

Reports

of

The Grand Master

The Grand Treasurer

The Grand Secretary

Boards, Commissions and Committees

at the

231st

Annual Communication

of

The Grand Lodge of

Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons

of North Carolina

at

Winston-Salem, North Carolina

September 28–29, 2018

Table of Contents

Report of the:

Grand Treasurer	5
Grand Secretary.....	6
Committee on Charity	12
Grand Historian.....	12
Committee on Permanent Building	13
Lodge Service Commission.....	14
Committee on Fraternal Correspondence	15
Petitions for Restoration	16
Judge Advocate	17
Committee on By-laws.....	19
Committee on WhiteStone	22
Committee on The Masonic Home for Children at Oxford.....	24
Petition for a Charter from Lodge of the Nine Sisters U.D., Raleigh, NC	27
Resolution for St. John's Lodge 1 to Receive a Duplicate Charter.....	27
Committee on Unfinished Business.....	28
Committee on Finance.....	41
Representative to the Masonic Service Association.....	41
Representative to the George Washington Masonic National Memorial Association.....	43
Board of Publications.....	45
North Carolina Masonic Foundation, Inc.....	46
Grand Lodge Committee on Masonic Education.....	47
Committee on Public Relations.....	49
Committee on Youth Organizations	49
Ad Hoc Task Force on Scouting Report	50
Board of Custodians.....	51
Commission on Subordinate Lodge Special Activities.....	53
Library Committee	54
Grand Lodge Personnel Committee.....	55
Scholarship Committee	56
Ad Hoc Transition Planning Committee	57
Ad Hoc Masonic Renewal Committee.....	57
Ad Hoc Membership Services Committee	60
Final Report of Grand Master A. Gene Cobb, Jr.....	61
Interim Report of Grand Master Speed Hallman.	83

Report of the Grand Treasurer

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

I submit this interim report as of June 30, 2018. Included in this report are the total receipts and disbursements, special funds, and the securities held by this Grand Lodge.

Total Funds available 01/01/2018 (General Funds & Special Funds)					\$681,662
Total Receipts YTD					<u>885,547</u>
Total Disbursements YTD					(372,902)
Total Cash To Be Accounted For					\$1,194,307
Deposits:	Rate	Maturity	Issue Date	Amount	
Petty Cash				100	
1st Citizens Bank (operating account)				277,005	
Money Markets:					
North State Bank	VARI			161,472	
PNC Bank	VARI			162,849	
Investment:	Value			Principle	
Alex. Brown investment	683,517			<u>592,881</u>	
Total Cash Accounted For					\$ 1,194,307
Total Cash & Principle Securities YTD					
Special Funds Summary		01/01/18	06/30/18		
Special Contingency Reserve	\$	200,000	200,000		
Emblems and Awards Reserve		8,265	11,998		
Automobile Reserve		49,048	29,051		
Operation Reserve		112,686	136,356		
Building Reserve		120,710	120,710		
Office Equipment Reserve		3,299	3,299		
Charity Fund		<u>79,161</u>	<u>89,383</u>		
Total Special Funds	\$	573,169	\$ 590,797		
Total Special Funds 06/30/2018					590,797
Total General Funds Available					<u>\$ 603,510</u>
Total Of All Funds 06/30/2018					\$ 1,194,307

Respectfully Submitted,
Lewis R. Ledford, PGM
Grand Treasurer

Report of the Grand Secretary

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

I herewith submit my interim report as Grand Secretary as of June 30, 2018, and a suggested budget for the calendar year 2019.

Grand Lodge of North Carolina proposed Budget 2019

Account Name	<u>Budget 2017</u>	<u>Actual 2017</u>	<u>Budget 2018</u>	<u>Actual 2018 through 6/30</u>	<u>Proposed Budget 2019</u>
INCOME					
Master Masons @ \$20 Per Capita Tax	\$ 672,340	\$ 668,303	\$ 644,300	\$ 645,400	625,400
Initiation Fees @ \$21.00	24,000	18,018	17,850	15,939	16,000
[NC Charities @ \$10.00]	(11,420)	(8,580)	(8,500)	(7,590)	(7,470)
[GL Building @ \$5.00]	(5,710)	(4,290)	(4,250)	(3,795)	(3,735)
[GWNMA @ \$5.00]	(5,710)	(4,290)	(4,250)	0	(3,735)
Initiation Fees Retained [@\$1.00]					
Endowed Members	24,000	24,216	25,000	27,192	28,460
Penalty for Late Returns	250	1,000	250	1,837	500
Dividends and Interest	8,000	9,307	12,000	10,842	12,000
Miscellaneous Income	<u>1,000</u>	<u>1,244</u>	<u>1,000</u>	<u>745</u>	<u>1,000</u>
Total Income	706,750	704,928	683,400	690,570	668,420
EXPENSES					
800-00 Philanthropy					
800-01 Masonic Home for Children	12,500	12,500	12,500	12,500	12,500
800-02 Masonic and Eastern Star Home	12,500	12,500	12,500	12,500	12,500
800-03 Charity and Relief	4,000	4,000	4,000	1,000	4,000
800-04 VA Hospital Visitation	1,000	1,000	1,000	0	250
800-05 Hospital Visitation (NC)	0	0	0	0	0
800-06 Masonic Youth Organizations	4,250	4,250	4,250	4,250	4,250
800-07 Wilkerson College/Scholarships	2,400	2,400	2,400	2,400	1,200
Total	36,650	35,650	36,650	32,650	34,700

810-00	Salaries and Fees								
810-01	Grand Secretary	91,782	91,782	94,077	47,039	94,077			94,077
810-03	Office Personnel	90,375	90,375	93,450	45,606	95,320			95,320
810-04	Retirement/Health and Life Insurance	44,691	42,116	45,339	21,391	45,556			45,556
810-05	Social Security Tax	18,248	18,248	18,767	12,485	18,998			18,998
810-06	Unemployment Tax	850	850	850		850			850
810-08	Assistant to the Grand Secretary	56,379	56,379	57,788	28,894	58,944			58,944
810-09	Summer Intern	1,500	0	1,500		1,500			1,500
810-10	Drewry Memorial Grand Secy. Fund	(20,000)	(16,485)	(16,000)	(17,970)	(18,000)			(18,000)
	Total	283,825	283,265	295,771	137,445	297,245			
820-00	Administration Costs								
820-02	Printing	10,500	9,815	10,500	854	8,000			8,000
820-04	Office Expenses	12,000	12,154	12,000	5,086	12,000			12,000
820-05	Postage	10,000	9,978	10,000	5,336	7,000			7,000
820-06	Office Equipment	3,000	2,112	3,000	2,056	1,500			1,500
820-07	Office Equipment Maintenance	10,500	10,818	10,500	4,971	9,500			9,500
820-08	Telephone/Internet	8,000	7,547	8,000	4,543	7,500			7,500
	Membership Services Fees	(41,880)	(81,645)	(80,000)	(81,780)	(80,000)			(80,000)
820-09	Membership Services Expense	39,500	68,376	68,000	28,194	74,000			74,000
820-11	Auditing/Tax Services	10,000	11,915	10,000	520	10,000			10,000
820-13	Legal Fees	3,000	0	3,000	0	3,000			3,000
	Background check fees	(18,600)	(13,915)	(15,000)	(8,355)	(14,000)			(14,000)
820-14	Background check expenses	<u>12,000</u>	<u>8,814</u>	<u>10,000</u>	<u>6,122</u>	<u>10,000</u>			<u>10,000</u>
	Total	58,020	45,969	50,000	(32,453)	48,500			

830-00	Building Expenses								
830-01	Utilities	10,000	10,055	10,000	5,220	10,000		10,000	
830-02	Building Grounds Maintenance	17,000	17,382	17,000	8,228	17,000		17,000	
830-03	Building Equipment Maintenance	5,000	5,137	5,000	50	5,000		5,000	
830-04	Hazard Insurance	8,000	7,058	7,000	4,476	7,000		7,000	
830-05	Bldg. Reserve-Transfer to Building Reserve	<u>10,000</u>	<u>10,000</u>	<u>15,000</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>15,000</u>		<u>20,000</u>	
	Total	50,000	49,632	54,000	17,974	54,000		59,000	
840-00	Membership Fees and Dues								
840-01	Masonic Service Association	2,250	2,359	2,250		2,250		2,250	
840-02	Conference of Grand Masters	750	500	750	500	750		750	
840-03	GMC Committee on Recognition	100	100	100		100		100	
840-05	Northeastern Regional Masonic Conf.	300	30	300		300		300	
	Total	3,400	2,989	3,400	500	3,400		3,400	
850-00	Travel and Officers Expense								
850-01	Grand Master's Travel	10,000	3,232	10,000	4,204	10,000		8,000	
850-02	Grand Master's Automobile	6,000	6,000	6,000	81	6,000		6,500	
850-03	Grand Master's Office	1,250	0	1,250		1,250		250	
850-04	Grand Secretary's Travel	7,500	5,893	7,500	3,184	7,500		7,000	
850-05	Grand Secretary's Automobile	4,500	4,500	4,500	797	4,500		4,500	
850-06	Travel - Other	7,500	7,599	7,500	4,263	7,500		7,500	
850-07	DDGM/DDGL November Orientation	<u>5,000</u>	<u>1,991</u>	<u>5,000</u>	<u>2,810</u>	<u>5,000</u>		<u>3,500</u>	
	Total	41,750	29,215	41,750	15,339	41,750		37,250	

