. **To William G. Hill Lodge No. 218** to hold all stated communications at James B. Green Lodge No. 735. Issued March 24, 2021.
 79. **To Kenly Lodge No. 257** to hold all stated communications in a hybrid format of both in-person and virtual until July 1, 2021. Issued March 24, 2021.
 80. **To Carthage Lodge No. 181** to hold an emergent communication on April 10, 2021, at 599 Doubs Chapel Road, Carthage, North Carolina, for the purpose of conferring an outdoor Master Mason Degree. Issued March 24, 2021.
 81. **To Dunn's Rock Lodge No. 267** to hold the annual communication and election of officers on the April 8, 2021, stated communication. Issued March 26, 2021.
 82. **To Raleigh Lodge No. 500** to hold an emergent communication on April 1, 2021, for the purpose of conferring the Fellowcraft Degree at Cary Lodge No. 198. Issued March 26, 2021.
 83. **To Ayden Lodge No. 498** to postpone the election of officers until their 2021 annual communication. Issued April 1, 2021.
 84. **To Mount Olive Lodge No. 208** to postpone the election of officers until their 2021 annual communication. Issued April 5, 2021.
 85. **To Laurinburg Lodge No. 305** to hold their stated communication on May 4, 2021, at 6:30 p.m. instead of 7:30 p.m. Issued April 5, 2021.
 86. **To Scotland Neck Lodge No. 447** to hold a special election at the May 4, 2021, stated communication for Junior Warden. Issued April 7, 2021.
 87. **To Raleigh Lodge No. 500** to hold the April 20, 2021, stated communication at James B. Green Lodge No. 735. Issued April 19, 2021.
 88. **To State College Lodge No. 770** to hold the April 21, 2021, stated communication virtually. Issued April 21, 2021.
 89. **To Spencer Lodge No. 543** to cancel the April 27, 2021, stated communication to attend a Master Mason Degree at Scotch Ireland Lodge No. 154. Issued April 22, 2021.
 90. **To Knights of Solomon Lodge No. 768** to hold the May 1, 2021, stated communication at Waynesville Lodge No. 259. Issued April 23, 2021.
 91. **To Jerusalem Lodge No. 95** to hold an emergent communication
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- on May 15, 2021, at 728 Ormondsville Road, Hookerton, North Carolina, for the purpose of conferring an outdoor Master Mason Degree. Issued April 26, 2021.
92. **To Oxford Lodge No. 122** to hold an emergent communication on May 17, 2021, at Orphans Lodge No. 761 at the Masonic Home for Children in Oxford for the purpose of Masonic Education and to tour the Children's Home. Issued April 26, 2021.
 93. **To Scotch Ireland Lodge No. 154** to cancel the May 11, 2021, stated communication to attend a Master Mason Degree at Spencer Lodge No. 543. Issued April 26, 2021.
 94. **To Sophia Lodge No. 767** to postpone the election of officers until their 2021 annual communication. Issued April 30, 2021.
 95. **To Perquimans Lodge No. 106** to postpone the election of officers until their 2021 annual communication. Issued April 30, 2021.
 96. **To Raleigh Lodge No. 500** to hold an emergent communication on May 6, 2021, at James B. Green Lodge No. 735 to confer an Entered Apprentice Degree. Issued May 3, 2021.
 97. **To Raleigh Lodge No. 500** to hold a stated communication on May 18, 2021, at James B. Green Lodge No. 735. Issued May 3, 2021.
 98. **To Veritas Lodge No. 769** to hold the May 26, 2021, stated communication virtually. Issued May 3, 2021.
 99. **To Knights of Solomon Lodge No. 774** to hold stated communications on the following dates and at the following locations: May 15, 2021, at Junaluskee Lodge No. 145; July 17, 2021, at Bakersville Lodge No. 357; and September 18, 2021, at Blue Ridge Lodge No. 435. Issued May 6, 2021.
 100. **To Semper Fidelis Lodge No. 680** to hold an emergent communication on August 14, 2021, at Orphans Lodge No. 761 at the Masonic Home for Children in Oxford for the purpose of Masonic Education and to tour the Children's Home. Issued May 6, 2021.
 101. **To Bald Creek Lodge No. 397** to hold an emergent communication on May 22, 2021, at 337 Camp Rainbow Road, Boone, North Carolina, for the purpose of conferring an outdoor Master Mason Degree. Issued May 14, 2021.
 102. **To Lodge of the Nine Sisters No. 773** to hold the May 15, 2021, stated communication virtually. Issued May 14, 2021.
 103. **To J. J. Crowder Lodge No. 743** to hold all stated communications in a hybrid format of both in-person and virtual until September 1, 2021. Issued May 27, 2021.
 104. **To Fuquay Lodge No. 258** to hold an emergent communication on June 24, 2021, at Holly Springs Lodge No. 115 for the purpose of conferring an Entered Apprentice Degree. Issued May 27, 2021.
 105. **To Stump Sound Lodge No. 733** to hold a special election at the June 22, 2021, stated communication for Senior Warden as the previous Senior Warden resigned his position. Issued May 27, 2021.
 106. **To Kenly Lodge No. 257** to hold an emergent communication on June 5, 2021, at 980 Cuddington Road, Kenly, North Carolina, for

the purpose of conferring an outdoor Entered Apprentice Degree. Issued May 27, 2021.

107. **To Lucama Lodge No. 527** to hold an emergent communication on June 5, 2021, at 980 Cuddington Road, Kenly, North Carolina for the purpose of conferring an outdoor Master Mason Degree. Issued May 27, 2021.
 108. **To Piedmont-Pioneer Lodge No. 685** to hold a special election at the July 1, 2021, stated communication for Junior Warden as the previous Junior Warden resigned his position. Issued June 3, 2021.
 109. **To Raleigh Lodge No. 500** to hold all stated communications at James B. Green No. 735 until October 31, 2021. Issued June 4, 2021.
 110. **To South Fork Lodge No. 462** to hold all stated communications at Belmont Lodge No. 627. Issued June 8, 2021.
 111. **To South Fork Lodge No. 462** to hold a special election at the June 8, 2021, stated communication for Senior Warden as the previous Senior Warden resigned his position. Issued June 8, 2021.
 112. **To William T. Bain Lodge No. 231** to hold an emergent communication on June 22, 2021, at Amran Shrine Center, 11100 Creedmoor Road, Raleigh, North Carolina for the purpose of hosting the District Meeting for the Grand Master of Masons. Issued June 10, 2021.
 113. **To Clay Lodge No. 301** to hold an emergent communication on September 11, 2021, at 6448 Hwy 64 West, Brasstown, North Carolina, for the purpose of conferring an outdoor Civil War reenactment Master Mason Degree. Issued June 10, 2021.
 114. **To Royal White Hart Lodge No. 2** to hold a special election at the June 20, 2021, stated communication for Senior Warden as the previous Senior Warden resigned his position. Issued June 17, 2021.
 115. **To Knights of Solomon Lodge No. 768** to hold a stated communication on July 10, 2021, at Pilot Lodge No. 493. Issued July 2, 2021.
 116. **To Wilkerson College Lodge No. 760** to hold stated communications on the following dates and at the following locations: August 14, 2021, at Pilot Lodge No. 493 and October 9, 2021, at Orphans Lodge No. 761. Issued July 2, 2021.
 117. **To Henderson Lodge No. 229** to hold all stated communications from August 2021 through December 2021 at John H. Mills Lodge No. 624. Issued July 30, 2021.
 118. **To Creasy Proctor Lodge No. 679** to hold the August 10, 2021, stated communication at Lebanon Lodge No. 391 due to the need to replace the HVAC system. Issued August 3, 2021.
 119. **To Clifford Duell Lodge No. 756** to hold the August 10, 2021, stated communication at Lebanon Lodge No. 391 due to the need to replace the HVAC system. Issued August 16, 2021.
 120. **To Union Lodge No. 618** to hold an emergent communication on September 18, 2021, at 16924 Cabarrus Road, Midland, North Carolina, for the purpose of conferring an outdoor Master Mason
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- Degree. Issued August 25, 2021.
121. **To Creasy Proctor Lodge No. 679** to hold all stated communications at Lebanon Lodge No. 391 located at Hope, Mills, North Carolina, beginning September 14, 2021, until such time as the HVAC system is repaired at Creasy Proctor Lodge. Issued August 30, 2021.
 122. **To Knights of Solomon Lodge No. 768** to hold a stated communication at Orphans Lodge No. 761 located in Oxford, North Carolina, on September 11, 2021. Issued September 2, 2021.
 123. **To Orphans Lodge No. 761** to hold a stated communication at Oxford Lodge No. 122 located in Oxford, North Carolina, on October 9, 2021. Issued September 3, 2021.
 124. **To Wilkerson College Lodge No. 760** to hold a stated communication at Blackmer Lodge No. 127 located in Mt. Gilead, North Carolina, on October 9, 2021. Issued September 8, 2021.
 125. **To Perquimans Lodge No. 106** to cancel the September 21, 2021, stated communication to attend an Entered Apprentice Degree at Eureka Lodge No. 317, located Elizabeth City, North Carolina. Issued September 9, 2021.
 126. **To MESH Lodge No. 771** to hold a stated communication at Greensboro Lodge No. 76 on October 9, 2021, due to Covid-19 pandemic restrictions at WhiteStone. Issued October 4, 2021.
 127. **To Raleigh Lodge No. 500** to hold all stated communication at James B. Green Lodge No. 735 until December 31, 2021, due to the sale of the Lodge Building by the Raleigh Masonic Temple Corporation. Issued October 4, 2021.
 128. **To Lux Libertas Lodge No. 772** to hold an emergent communication on October 12, 2021, at New West Hall on the Campus of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, located in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, for the purpose of celebrating University Day. Issued October 11, 2021.
 129. **To J. J. Crowder Lodge No. 743** to hold a stated communication on November 4, 2021, in a hybrid format of both in-person and virtual due to Covid-19 pandemic restrictions and a need to elect officers. Issued October 11, 2021.
 130. **To Knights of Solomon Lodge UD** to hold a stated communication Round Peak Lodge No. 616, located in Mount Airy, North Carolina, on December 4, 2021. Issued November 9, 2021.
 131. **To Knights of Solomon Lodge No. 768** to allow Br. Gary Maurice Whiteside to serve as Master of Knights of Solomon Lodge No. 768 whose installation date is November 6, 2021 while service as Master of Durham Lodge No. 352 until the 2022 installation of officers for Durham Lodge No. 352. Issued November 6, 2021.
 132. **To J. J. Crowder Lodge No. 743** to hold a stated communication on December 2, 2021, in a hybrid format of both in-person and virtual due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Issued November 22, 2021.
 133. **To Gastonia Lodge No. 369** to hold an election of officers at the December 9, 2021, stated communication due to an inability to elect
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officers at its annual communication. Issued November 22, 2021.

134. To Currituck Lodge No. 463 to hold an election of officers at the December 13, 2021, stated communication due to an inability to elect officers at its annual communication. Issued November 23, 2021.

135. To Lodge of the Nine Sisters No. 773 to hold an election of officers at the January 15, 2022, stated communication due to an inability to elect officers at its annual communication. Issued December 3, 2021.

Orders

During the period from December 5, 2020, through December 4, 2021, I issued eighteen (18) Orders. Listed below are the Orders during my term as Grand Master:

- 1. To all subordinate Lodges and Appendant Masonic Bodies under the Jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina** for the purpose of requiring that Lodges complete business and close no later than 9:30 p.m., to be in conformity with the Governor's statewide curfew. Issued December 22, 2020.
- 2. To Dunn's Rock Lodge No. 267 and Brother BRG** for the purpose of removing Br. BRG from the office of Master of Dunn's Rock Lodge No. 267 as a result of un-Masonic conduct directed at Past Grand Master Bradshaw and Grand Master Wicker by Br. BRG and for Br. BRG's failure to comply with the Summons of the Grand Master which was lawfully sent to and received by him. Issued December 22, 2020.
- 3. To all subordinate Lodges and Appendant Masonic Bodies under the Jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina** for the purpose of suspending all Masonic activities across the State of North Carolina from December 25, 2020, through January 15, 2021, as a result of recent outbreaks of the Covid-19 virus at various lodges. Issued December 24, 2020.
- 4. To all subordinate Lodges and Appendant Masonic Bodies under the Jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina** for the purpose of lifting the suspension of food sales as fund raising events and establishing standards for food preparation and service at such events. Issued January 28, 2021.
- 5. To Rockingham Lodge No. 495 and Brother JRC** for the purpose of removing Br. JRC from the office of Secretary of Rockingham Lodge No. 495 and prohibiting him from participating in any Masonic activities in the State of North Carolina until such time as a final disposition of the criminal charge alleging murder against him has been resolved. Issued February 12, 2021.
- 6. To all subordinate Lodges and Appendant Masonic Bodies under the Jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina** for the purpose of rescinding the 9:30 p.m. curfew set out in Order No. 1. Issued

February 25, 2021.

7. **To all subordinate Lodges and Appendant Masonic Bodies under the Jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina** for the purpose of rescinding the prohibition of the service of meals in lodges prior to or after stated and emergent communications of all Masonic organizations in the State of North Carolina and establishing standards for food preparation and service at such events. Issued February 26, 2021.
8. **To University Lodge No. 408** for the purpose of declaring the ballot void and ordering a re-ballot on an application for affiliation by University Lodge No. 408 due to the failure of the Lodge to comply with the proper balloting procedure at the time of the original ballot. Issued March 11, 2021.
9. **To all subordinate Lodges and Appendant Masonic Bodies under the Jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina** for the purpose of increasing the maximum capacity of Masonic meetings and functions, as well as rescinding the time limits on Masonic meetings and functions set out in the prior orders issued by PGM P. Shaun Bradshaw. Issued April 26, 2021.
10. **To all subordinate Lodges and Appendant Masonic Bodies under the Jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina** for the purpose of rescinding Orders 9, 10, and 11 previously issued by PGM P. Shaun Bradshaw, as well as rescinding Orders 4 and 9 issued by Grand Master Wicker, and establishing new sanitation and COVID-19 health and safety protocols. Issued May 19, 2021.
11. **To Forsyth Lodge No. 707** for the purpose of declaring the ballot void and ordering a re-ballot on an application for affiliation by Forsyth Lodge No. 707 due to the failure of the Lodge to comply with the proper balloting procedure at the time of the original ballot. Issued April 23, 2021.
12. **To Palmyra Lodge No. 147** for the purpose of declaring the ballot void and ordering a re-ballot on a petition for the Degrees of Masonry by Palmyra Lodge No. 147 due to the failure of the Lodge to comply with the proper investigating procedure prior to the original ballot. Issued May 24, 2021.
13. **To Balfour Lodge No. 188 and Brother PEW** for the purpose of removing Br. PEW from the office of Secretary of Balfour Lodge No. 188 as a result of un-Masonic conduct by Br. PEW in directing profanity in open Lodge to the Grand Master presiding in the East, as well as to other Brothers present at the stated meeting. In addition, Br. PEW failed to comply with the Summons of the Grand Master which was lawfully sent to and received by him. Issued May 25, 2021.

14. **To all subordinate Lodges and Appendant Masonic Bodies under the Jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina** for the purpose of establishing additional health and safety standards for all Masonic organizations meeting in the State of North Carolina, in part requiring all those who have not been vaccinated for the Covid-19 virus to wear a cloth face covering at all times during any meeting. Issued July 21, 2021.
15. **To University Lodge No. 408** for the purpose of declaring the ballot void and ordering a re-ballot on an application for affiliation by University Lodge No. 408 due to the failure of the Lodge to comply with the proper balloting procedure at the time of the original ballot. Issued July 21, 2021.
16. **To Eagle Lodge No. 19** for the purpose of declaring the ballot void and ordering a re-ballot on applications for affiliation by Eagle Lodge No. 19 due to the failure of the Lodge to comply with the proper investigating procedure prior to the original ballot. Issued August 18, 2021.
17. **Holly Springs Lodge No. 115** for the purpose of declaring the ballot null and void and ordering a re-ballot on an application for affiliation by Holly Springs Lodge No. 115 due to the failure of the Lodge to comply with the proper investigating procedure prior to the original ballot in that they failed to first certify the application through the office of the Grand Secretary and have the certification returned to the Lodge. Issued October 4, 2021.
18. **To French Broad Lodge No. 292** and Brother MDG for the purpose of removing Br. MDG from the office of Secretary of French Broad Lodge No. 292 as a result of un-Masonic conduct by Br. MDG for the improper use of the Grand Lodge M2|Groupable database system, directing a chain letter to the Masters and Wardens of every Masonic Lodge in the State of North Carolina and improperly soliciting brothers to his personal religious beliefs, offering disrespectful statements and commentary toward the Grand Master, Grand Line Offices and the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons in general, and for his failure to appear and failure to comply with the Summons of the Grand Master which was lawfully sent to and received by him, all in violation of Regulations 52-3.11, 86-2.51 and the ancient Landmarks of Freemasonry. Issued November 11, 2021.