860-00	Boards, Commissions, and Committees								
860-01	Board of General Purposes	4,616	6,000	244	5,000				
860-02	Board of Custodians	2,430	2,500	1,154	2,500				
860-04	Masonic Public Relations	0	3,500	0	3,500				
860-05	Finance Committee	0	500	796	500				
860-06	Code Commission	0	300	0	300				
860-07	Lodge Service Commission	228	100	0	100				
860-08	Masonic Education	<u>5,169</u>	<u>3,500</u>	860	<u>3,500</u>				
	Middle Chamber Books expense	5,206							
	Middle Chamber Books sale/Eventbrite	(10,917)							
	Total	6,732	16,400	348	15,400				
				(7,979)					
870-00	Out-of-State Visitation								
870-01	Visiting other Grand Lodges	2,859	3,000		3,000				
870-02	Conference of Grand Masters	4,824	6,500	7,501	7,500				
870-03	Conference of Grand Secretaries	2,098	2,000	1,442	2,000				
870-05	Regional Conference (NE)	5,941	3,000	1,423	4,000				
870-06	World Masonic Conference	<u>2,206</u>	<u>4,000</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4,000</u>				
	Total	17,928	18,500	10,366	20,500				
880-00	Annual Communication / GLO Installation								
	Grand Lodge Officers	3,121							
	Past Grand Masters	3,269							
	DDGM Travel	4,586							
	DDGL Travel	1,894							
	Boards, Committees, & Comm.	3,236							

	Guests	11,378			
	Auditorium, Banquets, Etc.	21,282			
	Printing	3,541			
	Installation Expenses	14,506	300		
	Lump sum totals	<u>66,813</u>		<u>68,000</u>	<u>68,000</u>
	Total	66,813	300	68,000	68,000
890-00	Miscellaneous Expenses				
890-01	Awards, Aprons, and Emblems	13,017	6,346.58	13,000	13,000
890-02	Grand Master's Portrait	940		500	500
890-04	Miscellaneous	1,133	678.21	1,000	1,000
890-06	Grand Lodge Library & Archives	<u>3,375</u>	784.88	<u>4,000</u>	<u>3,500</u>
	Total	18,465	7,809.67	18,500	18,000
900-01	Communications Director	29,110		28,110	28,110
900-02	Social Security Tax	2,227		2,170	2,170
900-03	Printing	51,600		51,600	41,600
900-04	Postage	38,000		38,000	38,000
900-05	Retirement/Life and Health Insurance	2,620		2,620	2,620
900-07	Travel	4,000		4,000	4,000
900-08	Equipment and Supplies	2,000		2,000	2,000
900-09	Internet Services/Web Page Domain	<u>1,500</u>		<u>1,500</u>	<u>1,500</u>
	Total	131,057		130,000	120,000

Acct.	EXPENSE SUMMARY	Budget	Actual 2017	Budget	Actual 2018	Proposed
800-00	Philanthropy	36,650	35,650	36,650	32,650	34,700
810-00	Salaries and Fees	283,825	283,265	295,771	137,445	297,245
820-00	Administration Costs	58,020	45,969	50,000	(32,453)	48,500
830-00	Building Expenses	50,000	49,632	54,000	17,974	59,000
840-00	Membership Fees and Dues	3,400	2,989	3,400	500	3,400
850-00	Travel and Officers Expense	41,750	29,215	41,750	15,339	37,250
860-00	Boards and Committees Office and Travel	14,900	6,732	16,400	348	15,400
870-00	Out-of-State Visitation	18,500	17,928	18,500	10,366	20,500
880-00	Annual Communication	68,000	66,813	68,000	300	68,000
890-00	Miscellaneous Expenses	18,500	18,465	18,500	7,809.67	18,000
900-00	North Carolina Mason	131,057	131,057	130,000		120,000
	Total Expenses (Series 800 - 910)	724,602	687,715	732,971	190,278.67	721,995
		0.58%	0.86%	1.22%		-1.50%
	ESTIMATED SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	(17,852)	17,213	(49,571)		(53,575)

Membership Statistics

Membership 12/31/2016.....	39,312
Initiated.....	747
Raised	630
Admitted.....	360
Restored.....	328
Total Gains.....	2,090
Expelled.....	9
Suspended UMC	3
Excluded NPD.....	882
Demitted.....	336
Died.....	1,255
Total Losses.....	2,718
Total membership 12/31/2017	38,173

Service Awards for 2018

Twenty-five Year Service Awards presented.....	713
Fifty Year Veteran Awards presented.....	448
Sixty Year Awards	201

Respectfully submitted,
T. Walton Clapp, III, Grand Secretary

Report of the Committee on Charity

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

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

To TER.....	\$1,000
To GRW	\$1,000
To DDG.....	\$1,000

Respectfully submitted,
Johnny Surlles, Chairman

Report of the Grand Historian

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

Legend plays a large part in the formative history of Freemasonry. When the world was several thousand years younger, gods were jealous of their name. It was thought that if you knew the name of a god, that you had some power and control over him; and the Hebrew God was no exception. For example, when Moses asked the Hebrew God his name on Mount Sinai, the deity

simply replied, "I am that I am."

Legend tells us there was one ancient patriarch that found favor in the eyes of the Hebrew God, and that patriarch was Enoch. Enoch, father of Methuselah and great-grandfather of Noah, is a figure found in the book of Genesis, and a man described as "beloved by God." The story of Enoch states that God so loved Enoch that he decided to reveal to him his true name. In a dream, God wafted Enoch over mountains and down valleys until he reached the high summit of a mountain, and there, in the sky, God wrote his ineffable name. That mountain was Mount Moriah.

On awakening, Enoch and his sons retraced the journey of the dream. When they arrived at Mount Moriah, Enoch inscribed upon a triangle of gold, the ineffable name of deity, and he and his sons excavated nine vaults into the earth. At the bottom of the ninth vault, he placed that triangle of gold on a cube of agate and at the top of the vaults they built a small shrine of rough stone. Genesis tells us that Enoch was taken up to heaven by God.

Eons later, when King Solomon was building his temple on Mount Moriah to house the Ark of the Covenant, he sent three workmen, led by the Craftsman Adoniram, to survey the land for the construction of an administrative building. The workmen found Enoch's long-forgotten rude shrine and began excavating. At the bottom of the ninth vault they found the cube of agate and the triangle of gold inscribed with the name of deity. Adoniram took the golden triangle to King Solomon. Solomon, in his wisdom, recognized the name of deity inscribed upon the golden triangle. Solomon then called his friends, Hiram, King of Tyre, and the Master Builder, Hiram Abif. The three of them decided that the inscribed name of deity would be the Master's word to be given to the craftsmen once the temple was completed. King Solomon then ordered a room to be excavated beneath the sanctum sanctorum of the temple, and there the three Grand Masters placed the triangle of gold for safekeeping.

The second section of the Master Mason's degree deals with the loss of the Master's word. King Solomon's Temple lasted 365 years, until it was destroyed by the Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar. However, King Solomon's subterranean vault survived and the Master's word was recovered when the second Temple under Zerubbabel was built 70 years later.

Today's speculative Freemasonry accepts men of all faiths, so the recovered word of deity has many names. But whatever the name, it is for each Freemason to discover, to be given, to have, to hold, to glorify, to worship, to protect and to carry with him when he hopes to be translated from this imperfect, to that all-perfect glorious and celestial Lodge above, where the Supreme Architect of the Universe, [the word] presides.

Respectfully submitted,
Michael W. Brantley
Grand Historian

Report of the Committee on Permanent Building

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The Committee on the Permanent Building remains exceptionally proud of the improvements made in our headquarters building over the past few years. We continue to work on the restoration of the building and, like last

year, to collaborate with the Library Committee to display paintings, prints, and objects found in the artifact collections. To this end, the bookshelves in the Conference Room have been renovated with glass shelves for displays, as well as cost and energy efficient LED lighting. Similar recessed lighting has been installed down the interior wall of the Conference Room, greatly enhancing the appearance and illumination of the room. As of August samples of new lighting fixtures arrived for assessment and a forthcoming selection will be made in order to replace the fixtures in the main offices and ground floor classroom with energy and cost efficient fixtures.

The grounds have been improved with energy efficient light fixtures in the parking lot, which more adequately light the lot after dark. The grassed area at the rear of the building has been reduced in size by the expansion of several natural beds. This reduces the amount of area requiring mowing and creates a more finished look to the yard. Several diseased rosebushes have been pulled up along the side of the building and will be replaced with relatively self-sufficient plants. A new staircase was added to the backyard, providing access from Glen Eden Street to the building's rear amphitheater and deck. This will enable visitors who have parked across Glen Eden Street to have access to the building and grounds during special events. The steps were constructed as a courtesy by the firm who developed the acreage behind the building.

The committee has entered into discussion with HVAC engineers to assess the building's aging HVAC system. The system is nearly 15 years old and parts and coolant are becoming more difficult and more expensive to come by. In anticipation of the system's replacement, the Committee recommends additional funds be put into the Building Reserve Account to facilitate the future replacement of the units as they fail.

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

Respectfully submitted,
Edward R. Johnson, Chairman

Report of Lodge Service Commission

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

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

The following is a report on the various applications and inquires that

have been submitted to, and addressed by, the Lodge Service Commission during 2017-2018.

Information was provided to Apex Lodge No. 584, located in Apex, pertaining to how to process real property left to the lodge by a deceased member.

Information was provided to Joseph Warren Lodge No. 92, located in Stantonsburg, regarding building condition and financial options related to repairs.

Information was provided to a number of lodges in the Charlotte area regarding the sell and purchase of real property as well as temple association related matters.

The documents for Millbrook Lodge No. 97, located in Raleigh, to lease meeting space to the Raleigh York Rite Bodies were reviewed and approved.

Documents for the sale of the Raleigh Masonic Temple Association property located on Caswell Street, Raleigh, were approved. The property is currently under contract, and the closing date is to be determined.

The LSC reviewed and approved the sale of the building owned by Cherokee Lodge No.146, located in Murphy. The lodge is currently actively working to locate and purchase land in order to construct a new lodge building. The LSC has provided information related to the purchase process and continues to assist as needed.

Information has been received from the Gastonia Masonic Temple Association related to the sale of the building and lot located on South Street in Gastonia. The application and related documentation is currently being prepared for review by the LSC.

The LSC provided information to the Greensboro Masonic Temple Association related to a long term lease of a building currently unused for Masonic functions. Documentation will be prepared and forwarded to the LSC for review.

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

Respectfully and Fraternaly,
James W. Howell, PM, Chairman

Report of the Committee on Fraternal Correspondence

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

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

1. Legitimacy of Origin
2. Exclusive Territorial Jurisdiction, except by mutual consent and/or treaty.

3. Adherence to the Ancient Landmarks – specifically, a belief in God, the Volume of Sacred Law as an indispensable part of the furniture of the lodge, and the prohibition of the discussion of politics and religion.

Brazil State-Espírito Santo

The Grande Loja Maçônica do Estado do Espírito Santo was founded November 8, 1970, as a legitimate and regular power extending its jurisdiction throughout the whole state of Espírito Santo, located in the southeast region of Brazil. It is a member of the World Conference of the Regular Masonic Grand Lodges, of the Confederación Masónica Interamericana (CMI), and to the Brazilian Symbolic Free-Masonry Confederation (CMSB). The Commission on Information determined these Brazilian grand orients are practicing regular Masonry. Therefore, it is the recommendation of this committee to approve recognition of the Grande Loja Maçônica do Estado do Espírito Santo.

Gran Logia Simbolica del Paraguay

The Gran Logia Simbolica del Paraguay was founded September 7, 1871, and reestablished on June 6, 1887. It was and is a legitimate and regular power extending its jurisdiction throughout all of Paraguay. Its forms, functions, and jurisdiction were well established by the time the Gran Logia Simbolica del Paraguay received recognition from the United Grand Lodge of England on March 2, 1910. The Gran Logia has operated regularly since that time, however an unfortunate schism occurred within the Gran Logia Simbolica del Paraguay in 2006 which has not healed. To complicate matters, the splinter Gran Logia adopted the same name, structure, and even physical address (but a different floor) as the original Gran Logia Simbolica del Paraguay, and spuri-ously supplanted the original Gran Logia in its work and international recognition. Language and cultural barriers have hindered the Commission on Information for Recognition in recognizing the true Gran Logia. However, Most Worshipful Jorge L. Aladro, Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Florida and a member of the Commission on Information for Recognition, undertook an extensive investigation of the matter, visited both Gran Logias, reviewed each's documents of origin, deeds, and other records and determined, the Gran Logia Simbolica del Paraguay whose Grand Master is Benign A. Villasanti is the legitimate Masonic body of the nation of Paraguay. It is therefore the recommendation of this committee to re-establish ties and re-recognize the Gran Logia Simbolica del Paraguay whose Grand Master is Benign A. Villasanti.

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

Petitions for Restoration

DRC (docket no. 652), formerly a member of Garner Lodge No. 701, Garner, was expelled for un-Masonic conduct on March 24, 1997. He filed for restoration with the lodge on June 25, 2018, and with the Grand Secretary on July 6, 2018.

DBF (docket no. 867), formerly a member of Hall Lodge No. 53, Shawboro, was expelled on November 21, 2014. He filed for restoration with the lodge on May 30, 2018, and with the Grand Secretary on June 21, 2018.

MEF (docket no. 903), formerly a member of Clifford Duell Lodge No. 756, Fayetteville, was expelled on March 1, 2017. He filed for restoration with

the lodge on October 26, 2017, and with the Grand Secretary on November 28, 2017.

M.A.B. (docket no. 735) formerly a member of Newell Lodge No. 739, Newell, was expelled on February 18, 2005. He filed for restoration with the lodge on August 09, 2018, with the lodge waiving the 90 day notice and with the Grand Secretary on August 31, 2018.

Appeal the Decision of Trial Commission

JDH (docket no. 911), formerly a member of Gaston Lodge No. 253, Dallas, was found guilty by a trial commission and suspended for a three year period commencing on January 24, 2018. Gaston Lodge No. 263 has filed an appeal on the penalty imposed by the Trial Commission. They are entering an appeal for the sentence of expulsion to be imposed.

Report of the Judge Advocate

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

This report is prepared as of 1 August 2018 and most respectfully submitted for your information and disposition.

1. **Docket #908** - Brother GMW, a Master Mason and member of Durham Lodge #352, was suspended for one year by Grand Master Gene Cobb as the result of a summary trial. It was found that while in a state of intoxication in a hospitality room at the annual communication he made a vile and offensive remark to the wife of a Grand Lodge Officer. Brother GMW admitted the charges against him.
2. **Docket #909** - Brother JTL, a Master Mason and member of Mount Holly Lodge #544, was expelled by Grand Master Gene Cobb as the result of a summary trial. It was found that Brother JTL confronted a female in a vile and profane manner after she inquired about a large Nazi flag he had prominently displayed at his residence. Brother JTL admitted the charges against him and was expelled by Grand Master Cobb.
3. **Docket #910** - Brother HCM, a Master Mason and member of Manteo Lodge #521, was expelled by the Judge Advocate after he pled guilty in the Federal Court at Raleigh, NC of a felony, to wit: accepting illegal gratuities. As part of a plea bargain several other felonies were dismissed.
4. **Docket #911** - Brother JDH, a Master Mason and member of Gaston Lodge #263, was suspended for three years by the Trial Commission after he was found to have falsely represented himself as a military veteran, a former Sniper and accepted a Masonic Certificate recognizing him for honorable military service, to which he was not entitled. Brother JDH admitted he had lied on numerous occasions concerning military service.
5. **Docket #912** Brother TJJ, a Master Mason and member of Mt Pleasant Lodge #573, was expelled by the Trial Commission after he was convicted in the District Court of Wilkes County for violating his probation. Brother TJJ appeared at the Masonic trial and admitted he had pled guilty to the violation.
6. **Docket #913** Brother ASE, a Master Mason and member of Enterprise