Approvals

During the period of December 5, 2020, through December 4, 2021, I issued twelve (12) Approvals for various Lodge needs and situations. Listed below are the Approvals issued:

1. **James K. Polk Lodge No. 759** for my approval of the resignation of the Senior Warden. Issued January 8, 2021
2. **To District 33 and the Grand Lodge of North Carolina** with regard to my acceptance of the resignation of the District Deputy Grand Master as herein above set out. Issued January 11, 2021.

3. **Stump Sound Lodge No. 733** for my approval of the resignation of the Senior Warden. Issued May 4, 2021
4. **New River Lodge No. 736** for my approval of the resignation of the Master. Issued June 24, 2021
5. **Wendell Lodge No. 565** for my approval of the resignation of the Treasurer. Issued August 2, 2021
6. **Fellowship Lodge No. 687** for my approval of the resignation of the Senior Deacon. Issued August 2, 2021
7. **Harmony Lodge No. 340** for my approval of the resignation of the Junior Warden. Issued August 2, 2021

Emergent Communications

I have called an emergent communication of the Grand Lodge of North Carolina on four (4) occasions. The date of each emergent communication and the purpose for which each was called is listed below.

With the permission and authorization of Past Grand Master P. Shaun Bradshaw, the Grand Lodge was opened on December 4, 2020, at Oak Grove Lodge No. 750 in Durham, North Carolina, for the purpose of installing the 2021 Grand Lodge Officers on December 5, 2020. The Grand Lodge was opened in Ample Form with the officers of Oak Grove Lodge No. 750 acting as Grand Lodge Officers pro tempore.

Grand Lodge was opened on May 1, 2021, at the Grand Lodge Offices in Raleigh, North Carolina for the purpose of installing Jonathan A. Underwood as Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of North Carolina. The Grand Lodge was opened in Ample Form with the Grand Lodge Officers filling their respective stations and places.

Grand Lodge was opened on October 2, 2021, at the Library for the City of Roanoke Rapids for the purpose of re-laying the cornerstone for Roanoke Rapids High School. The Grand Lodge was opened in Ample Form with the Grand Lodge Officers filling their respective stations and places.

Grand Lodge was opened on November 12, 2021, in the conference room of WhiteStone in the City of Greensboro, North Carolina, for the purpose of laying the cornerstone for Care and Wellness Center at WhiteStone. The Grand Lodge was opened in Ample Form with the Grand Lodge Officers filling their respective stations and places.

The North Carolina Masonic Foundation, Inc.

For an overview of the activities of the North Carolina Masonic Foundation, Inc. during my tenure as Grand Master, I refer you to their reports found in the 2020 and 2021 book of Reports submitted by the Board of Directors and Staff and led by Michael A. Faulkenbury, Chairman.

During 2021, the North Carolina Masonic Foundation met on January 19, April 20, July 20 and October 19. I was not able to attend the July 20 meeting as I was traveling from my District meeting in Manteo to Elizabeth City. I participated in estate planning seminars sponsored by the Foundation as Grand Master. These seminars were well-received and provided a wealth of information to those in attendance. On September 14, the Foundation hosted a reception with the Grand Master at the Greensboro Aquarium. The reception was well attended, and it offered information to prospective donors with regard to the Foundation's Capital Campaign for the construction of the new Independent Living and Assisted Living facilities. On October 5, I traveled to Wilmington, and on behalf of the Foundation, I presented Br. Michael A. Faulkenbury with the Bridge Builders Award for his donation to the Foundation. Br. Faulkenbury has been a leader of our charitable work, not only in his words, but in his actions. I am honored to have been a part of this ceremony.

I want to offer a special thanks to the North Carolina Masonic Foundation for their support of our charities and lodges. The financial support they provide keeps the Masonic Home for Children in Oxford and WhiteStone operational. The Foundation also provides investment support for our lodges and our appendant bodies. The Foundation's subscription program allows lodges and appendant bodies with an opportunity for investment returns that they could not receive on their own. From personal experience, I know how successful the subscription program has been. My lodge was able to make several capital improvements to the grounds and the building because of the return on the investment made with the Foundation in years past. Without that return, the capital projects would have been difficult, if not impossible, for a small lodge to complete. The Foundation, and those members who serve on this committee, provide so much for our Fraternity. Their work has not gone unnoticed by me.

Whitestone: A Masonic and Eastern Star Community

WhiteStone, our Masonic and Eastern Star Community in Greensboro turned 109 years old in 2021. From a humble beginning where we were able to provide for the residents with 3 milk cows, 3 calves, 6 hogs, 2 mules and 60 chickens, today, WhiteStone is now a full retirement community providing residents with Independent Living units, skilled nursing care and memory care.

We continue to improve our campus to meet the needs that the market demands. On July 22, we celebrated a ground-breaking ceremony for the new Independent Living (IL) tower currently under construction, as well as for the renovation of our Care and Wellness Center (CWC). In addition, we have added an Assisted Living (AL) component to our level of care. This has been missing from our continuum of care in the past. The Long-Range Committee/Development Team chaired by WB Joey Transou continues to work hard to oversee the new expansion. The renovations in the CWC were completed in 2022 and the IL and AL units are still scheduled to come on line in 2023.

On November 12, an Emergent Communication of the Grand Lodge was opened at WhiteStone for the purpose of re-laying the cornerstone at the CWC. After almost 20 years, the CWC needed a complete renovation. With the change in the market, demands had changed over the years; the care model in the CWC was changed from semi-private to private rooms. All the rooms and

common areas have now been renovated. The CWC at WhiteStone is again the gold standard for care in the State.

I would like to thank Chairman, Most Worshipful Gene T. Jernigan, PGM 2006, the Board of Directors, and the staff and administration of WhiteStone for their many hours of service and continued support to ensure our home in Greensboro continues to be successful. MWB Gene works tirelessly as he oversees the Board of Directors and the operation of our Home.

At the time of the preparation of my Final Report, the WhiteStone campus is again closed. During the summer of 2022, there was a spike in Covid-19 cases on campus triggering the safety protocols put in place for the pandemic. The WhiteStone administrators and staff were quick to address the issue and, fortunately, the cases have been limited in number. The Campus should be open again in the coming weeks. If you have never visited WhiteStone, when the campus opens, I encourage you to do so. See the life changing work that is being done in Greensboro. Your gifts and your support are making a difference in the quality of life for those in the golden years of their life.

Several years ago, we established a foundation called the Masonic and Eastern Star Home, LLC. Please note that a donation to the 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 those with a Masonic a connection whether they be residents on campus or those who are served through the Fraternal Friendship outreach program. Please consider supporting this worthy cause.

Although many of our lodges provide financial support the MESH Foundation, LLC, I am disappointed to say that many do nothing for the care of our widows and our elderly. I do not understand the lack of support. As Masons we are obligated individually to support our elderly brothers and their widows. In 1913 it was reported that half of the Lodges had not made any contribution to our Home in Greensboro. Today, that has not changed. I ask each of you today the same question that was asked in 1913, “what, my brethren, can be the reason for this indifference and apathy? ... An opportunity of doing great good is at hand. How much better it is to provide a Home where your aged and indigent brothers can spend their last few remaining years in peace and comfort, and in the congenial society of brothers and friends, then it is to have small charity doled out to them by their home lodge and individual friends.” My brothers, we must do a better job supporting WhiteStone.

For more detailed report of WhiteStone, I refer you to the reports found elsewhere in these proceedings submitted by Worshipful Brother Gilbert Bailey, Junior Grand Deacon and Chairman of the Committee on WhiteStone for 2022.

Masonic Home for Children at Oxford

The Masonic Home for Children at Oxford turned 148 years old in 2021. If you have never visited our home in Oxford, I encourage you to do so. In Oxford, you are changing the lives of children. Donations to our Children’s Home can be made out to MHCO, which also qualifies as a 501(c)3 tax deductible charity.

Through most of 2020 and the first half of 2021, the campus was closed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The campus opened in the late spring and remained opened until mid-August when the rise in Covid cases increased and

the safety of the children mandated that we close the campus to visitors once again.

Nevertheless, in May we celebrated the final payments of the pool campaign. Not only was enough money raised to pay for the construction, we had a surplus that was used to pay for the supplies needed to operate the pool. This was done in great part by the support of the three (3) Shrine Temples, Oasis, Amran and Sudan, along with a few generous brothers. Thank you, my brothers for your support. Your fundraisers enable us to provide a great home for children who would otherwise be homeless or in a dangerous or unsafe living environment.

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. MWB Dewey was required to come off the Board at the end of 2021, having completed two (2) consecutive three (3) year terms of service. Although his leadership will be missed, Most Worshipful C. Speed Hallman, PGM 2017, came on the Board at the beginning of the year. With his leadership, we will continue to provide for those children who need our support. I wish to thank each of these brothers for all they do for our children and our Fraternity.

The MHCO now has Ambassadors in all 41 Masonic Districts. They work to update lodges in their district on activities and needs of our Home. During my District Meetings, WB Kevin Otis and WB Alvin Billings presented walking sticks to our new Ambassadors. The walking sticks were made from trees that came off the Home. I offer a special thanks for each Ambassador for their 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.

Sadly, the resurgence of Covid-19 caused the cancellation of the annual Homecoming Festival at the Masonic Home for Children scheduled for October 2021. This is the second year in a row that Homecoming was cancelled. For 2022, Homecoming is planned for October 7-8. It will be wonderful to be back on the campus in October to enjoy the barbecue cook-off and watch the parade, as our Shrine Temples bring entertainment and joy to the Home and the entire Oxford community.

A very special moment during my term as Grand Master was the opportunity to be with the graduates of the Masonic Home for Children in Oxford at their annual Baccalaureate service on May 22, 2021. This was a unique experience for me as I have never addressed graduates. We celebrated the four (4) who graduated from J.F. Webb High School as well as one (1) young lady who graduated from college. One of our High School graduates is the first person in his family to ever complete High School. The young lady who graduated from UNC-Charlotte did so with a double major, earning a BS in Accounting and a BS in Finance. We are truly proud of all their accomplishments. I am grateful to the Masons of our North Carolina for continuing to provide a Home and for children in need. As Past Grand Master Preslar is fond of saying, in Oxford, we are truly doing God's work.

In 2021, the Masonic Home for Children was re-accredited by the Council On Accreditation (COA). Maintaining the accreditation and licensing requirements is difficult, but necessary to continue to serve children. For more detailed report of the activities concerning the Masonic Home for Children in

Oxford I refer you to the report found elsewhere in these proceedings submitted by Worshipful Brother Steve Norris, Senior Grand Deacon and Chairman of the Committee on the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford for 2022.

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 on special funds or assessments. Our Grand Lodge annually elects to maintain its membership with the Masonic Service Association, supporting 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 unable to arrange a visit to any of the Veteran's Administration Hospitals as a result of the limited visitation permitted due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

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 (50) U.S. states, the 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 2021 was scheduled to be held February 20-24 in Seattle, Washington. Unfortunately, as with most events scheduled early in 2021, the in-person Conference of Grand Master of North America was cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Instead of an in-person Conference, a one-half (1/2) day meeting was held on February 20. That meeting was conducted via Zoom. At the 2020 Conference, I was privileged to have been elected to serve as an officer and member of the Time and Place Committee for the 2021 Conference along with Grand Masters from six (6) other grand jurisdictions. Sadly, with the Covid-19 restrictions only the bare minimum of business was conducted, and most items were deferred to the 2022 Conference scheduled for February 2022 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Also attending with me via Zoom were Deputy Grand Master, RW Brother Larry B. Thompson, Jr.; Senior Grand Warden, RW Brother Kevan D. Frazier; Junior Grand Warden, RW Brother Donald E. Kehler; Grand Secretary, RW Brother T. Walton Clapp, III; Assistant to the Grand Secretary, WB Jonathan Underwood; and Grand Treasurer, MW Brother Lewis R. Ledford. This was a bittersweet conference for me personally as it was my last as an elected Grand Lodge Officer and one that the pandemic prevented us from having.

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, the District of Columbia, Indiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, and Wisconsin.

This year's conference was scheduled to be held July 16-19 in Cincinnati, Ohio. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Conference was cancelled. The Grand Lodge of Ohio, the Conference host, chose not to proceed with a virtual conference. All matters were deferred to the 2022 Conference currently scheduled for Baltimore, Maryland.

Board of Custodians and Certified Lecturer Examinations

The first Board of Custodians meeting was held on January 8, 2021. The meeting was held via a Zoom virtual platform. As Grand Master, I opened the meeting and presided as Chairman ex-officio as required by our Code. It was an honor to return to the Board of Custodians as this was the first Grand Lodge Committee or Board to which I was appointed. I served on the Board of Custodians from 2007-2009. After the meeting was opened, the Board elected WB Earl Wells as Chairman and WB Tom Dolinger as Secretary. Each has done an outstanding job this year.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the 2020 annual examinations for certified lecturers and instructors conducted by the Board of Custodians were postponed. All lecturers and instructors, including the Grand Master, were granted an automatic extension until the 2021 examinations. During the year, the Board conducted a special examination and for the fourth time, I was certified as a Class A Lecturer.

This year, the Board of Custodians held examinations at six (6) locations across the state. The dates and examination sites are as follows: August 14 – Greenville and Greensboro, August 21 – Wilmington and Charlotte and August 28 – Fayetteville and Asheville. I was only able to attend and assist with the examinations at the Charlotte location due to conflicts with the Board of Directors meeting at WhiteStone and graduation of Wilkerson College Class of 2020-21. At the conclusion of the examinations, one (1) new Class A Lecturer and seven (7) new Class B Instructors were certified. One (1) Class A Lecturer was reinstated to the rolls. Fifty-eight (58) Class A Lecturers and four (4) Class B Instructors renewed their certification. Unfortunately, twenty-two (22) brothers failed to recertify and were dropped from the rolls. There are currently two hundred eighty-one (281) Class A Lecturers and thirty-six (36) Class B instructors. This is a net loss of thirteen (13) from the prior year.

My brothers, we need additional lecturers and instructions to conduct our ritualistic work. If you know of a brother who would like to become a lecturer or an instructor, please have him contact the Board of Custodians. The Board will assist him with the examination process so that he can successfully complete the requirements of certification.

Capitol Insurrection

As I began my term of office, I had no way of anticipating the tragic events that unfolded in our Nation's Capital on January 6. For the first time in our history, there was an attempt to prevent the peaceful transition of power after a presidential election. As Grand Master, I felt it was important for me to address these events through my thoughts as a Freemason as this matter related to an event of national significance and the events occurred during my term of office. Matters occurring during the term another Grand Master, past or present, are properly addressed by that Grand Master.

I was not the only Grand Master in the United States to issue a statement denouncing these acts of violence against our democracy. But as it turned out, I was the first Grand Master to do so. I believe that the teachings of Freemasonry can lead our country out of the darkness of January 6 and into the light of the future. You see my brothers, it was the Freemasons who lead a movement whereby we would no longer be the subjects of a King. It was the Freemasons who founded this nation, a nation whose very Constitution is based in large part on the principles set out in Anderson's Constitution of Free Masons of 1723.

In condemning the actions of January 6, and those who engaged in and supported that conduct, I was guided by our Masonic teachings. These teachings instruct us, from the youngest Entered Apprentice to the Master of the Lodge, as to how we should act. In the First Degree Charge, we instruct an Entered Apprentice "to be a quiet and peaceable citizen, true to your government and just to your country." As citizens, we "are not to countenance disloyalty or rebellion, but patiently submit to legal authority, and conform with cheerfulness to the government." Before being installed as Master of a lodge, one must publicly state their agreement to the duties of a Master of a Lodge. In part, these duties require us to be peaceable subjects, and to cheerfully conform to the laws of our country. We are to avoid plots and conspiracies against government, and patiently submit to the decisions of the supreme legislature. In addition, we agree to pay proper respect to the civil magistrate.

Although unexpected, I received calls, letters and emails of support for my statement from our craft, other grand jurisdictions in this country, from grand jurisdictions in North and South America, and from grand jurisdictions across Europe.

Much to my surprise, I received pushback from a segment of our Craft. In taking the calls and responding to the letters and email, none were able to justify what happened January 6. To date, the only reason anyone has given me to rationalize their objection to my statement is that I did not address actions of someone else. I did not then, and I do not now, accept the "but what about" argument. The wrongful conduct of another can never be used as justification for one's own wrongful conduct.

I have often heard members of the Craft say that Masonry is not for everyone. There is nothing further from the truth. My brothers, for various reasons, not everyone should be a Freemason. But Masonry, its tenets, its principles and its teachings, is for everyone. That is why it is and has been prohibited and suppressed by every fascist and totalitarian regime throughout history. Today, I stand by the statement that I issued denouncing the attempted insurrection against our government.