- Lodge #752, was expelled by the Judge Advocate after he was found guilty in the Superior Court of Davidson County for Felony Embezzlement by a Government Employee. Brother ASE did not answer the Masonic charges against him.
7. **Docket #914** Brother WST, a Master Mason and member of Rolesville Lodge #683, was accused of communicating threats and having illegal communication with the wife of brother Master Mason. The case was dismissed by the Judge Advocate.
 8. **Docket #915** Brother RGW, a Master Mason and member of Ionic Lodge #583, was summoned to appear at a summary trial before Grand Master Speed Hallman after he was accused of directing un-Masonic and inappropriate comments toward the Grand Lodge and Grand Lodge Officers during an internet conversation. Brother RGW, appeared at the trial, sincerely apologized for his comments and the case was dismissed by the Grand Master.
 9. **Docket #916** Brother ELB, a Master Mason and member of Richard Caswell Lodge #705, was summoned to appear at a summary trial before Grand Master Speed Hallman after he was accused of directing un-Masonic and inappropriate comments toward the Grand Lodge and Grand Lodge Officers during an internet conversation. Brother ELB, appeared at the trial, sincerely apologized for his comments and the case was dismissed by the Grand Master.
 10. **Docket #917** Brother AH, a Master Mason and member of Temple Lodge #676, was summoned to appear at a summary trial before Grand Master Speed Hallman after he was accused of making death threats to a brother Master Mason during an internet conversation. Brother ELB, appeared at the trial, admitted he had made the comments but was completely unrepentant and was expelled by the Grand Master.
 11. **Docket #918** - Brother SAE, a Master Mason and member of King Lodge #722, was summoned to appear at a summary trial before Grand Master Speed Hallman after he was accused of directing un-Masonic and inappropriate comments toward the Grand Lodge and Grand Lodge Officers during an internet conversation and that he provided misleading information to the Grand Lodge when requesting permission to hold a charity raffle. Brother SAE failed to obey the summons. For administrative purposes this case was combined with Docket #923.
 12. **Docket #919** - Brother JC, a Master Mason and member of PP Turner Lodge #746, was summoned to appear at a summary trial before Grand Master Speed Hallman after he was accused of directing un-Masonic and inappropriate comments toward the Grand Lodge and Grand Lodge Officers during an internet conversation. Brother ELB, immediately contacted the Grand Master and sincerely apologized for his comments and the case was dismissed by the Grand Master.
 13. **Docket #920** - Brother CDB, a Master Mason, and member of Enterprise Lodge #752, was summoned to appear at a summary trial before Grand Master Speed Hallman after he was accused of directing un-Masonic and inappropriate comments toward the Grand Lodge and Grand Lodge Officers during an internet conversation. Bro CDB
-

- failed to obey the summons. For administrative purposes this case was combined with Docket #922.
14. **Docket #921** - Brother JTW, a Master Mason and member of Steele Creek Lodge #737, was expelled by the Judge Advocate after he admitted to having had illegal carnal communication with the wife of a brother Master Mason knowing her to be such.
 15. **Docket #922** - Brother CDB, a Master Mason, and member of Enterprise Lodge #752, was expelled by the Trial Commission after he was found to have refused to obey a summons lawfully issued by Grand Master Speed Hallman. Brother CDB did not appear at his Masonic trial.
 16. **Docket #923** - Brother SAE, a Master Mason and member of King Lodge #722, was expelled by the Trial Commission after he was found to have refused to obey a summons lawfully issued by Grand Master Speed Hallman. Brother SAE did not appear at his Masonic trial.
 17. **Docket #924** - Brother JPL, a Master Mason and member of Statesville Lodge #27 was expelled by the Judge Advocate after he pled guilty to larceny from Statesville Lodge #27. Although, through a plea bargain, he pled guilty to a misdemeanor, the amount of money involved would constitute a felony. Brother JPL answered the charges and declined to submit to Masonic trial.

Respectfully submitted,
James Stevens, Judge Advocate

Report of the Committee on By-Laws

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

Royal White Hart 2	Art 8	meeting time changed to 7pm
Johnston-Caswell 10	Art 10	dues increase to \$150
Phalanx 31	Art 19	institute special ballot procedures
Phalanx 31	Art 10	dues increased to \$80 plus per capita
LaFayette 83	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$250
	Art 11	affiliation fee increased to \$25
	Art 13	charity amount increased to \$500
St. Alban's 114	Art 10	dues increased to \$75 plus per capita
Mt. Hermon 118	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$235
Junaluskee 145	Art 8	changing meeting time of lodge
Cherokee 146	Art 10	dues increased to \$80
Palmyra 147		Complete revision of bylaws
Cary 198	Art 10	dues increased to \$175 plus per capita
Cary 198	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$245
Eno 210	Art 10	dues increased to \$75
William G. Hill 218	Art 10	dues increased to \$55 plus per capita and per capita rent by Temple Association

William T. Bain 231		Complete revision of bylaws
Grifton 243	Art 10	dues increase to \$135
Monroe 244	Art 8	changing meeting time of lodge
	Art 8	annual meeting in November
	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$125
	Art 11	affiliation fee increased to \$25
Kenly 257	Art 10	dues increased to \$80 plus per capita
Kenly 257	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$150
Fuquay 258		Complete revision of bylaws
Gaston 263	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$130
	Art 10	dues increased to \$90 plus per capita
	Art 11	affiliation fee increased to \$25
Beaver Dam 276	Art 10	dues increased to \$100 plus per capita
Gastonia 369	Art 10	dues increased to \$25 plus per capita and assessment of the Gastonia Masonic Temple Co
Forest City 381	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$100 plus investigation fee
Orient 395	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$200 plus investigation fee
	Art 19	miscellaneous provisions
University 408	Art 8	change meeting time to 7:30pm
Maxton 417	Art 10	dues increased to \$50 plus per capita
Sparta 423	Art 8	change in meeting nights
Enfield 447	Art 8	meeting time changed
Rockingham 495	Art 8	meeting time changed to 7pm
	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$125
Rockingham 495	Art 10	dues increased to \$100
Rockingham 495	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$200
Mooresville 496		Complete revision of bylaws
Cherryville 505	Art 8	annual meeting in November
Belhaven 509	Art 10	dues increased to \$100
Corinthian 542	Art 8	changing meeting time of lodge
	Art 19	institute special ballot procedures
Spencer 543		Complete revision of bylaws
Tabor 563	Art 19	institute special ballot procedures
Richlands 564	Art 10	dues increased to \$100 plus per capita
Doric 568	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$100 plus investigation fee
Mt. Pleasant 573	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$200
	Art 10	dues increased to \$80 plus per capita tax
	Art 11	affiliation fee eliminated
Andrew Jackson 576	Art 10	dues pro rated

	Art 11	affiliation fee increased to \$50
Andrew Jackson 576	Art 10	dues increased to \$80 plus per capita
Waccamaw 596	Art 9	initiation fee increased to \$185
Riverside 606		Complete revision of bylaws
Belmont 627	Art 10	dues increased to \$75
	Art 10	dues increased to \$80 effective 2021
	Art 10	dues increased to \$85 effective 2024
	Art 10	dues increased to \$90 effective 2027
Belmont 627	Art 13	charity amount increased to \$200
Guilford 656	Art 5	filing a report of the Treasurer by Feb
	Art 6	filing a report of the Secretary by Feb
	Art 9	not approved. Must have set initiation fee
	Art 10	dues increased to \$50 plus per capita and per capita rent by Temple Assoc.
	Art 11	affiliation fee increased to \$25
Washington 675	Art 10	dues increased to \$80 plus per capita
Fellowship 687	Art 10	dues increased to \$80 plus per capita
	Art 11	affiliation fee increased to \$50
Fellowship 687	Art 8	meeting times in November and December
Scotland Neck 689	Art 8	meeting time changed
Charles M. Setzer 693	Art 10	dues increased to \$100 plus per capita
Albemarle 703	Art 10	dues increased to \$80 plus per capita
Conover 709	Art 13	charity amount increased to \$100
Stanley 713	Art 10	dues increased to \$70 plus per capita
Liberty 714	Art 13	charity amount increased to \$500
Burnsville 717		Complete revision of bylaws
Steele Creek 737	Art 19	permitting facilities to be rented with alcohol permitted
Denver 757	Art 19	institute special ballot procedures
Orphans 761	Art 19	additional duties of the Finance Committee
Knights of Solomon 764	Art 8	meeting time changed
Lodge of the Nine Sisters UD	Art 8	change in meeting nights
	Art 8	change location of lodge
Lodge of the Nine Sisters UD	Art 8	location of lodge updated

Respectfully submitted,
T. Walton Clapp, III
Chairman

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

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The Committee on WhiteStone: A Masonic and Eastern Star Community is pleased to report its findings and recommendations to the delegates and attendees of the 231st Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of North Carolina. For more than a century, our home in Greensboro has provided care for our senior brothers, sisters, and family members in need. Some 300 residents call WhiteStone home. The facility employs nearly 250 full- and part-time employees and operates on a \$16 million annual budget. This growth and excellence in care would not have been possible without the ongoing support of individual brothers, their lodges, and the Grand Lodge.

Our committee is charged with visiting our home in Greensboro and reporting on its conditions and management. Throughout the year, committee members attended board meetings, participated in the annual Family Day in May, and toured our home. We are grateful for the new Executive Director Mark Lewis's assistance with our work and for his and the Chairman of the Board, MW Brother Gene Jernigan's, consistently outstanding leadership throughout the year. We also extend our thanks to the WhiteStone staff for their dedication and service to the residents and their support of our committee this year.