In-State Visitation and Special Activities

By co-hosting my District Meetings, the appendant bodies expressed their support of the Grand Lodge and the Blue Lodges. As a demonstration of my support and the Grand Lodge's support for the work being done by the appendant bodies, I was pleased to attend their meetings and events throughout the year.

Scottish Rite

Through the end of my term as Grand Master, I have been able to attend meetings of the Scottish Rite Bodies on seven (7) occasions, as well as the Scottish Rite Summer Workshop that was held on June 16 in New Bern and the Fall Reunion in Raleigh.

In December, shortly after being installed as Grand Master, I received telephone calls from MW and Ill. William B. Brunk and MW and Ill. A. Gene Cobb. Being certain that I would not have enough to do as Grand Master, they asked that I accept the appointment as the Personal Representative of the Raleigh Valley. The appointment was unexpected, but a great honor. The Raleigh Valley and the Valley Secretary, J. Luigi Ammons, were very supportive of me as I attended my duties as Grand Master. I appreciate all they did to assist me while I was performing other duties.

During my term of office, we saw a change in leadership in the Scottish Rite Orient of North Carolina. In December, after more than twenty (20) years, MW and Ill. William B. Brunk retired as the Sovereign Grand Inspector General. A scholarship was set up in his honor with a goal of raising \$50,000.00 as an education endowment to the University of North Carolina. Well over \$66,000.00 has been raised. On March 12, there was a retirement dinner celebrating the many years of service given to our fraternities by Dr. Brunk. I was pleased to attend the dinner and offer a few words to honor him for his service. In his place, the Supreme Council for the Southern Jurisdiction elected MW and Ill. A. Gene Cobb, Jr. as Deputy to the Supreme Council. I served in the Grand Lodge Officer line with MWB Cobb. It has been wonderful to again work under his leadership with the Scottish Rite. I look forward to the day when MWB Cobb is elected Sovereign Grand Inspector General for the Orient of North Carolina.

York Rite Bodies

I was able to attend three (3) meetings of the York Rite Bodies as well as the district meeting of their Grand Officers in North Wilkesboro on June 21, 2021. I was able to attend the virtual installation of the Grand York Rite Officers on April 19. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Grand York Rite Officers could not have a public installation. Nevertheless, I was pleased to be able to offer remarks and present a brief summary of my message to the incoming Grand York Rite Officers. I offered them my support and wished them well on their term of office. Unfortunately, the York Rite Summer Assembly Maggie Valley was again cancelled in 2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. I look forward to being to return to Maggie Valley in the years to come.

I would like to congratulate ME William C. Chriscoe, Grand High Priest; MI Jeffrey E. York, Grand Illustrious Master; and SK Ludwik J. Wodka, Grand Commander, for their excellent service and leadership to the York Rite Bodies. I appreciate their support during the year, as well as the opportunity to spend with them.

Shrine

North Carolina is blessed to enjoy an excellent relationship with all three (3) Shrine Temples. The lack of unity with other Grand Lodges and their Shrine Temples was shocking for me to learn about during my time as a Grand Lodge Officer. The dedicated Masons who are members of Amran, Oasis, and Sudan Shriner Temples are doing great work in supporting the Shriners Hospitals for Children, as well as our Masonic Charities. In 2021, our Temples were led by Ill. Sir Thomas Stephenson (Amran), Ill. Sir Tommy Helms (Oasis), and Ill. Sir Coble Wilson (Sudan). This is the first time in recent history that all three (3) Potentates were also Past Masters of their respective Blue Lodge.

Having been a member of the Amran Shrine since 1999 and having served during that time as their Temple Attorney, it was special to be the first Grand Master installed at Amran Temple. On December 9, 2020, as one of my first official acts as Grand Master, I presented Ill. Sir, J. Ray Fields, Past Potentate and Recorder Emeritus, with his 50-service award from Amran Shrine.

I was honored to attend the installations for each Potentate and his respective Divan — Amran on January 16, Sudan on January 23, and Oasis on February 6. I attended the Amran Awards night on February 8 at the Shrine Temple in Raleigh, the Oasis Black Tie Ceremonial held on July 31 at the Greensboro Shrine Club, and the fall ceremonial of Sudan Shrine at the Brunswick County Shrine Club. On each occasion, I was afforded the opportunity to offer remarks of support for the great work done by the Shriners. On December 17, 2020, I attended WG Arnold Lodge No. 683 in Rolesville with the Potentate and Divan from Amran Shrine for a presentation by the Shrine to the family of William G. Arnold.

National Sojourners

On May 26, I was inducted as an Honorary Member of the National Sojourners, Camp Lejeune Chapter No. 329. The induction was held at the York Rite Temple in New Bern where I was made a Member in Perpetuity. After the induction, I was presented with a framed copy of the Toast to the Flag which is displayed in my office. Each and every American owes a debt to those who serve and have served in the United States Armed Forces. It is through their service that we enjoy the freedoms that many in other parts of the world are denied. I want to thank all members of the National Sojourners who made this special honor possible.

Masonic

To raise money for our Masonic Charities a virtual 5K walk/run was held during 2021. The event began on September 24, the first day of Annual Communication and ended on December 4, the last day of my term as Grand Master. As this was a virtual 5K, the participants were permitted to either walk/run 1K/0.62 miles, 5k/3.1 miles, or 10K/6.2 miles. All the proceeds went to support WhiteStone and the Masonic Home for Children. Participants were permitted to walk or run individually, with someone else, with their lodge, or in memorial for another. The entrance fee was \$20.00 per participant. Participants were asked to send in photos of themselves during the walk/run. The 5K walk/run raised \$2,700.00 for our Charities. I want to thank everyone who participated to make this event a success. In addition, I want to thank

RWB Robert Rideout for chairing this committee. Without him, this would not have happened.

In addition to the other activities discussed herein, I have visited approximately 40 different lodges in 28 Districts. I have also participated in many other Masonic related events. These events include the installation of officers, presentation of awards, assistance with degree work, consecration of a lodge, assistance with lodge consolidations, activities at the Masonic Home for Children and WhiteStone, as well as various Board, Committee and Commission meetings.

A summary of some of these activities is as follows:

- The total travel in the Grand Master's car exceeded 30,000 miles.
 - On December 10 I delivered gift cards to the children in residence at the Masonic Home for Children.
 - I presided over the Board of General Purposes Meetings in March, June, September and December 2021.
 - I attended meetings with the North Carolina Masonic Foundation.
 - I attended the meeting of the Code Commission.
 - I attended the Board of Directors Meetings at the Masonic Home for Children in February, May, August and November.
 - I attended the Board of Directors Meetings at WhiteStone in February, May, August and November.
 - I attended the Grand Lodge Finance Committee Meetings.
 - I installed the Officers at Orphans Lodge No. 761 on December 12 and at the Lodge of the Nine Sisters No. 773 on January 16.
 - On March 15, I met to discuss and facilitate the consolidation of Rodgers Lodge No. 525 and Bailey Lodge No. 411.
 - I oversaw the consolidation of P.P. Turner Lodge No. 746 with Corinthian Lodge No. 542.
 - I had discussions with Adoniram Lodge No. 149 with Orphans Lodge No. 761 regarding a possible consolidation. The Lodges did not proceed with consolidation.
 - I met with Balfour Lodge No. 188 on May 18 regarding the sale of Lodge property.
 - I participated in the Great Landscape Day to work around the cemetery at God's Half Acre at the Masonic Home for Children.
 - I held a retreat for the Grand Lodge Officers at the Trinity Center in Pine Knoll Shores.
 - On March 8 I met with the MW Douglas V. Jones, Grand Master of Virginia regarding the construction of the Winston-Salem Masonic Center and the desire of the Grand Lodge of Virginia to build a similar facility.
 - I attended virtual estate planning seminars with the North Carolina Masonic Foundation held on March 23 and March 30.
 - I re-consecrated Semper Fidelis Lodge No. 680 on April 17 in honor
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of their 75th anniversary.

- I attended a tractor pull with the children from the Masonic Home for Children at GALOT Motorsports Park on May 21 and hosted by WB Earl Wells.
- I spoke at the Bachelorette celebration at the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford on May 22.
- I participated in the WhiteStone Ground Breaking for the Construction of the new Independent Living facility on July 22.
- I attended the Memorial Service for MWB Charles A. Lewis, Jr. in Wilmington on September 18.
- I attended State College Lodge No. 770 and participated in the Grand Master's 5k walk/run for our Masonic Charities.

Some of the Service Awards I have presented to date:

- 50 Year Service Award to WB J. Ray Fields of Henderson Lodge No. 229 at Amran Shrine Temple on January 9
- 50 Year Shrine Award to MWB Dalton W. Mayo from Sudan Shrine at Hiram Lodge No. 98 on January 13
- 50 Year Service Award to Br. Charles R. Ryals at Relief Lodge No. 431 on May 11
- 25 Year Service Award to WB Gene E. Lee at Relief Lodge No. 431 on May 11
- 60 Year Service Award to Br. Clyde Norman Walker of Eagle Lodge No. 19 at his home
- 50 Year Service Award to Br. Terry L. Roush at Corinthian Lodge No. 542
- 70 Year Service Award to Br. Douglas Van Horn Wade at Corinthian Lodge No. 542
- 70 Year Service Award to Br. George D. Greene of Camp Call Lodge No. 534 at his home on July 24
- 50 Year Service Award to Samuel D. Vaughan, Jr. at Oak Grove Lodge No. 750 on August 16
- 50 Year Shrine Award to Samuel D. Vaughan, Jr. from Amran Shrine at Triangle Shrine Club on August 26
- 50 Year Service Award to MWB Charles Ingram, PGM at St. Johns Lodge No. 13
- PDDGM Certificate to WB Tommy Wheeler on October 12. WB Wheeler could not be at Annual Communication due to his battle with cancer.

Conferral of Degrees in Masonry in which I have participated to date:

- 3rd Degree at Garner Lodge No. 701 on December 12 as a fellowcraft
- 3rd Degree at William T. Bain Lodge No. 321 on February 10 as the principal ruffian
- 1st Degree at Oak Grove Lodge No. 750 on March 22 to deliver the lecture
- 3rd Degree at Hiram Lodge No. 98 on April 6 sitting in the East for the Second Section of the Master Mason's Degree
- 3rd Degree at P. P. Turner Lodge No. 746 on April 15 to deliver the lecture
- 1st Degree at Henry F. Grainger No. 412 on April 20 to deliver the lecture and the Bible presentation and oration
- 3rd Degree at Bula Lodge No. 409 on April 26 to deliver the lecture
- 3rd Degree at Pilot Lodge No. 493 on April 27 sitting in the East for the Second Section of the Master Mason's Degree
- 1st Degree at Person Lodge No. 113 on May 25
- 3rd Degree at Semper Fidelis Lodge No. 680 on August 18 to sit in the East for the First Section of the Master Mason's Degree
- 2nd Degree at Eno Lodge No. 210 September 2
- 3rd Degree at Oak Grove Lodge No. 750 on October 6
- 3rd Degree at Henry F. Grainger Lodge No. 412 on October 19 to deliver the lecture and the Bible presentation and oration
- 3rd Degree at Mosaic Lodge No. 762, on October 23 to sit in the East for the First and Second Section of the Master Mason's Degree
- 3rd Degree at William T. Bain Lodge No. 231 on November 29
- 3rd Degree Granite Lodge No. 322 on December 2 to sit in the East for the Second Section of the Master Mason's Degree

Out of State Visitations

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, early in the year, much of my out of state visitation was postponed or cancelled. As the year progressed and the Covid-19 restrictions began to ease, travel was again permitted. As a result, I was able to attend several out of state events.

Grand Lodge of Connecticut

I attended Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of Connecticut April 8-10. Their annual communication was limited in attendance and business. Nevertheless, I was warmly received by MW Stephen W. Petri, Grand Master. The hospitality extended to me and Susan by the Grand Lodge of Connecticut was outstanding. I appreciated the opportunity to observe the business conducted in their grand jurisdiction, as well as be at the installation of MW William E. Bohman as he was installed as Grand Master on the last day of their annual communication.

Grand Lodge of Alabama

During June 10-12, the Grand Secretary and I attended the bicentennial celebration of the Grand Lodge of Alabama. The Grand Lodge of Alabama was founded June 11, 1821, at Cahawba, then the capital of Alabama. It was formed from lodges chartered from the Grand Lodges of North Carolina, Louisiana, Kentucky, Georgia, South Carolina, and Tennessee. The ceremony included the dedication of a historical marker located at the site of the original Grand Lodge building. Today, the city of Cahawba no longer exists. The former city is today a state park and an archeological site. During our visit, the Grand Secretary and I were well received by MW Shelby Thomas Morrow, Jr. Grand Master of Alabama and his officers. At the conclusion of the celebration, Grand Master Morrow presented me with a commemorative flag of the State of Alabama. I was most grateful to Grand Master Morrow for his hospitality while in his jurisdiction.

147th Imperial Session of Shriners International

July 2-8, I traveled with Amran, Oasis and Sudan Shrine Temples to attend the 147th Imperial Shrine Session in Houston, Texas, hosted by Imperial Sir Jim Smith. Susan and I enjoyed the hospitality of our Shrine Temples as well as the opportunity to spend time with the Shrine Potentates, Ill. Sir Thomas Stephenson, Ill. Sir Tommy Helms and Ill. Sir Coble Wilson along with their respective Divans. During the Imperial Session, I was proud of the work done by Oasis Shriners as they presented over \$1 Million to the Shriners Hospitals and First Lady's charity.

There were approximately twenty (20) Grand Masters in attendance for Imperial Shrine. At the Imperial Session, Imperial Sir William S. Bailey was elected and installed as the new Imperial Potentate. Imperial Sir Bill Bailey is in commercial real estate sales in Chicago, Illinois. Of note, Imperial Sir Kenny Craven was elected Imperial Chief Rabban. Imperial Sir Craven is from Summerville, SC, but is also a member of Shallotte Lodge No. 727. At the Imperial Shrine session this summer, Imperial Sir Craven was elected Imperial Potentate and he will be bringing the Imperial Shrine Session to Charlotte in 2023.

Although the message regarding the work done at the Children's Hospitals was inspiring, it was troubling to hear legislation being presented to permit Shrine Temples to allow non-Masons to become Shriners. The legislation failed to get the necessary support for adoption. However, almost twenty percent (20%) of the delegates supported passage of this amendment. This further shows the disconnect that many Grand Lodges have with their Shrine Temples. Fortunately, in North Carolina, we have a wonderful working relationship with our Shrine counterparts. We must continue to foster that relationship.

48th Annual South Atlantic Shrine Association Fall Festival

September 15-18, I attended the South Atlantic Shrine Association (SASA) in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. There are 20 Shrine Temples from 7 states that make up SASA. Ill. Sir James R. Wilson, PP of Amran Shrine was elected 1st Vice President of SASA. I have no doubt that he will do an exceptional job as President next year. On Saturday, September 18, there was

a Shrine Parade. I greeted each of the Shrine Units from Amran, Oasis and Sudan Shrines who participated in the parade. These units represented North Carolina very well, taking home several awards. I was well received by the representatives from all 20 Shrine Temples, and I appreciate the opportunity to attend such an outstanding event.

Grand Lodge of West Virginia

October 8-12, I traveled to Charleston, West Virginia, to attend the Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of West Virginia. I was warmly received by MW Danny W. Garber, Grand Master. This is the first time a Grand Master from North Carolina has attended the Grand Lodge of West Virginia in many years. The hospitality extended to me and Susan by the Grand Lodge of West Virginia was wonderful. The entire first day of their Annual Communication consisted of the District Lecturers exemplifying the entire ritualistic work before the Grand Lodge Officers and the delegates. Of note, the Grand Lodge of West Virginia had a dress code for attendance. No delegate was admitted into the Grand Lodge unless the brother was dressed in a coat and tie. There were no exceptions. I appreciated the opportunity to observe the business conducted in their grand jurisdiction, as well as be at the installation of MW Lewis R. Youngblood as he was installed Grand Master on the last day of their annual communication.

Grand Lodge of Virginia

November 5-7, I traveled to Richmond to attend the Grand Lodge of Virginia. Although Virginia is a bordering state, the Grand Master of North Carolina is rarely afforded the opportunity to attend their Annual Communication. This is because their Annual Communication conflicts with the November Board meetings of the Masonic Home for Children and WhiteStone. Due to a scheduling conflict, the Grand Lodge of Virginia held their Annual Communication a week early. I was well received by MW Douglas V. Jones, Grand Master. I attended their business session and was able to be present when my friend and brother, MW James W. Golladay, Jr. was elected and installed as Grand Master. MWB Golladay and I became friends during our travels to various conferences as well as his attendance at our Annual Communication. I know he will do an excellent job as Grand Master.

XVII World Conference of Regular Masonic Grand Lodges

Every 18 months, the World Conference of Regular Masonic Grand Lodges (WCRMGL) convenes. November 17-20, 2021, the WCRMGL was in Berlin, Germany, hosted by the United Grand Lodges of Germany. There are five (5) separate Grand Jurisdictions in Germany, all of which fall under the umbrella of the UGLG. In Berlin, I met with more than 80 Grand Masters from all parts of the world to discuss the principles of Freemasonry and how those principles applied to the issues of today. Susan and I were warmly received by MW Christoph Bosbach, Grand Master.

Whether in South Africa or South America, North Carolina or the Netherlands, the aim of Freemasonry is to motivate its members to align their behavior and their dealings with themselves and others according to moral

standards. To do this, Freemasonry supplies the individual with the means to conquer their own path of life. To practice Freemasonry is to strengthen one's character and to make one a better person, both figuratively and literally. Our Masonic symbols are connected to the constant demand to improve oneself and one's relationships to others.

Building upon this, one learns to measure one's own actions by ambitious moralistic standards. The Masonic educated 'better person' is urged to contribute to an improved world. Freemasonry is neither a concrete behavioral pattern for an entire society nor is it dogmatic. But, it is always anchored in reality. Philosophical systems, religions, and political parties tend to practice differentiation and focus on the opposites. They divide the world into supporters and opposition, into us and them. Masonic thought is entirely focused on uniting all mankind.

Freemasonry is an ethical alliance and does not take part in political or denominational party struggles. It is not a religious community, nor is it a secret association. It does not require illegal secrecy and does not convey any secret knowledge. Freemasonry's greatest good is freedom of belief, conscience, and thought. Therefore, Freemasonry accepts into its ranks unprejudiced men of good reputation as brothers regardless of their religious creed, race, nationality, political convictions, or social class. The Freemason recognizes in the construction of the world, in everything living and in the moral consciousness of the human being, a divine creative spirit full of wisdom, strength and beauty.

While at the WCRMGL these principles were best exhibited to me on two occasions. The first was during one of the many breakout sessions I attended. One afternoon, I chose to participate in a discussion regarding the place technology and virtual meetings have in Freemasonry. As the various Grand Masters in the room were talking, it struck me that sitting in our session was the Grand Master from the Ukraine and the Grand Master from Russia. These brothers were engaged with everyone in the room in a thoughtful debate regarding how and when technology should be used in the Lodge setting, along with the security measures that should be taken to preserve the sanctity of the meeting. These brothers were courteous to each other and spoke only with kindness and respect. My brothers, less than 90 days later, Russia invaded the Ukraine, starting a war that has now been raging for over 6 months. The Russian invasion was not a surprise to anyone in the room. In addition to the news coverage, there was much talk in Europe and at the Conference about the certainty of the coming Russian invasion and the uncertainty of maintaining peace throughout the rest of the continent. Nevertheless, these men, these brothers, sat and discussed the issues relating Freemasonry in peace and harmony.

The second occasion was at a much less formal setting. After the day's sessions had ended, I found myself "speaking" with MW Yehuda Shmuelevitz, Grand Master of Israel. I say "speaking" because he was speaking to me in Hebrew, and I was speaking to him in English. Fortunately, his Grand Secretary, RW Jose Cohen, was there to translate. We were discussing Masonic charity. I explained the symbolism on my lapel pin, that being a depiction of the logos of the Masonic Home for Children in Oxford and WhiteStone. When I asked about his lapel pin, he stated that his pin depicted the Star of David, over which was the Islamic Crescent, over which was the Christian Cross. He told

me that in Israel, the lodges did work in multiple languages and in all major religions. My brothers, these are shining examples of how the application of our Masonic principles make the world a better place.

During the conference, I had the opportunity to speak with various Grand Masters regarding their ritualistic work and their practices. What I learned was how serious much of the world takes Freemasonry. By way of example, in speaking with the Grand Master of Austria regarding their ritual, he informed me that his application for the Degrees in Masonry was considered for 2 years before it was approved. Their lodges open on the First Degree because it takes years to advance from Entered Apprentice to Master Mason; sometimes they never do. Advancement is based on the work of the Entered Apprentice and the Fellow Craft. Not merely memorizing a few lines of catechism, but presenting research papers and leading discussion groups on various Masonic topics. Freemasonry is viewed as a life commitment. They don't pay a hundred dollars per year for dues, they pay thousands of dollars per year in dues. To them, Freemasonry is something of value.

At the end of the Conference, delegates were permitted to join in as MW Christoph Bosbach installed MW Michael Volkwein as the new Grand Master of the United Grand Lodges of Freemasons of Germany. As with most aspects of Freemasonry in Europe, the installation ceremony was very formal and very serious. At the same time, the ceremony was very beautiful. I want to thank MW P. Shaun Bradshaw who accompanied me to the World Conference. I cherish his friendship and the opportunity we had to spend time together.

Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia

Although technically after my term as Grand Master ended, December 10-13, I traveled to our nation's capital to attend the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia. Grand Master Thompson had a conflict in his calendar and, having formed a friendship with MW Alan L. Gordon, I was invited to attend his Annual Communication. Susan and I were warmly received and enjoyed being in Washington. I attended their business session, and we were received for lunch at Almas Shrine Temple by my friend and brother, RW and Ill. Sir George J. Stokelas, Jr., Potentate, and Grand Treasurer for the Grand Lodge of DC. I was able to attend the installation of MW Daniel A. Huertas as he was installed Grand Master. I know he will do an excellent job as Grand Master.

Honorary Memberships

It was my distinct pleasure to have received honorary memberships from Sudan Shriners, Oasis Shriners, the National Sojourners, and William T. Bain Lodge No. 231. These honorary memberships were not expected, and words fail me in trying to express the gratitude shown to me by all the Shrine Temples, the National Sojourners and the brethren of William T. Bain. I am honored to be a Shriner and a Sojourner. It is said that no man stands so tall as when he stoops to help a child. This is true of the Masons and the Shriners of North Carolina. You will understand that when you visit the campus of the Masonic Home for Children in Oxford or the Shriners Hospital in Greenville, South Carolina. As with the lessons taught in our ritual, visiting these campuses and meeting the children you help will transform your life. Likewise, there is

nothing more honorable than being a member of the National Sojourners. The National Sojourners is an order of Freemasons who have served in the United States Armed Forces. There is nothing nobler than the service provided by the member of our Armed Forces. They selflessly answer our country's call and put themselves in harm's way to preserve our freedoms. I am honored to be associated with such a wonderful group of men.

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. It consists of three (3) different sessions, at WhiteStone, the MHCO, and in Raleigh which includes a tour of the Grand Lodge Office. For many attending the College, this is the first time they have had the opportunity to be on the campuses of our Homes or at the Grand Lodge Office. Having met Grand Masters from across the United States and discussed Wilkerson College with them, it is apparent that North Carolina has the premier educational program in the nation.

Every Grand Master likes to believe that the graduating class in his year is special. In 2021, it was truly special. The class of 2020 was unable to continue their education due to the Covid-19 pandemic. After completing the first session at WhiteStone, as with the rest of the world, the College was shut down for over a year. On June 11-12, almost eighteen (18) months later, the class was able to meet again in Oxford at the Masonic Home for Children to resume their study. On August 27-28, the class met for the final time in Raleigh. After a tour of the Grand Lodge offices on Friday afternoon, the class completed their training at the Embassy Suites. There were thirty-five (35) graduates in the Wilkerson College Class of 2020-21. At a banquet held in honor of the graduates, Deputy Grand Master Larry B. Thompson, Jr., 2020 Past Grand Master P. Shaun Bradshaw, and I had the distinct pleasure to present each graduate with his certificate of graduation. Since its inception in 2002, there have been six hundred nineteen (619) graduates from Wilkerson College.

As with Wilkerson College, the Covid-19 pandemic shut down the other educational programs in North Carolina. As lodges tried to reopen, the Davie Academy, Middle Chamber Program, Speakers Bureau also looked to restart their programs. These are other educational resources offered to the Masons and Lodges in North Carolina. Sadly, they are not available in most other grand jurisdictions. North Carolina is truly blessed to have wonderful training and education programs available for its members. I hope you will choose to take advantage of some of these as you seek to improve yourself in Masonry.

Summons and Summary Trials

During my term as Grand Master, I have not had the need to conduct any summary trials. However, there have been six (6) occasions that I have been compelled to issue a Masonic Summons.

The first Summons was issued on December 23, 2020, to Br. BRG, Master of Dunn's Rock Lodge No. 267. The Summons directed Br. BRG to appear before the Grand Master at the Grand Lodge office to discuss reason for the un-Masonic and hate filled email communication he sent to the Grand Master. The comments contained in his email were directed at the Grand Master and at PGM Shaun Bradshaw, neither of whom he had ever met or spoken with. In response to receiving the Summons, Br. BRG again sent a volatile email to the Grand Master stating that he was a grown man and no one would tell him what to do. Br. BRG further stated that refused to comply with the Summons. When Br. BRG failed to comply with the Summons, he was removed as Master of Dunn's Rock Lodge, and the matter was referred to the Judge Advocate for such action as he deemed appropriate. I refer you to the Report of the Judge Advocate for details of his actions.

The next Summons was issued on May 19, 2021, to Br. PEW, Secretary of Balfour Lodge No. 188. The Summons directed Br. PEW to appear before the Grand Master at the Grand Lodge office to discuss the reason for his outbursts and un-Masonic conduct in open Lodge where he directed profanity toward the Grand Master and other Brothers in the Lodge. At the time, a discussion was ongoing regarding the sale of Lodge property and the Grand Master was presiding in the East. Thereafter, Br. PEW stormed out of the Lodge leaving the station of secretary unattended. When Br. PEW failed to comply with the Summons, he was removed as Secretary of Balfour Lodge, and the matter was referred to the Judge Advocate for such action as he deemed appropriate. I refer you to the Report of the Judge Advocate for details of his actions.

The next Summons was issued on June 22, 2021, to Br. EAC, Secretary of Temple Lodge No. 676. The Summons directed Br. EAC to appear before the Grand Master at the Grand Lodge office to discuss his un-Masonic conduct relating to an angry and disrespectful voicemail he left for the Grand Master. Br. EAC appeared as directed in the Summons. Br. EAC had a frank and open discussion with regard to his actions with the Grand Master, Junior Grand Warden, and the Judge Advocate. Br. EAC was counseled by those present and apologized for his comments and disrespectful manner he addressed the Grand Master. Given the productive nature of the conversation with Br. EAC, I deemed the matter to be successfully concluded and no further action was necessary.

The next two (2) Summonses were issued on August 17, 2021, to Br. BEG and Br. DEB, both of Eagle Lodge No. 19. The Summons directed Br. EAC and Br. DEB to appear before the Judge Advocate at the Grand Lodge office to discuss with the Judge Advocate un-Masonic conduct relating to an allegation of electioneering that occurred at Eagle Lodge. The Summonses were necessary as members of Eagle Lodge were refusing to discuss the matter with the Judge Advocate and, as a result, impeding his ongoing investigation. These matters are properly before the Judge Advocate. I refer you to that Report of the Judge Advocate for details of his actions.

The last Summons was issued on November 9, 2021, to Br. MDG, Secretary of French Broad Lodge No. No. 292, The Summons directed Br. MDG to appear before the Grand Master at the Grand Lodge office to discuss the reason for the un-Masonic relating to his improper use of the Grand Lodge M2|Groupable database system, directing a chain letter to the Masters and Wardens of every Masonic Lodge in the State of North Carolina and improperly soliciting brothers to his personal religious beliefs, offering disrespectful statements and commentary toward the Grand Master, Grand Line Offices, and the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons in general. Not responding to the Grand Master directly, Br. MDG sent an email to several brothers stating that he would not appear as “the decision was already made.” When Br. MDG failed to comply with the Summons, he was removed as Secretary of French Broad Lodge and the matter was referred to the Judge Advocate for such action as he deemed appropriate. I refer you to the Report of the Judge Advocate for details of his actions.

Recommended Legislation

The Grand Master has the privilege of recommending legislation for the Craft to consider at the Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge following his term of office. At the time of my preliminary report, I had not formally offered any legislation. However, in contemplating matters that needed to be addressed, I offer the following legislation regarding the North Carolina Foundation and the issue of excluding a brother for nonpayment of dues.

For almost 100 years, the North Carolina Masonic Foundation has done an admirable job with the investment of the gifts it and our Homes have received. However, the Foundation was not set up to engage in financial development and oversee employees. Times have changed. Financial development is becoming an integral part of what this Foundation must do to see that our Homes have the funding necessary as we go forward in the future. To properly engage in financial development, the Foundation must engage employees with the skills and capacity to perform the job. With regard to those employees, there must be oversight and supervision. The Foundation must be able to develop a strategic plan to not only invest the gifts received, but to develop potential gifts for the future.

Although the legislation I proposed originally included an increase in the number of members who sit on the North Carolina Masonic Foundation Board, the Board addressed this issue by increasing their size in a recent bylaw change. As such, that portion of the legislation was withdrawn. The legislation regarding the Foundation may be found in the reports book at Amendment Groups 10 and 11. Amendment Group 10 clarifies the relationship between the Grand Lodge and the North Carolina Masonic Foundation. This legislation restores the designations that were removed in years past. Amendment Group 11 designates that funds generated or derived from defunct lodges be placed in a subscription with the Foundation such that the Grand Master and the Grand Lodge Officers have the ability to designate these funds for charitable relief, educational needs or to address other matters should they arise.

Amendment Group 12 addresses the continuing issue of members who are excluded for nonpayment of dues. At the end of every year, lodges vote to exclude members for nonpayment of dues, often time without any knowledge or understanding as to why the brother failed to pay his dues. This legislation

will require lodges to appoint a committee to investigate the physical and financial condition of a brother before he is excluded. Brothers who are aged, sick, or financially in need should be helped, not excluded. We must comply with our Masonic obligations and take care of our brothers.

Acknowledgements and Special Appreciations

I am deeply honored elected to serve as the 168th Grand Master of Masons in North Carolina. I intended to be installed as Grand Master in the York Rite Chapel on the campus of the Masonic Home for Children in Oxford. I worked with WB Kevin Otis, the Administrator of the Home, in planning to bring Masons from across North Carolina to Oxford. It was my goal to have them experience firsthand the great work being done at our Home. Unfortunately, the Covid-19 Pandemic was ongoing and like most of North Carolina, the campus of the Home was closed to visitation as a safety measure for the Children we serve. Therefore, I was forced to make other plans.

With the campus of the Children's Home closed to visitation, I turned to Amran Shrine, my home Shrine Temple. Stepping up to assist me with my installation was Ill. Sir C. Alvin Billings, Jr., Potentate and Ill. Sir J. Ray Fields, P.P. and Recorder. These brothers made certain that the installation of the Grand Master was a first-class event. I have thanked them before and I wish to thank them and all the Nobility of Amran Shrine for helping make the installation special event for me and the entire line of Grand Lodge Officers.

I offer a special thanks to the Master, Wardens, Officers, and Masons of my home lodge, Oak Grove Lodge No. 750. There are too many names to mention individually. Their efforts were a key factor in making my installation weekend a success. In addition to installation, they worked tirelessly at the Lodge, cleaning, painting, renovating, and preparing the building and grounds to host my last District Meeting. Words cannot adequately express what your friendship means to me. As a special thank you to Oak Grove Lodge, at their stated meeting on December 21, I presented the Lodge new Wardens' Columns. The columns, along with two (2) gavels I have used this year, were turned by Mr. David Stoval, a cabinet maker in Granville County. The columns and gavels were turned from a log I took from a pecan tree that fell on the Masonic Home for Children during a storm some years ago. In addition, the Lodge supported me through the entire year and I cannot thank them enough.

As they have done for so many Grand Masters, Worshipful Brother Johnny Surles and Worshipful Brother Bobby Meadows assisted in directing the installation ceremony and Grand Lodge Annual Communication. Susan and I want to thank these fine Brothers for their help. Their experience was invaluable in making the ceremony go smoothly.

I would like to thank my Grand Lodge Officers for their continued support of my year as Grand Master. You each bring a special talent to the officer line. It is those special talents that, when combined, makes our officer line one of the strongest in the country. You are each very special to me. You have supported me and provided good counsel all year. I know each of you will make an excellent Grand Master, and I look forward to your success. You have my continued support and admiration. Know that I will be there to assist each of you as you may need.

Thank you to our Past Grand Masters and their families for your support.

We stand upon the shoulders of great leaders like you. As with my Grand Line Officers, many of you have been there to provide me with good counsel. Thank you for all you have done and continue to do for our great Fraternity.