We are pleased to report to the Craft that WhiteStone is financially strong, the condition of the property is excellent, and operations continue to be both efficient and professional. The success at WhiteStone has resulted in a list of more than 40 people waiting to become residents.

Operating Highlights

- \$16 M annual operating budget
- Independent Living 97% average occupancy
- Assisted Living/Memory Care unit 100% average occupancy
- Care and Wellness Center 97% average occupancy
- Resident age range: 65 to 111

Future Plans

Nationally, statistics indicate the population of US citizens aged 65+ will grow annually by 3.3% across our nation but by 3.5% in North Carolina. Statistics also indicate the Independent Living population will increase by 3.7% annually. Along with the fact that the average age of our Masonic membership is 62.87 years, the data indicates a strong need for expansion at WhiteStone to accommodate this growth.

The vision to moving forward with the expansion is to provide a full continuum of care offering a seamless transition of care for residents moving between the Independent Living, Assisted Living, Memory Care, and Skilled Nursing Care as needed. To achieve this vision, we plan to expand the current Independent Living area, add a free-standing Assisted Living building, double our memory care capacity, and renovate the existing Care and Wellness Center to better meet resident needs (which includes the creation of additional private rooms). Additionally, the expansion will include enhanced common areas, underground parking, and new auditorium space.

The WhiteStone Board of Directors and management are currently working with architects to further define the scope of improvements and expansion of facilities. We are confident that this expansion will further solidify WhiteStone's position as one of the state's premier providers for a full continuum of care both for our fraternal members and the greater community.

- Newly constructed Independent Living (IL) wing of 64 units.
- Newly constructed Assisted Living (AL) with memory care unit.
 - o 24 Assisted Living Suites
 - o 12 Memory Care Suites
- Renovation of Care and Wellness Center common areas and conversion of 25 semi-private resident rooms to private accommodations

Charity Summary

Donations to:	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
WhiteStone					
Masonic Charities	\$91,262	\$100,839	\$112,045	\$125,053	\$176,742
Eastern Star Charities	\$278,379	\$23,680	\$263,750	\$363,723	\$1,235
*NC MESH LLC	\$562,754	\$316,699	\$339,768	\$379,591	\$339,621
Individual					
Contributions	\$1,160,991	\$659,829	\$731,440	\$249,140	\$523,233
TOTAL	\$2,093,386	\$1,101,047	\$1,447,003	\$1,117,357	\$1,040,831

*Note: The NC Masonic and Eastern Star Home Foundation LLC (NC MESH LLC) was established in 2012 to receive tax-deductible donations and help administer and fund fraternal-based charity.

As can be seen in the tables above, overall contributions to WhiteStone have been steady over the last several years and Masons and Eastern Stars across our state are to be commended for their support of our wonderful home. In 2017, WhiteStone contributed over \$1M in financial assistance to 40 plus fraternally related residents. Three years ago, WhiteStone, in a partnership with our other Masonic and Eastern Star Charity for aging brothers and sisters, NC MESH LLC, made several units and rooms available at the home for fraternal members who could not afford the entrance fee and/or monthly maintenance fees. Through this partnership a number of applications have been approved to receive financial assistance and move into the community. In addition to this direct financial support for fraternal residents, WhiteStone offers an "adopt a resident" program, whereby various Masonic lodges and Eastern Star chapters adopt fraternal residents to provide gifts, cards, and other support directly to those individuals on an ongoing basis.

Additionally, WhiteStone has begun developing other means of providing assistance for non-residents that are less costly and which allow our members to stay independent and in their own homes longer. In October of 2009, WhiteStone initiated its medical equipment loan/information hotline program and began providing guidance for those fraternal members and families requiring assistance navigating various Medicaid, Medicare, and Veterans support programs.

In 2017, WhiteStone and NC MESH LLC developed another outreach,

the NC Masonic and Eastern Star Outreach Program (MESOP). MESOP is for Masonic and Eastern Star members, age 65 years and older, and their spouses. Its primary objective is to ensure that our Sisters, Brothers, and spouses have access to the services and resources they need to stay in their own homes for as long as possible. The outreach program has also seen growth in 2018 and continues to receive requests from across North Carolina. Assistance comes in many forms from that of emergency and long term financial assistance as well as case management by our Outreach Coordinator. Case management is the process of assessment, planning, facilitation, care coordination, and evaluation of options and services to meet an individual's comprehensive health needs and promote quality, cost-effective outcomes. This can be an extremely effective tool to help our fraternally related members to remain at home, independently, as long as they can do so with a quality of life. The toll-free number established for the Outreach Program is 1-833-853-1449

Our committee wishes to thank the Grand Lodge and WhiteStone's residents and staff for giving us the opportunity to learn more about our home and its charitable work. We hope you will take the opportunity to visit WhiteStone and see for yourself the impact of our fraternity's involvement in the lives of the residents there. You may even consider holding a lodge meeting there to enjoy fellowship with Masonic residents who are not able to travel to meetings or simply visit the recently chartered MESH Lodge #771, which meets at 2:00 pm on the second Saturday of each month. Or think about adopting a resident — this is a small investment of time and resources that yields tremendous personal rewards for the recipients, as well as those who give. Feel free to contact Mark Lewis if you'd like to explore any of these ideas.

Finally, the committee encourages each and every brother, as well as every lodge, to strongly consider regular contributions in support of WhiteStone and NC MESH LLC. Your dollars go directly to support aging Brothers and Sisters in need, both at the home in Greensboro as well as at their own homes. North Carolina Masons can be proud of the good work they are doing in support of their aging brethren.

Respectfully submitted,
Kevan Frazier, Chairman
Chance Corbin
Bruce Gordon
Jonathan Johnson
O'Neal McCall
Roger Lambertson
Tim Swaringen
Tim Taylor
Chris Wilhoit

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

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The Grand Lodge Committee on the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford (MHCO) visited our Home on April 21, 2018. The committee members met with Br. Kevin Otis, the Administrator of the MHCO, alongside house parents and other employees. The committee members toured the facilities, inspect-

ing the children's cottages, independent living apartments, York Rite Chapel, print shop, and gymnasium.

The MHCO serves children in need by providing two programs: direct residential care and independent living (ILP). The direct residential care program provides a home care model for children who have not graduated high school. The children in residential care live in a home with a childcare couple in a family setting. Children in the residential care program attend the Granville County public schools. The ILP program is designed for children ages 18 to 21 and assists high school graduates transitioning to adult life. The ILP students reside on campus in studio apartments while continuing their education by attending Vance-Granville Community College (VGCC). In addition, they are provided assistance in obtaining part-time employment.

This school year was a tremendous success with two high school seniors and one East Carolina University senior graduating (a 100% graduation rate). Four ILP residents earned certifications at VGCC: two Automotive Mechanic Certifications, one Certified Nursing Assistant, and one Culinary Arts Certification. These accomplishments were celebrated at the Baccalaureate Service where Alumnus Devante Hicks inspired those in attendance with his account of the impact the Home has had on his own life. Mr. Hicks also motivated the youth by recognizing the challenges they face, encouraging them to understand their internal strength, and utilizing this opportunity to fully realize their potential. Immediately after the Baccalaureate, six donors were recognized and inducted into the Hayes-Neal Society, while nineteen scholarships and the Alumni Citizenship Award were awarded to seven students continuing their education in pursuit of their dreams. There were other significant academic milestones as four students graduated eighth grade, three graduated kindergarten, and two graduated pre-school. The promotion rate for this year was 95%. All ILP residents are employed in the community at this time.

As the youth achieved their goals, they also progressed according to their individual plans. Over the past quarter nineteen youth transitioned out of the program. For many this was a natural development due to completing their academic and employment goals. For others their family situation improved, and several sibling groups returned home. During the same period, twelve children were admitted, and eight more children were placed in a single day in early in July.

2016 saw the MCHO's inaugural class of Ambassadors. On April 20 and 21, the Third Class of Ambassadors gathered in the Cobb Center for a 2-day orientation. The Ambassadors toured the cottages, asked questions, and interacted directly with children and House Parents. The Ambassadors will work with our lodges and others to provide information about the MHCO and are requested to provide a three-year commitment to the program.

Our 2018 Ambassadors are:

Tommy Cook
Chris Gibson
Rodney Hardy
Ron Hensley
Kevin Howell
Chase Huffer

Martin Jackson
John Lloyd
Michael McMorrow
David Ozvat
James Pugsley
Scott Sigmon
Victor Vogelsang

At the present, we have 39 Ambassadors for the Home out of 41 Districts. We still need Ambassadors for Districts 5 and 10. If you are interested in serving as an Ambassador, please contact your DDGM and request a referral.