The District Deputy Grand Masters, District Deputy Grand Lecturers, and Board/Committee members provide a voluntary service that is essential in managing our grand jurisdiction. The Grand Master cannot be everywhere all the time. You are the eyes and ears of the Grand Master across the State. My gratitude for your support cannot be overstated. Thank you for everything you did for me this year.

I would like to give 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.

It would be impossible for our Grand Lodge to have the respect it does and a reputation for leadership in Freemasonry across the nation without the work of our office staff. After 40 years of service, Right Worshipful Brother Walt Clapp retired early in my term of office. Walt has always been a great friend to me and to our fraternity. Although he is missed, he left us in good hands. Right Worshipful Brother Jonathan Underwood has so ably filled the position of Grand Secretary. His leadership in the office was been a great help to me all year. Cornelia Doherty also retired this year, and she is very much missed. Vicki Lam and Hayley Moll do so much for our fraternity, and I cannot thank them enough. They are always there to assist. Worshipful Brother Matthew Robbins has taken a position at the Grand Lodge. Matt has assisted me with my duties and, as a trained architect, has begun assisting lodges as they plan the use of their space for the future. I expect to see great things from Matt as he becomes more comfortable in his position.

There are many that have contributed to my becoming Grand Master. I would like to thank WB Archie L. Smith, III. Br. Archie first took the time to discuss Freemasonry with me. He was the top line signer on my petition to the lodge, to the Scottish Rite, and to the Shrine. When I did not get a coach, Archie stepped up to become my coach. I am the only Master Mason that Br. Archie has ever coached. I have asked him to become more active and coach new candidates, but he insists that he only coaches Grand Masters. For that, I thank him.

Next, I need to thank WB Herbert C. “Dicky” Lyon. When I started learning the work, Brother Dicky encouraged me to become a certified lecturer. After I was certified, Brother Dicky encouraged me to become District Deputy Grand Lecturer. After completing my term as DDGL, Brother Dicky encouraged me to make an application to become District Deputy Grand Master. I thank him for seeing some quality in me to hold these offices and his encouragement for me to take the next step in the leadership in our Craft.

I would like to thank MWB Billy Dill for appointing me to my first Grand Lodge Committee, the Board of Custodians. I would also like to thank MWB Lew Ledford appointing me to the Board of Directors of WhiteStone and for his support and wise counsel all these years. You have both been an inspiration to me.

None of this would be possible if were not for MWB Dalton W. Mayo. A very special thank you to my Masonic Father for appointing me as Junior Grand Steward. I hope that my travel through the Grand Lodge Officer Line has made him proud, as well as the rest of my lineage, PGM Gene Jernigan and PGM Charles Ingram. The support, guidance, and counsel that I have received from PGM Mayo, PGM Jernigan, and PGM Ingram has been invaluable for my success. Thank you.

Finally, I owe a debt of gratitude to wife Susan. You were patient with my many absences over the past decade. However, I am glad that we were able to travel together and that you have been able create your own friendships with many who we would otherwise have never met. You have been and continue to be my biggest supporter, documenting my journey across the state, the nation, and Europe. I love you and thank you for all that you have done for me.

Respectfully and Fraternaly,
R. David Wicker, Jr.
Grand Master, 2021

Interim Report
of
Grand Master
Larry B. Thompson, Jr.
to
the
Grand Lodge
of
Ancient, Free & Accepted Masons
of
North Carolina
at
Winston-Salem, North Carolina
September 30, 2022

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina, Grand Lodge Officers, Past Grand Masters, Past Grand Officers, Officers of Constituent Lodges, Voting Delegates to the Annual Communication and Brethren all:

I welcome each of you back to Winston-Salem for the 235th annual communication of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina!

As Grand Master, Regulation 13-2.5 requires that I present this Interim Report setting forth my actions to date as your Grand Master, my assessment of the Craft, the general condition of Freemasonry in North Carolina and recommending such legislation as, to date, I deem necessary for the Craft to consider next year.

2022 Initiatives

During his tenure, M.W. Grand Master David R. Wicker, Jr, focused on rekindling an interest in Freemasonry through marketing our Fraternity. He reminded us that we must understand that everything we do and say, even what we fail to do or say, is marketing. Grand Master Wicker concentrated on three (3) areas: community involvement, lodge stability, and reestablishing fraternalism.

I felt compelled to continue on this path, with a twist, as we reemerged from a global pandemic and encountered members who had become indifferent and had gotten out of the habit of attending lodge meetings. We still had members who were truly concerned about potential exposure and who, for this reason, chose to limit their activities.

I was truly amazed at the number of brothers who worked tirelessly to ensure that our communities, and our lodges, maintained some semblance of order in the face of ongoing challenges; and to those men, we shall be forever grateful for their service.

When I took office, we were beginning to see a new horizon in a world that was not quite post-Covid but one that was getting ever closer. I challenged our membership to decide what this world would look like — it was up to us to decide what Freemasonry would look like.

Knowing that this would not happen without focused efforts, I challenged our membership to help revitalize our lodges and gain a renewed sense of purpose and relevancy in 2022. A list of action items was generated that have been proven in the past to generate positive results, and it was my desire to see our lodges implement a planned approach to reengaging the Craft, creating a quality lodge experience, and enjoying the growth that they deserve. A Masonic “Revival” if you will.

Personal Contact

Our lodges were challenged to reach out to every member and perform a wellness check. They were also challenged to ask each brother to attend at least four (4) lodge meetings in the coming year with the hope that our attendance rates would increase and that those who attended would remain engaged.

This challenge extended further with a request that all of our Masonic widows be contacted and continue to be contacted on at least a quarterly basis. We missed opportunities during the pandemic, and this was unacceptable.

Creating a Quality Experience

We should give our members a sense of purpose and a reason to be excited about our lodge activities. To that end, every meeting should have a short program of interest for the brethren. We have a lot of resources available on the NC Grand Lodge website (including the Speakers Bureau). Another great resource is the “Short Talk Bulletin” published by the MSNA (<https://shorttalkbulletin.com/>).

When it comes to our degree work, we must remember that our focus should always be on the candidate. The work that we deliver makes a lasting impression upon the candidate – good or bad. Consider altering the lighting (candlelight degrees are impressive), adding appropriate music, taking our time, and being very deliberate in our work.

Our lodge buildings make an impression as well. The first impression of our fraternity for many is the appearance of a lodge building. I encouraged every lodge to consider implementing a lodge improvement project in 2022 that focuses on the outer appearance of their building (painting, landscaping, shutters, front portico, front doors, etc.). This is a requirement for the new Grand Master Lodge of Excellence level of the Lion & Pillar award, and an interior lodge improvement project qualified as well. From experience, a lodge improvement project has the potential to create excitement among the brothers, and when they get excited, they tell others about the new activity which can create interest in potential members.

Quality should be our focus whether it be in Masonic education, degree work, our buildings, or the meals that we serve. Our brethren desire a quality experience, and we should be delivering on every level to maintain interest and a sense of value.

Membership Selection

Creating a quality lodge experience, and enthusiasm amongst the brothers, generates interest and, ultimately, petitions for the degrees. It goes without saying that these men need to be thoroughly vetted. Approximately 5% of our background investigations come back with “red flags.” These are individuals that we did not take the time to get to know before handing them a petition.

You have heard it said many times before: we should not be concerned about membership numbers. Be more concerned about the quality of men that we are allowing through the West Gate, and we will have the brothers needed to support our mission. We have endured the test of time and will continue to do so!

Mentoring our New Members

Early in the year, I was contacted by a new member who was raised a Master Mason in 2020. The questions that he asked made it very apparent that

he did not have a solid mentor through his degrees. He learned the catechisms, but nobody took the time to explain the deeper meanings of the work to him or simple things such as the sequence of knocks at the door during a tyled meeting, why the Master of the lodge is always “covered” during a meeting, what is a “blue lodge,” etc. We need to mentor and engage our new members, or we will lose them. Consider assigning a mentor to a candidate in addition to his coach. A candidate’s coach may not be the best mentor in his Masonic journey. Use the Lodge System of Masonic Education. This program will help with the mentoring process, is extremely easy to implement, and it is available on the Grand Lodge website as a PDF or as a Podcast (17 individual tracts).

Once you have a new member, put him to work! Take the time to find where his interests lie and find a job in the lodge for him. This could be building and grounds, the kitchen crew if you have one, lodge webmaster, newsletter, or learning a part in the degrees. Whatever we do, we must keep our new members engaged.

Community Involvement

Another opportunity to engage our brothers and remain relevant is through community involvement. I continue to encourage our lodges to participate in community events that occur throughout the year. Consider sponsoring a youth sports team, a boy scout troop, a school band, a Red Cross blood drive, a Habitat for Humanity project, Meals on Wheels, etc. These are not only worthwhile endeavors, but it is also key in helping good men find the path to our doors.

Again, these five action items have stood the test of time, and while simple to implement, they have yielded consistent results. I have received positive feedback from quite a few lodge Masters who have benefitted from this five step initiative in 2022.

New Member Packages

At the 2021 Grand Lodge Annual Communication, voting delegates approved a \$20,000.00 line item for new member packages. I am pleased to report that our new member package has been created and is in the production stage. The new member packages will be distributed to all new Master Masons and will contain the following content within presentation folder adorned with a square and compass and Grand Master’s lapel pin:

- Foreword
 - History of Freemasonry in North Carolina
 - The Grand Lodge of North Carolina
 - Masonic Charities
 - The Code
 - Grand Lodge Officers
 - District Officers
 - Subordinate Lodges and Masonic Law
 - Communications of a Lodge
-

- Rights and Privileges of Master Masons
- Masonic Etiquette
- Education for Master Masons
- Appendant Bodies

The North Carolina Mason

For years there have been discussions taking place regarding The North Carolina Mason and the possibility of transitioning to a periodical. The idea did not take flight due to concerns related to publication costs, layout, and perhaps fear of the unknown. I felt strongly about converting to a magazine format. It was a logical step towards reviving our fraternity, and I wanted to deliver a high quality publication that our brothers would be proud to leave on their coffee tables and in their places of work.

We set to work by assembling a Board of Publications team led by W. Brother Michael Register, Grand Marshal, and assisted by W. Brother C. Alvin Billings, JGS, W. Brother Thomas A. Pope, Jr., W. Brother Anthony J. Rathbone, W. Brother Philip P. Miller, and, of course, Beth Grace. Brother George Marut, Chief Development Officer with the NCMF, also played an integral part in the magazine development, and our team at The Masonic Home for Children are to be commended for their envelope inserting skills and ability to get the publication out the door as quick as possible. Thank you all! We have had so much positive feedback from our membership that it is all a little overwhelming!

Resolution of Unified Public Service

Shortly after taking office, it was brought to my attention that a subordinate lodge had planned a public ceremony in their community where the Grand Master, and other Grand Lodge Officers, of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons North Carolina had not been invited to participate. Since 2008 we have enjoyed mutual recognition and visitation with the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge, but we did not have a resolution to jointly participate in public parades, community celebrations, public devotions to deity, and the laying of cornerstones for public buildings. To rectify this situation, the following resolution was created and adopted:

Since its founding, Freemasonry and Freemasons have striven to promote a never-ending argument for nobler deeds, for higher thoughts, and for greater achievements. As Masons we serve the people and make our world a better place through charitable acts and public service. Freemasons often perform these acts quietly.

Yet, Freemasons strive to inspire and act in unison. Since our earliest days we communally celebrate the betterment of man and honor good works, especially when together we may inspire, and build edifices for the public's benefit. Since time immemorial we have conducted certain forms and ceremonies to celebrate these constructs and offer thanks to God for his blessings upon us.

In the continuation of brotherly love and friendship we hold so dear between the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina and the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons North Carolina, hereby reaffirm our drive to work together for the public good and improvement of the lives of our citizens, communities, our state, and nation.

Together we reaffirm the great principles of our Masonic fraternity — of Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth. Our strength and ability to foster progress and improvement in society is based upon our ability to work together.

Therefore, be it Resolved, that the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina and the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons North Carolina agree and look forward to faithfully performing and carrying out all such public ceremonies and functions anciently associated with our institution — including public parades, community celebrations, public devotions to deity, and the laying of cornerstones for public buildings.

Together, we are a great mosaic and beautiful to behold. We are united. We are stronger together.

Grand Master's Fundraisers

This year we have initiated three charity fundraisers that have generated a lot of interest, which I am very pleased with. Our first fundraiser, which is ongoing, evolved from the idea of creating a North Carolina-made dress sock that was designed by one of our children from The Masonic Home for Children at Oxford. Not only were we able to do this, but we were also fortunate enough to find a company (Wrightsock) that was owned by a member of the Craft. The result was a high-quality eco-friendly product made by Masons, for Masons right here in our great state! W. Brother Alvin Billings has visited multiple lodges who have placed a substantial order for our socks and presented a program on our children's home while making a sock delivery — thank you W. Brother Alvin!

The second fundraiser that is ongoing is the "Revival" cigar, a premium cigar crafted exclusively in the Dominican Republic at the PDR factories by Abe Flores, a member of the Elite Pro Cigar (Association of Dominican Cigar Manufacturers). This effort would not have been possible without the help of Brother Larry Payne of the Gold Leaf Cigar Lounge and Brother Fouad Kashouty and his lovely wife, Romy, of Hiram and Solomon Cigars. A release party was held at the Gold Leaf Cigar Lounge on March 12th. Brother Fouad and Remy made the trip to North Carolina and joined 127 brothers and friends for the cigar launch. Holly Hopkins entertained the packed house with jazz and blues selections in between speeches and drawings for free gifts. The sales for this cigar have been very strong, and we have really enjoyed the excitement that the product has generated. A recent 5-person blind tasting of the cigar generated an overall 92 point rating, which is incredible!

On July 22nd we kicked off the "Grand Master's Charity Ride from Murphy to Manteo," a 2-day motorcycle ride that visited several Shrine clubs

across the state. We had the opportunity to make stops at Junaluskee Lodge No. 145, Land of the Sky Shrine Club, Catawba Shrine Club, Burlington Shrine Club, Rocky Mount Shrine Club, and ending at Manteo Shrine Club where we were treated to a delicious seafood dinner donated by Law Tigers Motorcycle Lawyers. As many as 60 riders, at any given time, were well treated at each stop and received many requests to consider making this an annual event.

State of the Craft

To date I have been able to visit forty (40) lodges, installed the officers of ten (10) lodges and presented thirty-nine (39) service awards (4 – 70yr, 9 – 60yr, 16 – 50yr, and 13 – 25yr). I have had the opportunity to attend the Conference of Grand Masters of North America, held in Milwaukee, WI; the Grand York Rite assembly held in Clemmons, NC; Imperial Shrine which was held in Minneapolis, MN; and traveled to Waco, TX with our instructors from the Middle Chamber to share that program with our brethren in Texas (thank you to M.W. Brother Shaun Bradshaw, and W. Brothers Ben Wallace and Randy Browning for their continued efforts with this excellent program).

This year we have held six (6) traditional District Meetings (Unanimity Lodge No. 7, Wayne Lodge No. 112, Lebanon Lodge No. 391, Waynesville Lodge No. 259, Hibriten Lodge No. 262, and Ocean Lodge No. 405) as well as reintroducing the Table Lodge or “Harmony” to our brethren. We have held five (5) of these special events at this time (Greensboro Masonic Temple, the Speedway Club at the Charlotte Motor Speedway, Wilmington at the Beau Rivage Golf & Resort, Asheville Masonic Temple, and Raleigh at the City of Raleigh Museum), with more planned before the end of the year.

All meetings were well attended, but I need to share a few observations related to the Table Lodges. The Table Lodges, or “Masonic Harmony,” were open events, and our brethren were able to bring their spouses. Dress for the evenings consisted of black tie or dark suits, the meals were catered, and traditional Masonic toasts were observed. Ticket prices ranged from \$60.00 to \$100.00, based on area venue and catering costs, and we were at capacity for every event. This, in my opinion, is significant. Those that attended the Table Lodges were willing to pay for a quality event and really enjoyed the formal setting and structure. Many of those in attendance asked if this is something that they could implement in their home lodge. Given the overwhelming positive responses that have been received, the Grand Lodge will be developing guidelines for similar events that will be distributed to our lodges.

As time allows, I will continue to visit lodges throughout this great state, and I am truly humbled to serve the brethren as your Grand Master. I have been received with nothing but kindness and respect by our Lodges, Shrine Temples, and Appendant Bodies, and it has been a pleasure meeting so many wonderful brethren during my travels.

Perhaps the single most take-home point from my report on the state of the craft should be Freemasonry is alive and well in the state of North Carolina... but there are challenges ahead. Some of these challenges are being addressed through lodge mergers as we “right size” again.

What do I mean by right sizing? Freemasonry experienced an abnormal growth spurt that began in the 1940s and continued into the 1950s. We were making Masons at almost every meeting. Based on membership trends in Freemasonry and other fraternal organizations, we know that this was not normal growth, and it was not sustainable. As we lose members, we are getting back to more realistic membership numbers — and less income with our current dues structure. We are faced with the challenge to “do more with less.”

As I travel the state, I look at the dues that lodges are paying, and it is concerning. To be blunt, a growing number of lodges do not have dues that are high enough to sustain operations. We have some lodges that have operated on a deficit. As a whole, we are not factoring in the cost of future roof replacement, HVAC replacement, or other normal building maintenance costs, which can be the death knell of a lodge. The majority of our lodges are not paying what equates to \$.50 per day in dues; why? Worse yet, as a non-profit organization that does not pay taxes, some lodges are of the opinion that it is perfectly okay to ask the public to support fundraisers intended to benefit our lodge building funds (even though the IRS takes exception to this) ... why? The general public does not owe us a dime. We are the world’s oldest and largest fraternal organization that was built by Freemasons for Freemasons, and we should be paying our own way. We should be raising the bar and setting the example for all other fraternal organizations, but we are not. If you have been to one of my district meetings, you have heard me question whether Freemasonry is not worth at least \$1.00 per day? We offer a transformative experience for the initiate that no other civic or fraternal organization offers, and we are the cheapest game in town. Simply put, we spend money on the things that are important to us, and our actions state that Freemasonry is not important or not worth the amount it takes to keep a roof over our heads — why?

This year you will see two proposed amendments on the floor to raise our minimum initiation fee, which is currently \$21.00. The minimum initiation fee was originally set in 1919 when the dollar value of \$21.00 equated to \$310.34! I make this point because our brethren in 1919 knew the value of the fraternity, and they were willing to pay for it. We should take note of that fact the brethren before us left many way-marks to help guide us on our path; one was adding value to the fraternity and being willing to pay for it. Years of delayed maintenance needs and reluctance to raise lodge dues have many of our lodges in a precarious situation.

To that end, the grand lodge staff, along with the help of several brethren, developed the web based Lodge Dues Calculator to help your lodge with budgeting and financial processes. The calculator takes into consideration:

1. Your lodge facility’s health—the age of your roof and HVAC system and other systems based on age and square footage,
2. Your lodge’s savings and expenditures,
3. Your lodge’s dues structure based on the number of dues paying members

With this information, the calculator generates the optimal amount per

member that should be saved for capital improvements, renovations, and basic administrative functions. Here's the link to the calculator: <<https://bit.ly/3KfQNib>>

I would encourage your lodge to take advantage of this tool and be honest with yourselves when it comes to finances and budgeting for the future. As M.W. Benjamin Franklin stated, “If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail.”

Regardless of our efforts, we will continue to see lodge mergers due to apathy, individualism, weak leadership, bigotry, and late stage planning efforts. So far this year we have seen four lodge mergers this year, and there are at least two more mergers that are being planned. As we continue to right size, it is paramount that our lodge culture changes and the right leaders are selected and kept in positions for longer terms. The “progressive line” that we have grown accustomed to oftentimes does more to hurt our lodges than help. There is nothing wrong with keeping a good lodge Master for more than one year. This creates continuity and helps with strategic planning.

Here are some additional Masonic truths that I have learned over the years that could help any lodge succeed. We should not be concerned about our membership numbers. In fact, smaller lodges of 50-75 members is probably the ideal size. We should be creating meaningful relationships in lodge, and we should know all of our members. We need to be honest with ourselves when it comes to the real cost of operating our lodges, and we need to be willing to pay that price. We need to exude quality in everything that we do, whether it be our ritual, our meals, or the appearance of our buildings. We should provide thought-provoking educational programs at every meeting and challenge our members to engage the initiates, mentor them, and put them to work. We need to be involved in our communities. These are our action items — it is up to each lodge to take the initiative and execute.

You might think that this report is overly negative. I disagree; it is just the facts. I would also state that the majority of our lodges are doing well and continue to deliver on all of the topics that I have covered. Our affinity lodges are not only succeeding, but they are also growing in numbers. Our observant lodges continue to garner a great deal of interest and the number of observant lodges continues to tend up across the country. Our educational opportunities across the state with the Speakers Bureau, Wilkerson College, Davie Academy, and Middle Chamber continue to be sought out and are drawing interest from other states. And we are experiencing great interest in old traditions that we knock the dust off of and bring to light once again.

Brethren, we are at a turning point, and it is up to each of us to decide the future of Freemasonry in North Carolina. Will we allow apathy, individualism, weak leadership, bigotry, and the cheapening of the craft to continue? Or do we encourage, mentor, build, and educate? Brother Henry Ford provided us many inspirational quotes. Two of my favorites that I find apropos when pondering a path forward are:

“Whether you think you can, or you think you can’t, you’re right.”

“Obstacles are those frightful things that you see when you take your eyes off your goal.”

Commit to making positive changes in your lodge. Assess your needs, set goals, and work to accomplish them. Doing this, you will get your lodge closer and closer to its full potential. You will enrich your community and the lives of your members. You will experience the success that has carried us forward for centuries!

Lodge Losses and Gains

To date, we have had four completed lodge consolidations and once recently-approved consolidation. The most recent consolidation of Acacia Lodge 674 (District 23) into Numa F. Reid Lodge 344 has been approved only within the past few weeks as of the date of this report. We have also been made aware that Bush Hill Lodge 732 (District 24) is seeking to consolidate into Thomasville Lodge 214 (District 27), that Wilson Lodge 712 (District 16) is completing paperwork to consolidate into Mount Lebanon Lodge 117, and Piedmont-Pioneer Lodge 685 (District 26) is beginning the process to consolidate into Salem Lodge 289. Hopefully these consolidations will result in stronger lodges.

In November 2021, M.W. Brother R. David, Wicker, Jr, PGM, with my full support, found it in the best interest of Freemasonry to arrest the Charter of French Broad Lodge No. 292. In our discussions, Grand Master Wicker and I were of the opinion that the arrest of the Charter would allow the members of French Broad Lodge to reflect upon their Masonic obligations and assess whether the Lodge was living up to those obligations. After allowing sufficient time to contemplate the Masonic principles that every Mason should be demonstrating toward all mankind, it may then be possible to save the lodge. After taking office, Grand Master Wicker and I continued to discuss this matter. We discussed the remedial actions that we believed the lodge needed to take before I would restore the Charter. I am pleased to report that the Charter of French Broad Lodge No. 292 was restored on March 1, 2022.

On April 28, 2022, I found it in the best interest of Freemasonry to arrest the Charter of Dunn's Rock Lodge No. 267. The basis for the arrest of the charter is based on several events illustrating an irregularity of work within the lodge, to wit: in 2019 a Mason applied for affiliation to Dunn's Rock Lodge 267 but was rejected. The intent of the blackballing, due to the color of the man's skin, became known to some officers and district officers and was reported to the Grand Secretary's Office. In 2021 the Master of the Lodge verbally abused the Grand Lodge, insulted the Grand Master, ignored his summons, and further ignored a summons from the Judge Advocate to explain his actions. He was subsequently expelled. And earlier this year a young man petitioned for the degrees at Dunn's Rock Lodge 267. According to reports, he dined with the brethren, volunteered his time to participate in lodge events, and received a favorable report when the ballot for his petition was read. He was blackballed, and allegations of racism again emanated from the lodge, at which time the Master, Secretary, and Tyler resigned from the lodge and demitted from Masonry. It was then reported that the blackballs were thrown to spite the Master, which is also un-Masonic.

The lodge officers reached out to me on May 16th and presented a formal apology and a plan to reconcile and move forward. On May 25th I received a Statement of Principles from the lodge that addressed previous concerns related to racism and path forward to success. This information was shared

with the Board of General Purposes on June 24th and the Charter of Dunn's Rock Lodge No. 267 was restored on July 20th.

Although there will be losses of individual lodges in 2022, we hope that the consolidations will create stronger, more vibrant lodges. Unfortunately, some lodges do not take the opportunity to merge or surrender their Charter before expending lodge resources which would have benefitted the lodge that they consolidate with, or our fraternity as a whole. We have to be honest with ourselves and make the decision to consolidate or surrender a Charter sooner rather than later if failure is inevitable. One common thread that I have observed in failing lodges through my years as a Grand Lodge Officer is something that you read in the State of the Craft portion of this report and that is apathy, individualism, weak leadership, bigotry, and late stage planning efforts.

On a more positive note, I do anticipate the opportunity to consecrate a new lodge later this year. The Knights of Solomon Lodge, UD has completed all of the requirements set forth and will be voted on at this Annual Communication. Being a motorcycle enthusiast and a charter member of the Knights of Solomon Lodge No. 764, this gives me great pleasure.

Necrology

During this past year, the Grand Lodge of North Carolina lost to death one (1) Past Grand Master, Lee Roy "Pete" Thomas, Jr. Unfortunately, each year it is our sad duty to report the number of deceased brethren that have been called into that Celestial Lodge Above. Since our last Annual Communication, we have lost 1,002 brethren to death. We grieve the loss of our brothers and know that they are now in a better place. We offer our continued thoughts and prayers to their families and thank them for sharing their loved ones with our fraternity during each of their Masonic journeys.

District Deputy Officer Regional Planning Meetings

There were five (5) regional planning meetings held with the District Deputy Grand Masters and the District Deputy Grand Lecturers taking place in November and December 2021. These meetings were spread across the state due to COVID-19 concerns and the desire to limit our group sizes. We held our District Deputy Officer Conferences following dates and at the following locations:

| Date | Host | Location |
|-------------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| November 3 | Waynesville Lodge No. 259 | Waynesville |
| November 4 | Statesville Lodge No. 27 | Statesville |
| November 11 | Columbus Lodge No. 102 | Pittsboro |
| November 15 | St. John's Lodge No. 13 | Kenansville |
| December 20 | Concord Lodge No. 58 | Tarboro |

Our District Deputy Grand Masters and District Deputy Grand Lecturers provide an invaluable service to the Craft, and these meetings give the Grand

Master-elect, the Grand Lecturer, and Grand Secretary the opportunity to get to know each of these officers and deliver talking points, goals, and objectives for the ensuing year. These meetings also provide the opportunity for the District Officers to ask questions and discuss best practices between the districts.

Honorary Title of Past District Deputy Grand Master

It is my privilege to recommend that this Grand Lodge grant the honorary title of Past District Deputy Grand Master to the following brethren who have completed their respective terms of service and who are now eligible to receive this honorary title in accordance with The Code:

| Name | Lodge | District |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| Scot Robert Hardwick | Eureka Lodge No. 317 | 1 |
| Wesley Lee Sales | Seaside Lodge No. 429 | 4 |
| Warren George Taylor | Doric Lodge No. 568 | 7 |
| Lester Howard Knight | Johnston Caswell Lodge No. 10 | 8 |
| Christopher Ronald Raines | St. John's Lodge No. 4 | 10 |
| John Arthur Shawver | St. John's Lodge No. 1 | 12 |
| Jerry Eugene Brown, Jr. | Oxford Lodge No. 122 | 13 |
| Jeffrey Arthur Sank | Wake Forest Lodge No. 282 | 14 |
| Michael Joseph Crocker | Vandora Lodge No. 745 | 15 |
| James Leonard Pugsley | Lebanon Lodge No. 391 | 17 |
| Robert Stephen Hagen | Red Springs Lodge No. 501 | 18 |
| James Edward Paschal | Corinthian Lodge No. 542 | 23 |
| William Michael Payne | Granite Lodge No. 322 | 25 |
| Gary Wayne Leonard | Thomasville Lodge No. 214 | 27 |
| Eddie Nelson Rimmer | Statesville Lodge No. 27 | 30 |
| John Patrick White | Gaston Lodge No. 263 | 36 |
| Robert Michael Swann | Bald Creek Lodge No. 397 | 37 |

Honorary Title of Past District Deputy Grand Lecturer

Likewise, I am privileged to 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:

| Name | Lodge | District |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|
| Charles Maris Chapman | Jerusalem Lodge No. 95 | 6 |
| Dale Allen Krueger | Cherry Point Lodge No. 688 | 7 |
| Phillip Christopher Lee | Wendell Lodge No. 565 | 14 |
| Christopher Michael Ryan | Green Level Lodge No. 277 | 15 |

| | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|----|
| Matthew Britt Moore | Relief Lodge No. 431 | 16 |
| Justin Dolphus Parker | Fairmont Lodge No. 528 | 18 |
| Frank David Wanko | Southern Pines Lodge No. 584 | 21 |
| Jeffrey David Martin | Tabasco Lodge No. 271 | 23 |
| Joseph Sterling Henry | Long Creek Lodge No. 205 | 31 |
| Brett Albert Huffman | Lovelady Lodge No. 670 | 34 |
| Michael Lee McGinnis | Gaston Lodge No. 263 | 36 |
| Claude Ray Harrill | Kedron Lodge No. 387 | 38 |

Lion and Pillar Lodges for 2022

Since its inception in 2017, this program has been utilized by many lodges for their continued growth and pursuit of excellence. Below is a list of lodges that have achieved excellence this year.

Grand Master's Lodge of Excellence

| Lodge | District | Location |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Holly Springs Lodge No. 115 | 15 | Holly Springs |

Platinum Level Lion and Pillar

| Lodge | District | Location |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Eagle Lodge No. 19 | 19 | Hillsborough |
| Greensboro Lodge No. 76 | 23 | Greensboro |
| Zion Lodge No. 81 | 7 | Trenton |
| Western Star Lodge No. 91 | 38 | Rutherfordton |
| Cleveland Lodge No. 202 | 35 | Shelby |
| William G. Hill Lodge No. 218 | 14 | Raleigh |
| Mystic Tie Lodge No. 237 | 34 | Marion |
| Kenly Lodge No. 257 | 16 | Kenly |
| Fuquay Lodge No. 258 | 15 | Fuquay-Varina |
| Hibriten Lodge No. 262 | 34 | Lenoir |
| Wilmington Lodge No. 319 | 12 | Wilmington |
| Campbell Lodge No. 374 | 30 | Troutman |
| Bula Lodge No. 409 | 22 | Burlington |
| Pilot Lodge No. 493 | 25 | Pilot Mountain |
| Cannon Memorial Lodge No. 626 | 28 | Kannapolis |
| Semper Fidelis Lodge No. 680 | 4 | Jacksonville |
| Shallotte Lodge No. 727 | 12 | Shallotte |
| Vandora Lodge No. 745 | 15 | Garner |
| Ashlar Lodge No. 765 | 12 | Hampstead |
| Lux Libertas Lodge No. 772 | 19 | Hillsborough |

Standard Level Lion and Pillar

| Lodge | District | Location |
|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| St. John's Lodge No. 1 | 12 | Wilmington |
| Statesville Lodge No. 27 | 30 | Statesville |
| Oxford Lodge No. 122 | 13 | Oxford |
| Palmyra Lodge No. 147 | 20 | Dunn |
| Mingo Lodge No. 206 | 11 | Dunn |
| Corinthian Lodge No. 230 | 9 | Rocky Mount |
| Wallace Lodge No. 279 | 11 | Wallace |
| Ashler Lodge No. 373 | 33 | Deep Gap |
| Jefferson Penn Lodge No. 384 | 22 | Reidsville |
| Bald Creek Lodge No. 397 | 37 | Burnsville |
| Thomas M. Holt Lodge No. 492 | 22 | Graham |

We have this program today thanks to M.W. Brother A. Gene Cobb, Jr., PGM. M.W. Brother Cobb turned over the day-to-day operations of the program to W. Brother Chris Canipe, Chairman, W. Brother Jason Caldwell, W. Brother Michael Wright, W. Brother Marty Hunt, W. Brother Albert Hopping, and W. Brother Aaron Jackson, all of whom are doing a wonderful job and deserved to be mentioned for their work.

The Lion and Pillar program has been a great asset to those lodges who have chosen to participate, and we look forward to seeing even more lodges take advantage of this opportunity next year!

Joseph Montfort Medals

Pursuant to Regulation 80-1, each Grand Master has been given the privilege to present not more than three (3) Joseph Montfort Medals during his term in office. The Montfort Medal can be presented by the Grand Master to "any Master Mason in good standing...who in the opinion of the Grand Master is deserving thereof because of distinguished Masonic service or achievement." To date, it has been my honor to present two (2) Montfort Medals.

On December 4, 2022, I presented the first Joseph Montfort Medal to W. Brother William Baldwin Bruton. W. Brother Bruton was raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason on August 3, 1993, in Blackmer Lodge No. 127, Mount Gilead, North Carolina, and served as its Master in 1997. W. Brother Bruton has served as District Deputy Grand Master of the 24th Masonic District (2004-2006) and Past Grand Tyler (2017). He has served the Grand Lodge as a member of the Board of Masonic Jurisprudence (2017-2019) and is currently serving a second term on the Board of General Purposes (2012-2014, 2022-2024). Perhaps more importantly, W. Brother Bruton is a perpetual Masonic mentor and much of the current success experienced by Blackmer Lodge No. 127 is due to his leadership and desire to see young Masons develop to their fullest potential. This Grand Master would not be serving in my current capacity had it not been for W. Brother "Bill" Bruton

pushing and prodding me along my Masonic path! Much love.