This year's Great Landscape Day was another huge success with over 100 volunteers helping mulch, clean, and spruce up the campus for Spring. God's Half Acre continues to develop with ongoing love and care. Another important change is the progress of the new pool. In May the final pool inspection was approved. The existing pool and pool house have been demolished, and significant erosion was discovered due to extensive, ongoing leaks. Final installation for the slide is needed before the shell can be poured. Immediately following, the pump house and pool house construction will begin. Timelines for completion are not definite. Downtime related to the slide decision and weather have had an impact, but hope remains the pool shall be completed by the end of the summer. This is an ongoing capital improvement project that deserves our support. If you would like to support the pool project, please contact Chris Richardson with the NC Masonic Foundation by email at: crichardson@mfnc.org, or by phone at: 919-690-5996.

The Summer Academy was held for the 4th consecutive year this summer. The purpose of the Academy is to address many of the pre-employment needs our children have through a concentrated two-week program. High school age residents who are not yet employed participate in the Summer Academy Program. During the 2018 Summer Academy, the children visited East Carolina University, a Walmart Distribution Center, Mako Medical Labs, and Tri-Arc Food Systems. These students also volunteered at the Ronald McDonald House. Public Appreciation Day included the children washing vehicles for public servants including police, sheriff, and fire personnel. All these offerings provide an opportunity for the children and youth to learn, develop, and give back in a fun and productive way.

One significant change in the summer schedule worth noting is the transition from a traditional school calendar to a year-round school with the Elementary-aged (K-5th) students. This adjustment is intended to promote academic success but will present a challenge in that other grades are not participating in the same calendar at this time.

The MHCO Homecoming will take place October 12-14th. BBQ teams begin cooking on Friday, October 12, and the Moonlighter's Orchestra will play that evening. Orphan's Lodge No. 761 will hold a stated communication Saturday, October 13, at 8:00 AM. The Parade step off time has been moved back to 11:00 AM to accommodate those traveling. The Parade staging area for this year has also changed and will be in front of the Fire Department Station located at 112 E. McClanahan Street in Oxford. Country Artist Bryan Mayer performs on the 13th beginning at noon. Please check the website www.mhc-oxford.org for additional information and registration. For those staying

through Sunday, there will be a worship service Sunday morning in the York Rite Chapel. As always, Homecoming is an opportunity for you to visit the Home with your lodge, your friends, and your family. There you will see first-hand the good work we are doing for at-risk children in North Carolina!

The committee would like to thank Br. Kevin Otis for the time he and the staff at the MHCO spent with us during our visit, as well as for making available to us the information contained in this report. If you would like additional information regarding the MHCO, please review the 2018 Annual Achievement Report. This report summarizes the achievements of the Home for 2018, as well as providing a complete financial report for the Home. It is available on the MHCO's website, or a hard copy can be requested directly from the Home.

Respectfully submitted,
 Larry B. Thompson, Jr., SGD, Chairman
 Timothy J. Hawkins
 Gregory N. Flowers
 Timothy M. Willett
 Craig P. Steelman
 Thomas A. VanEtten
 Junior J. Caldwell
 Frank D. Wanko
 Marcus A. Sessoms

Petition for a Charter from Lodge of the Nine Sisters UD, Raleigh

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

The subscriber hereto respectfully represent that, on the twelfth day of June, CE 2017, AL 6017, 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 Raleigh in the County of Wake, by the name of Lodge of the Nine Sisters, 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 John Gregory Wallace, Master; Brother Matthew Nathaniel Parker, Senior Warden; and Brother Chance Brooks Corbin, 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 23rd day of August, CE 2018, AL 6018.

Respectfully submitted,
 Members of Lodge of Nine Sisters, UD

Resolution for St. John's Lodge 1 to Receive a Duplicate Charter

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:
 WHEREAS, St. John's Lodge No. 1, AF & AM located in Wilmington, NC,

is a regular lodge originally chartered in 1755 and accepted a charter by the Grand Lodge of North Carolina in 1794, and

WHEREAS, the chartered history of St. John's Lodge No. 1, AF & AM remains unbroken, and

WHEREAS, St. John's Lodge No. 1, AF & AM 1794 charter issued by the Grand Lodge of AF & AM of North Carolina is now illegible due to age and deterioration, and

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

NOW THEREFOR BE IT RESOLVED: St. John's Lodge No. 1, AF & AM, Wilmington, NC, 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,
Larry C. Brown, Master

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 A. Gene Cobb, Jr, PGM, and Grand Master C. Speed Hallman are to be considered during this Annual Communication

Cobb Opinion 1

All Masons are accountable to The Code of the Grand Lodge of North Carolina.

On June 22, 2017, an official response to concerns raised by the Judge Advocate regarding "complaints from our appendant bodies seeking resolutions for incidents" was given by the Grand Master.

Since that time, other matters requiring a disciplinary review have occurred in this jurisdiction which leads the Grand Master to issue the following official opinions.

That the Judge Advocate only hear and address cases that are presented in accordance with our laws, rules, and regulations relating to Masonic offenses as they appear in The Code.

That in the event the Judge Advocate is presented a case that needs to be referred to another Masonic related organization, who, in his judgment, should hear and act on these matters before we address it as a matter related to The Code, he may refer the matter to the York Rite, Scottish Rite, Shrine, Order of the Eastern Star, Amaranth or another Masonic order recognized in North Carolina.

That when other Masonic related organizations act in accordance with their procedures to address matters of procedure and discipline, the Judge Advocate may concur or not concur and dispense procedural or disciplinary actions as called for by The Code that is concurrent with other Masonic related organizations.

Given under my hand and seal as an opinion on the nineteenth day of October 2017 in Sanford, North Carolina.

Cobb Opinion 2

Intentional hospitality that promotes peace and harmony within the fraternity is a welcomed practice in many jurisdictions around the world. North Carolina has engaged in such intentional efforts for many years, and I hope that this will continue.

While not all Masons agree about all things, guarding against intemperance and excess is something about which we all agree. Being diligent, prudent, temperate, and discreet is something about which we all agree.

Accordingly, each of us is responsible for our actions. Therefore, in the event any Masons, lodge, or group of lodges host a “hospitality” room at any time or place in this jurisdiction, it is my official opinion that they assume responsibility and accountability for both the hospitality and the behavior of those who participate; and shall be liable for their conduct in accordance with The Code.

Given under my hand and seal this the nineteenth day of October 2017 in Sanford, North Carolina.

Cobb Opinion 3

In the effort to address better financial practices throughout the Craft and to reflect best practices, annual audits need to be performed every year.

Our MORI system can provide valuable assistance in this process if the year-end reports are printed out, reviewed, and signed by three members of the lodge. The Grand Secretary is fully capable of working with the subordinate lodge secretaries and coordinating with MORI such changes as will be necessary for future years to provide accurate and effective audits.

Accordingly, and after testing the continued use of Form 39 during my year as Grand Master, it is my opinion that the end-of-the-year report in MORI should be adjusted such that it will allow beginning and ending balances of lodge funds that account for income and expense reporting sufficient for lodges in the future such that Form 39 will become obsolete.

Given under my hand and seal this the twenty-third day of November 2017 in Sanford, North Carolina.

Cobb Opinion 4

This opinion will begin to address issues of affiliation with Prince Hall Freemasons.

The Grand Secretary has requested an Official Opinion regarding the affiliation of Prince Hall Affiliate (PHA) Freemasons within our sister jurisdictions who are not yet recognized by our sister jurisdictions, but otherwise conform to the ancient usages and Landmarks of the Fraternity and derive their legitimacy, historic usages, and warrants from African Lodge No. 459, chartered by the Premier Grand Lodge of England (now the United Grand Lodge of England) on 29 September 1784. In compliance with his request, I am giving you my Official Opinion.

On 19 September 2008 and 22 September 2015 the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina resolved that the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Affiliate Grand Lodges within the United States were regular in their workings, usages of Masonic Law, and adhered to the ancient Landmarks of our Fraternity.

Considering the Resolutions of this Grand Lodge in 2008 and 2015, it is my opinion that members in good standing of Prince Hall Affiliate Grand Lodges may apply for affiliation to a lodge in this Grand Jurisdiction per Regulation 75-1 (the Right to Apply for Affiliation) as regular and recognized Masons.

Given under my hand and seal in Sanford, North Carolina, this the 27th day of November 2017.

Hallman Order No. 1

It has been brought to my attention by the Grand Secretary that Kedron Lodge No. 387, A.F. & A.M., balloted on a Petition for the Degrees for Mr. E.H. without first complying with 68-3.13 of The Code.

In such cases the Grand Master may authorize a rebalot at a stated communication. Under Regulation 68-8 the master was informed of differing results presented by his wardens and proceeded to an improper announcement. He then rebaloted again. Therefor, the Grand Master by positive and unquestionable evidence determines the ballot was clearly and grossly illegal and is empowered to order another ballot in cases of this kind. I hereby ORDER Kedron Lodge No. 387 to rebalot on the above mentioned petition for the degrees at the stated communication to be held on August 6, 2018.