On September 10, 2022, at the Phoenix Lodge No. 8 and Fayetteville Independent Light Infantry Company Harmony, I presented the second Joseph Montfort Medal to Brother Bruce Joseph Daws. Brother Daws was raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason on September 24, 1985, in Phoenix Lodge No. 8, Fayetteville, North Carolina. Brother Daws is a recipient of The Order of the Long Leaf Pine (2015), an award that is among the most prestigious of awards presented by the Governor of North Carolina. He serves as Director of Historic and Natural Resources for the City of Fayetteville (Includes: The Fayetteville History Museum, NC Veterans Park, City Park Rangers, Historic Properties Manager, and City Historian) and as Commander of the Fayetteville Independent Light Infantry, North Carolina's Official Historic Military Command, a position he has held since August 23rd, 1984. Major Daws has been the longest-serving commander of the Fayetteville Independent Light Infantry since 1793. He currently has 38 years of service as an Infantry Officer.

I intend to present a third Montfort Medal prior to the end of my term in office.

Physical Disabilities

In the case of petitioners having physical disabilities, The Code requires the District Deputy Grand Master to investigate and advise the Grand Master as to whether the petition should proceed through its normal process. 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.

As of September 1, seven (7) such requests have been submitted to me. In each case an investigation was conducted by the District Deputy Grand Master, with such assistance as he deemed necessary. Based on the information provided to me by the DDGMs, I have approved the request of all seven (7) petitioners to proceed with the Degrees in Masonry with their physical disabilities.

I would like to thank each of the District Deputy Grand Masters who met with these petitioners, thoroughly interviewed them, and presented me with their findings. Their assistance and the reports that were provided were invaluable and helped me to make my final decisions.

Dispensations

During the period from December 4, 2022, through September 1, 2022, I have issued seventy-four (74) Dispensations for various Lodge needs and situations. Listed below are the Dispensations issued to date:

1. Emergent communication - Sophia 767
2. Elect Junior Warden - Granville 380
3. Stated communications - Knights of Solomon UD
4. Install Master - Mt. Moriah 690

5. Elect Master - Lawndale 486
 6. Master of two lodges - Millbrook 97
 7. Hybrid stated communication - J. J. Crowder 743
 8. Elect Master - Southern Pines 484
 9. Operate without charter - Millbrook 97
 10. Elect Junior Warden - James K. Polk 759
 11. Elect officers - Perseverance 59
 12. Other place - Knights of Solomon 764
 13. Virtual stated - Mosaic 762
 14. Virtual stated - University 408
 15. Move stated - Pythagoras 249
 16. Elect Master - Southern Pines 484
 17. Cancel stated - Cannon Memorial 626
 18. Other place - Knights of Solomon 774
 19. Elect Senior Warden - Yadkin 637
 20. Hybrid stated communication - J. J. Crowder 743
 21. Move stated - Prometheus 775
 22. Elect Junior Warden - Waccamaw 596
 23. Emergent communication - Raleigh 500
 24. Other place - Knights of Solomon 768
 25. Virtual stated - Mystic Tie 237
 26. Emergent communication - Orr 104
 27. Emergent communication - Sophia 767
 28. Elect SW - Oconee 427
 29. Virtual stated - State College 770
 30. Hybrid stated communication - J. J. Crowder 743
 31. Elect Master - Charity 5
 32. Other place - Knights of Solomon 764
 33. Brunswick Town Degree - Lux Libertas 772
 34. Other place - Raleigh 500
 35. Outdoor degree - Jerusalem 95
 36. Other place - Wilkerson College 760
 37. Elect Junior Warden - Hanks 128
 38. Elect Junior Warden - Wayne 112
 39. Emergent communication - Lebanon 391
 40. Other place - Knights of Solomon 768
 41. Emergent communication - Pilot 493
 42. Emergent communication - Orr 104
 43. Other place - Cary 198
 44. Cancel stated - Mill Creek 125
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45. Outdoor degree - Cranberry 598
46. Other place - Knights of Solomon 764
47. Move stated - Friendship 388
48. Other place - Henderson 229
49. Move stated - St. John's 13
50. Other place - Tabasco 271
51. Elect Senior Warden - Ashler 373
52. Move stated - Stedman 730
53. Virtual stated communication - Wilkerson College 760
54. Virtual emergent communication - Nine Sisters 773
55. Other place - Creasy Proctor 679
56. Other place - Clifford Duell 756
57. Emergent communication - Royal White Hart 2
58. Emergent Communication - Denton 404
59. Other place - Knights of Solomon 768
60. Cancel stated - Mingo 206
61. Other place - Knights of Solomon 766
62. Other place - Raleigh 500
63. Virtual stated communication - Wilkerson College 760
64. Harvest Moon degree - Union 618
65. Other place - Nine Sisters 773
66. Cancel stated - Richard Caswell 705
67. Other place - Oconee 427
68. Other place - Knights of Solomon 766
69. Cancel stated - MESH 771
70. Other place - Lux Libertas 772
71. Cancel stated - Zion 81
72. Degree modifications - Excelsior 261
73. Emergent communication - Excelsior 261
74. Other place - Knights of Solomon 768

Orders

During the period from December 4, 2022, through September 1, 2022, I have issued six (6) Orders. Listed below are the Orders issued to date:

1. **To Brother CAS** for the purpose of ordering the aforementioned brother, as the former Treasurer of Liberty Lodge 45, to deliver the keys and combination of the lodge's safe to the District Deputy Grand Master of the 33rd Masonic District. Further ordered that the aforementioned brother return all keys, files, and other lodge property retained by him since leaving office. Issued February 28, 2022.

2. **To all subordinate Lodges and Appendant Masonic Bodies under the Jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina** for the purpose of lifting all COVID-19 precautions still in effect and empowering the Masters of Lodges to issue whatever pandemic precautions they deemed necessary for their individual Lodge. Issued February 28, 2022.
3. **To Dunn's Rock Lodge 267** for the purpose of declaring the ballot null & void and ordering a re-ballot on a petition by Dunn's Rock Lodge 267 due to the failure of the Lodge to comply with the proper balloting procedure at the time of the original ballot. Issued March 15, 2022.
4. **To Millbrook Lodge 97** for the purpose of declaring the ballot null & void and ordering a re-ballot on a petition by Millbrook Lodge 97 due to the failure of the Lodge to comply with the proper balloting procedure at the time of the original ballot. Issued April 8, 2022.
5. **To Rockingham Lodge 495** for the purpose of declaring the ballot null & void and ordering a re-ballot on an application for affiliation for Brother CHG by Rockingham Lodge 495 due to the failure of the Lodge to follow proper affiliation certification procedure prior to balloting on the application. Issued June 1, 2022.
6. **To Rockingham Lodge 495** for the purpose of declaring the ballot null & void and ordering a re-ballot on an application for affiliation for Brother CJT by Rockingham Lodge 495 due to the failure of the Lodge to follow proper affiliation certification procedure prior to balloting on the application. Issued June 1, 2022.

Approvals

During the period of December 4, 2021, through September 1, 2022, I issued eight (8) Approvals for various Lodge needs and situations. Listed below are the Approvals issued:

1. Dunn's Rock Lodge No. 267 for my approval of the resignation of the Master, Secretary, and Tyler. Issued 2/1/2022.
2. Ashler Lodge No. 373 for my approval of the resignation of the Senior Warden. Issued 5/23/2022.
3. Campbell Lodge No. 374 for my approval of the resignation of the Junior Warden. Issued 6/6/2022.
4. Phalanx Lodge No. 31 for my approval of the resignation of the Senior Warden. Issued 6/6/2022.
5. Southern Pines Lodge No. 484 for my approval of the resignation of the Senior Warden. Issued 6/6/2022.
6. University Lodge No. 408 for my approval of the resignation of the Junior Warden. Issued 6/6/2022.
7. Archer Lodge No. 165 for my approval of the resignation of the Secretary. Issued 6/22/2022.
8. Semper Fidelis Lodge No. 680 for my approval of the resignation of the Master. Issued 8/12/2022.

Emergent Communications

As of September 1, 2022, I have called an emergent communication of the Grand Lodge of North Carolina on three (3) occasions. The date of each emergent communication and the purposes for which each was called is listed below.

With the permission and authorization of Past Grand Master R. David Wicker, Jr, the Grand Lodge was opened on December 3, 2021, at the Meroney Theater in Salisbury, North Carolina, for the purpose of installing the 2022 Grand Lodge Officers on December 4, 2021. The Grand Lodge was opened in Ample Form with the officers of Blackmer Lodge No. 127 acting as Grand Lodge Officers pro tempore.

Grand Lodge was opened on December 18, 2021, at Lincoln Lodge No. 137 in Lincolnton, North Carolina for the purpose of dedicating a Masonic cornerstone for the new Lincoln County Courthouse. The Grand Lodge was opened in Ample Form with District Deputy Grand Master of the 34th Masonic District and the officers of Lincoln Lodge No. 137 acting as Grand Lodge Officers pro tempore.

Grand Lodge was opened on August 20, 2022, at Carthage Lodge No. 181 in Carthage, North Carolina, for the purpose of rededicating the Masonic cornerstone of the Moore County Courthouse 100 years after the original Masonic cornerstone dedication. The Grand Lodge was opened in Ample Form with the Grand Lodge Officers filling their respective places and stations.

Wilkerson College, the William R. Davie Leadership Academy, and the Middle Chamber Program

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. It consists of three (3) different sessions, which take place at WhiteStone, the MHCO, and in Raleigh which includes a tour of the Grand Lodge Office. For many attending the College, this is the first time they have had the opportunity to visit our homes or the Grand Lodge Office, which leaves a lasting impression.

I was fortunate enough to be a student in the first class of Wilkerson College in 2002 and I have assisted with the college since that time. I am honored to follow in the footsteps of the late W. Brother Dan Weatherington, Dean Emeritus, and M.W. Brother Billy Dill, PGM, Dean Emeritus, as the college's third Dean. Obviously, the college is very special to me, and I love it when other Grand Masters ask about our school and express an interest in doing something similar in their grand jurisdictions. Wilkerson College is the premier school of Masonic leadership in this country, and we are very fortunate to such talented staff and instructors who give freely of their time each year!

The William R. Davie Academy was developed to deliver a practical education on lodge management and leadership, with classes on Masonic history, traditions, and structure. Unlike Wilkerson College, the Academy is

open to both appointed and elected lodge officers and is an invaluable tool for those in a lodge leadership position who did not have the opportunity to attend Wilkerson College. Its objectives include:

- Making Masonic education inclusive, accessible, and affordable
- Providing high quality and relevant education in Masonic leadership, management, and traditions; and
- Preparing you for leadership and at the lodge, district, and state levels

Another unique learning opportunity that we have in North Carolina is the Middle Chamber Program. The Middle Chamber Program provides North Carolina Masons an opportunity to explore the rituals and symbols of the Craft and improve themselves as men and Masons. Instructors are experienced Masons specially trained to assist each brother as he examines the Masonic rituals, himself, and his relationship with Deity. Current plans for this year are to hold another Inner Chamber retreat as the capstone to the Middle Chamber

To date, our Middle Chamber team have been invited to Illinois and Texas to share this program. If you would like a “deeper dive” into our allegory, symbolism, and your inner self, this is the program for you!

I would like to thank Brother Noah Goode, Chairman of the Masonic Education Committee, as well as the members of this committee, for their continued efforts to deliver educational opportunities for the members of our state that remains unparalleled by any other grand jurisdiction! You brothers are rock stars!

The North Carolina Masonic Foundation, Inc.

For an overview of the activities of the North Carolina Masonic Foundation, Inc. during my tenure as Grand Master, I refer you to their reports found in the 2021 and 2022 book of Reports submitted by the Board of Directors and Staff and led by Brother Michael Faulkenbury, Chairman.

To date, I have to participated in one (1) joint fundraiser with the Foundation and the North Carolina Grand Lodge referred to as the “Resist and Restore Campaign” for our Ukrainian brothers. This campaign was extremely successful, and I would like to thank Brother George Marut, Chief Development Officer for the Foundation, and R.W. Brother Jonathan Underwood for their efforts to organize and host this live event.

The Foundation voted to expand their sitting members from five (5) to seven (7) at their April 19, 2022, meeting. I appointed R.W. Brother Don Kehler, SGW, of Bula Lodge No. 409 and W. Brother Benjamin Crissman of Gate City Lodge No. 694 to the new positions, which were approved by the Foundation.

I want to offer a special thanks to the North Carolina Masonic Foundation for their support of our lodges and Masonic charities. The financial support they provide to the Masonic Home for Children in Oxford and WhiteStone is invaluable. The investment tool that they offer our subordinate lodges is a unique opportunity for long-term growth that most of our lodges would

normally not have access to. The expansion and internal changes made by the Foundation has not gone unnoticed, and its members are to be commended for their efforts to improve and refine their operation.

Whitestone: A Masonic and Eastern Star Community

WhiteStone, our Masonic and Eastern Star Community in Greensboro turned 110 years old in 2022 and currently operates as a full retirement community providing Independent Living units, skilled nursing care, and memory care.

We continue to improve our campus to meet needs and market demands. The new Independent Living (IL) tower is currently under construction, a renovation of our Care and Wellness Center (CWC) is underway, and we are adding an assisted living component to our level of care, which has been missing from our continuum of care in the past. The Long-Range Committee/Development Team chaired by W. Brother Joey Transou continues to oversee the new expansion and are doing an excellent job! We look forward to holding cornerstone dedications later this year for our new Assisted Living and Memory Care Building and Independent Living Building.

I would like to thank M.W. Brother Gene T. Jernigan, PGM, Chairman of the Board of Directors, for his wisdom, passion, and tireless efforts. We also have a wonderful Board of Directors who are always ready to give. None of this would be possible without our Board of Directors and their vision and love for our home! Thank you!

I first toured WhiteStone in 2022 with my fellow Wilkerson College classmates. I was thoroughly impressed with our home at that time, even more so today. If you have never visited WhiteStone, please take the time to do so. It will touch your heart and you will be proud of “our” home!

Your gifts and support continue to make a difference in the quality of life for those in the golden years of their life. We established a foundation called the Masonic and Eastern Star Home, LLC. Donations to the MESH Foundation, LLC, qualifies as a 501(c)3 tax deductible donation and guarantees that your contributions will go to support only Masonic and Eastern Star connected residents, both internally and through the Fraternal Friendship outreach program (<https://mfnc.org/storage/wysiwyg/fraternalfriendshipbrochure2021front.pdf>).

M.W. Brother R. David Wicker, Jr., PGM, stated in his 2021 report: “Although many of our lodges provide financial support the MESH Foundation, LLC, I am disappointed to say that many do nothing for the care of our widows and our elderly. I do not understand the lack of support. As Masons we are obligated individually to support our elderly brothers and their widows. In 1913 it was reported that half of the Lodges had not made any contribution to our Home in Greensboro. Today, that has not changed. I ask of you what was asked in 1913, ‘what, my brethren, can be the reason for this indifference and apathy? ... An opportunity of doing great good is at hand. How much better it is to provide a Home where your aged and indigent brothers can spend their last few remaining years in peace and comfort, and in the congenial society of brothers and friends, then it is to have small charity doled out to them by their home lodge and individual friends.” My brothers, we must do a better job supporting WhiteStone, and I agree wholeheartedly with Most

Worshipful Brother Wicker's comments. We must financially support our Masonic and Eastern Star brother and sisters. Please consider a monthly recurring gift to MESH Foundation, LLC through the following link: <https://www.liveatwhitestone.org/donate/>.

For more detailed report of WhiteStone, I refer you to the reports found elsewhere in these proceedings submitted by W. Brother Gilbert D. Bailey, Junior Grand Deacon, and Chairman of the Committee on WhiteStone for 2022.

Masonic Home for Children at Oxford

Our Masonic Home for Children at Oxford turned 149 years old in 2022. If you have never visited our home in Oxford, I encourage you to do so. Like WhiteStone, I had the first opportunity to visit The Masonic Home for Children at Oxford with my Wilkerson College classmates in 2002. I was floored by the beauty of the campus, and I thoroughly enjoyed the tours that I was offered by the residents who proudly showed off "their home." Brethren you are changing the lives of children in Oxford, and I pray that you will consider making a recurring gift to our Children's Home. Gifts can be made out to MHCO, which qualifies as a 501(c)3 tax deductible charity and recurring gifts can be made online through the following link: <https://my.simplegive.com/App/Giving/mhco>.