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

This Order shall be read to the lodge at the stated communication to be held on July 2, 2018, entered on the minutes of that communication, and a proper notation made in the margin of the minutes for the stated communication on June 18, 2018, referring to this Order and the date it was recorded in the minutes.

Given under my hand and seal at Wadesboro, North Carolina this 20th day of July, 2018 AD;2018 AL

Proposed Amendments to The Code

Amendment Group 1

Submitted by William G. Hill Lodge No. 218

This amendment stops the purchase of new Endowed Memberships and creates a new type of membership, Legacy Membership. Current endowed membership participants would be unaffected. Legacy membership is crafted after Endowed Memberships and uses the same financial assumptions. The purchase price is increased to allow for the amount paid out to the lodge to increase over time. The legacy membership program can also be purchased over a five year period. This program allows the dues paid to the lodge to keep up with inflation, leaving a true legacy for all time. The present endowed membership holders may upgrade to a Legacy Membership if they desire. Legacy memberships can additionally be purchased via a bequest in a will by a brother in good standing at the time of his death.

REG. 77-25 ENDOWED MEMBERSHIPS.

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

- 1. Obsolete**
- 2. Obsolete**

3. Obsolete

4. Obsolete

5. Obsolete

6. Obsolete

7. Obsolete

...

REG. 77-26 LEGACY MEMBERSHIPS.

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

1. Any member in good standing and possessing a current dues card in a particular lodge of this grand jurisdiction may become a legacy member in that lodge pursuant to the provisions of this section.

2. Legacy memberships have a minimum payment as follows:

A. The minimum payment for a Legacy Membership shall be thirty-five (35) times the annual dues of the applying member's subordinate lodge effective on January 1st following the date of the application, or the sum of \$1300.00, whichever is greater.

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

A. The annual installment shall be eight (8) times the annual lodge dues effective on January 1st following the date of application, or \$300, whichever is greater.

B. After commencing installment plan payments, a member may not revert to the single payment method, but may remit any or all installments early, provided no installment is past due.

C. Failure to pay any installment due by December 31 of each successive year constitutes voluntary withdrawal from the program, and regular dues in this lodge for the same year are payable immediately.

D. A member may withdraw from the legacy membership program at any time.

E. A member withdrawing from the installment option reverts to the membership status held before joining the program and shall remit dues to his lodge for the current year and for successive years unless otherwise exempted.

F. A member who has withdrawn from the installment payment option may re-enroll in the program in the same status held when he withdrew. The remaining installments due from the re-enrolling brother shall be determined under Regulation 77-26.3.A and 77-26.3.C based on dues of the subordinate lodge effective on January 1st following the date of his re-enrollment.

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

stallment described in Regulation 77-26.3.

- A. The application shall contain thereon the computations upon which legacy membership fee is predicated.
 - B. The application shall be signed by the applicant. The lodge secretary shall complete his part of the application and apply the certification of the lodge secretary.
 - C. The lodge secretary shall forward the application together with the full fee due, to the Grand Secretary.
 - D. The application shall not become effective until the applicant's record has been certified by the Grand Secretary.
 - E. The date of the application shall be the date the Grand Secretary certified he received the application.
5. The Grand Secretary shall certify legacy memberships as follows:
- A. If the Grand Secretary determines that the minimum fee, tendered by the applicant is in excess of that required, he shall have the power to correct the application and the lodge secretary's computations of the fee, accept the application as corrected and refund any excess fee to the applicant through the particular lodge secretary.
 - B. If the fee tendered is insufficient, the Grand Secretary shall return the application and fee to the constituent lodge secretary for correction together with his calculation with amount due.
 - C. A copy of the completed and accepted legacy membership application and a certificate of legacy membership shall be furnished to the applicant and his lodge by the Grand Secretary.
6. After the legacy membership application and fee have been received and accepted by the Grand Secretary, the legacy membership fee shall not be refundable except under circumstances determined by the Grand Secretary to be mistakes of fact rendering the applicant ineligible for legacy membership as of the date of application.
7. The legacy membership shall be effective for the succeeding calendar year after certification by the Grand Secretary.
8. A legacy member shall owe no further dues to the lodge of which he is a legacy member. A dues receipt card shall be issued by the lodge secretary.
9. A Brother, at a future time, may add any amount to his legacy membership fee through his local lodge secretary who shall promptly remit any such sums to the Grand Secretary.
10. Legacy membership fees accepted by the Grand Secretary shall be paid over to the Grand Treasurer. The funds shall be placed collectively in the Permanent Fund.
- A. These funds shall be accounted for on an individual lodge basis.
 - B. The amount paid shall be apportioned between the Subordinate Lodge and the Grand Lodge in the ratio of the per capita

tax to the subordinate lodge dues on January 1st following the date of the application.

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

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

E. The funds shall be audited annually as a part of the Permanent Fund.

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

A. The payments to the subordinate lodge and the Grand Lodge mandated by this Regulation 77-26.11 shall be made regardless of the income earned by the Permanent Fund.

B. Beginning the year after the final installment payment is made the legacy member's dues shall be paid as provided in Regulation 77-26.10.

12. The Grand Secretary shall, at the time of the annual income distribution under Regulation 77-26.10, submit a statement to the subordinate lodge showing the apportionment of income from the legacy membership between the subordinate lodge and the Grand Lodge.

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

A. A legacy member may transfer his legacy membership to another lodge of which he is a plural member.

B. If the lodge to which the legacy membership is transferred has lower dues, including per capita tax, than the lodge from which the legacy membership is transferred, the entire amount paid for the legacy membership shall, nevertheless, be transferred.

C. If the lodge to which the legacy membership is transferred has higher dues, including per capita tax, than did the originating lodge on the date of the application for legacy membership, the member shall remit an amount equivalent to

the difference between the original cost of the existing legacy membership and the cost of a legacy membership in the lodge to which it is transferred, computed as of the date of the transfer.

D. If the member wishes to retain his plural membership in the lodge from which he transfers his legacy membership, he shall pay that lodge's regular dues and per capita tax for the year in which the transfer is made and any subsequent years so long as he retains his plural membership.

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

A. If the lodge to which the legacy membership is transferred has higher dues, including per capita tax, than did the originating lodge on the date of the application for legacy membership, the member shall remit an amount equivalent to the difference between the original cost of the existing legacy membership and the cost of a legacy membership in the lodge to which it is transferred, computed as of the date of the transfer.

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

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

17. A Legacy Membership may be purchased by a bequest in a will by any member in good standing and possessing a current dues card in a particular lodge of this grand jurisdiction at the time of his death.

18. An Endowed Membership described in Regulation 77-25 may be upgraded to a Legacy Membership. To upgrade the member shall remit an amount equivalent to the difference between the original cost of the existing endowed membership and the cost of a new legacy membership in the lodge, computed as of the date of the remittance.

REG. 77-267 VETERAN'S (FIFTY YEAR SERVICE AWARD) ENDOWED MEMBERSHIPS.

REG. 77-278 MEMORIAL ENDOWED MEMBERSHIPS.

Amendment Group 2

Submitted by Knights of Solomon Lodge No. 766

Would allow a lodge to be able to meet on another date due to cancellation of a stated due to hazardous conditions.

REG. 45-2 STATED COMMUNICATION.

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5. When inclement weather or a natural disaster compels a lodge to cancel its Stated Communication for the safety of the brethren, these lodges, with dispensation from the Grand Master, may reschedule the cancelled communication to a safer date.

Amendment Group 3

Proposed by the Grand Secretary

This amendment would require members appointed to the Code Commission to be a Past Master or Secretary.

REG. 33-1 MEMBERS.

The Code Commission shall be composed of five members appointed by the Grand Master.

3. Each member of the Commission **shall have served a full term as Master or Secretary of a subordinate lodge at least three years prior to his appointment. He** shall be well informed in the laws and usages of Masonry and of **this** Grand Jurisdiction in particular. [27-6; 27-7].

Amendment Group 4

Proposed by Oak Grove Lodge No. 750

This proposed amendment would automatically “suspend” the membership of a member who has been charged with a felony. Once his charges have been adjudicated and he is found not guilty, his record is expunged, and he is a member in good standing. If found guilty, his case is forwarded to the Judge Advocate for formal Masonic charges.

REG. 74-5 STATUS OF MASONS.

Status of Masons shall be as follows:

1. A Mason shall be in good standing until charges for un-Masonic conduct **or Federal or State criminal charges alleging the commission of a felony** have been served on him or until he has been duly demitted, excluded, suspended, or expelled. [50-1; 87-5; 90-4].