I would like to thank M.W. Brother C. Speed Hallman, PGM & Chairman of the Board of Directors, for his guidance and vision. I would also like to thank our wonderful Board of Directors, staff, and Ambassadors for their indefatigable commitment to our children and the mission of the Home.

At this time, I am happy to report that we will be holding the 10th Annual Masonic Homecoming Festival on the campus grounds of MHCO from October 7-9, 2022! One of the most important fixtures of this festival is our spectacular parade. This parade tradition dates to the early years of our St. John's Day celebrations with parade units from our three (3) Shrine Temples, Oasis, Amran, and Sudan participating. Make plans to attend; you will not want to miss the great music, games, and food trucks!

The MHCO is as of this writing, caring for 65 children which is the highest census that we have had in years. We have openings for older kids in the Transitional Living Cottages and young adults in the Independent Living apartment. At year end 2021 the census was 39. With 65 kids at present, this is a 67% increase. This is partially due to the great marketing efforts which started in mid-2021 and includes television and radio commercials, Facebook live feeds, and the efforts of our MHCO Ambassadors. We hope this leads to us not being the best kept secret in NC.

On February 13th, 2023, the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford (MHCO) will celebrate 150 years of continuous service. Well over 10,000 youth have enjoyed better lives thanks to professional services supported by friends of the Home. The Home has been visionary, resilient, and devoted to the care of children in very difficult situations. This work simply cannot be done without our gracious and generous donors who do an outstanding job making sure that the children in our care can overcome their individual challenges, begin preparing for their own positive futures, and simply be kids who grow, learn, and develop in a safe and loving environment.

One of the highlights of this year for me was having the opportunity to be

with the graduates of the Masonic Home for Children in Oxford at their annual Baccalaureate service on May 22, 2022. Five students graduated high school, with three of the graduates heading off to the Vance-Granville Community College to study automotive or HVAC, cosmetology, and child development. One graduate is attending Western Carolina University and one enlisted in the U.S. Army and has completed basic training. We also had one resident in our Independent Living Program who has graduated with an associate degree in Biotech and since transitioned out of the program. We are truly proud of all their accomplishments and wish them a bright and successful future. I remain very grateful to the Masons for their love and continued support of our Home.

For more detailed report of the activities concerning the Masonic Home for Children in Oxford I refer you to the report found elsewhere in these proceedings submitted by W. Brother Steven M. Norris, Senior Grand Deacon, and Chairman of the Committee on the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford for 2022.

Board of Custodians and Certified Lecturer Examinations

The first Board of Custodians meeting was held on January 14, 2022. As Grand Master, I had the privilege to open the meeting and presided as Chairman ex-officio as required by our Code. After the meeting was opened, the Board elected W. Brother Earl Wells as Chairman and W. Brother Tom Dolinger as Secretary. Both of these brothers continue to do an outstanding job for our Board of Custodians.

Two initiatives that have been implemented this year, which I am extremely pleased with, are the Lodge Ritual Restoration Program developed by our Grand Lecture, W. Brother Jerry R. “Randy” Browning, Jr., and the Modified Ritual Instruction Program.

The Lodge Ritual Restoration Program uses our ritual to help lodges who are struggling with their work, not as a punishment. Historically, a struggling lodge would be issued a 15-hour lecture service as a corrective measure. The Lodge Ritual Restoration Program takes a different approach by assisting the lodge in identifying weaknesses and establishing a plan to overcome the issues through a team effort, with the goal of gaining a new understanding of the power of our ritual is when performed properly. To date, we have had one lodge successfully complete the program and be declared proficient on all three degrees of Masonry.

The Modified Ritual Instruction Program was developed in response to concerns with holding larger schools of instruction and the threat of COVID-19 outbreaks. The program allows up to three lodges to work together to complete the instructional requirements. The District Deputy Grand Lecturers are responsible for assigning Instructors and Certified Lecturers to conduct the programs that are similar to the requirements of a five-hour lecture service. The program can be tailored to meet the needs of the respective lodges. What we discovered is that the modified program is better received than our schools of instructions. I continue to receive positive feedback from the program. Our brothers seem to prefer the smaller gatherings and cite more open dialogue and increased interaction as a result.

Three Certification Exams were held at various locations across the state this year: August 13th in Greenville and Greensboro, August 20th in

Wilmington and Charlotte, and August 27th in Fayetteville and Asheville. I would like to extend a personal thank you to the brethren who take time out of their busy schedules to conduct these certification exams!

At the time I write this, we have 277 Class A Lecturers and 36 Class B Instructors for a total of 313 Certified brothers. We certainly need additional lecturers and instructors to assist with our ritualistic work. If you know of a brother who would like to become a lecturer or an instructor, please have him contact the Board of Custodians. The Board will assist him with the examination process so that he can successfully complete the requirements of certification.

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 (50) U.S. states, the 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 2022 was held February 19-23, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. I had the opportunity to attend along with our Deputy Grand Master, R.W. Brother Kevan Frasier; our Grand Secretary, R.W. Brother Jonathan Underwood; M.W. Brother David Wicker, PGM; and M.W. Brother P. Shaun Bradshaw, PGM. M.W. Brother Wicker attended the conference as a member and officer of the Time and Place Committee for the Conference, while M.W. Brother Bradshaw attended the conference to address the Grand Secretaries Conference.

I found the conference in Wisconsin to be very interesting. One item that I found of extreme interest is the fact that the Grand Lodge of Wisconsin hired a marketing firm to control their narrative after realizing that a simple internet search for Freemasonry in Wisconsin revealed results that were not very flattering of Freemasonry in general. The marketing firm reworked the Grand Lodge website, crafting it more towards the non-Mason, and developed an online form where interested individuals could request more information after reading through pre-screening information. What they discovered was that two-thirds of the men that were coming to them did not have a relative or friend who was a member of the fraternity and they did not know anything about Freemasonry — yet the men expressed an interest after learning about our traditions and core values.

Brethren, if nothing else, Wisconsin's investment has reaffirmed what we already knew, and that is the fact that Freemasonry is still as relevant today as it has always been. All we need to do is let the men of this state know who we are and what we are about, and they will come.

Out of State Visitations

To date, the only out of state annual communication I have attended is the Grand Lodge of Tennessee. Their annual communication was held March

22-24, 2022, in Nashville. I was warmly received by M.W. Brother Charlie Mixon, Grand Master. The hospitality extended to me was wonderful, and I appreciated the opportunity to observe the business conducted in their grand jurisdiction.

During July 2-6, Amran, Oasis, and Sudan Shrine Temples invited Angela and me to attend the 148th Imperial Shrine Session in Minneapolis, Minnesota hosted by Imperial Sir William S. Bailey. Angela and I enjoyed the hospitality of our Shrine Temples as well as the opportunity to spend time with the Shrine Potentates, Ill. Sir Tim Daniels, Ill. Sir David Oates, and Ill. Sir Cleve Woolard along with their respective Divans. During the Imperial Session, I was proud of the work done by Oasis Shriners as they presented over \$1.4 Million to the Shriners Hospitals and First Lady's charity.

There were approximately forty (40) Grand Masters in attendance for Imperial Shrine. At the Imperial Session, Imperial Sir Kenny Craven was elected and installed as the new Imperial Potentate. Of note, Imperial Sir Kenny Craven is from Summerville, SC, but is also a member of Shallotte Lodge No. 727. Imperial Sir Craven will be bringing the Imperial Shrine Session to Charlotte in 2023.

The message regarding the work done at our Children's Hospitals was amazing and I was thrilled when the 2022 Patient Ambassadors were announced and Parker, a young man from Oxford, North Carolina, who I had previously met, was named. Parker has an amazing story and one that our very own W. Brother Alvin Billings is a part of! Parker will be a great ambassador for our Children's Hospitals! You can read Parker's story through the following webpage: <<https://www.shrinerschildrens.org/en/news-and-media/videos/2022/07/back-in-the-game-parkers-story>>

Honorary Memberships

It was my distinct pleasure to have received honorary memberships from Kilwinning Lodge No. 64, Monroe Lodge No. 244, Hibriten Lodge No. 262, Knights of Solomon Lodge No. 766, Knights of Solomon Lodge U.D., and the National Sojourners. These honorary memberships were unexpected, and words fail me in trying to express the gratitude shown to me.

The National Sojourners is an order of Freemasons who have served in the United States Armed Forces. There is nothing nobler than the service provided by the member of our Armed Forces. They selflessly answer our country's call and put themselves in harm's way to preserve our freedoms. I am honored to be associated with such a wonderful group of men — my heroes.

Acknowledgements and Special Appreciations

I am extremely honored and humbled to be elected to serve as the 169th Grand Master of Masons in North Carolina. The Grand Lodge Officer's installation took place at the Meroney Theater in Salisbury on December 4th, and I would like to thank W. Brother Johnny Surles and W. Brother Bobby Meadows for helping make the installation a special event for myself and the Grand Lodge Officers.

A special word of thanks goes out to the members of my home lodge, Blackmer Lodge No. 127, for their help in opening the Grand Lodge of North

Carolina for the emergent communication, the loan of the lodge furniture for the installation, and especially the lodge Bible that was used during each of my degrees. W. Brother Ben Wallace, Past Grand Orator; W. Brother Randy Browning, Grand Lecturer; and W. Brother Dale Goforth deserve even more accolades for their efforts in transporting our lodge furniture from Mount Gilead to Salisbury and then setting everything up. I also want to thank the officers and members of Sophia Lodge No. 767 who served as pro-tempore Grand Lodge Officers at the installation — you brothers are the best and I love you all!

We are very fortunate to have such great Grand Lodge Officers, and I consider myself to be the least of these great brothers. Each of us has a different skillset or talent and when we are all together, there is magic in the room. Having traveled to national conferences and visited many other grand jurisdictions, I can state, unequivocally, that we have one of the greatest teams in this country! Each member of our Grand Line is special to me, and I appreciate the support, advice, and love you have shown me this year. We are in great hands, and I look forward to enjoying your many successes!

I would also like to thank our Past Grand Masters, and their families, for their unfailing support. I knew that there would be big shoes to fill, but I did not have a firm grasp on just how large those shoes were until the second week in December! Our Past Grand Masters have given so much of their “time, talent, and treasure” and I thank you for all that you continue to do for the Masons in North Carolina!

We could not do what we do without our District Deputy Grand Masters, District Deputy Grand Lecturers, and Board/Committee members who give freely of their time with little to no compensation. Some of you have been tasked with some unpleasant duties or seemingly impossible tasks, but you have not let me down. Thank you so much for all of your support and assistance. This Grand Lodge could not survive without your valuable service.

Thank you to all of the Masters, Wardens, Secretaries, officers, and members of the lodges across North Carolina. We are nothing without you. You ARE the Grand Lodge. Your lodge improvement projects, charity fundraisers, the care you show for your brothers, widows, and orphans is to be applauded. We would not exist today if it were not for the hard work our lodges put forth. I remain awestruck at the brothers I meet who do this day in and day out without more than the occasional “thank you.” You deserve so much more recognition, but I am often told that “I do not do this for recognition.” You have my interminable respect and admiration!

I “grew up” with R.W. Brother Walt Clapp serving as Grand Secretary. It was R.W. Brother Walt who persuaded me to refocus my energy after becoming frustrated with a particular amendment vote at the 2006 Annual Communication. It was also R.W. Brother Walt who persuaded me to assist our late Brother Ron Page in coordinating the Grand Lodge Annual Communication each year, one of the most fun jobs that I have done in this Grand Lodge. I love and respect R.W. Brother Walt and I can tell you that he has left us in great hands. Thanks to his foresight and leadership we continue to enjoy a great Grand Lodge Staff!

Right Worshipful Brother Jonathan Underwood is starting to shine as our new Grand Secretary, and it has been a true pleasure working with him. I know he thinks I need to pick up my copy of The Code and read it before I

call him, but he never complains. I appreciate his open mindedness with my particular approach to new ideas and experiments, some were successes, and some need a little more polishing. More than that, I appreciate our friendship and the philosophical discussions that inevitably take place when we are together. Much love and respect.

While I dearly miss Cornelia Doherty, who retired in 2020, Vicki Lam, Hayley Moll, and W. Brother Matthew Robbins have stepped up and continue to deliver excellence in everything they do. They are always there to assist our lodges and are simply a delight to work with. This year I have been promoting W. Brother Matthew's lodge outreach program and the work that he has been doing for our lodges as they look for ways to take their meeting space from average to stunning. I cannot say enough about W. Brother Matthew's work in this area and what it is doing for lodge morale across this state! Thank you!

My Masonic journey started after conversations with Brother Thomas Allen Bruce of Georgia, W. Brother Terry Harris, Brother/Uncle Mickey Blake, Brother/Cousin Doc Byrd, most especially my late Brother/Uncle Lt. Col. Frank Cannon, USAF (Retired), whose Masonic ring I will be wearing at this Annual Communication. After much discussion, I petitioned Blackmer Lodge 127 with signatures from Brother/Cousin Doc Byrd and the late W. Brother Kenneth R. Fritts, PDDGM — the brother who always affectionately referred to me as "Rookie". Once initiated, W. Brother Johnny Almond, my old neighbor, coached me through the catechisms. I could always count on W. Brother Johnny pulling up in his pickup truck (our coaching parlor) every Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday evenings. I owe all of these brothers a great deal for their patience and fortitude!

As you have already read in my writeup for the Montfort recipients, it was W. Brother William "Bill" Bruton, PDDGM, who made sure I was "plugged in" at all of the various appendant bodies and was instrumental in getting me shipped off to Wilkerson College the first year the school was offered. A great mentor and friend!

M.W. Brother Lew Ledford, PGM, for some odd reason, appointed me Grand Tyler in 2011. I have no idea why, but I was happy to serve, and it was even more special serving with a fellow Appalachian State University graduate! Thank you for the opportunity!

I also want to thank my friend and mentor, M.W. Brother William "Billy" Dill, PGM, for having enough faith in me to suggest that I might be an "okay" replacement as Dean of Wilkerson College. It took quite a few years of hearing your sessions on planning, but a few things you taught registered with me. You are the only brother that I would allow to touch my beard as you placed the jewel of the office around my neck! I love and appreciate you!

None of this would be possible if were not for M.W. Brother Doug Caudle, PGM, who appointed me as Junior Grand Steward. After several unsuccessful attempts to get me and Ms. Angie to commit to dinner with him and his wife Angela, we finally relented and agreed to dinner at the Twisted Oak in Statesville. Little did I know! M.W. Brother Doug has to be the biggest daredevil of a Grand Master that we have had in recent history. Just blame M.W. Brother Doug if you don't like something I have said or done this year as Grand Master! In all seriousness, I have thoroughly enjoyed working with M.W. Brother Doug as we Chartered Sophia Lodge No. 767, served in its ranks, and simultaneously served the Grand Lodge of North Carolina. Your

confidence in me, your solicited wise counsel and, most importantly, your friendship places me forever in your debt. Thank you so much, it has been an honor that I will never forget!

Last, but certainly not least, I owe my family and my lovely wife Angie a great deal of gratitude. They have been my biggest supporters (Hey, when you get your to-go order and your name on the order is “Most Worshipful”, you know they support you, right?) and they have sacrificed while I have been on the road or busy at home with Zoom meetings over these past eight years. My youngest daughter was present in Winston-Salem for the 2014 Annual Communication when she was just two weeks old! I have been busy with Masonic activities since she has been in this world and she often asks me, “Daddy, where are you going tonight?” I love you all and thank you from the bottom of my heart for your love and support! I absolutely could not have done this without you!

Respectfully and Fraternaly,
Larry B. Thompson, Jr.
Grand Master, 2022

Necrology Service

Opening of the Grand Lodge of Sorrow

Grand Master: Brother Junior 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 Jim Jones, Grand Chaplain will lead our devotion.

(The Grand Master calls up the Grand Lodge for prayer by the Grand Chaplain)

Grand Chaplain: *Opens the Grand Lodge by prayer and proclamation. (No responses from the Grand Lodge or Line Officers; Grand Chaplain will go straight through to the next section)*

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.

Grand Master: Most Worshipful A. Gene Cobb, Jr., will lead our Necrology Service.

Eulogies for deceased Past Grand Masters:

PGM Lee Roy “Pete Thomas”, Date of Death May 8, 2022

Homily for all other Masons - Grand Chaplain Jones

The Grand Master calls up the Grand Lodge. Candles are lit and flowers are placed on the altar.

Funeral Grand Honors: Led by Grand Chaplain Jones with Grand Lodge Officers participating.

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 Marshal, conduct the Grand Chaplain to our Altar where he will lead our devotion.

Closing Prayer: Grand Chaplain Jones

Grand Master: I now declare the Grand Lodge of Sorrow for the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina opened and closed for 2022. Let us not forget those we have remembered today.

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