2. A Mason against whom **Masonic** charges have been preferred shall be deemed innocent, and he may attend the lodge of which he is a member until he shall have been found guilty. **A Mason who has been criminally charged with a felony in any state court, the United States District Courts or under United States Uniform Code of Military Justice shall be deemed innocent. However, a Mason subject to such criminal charges shall be immediately suspended until such time as there is a final adjudication of said charges. While under suspension for pending criminal charges, a Mason may not attend any lodge.**

a. It shall be the duty of every Mason with knowledge that a member has been criminally charged with a felony to report that fact to the Master of his Lodge and/or to the District Deputy Grand Master, who shall immediately forward that information to the Office of the Grand Lodge.

b. If, at the time of the final adjudication of the criminal charges, a Mason is found to be guilty of a felony, regardless

of whether the finding of guilt is as a result of a plea of guilty, a plea of no contest, or by trial, said Mason shall be immediately expelled by the Judge Advocate.

c. If, at the time of the final adjudication of the criminal charges, a Mason is found to be not guilty or if the charges are dismissed by the prosecuting authority, the suspension issued against said Mason shall be immediately withdrawn and the record of the suspension shall be expunged from the records maintained by the Grand Lodge. The Mason shall thereafter be entitled to all the rights and privileges of Masonry.

d. If, at the time of the final adjudication of the criminal charges, a Mason is found to be guilty of a misdemeanor or other lesser offense, regardless of whether the finding of guilt is as a result of a plea of guilty, a plea of no contest, or by trial, the matter shall then be referred to the Judge Advocate for his consideration as to whether charges of un-Masonic conduct should be preferred. If, after proper consideration, charges of un-Masonic conduct are not preferred, then the suspension issued against said Mason shall be immediately withdrawn and the record of the suspension shall be expunged from the records maintained by the Grand Lodge. The Mason shall thereafter be entitled to all the rights and privileges of Masonry. If charges of un-Masonic conduct are preferred, then the suspension shall remain in effect until such time as the matter is concluded pursuant to the procedures set out in The Trial Code.

3. A Mason against whom **Masonic** charges have been preferred **or felony criminal charges have been filed** shall not be appointed or elected to office, nor installed in any office, nor demitted, nor be buried with Masonic ceremonies while the charges are pending. [50-1; 53-2.4; 55-5; 82-2; 82-2.5; 90-4].

4. A Mason who has been suspended for a definite period of time shall be entitled to all the rights and privileges of membership in his lodge at the expiration of the time without action by the Grand Lodge or the lodge. He shall not be subject to dues during the time he is suspended. [77-10; 101-2].

5. The reversal of a judgment of suspension or expulsion by the Grand Lodge or a termination of a judgment of suspension by the Grand Lodge shall restore the accused to membership in his lodge without further action by the lodge. [98-11; 100-5; 101-1; 101-8].

6. If restoration of an expelled Mason is made by the Grand Lodge, he shall not thereby be restored to membership in his lodge, but shall become a nonaffiliated Mason. [98-11; 100-5; 101; 101-3; 101-7; 101-8].

7. The members of a defunct lodge who are not in arrears for dues shall be nonaffiliated Masons.

8. The members of a defunct lodge who are in arrears are excluded Masons. Such excluded Masons shall be nonaffiliated Masons upon paying to the Grand Secretary such arrears as may be required by law and obtaining a Grand Lodge demit. [49-4; 49-4.1].

9. Restoration of an Entered Apprentice or a Fellow Craft shall be to the same status in his lodge that he had before he was suspended or expelled, or as provided in Regulation 101-3.1.

Amendment Group 5

Proposed by Eagle Lodge No. 19

This proposed amendment would allow a lodge not to vote on a petition if the lodge discovers the petitioner has answered a question falsely.

REG. 59-2 MASTER.

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

48. He shall order a petition or application withdrawn and returned if he discovers after it has been received that the lodge does not have jurisdiction or that the petitioner or applicant is not mentally or physically qualified. **He may, but is not required to, order a petition of application withdrawn and returned if he discovers after it has been received that the petitioner or applicant answered any question in the petition or application falsely.** If he **the petitioner or** applicant is morally disqualified, the petition or application shall not be withdrawn but shall go to the ballot. [65-6; 65-7; 66-2; 67-4; 67-6; 75-8; 78-2].

Amendment Group 6

Proposed by A. Gene Cobb, Jr., PGM

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

Per Capita Tax and Initiation Fee

REG. 20-1 ESTABLISHED.

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

1. The sum of ~~twenty~~ **twenty-five** dollars and for each member of the lodge at low twelve on December thirty-first. A lodge shall be exempt from the payment of the annual assessment to the Grand Lodge for any member who has received either the Fifty-Year or Sixty-Year Service Award and any member of a lodge whose dues have been remitted under Reg. 77-14.2. [5-1.1; 20-1; 81-1; 81-7]. (This subsection amended, effective 1/1 /2014.)

Substitute Amendment 6

The following substitute amendment has been proposed by Grand Lodge Finance Committee.

This substitute amendment would raise the per capita \$5 every three years through 2025.

REG. 20-1 ESTABLISHED.

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

1. The sum of twenty-~~five~~ **five** dollars **and** for each member of the lodge at low twelve on December ~~thirty-first~~ **31, 2019, and continuing on the thirty-first day of December of each year thereafter until such time as this Regulation may be modified or changed. The sum of thirty dollars for**

each member of the lodge at low twelve on December 31, 2022, and continuing on the thirty-first day of December of each year thereafter until such time as this Regulation may be modified or changed. The sum of thirty-five dollars for each member of the lodge at low twelve on December 31, 2025, and continuing on the thirty-first day of December of each year thereafter until such time as this Regulation may be modified or changed. A lodge shall be exempt from the payment of the annual assessment to the Grand Lodge for any member who has received either the Fifty-Year or Sixty-Year Service Award and any member of a lodge whose dues have been remitted under Reg. 77-14.2. [5-1.1; 20-1; 81-1; 81-7].

Amendment Group 7

Proposed by A. Gene Cobb, Jr., PGM

This amendment would require the lodge treasurer to make a report to his lodge at least quarterly.

REG. 59-2 MASTER.

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

51. He shall make certain that the Treasurer makes a full and complete report to the lodge of its receipts, disbursements, account balances, and financial condition, as required by Regulation 59-11.5. The failure of the Master to make certain that the required reports are provided to the lodge by the Treasurer shall be a serious Masonic offense. In the event that the Treasurer fails to make any required quarterly report, the Master shall notify the District Deputy Grand Master, who shall then notify the Grand Master. (This amendment shall become effective upon adoption.)

REG. 59-11 TREASURER.

The duties of the Treasurer shall be as follows.

5. He shall make **full and complete** reports to the lodge of its receipts, disbursements, **account balances**, and financial condition **on not less than a quarterly basis. At the time of each such report, the Treasurer shall have present in the lodge and available for inspection by the Officers and members, any and all necessary documentation supporting his report, including but not limited to bank statements and check registers. Each quarterly report of the Treasurer shall be read out in open lodge and recorded by the Secretary as a part of the minutes of the lodge. The failure of the Treasurer to make the required quarterly reports to the Lodge shall be a serious Masonic offense.** as the law and as the lodge or the Master may require. *(This amendment shall become effective upon adoption.)*

REG. 59-12 SECRETARY.

The duties of the Secretary shall be as follows.

6. He shall make to the lodge, as its by-laws direct or as otherwise required, a report of its work, of the condition of its accounts with its officers and members, and of all other matters relating to its finances or business which may be under his care, **including, but not limited to, a copy of the financial reports provided by the Treasurer as required in Regulation 59-11.5. The fail-**

ure of the Secretary to record the required quarterly reports given to the Lodge by the Treasurer shall be a serious Masonic offense. (This amendment shall become effective upon adoption.)

Amendment Group 8

Proposed by the Grand Secretary

This amendment would allow a lodge to be able to hold its annual meeting (election of officers) on another date due to cancellation of a stated due to hazardous conditions. This amendment does require membership notification on a date other than a stated communication.

REG. 54-1 ANNUAL ELECTION.

Each chartered lodge, annually as provided in its by-laws under Article 8 Section 4, shall elect without nomination by written ballot from its members the elective officers. The lodge shall not elect officers by acclamation. [44-2.1; 44-7(Art.); 45-2; 45-6; 45-3.4.A; 53-1; 53-1.1; 53-2; 54-3.1]. (This regulation amended, effective 1/1/2009)

1. In the event the stated communication, as named in the by-laws of a lodge at which the officers should be elected as required by Regulation 54-1, shall fall on a legal holiday, then the lodge shall hold that stated communication on the day following such legal holiday, excepting Sunday. [44-7 (Art.8); 45-1.1; 45-2; 45-6; 45-3.4.A].
2. If a lodge fails to elect its officers at the time required, the Grand Master shall, upon application, grant a dispensation to the lodge to hold an election at a designated stated communication. **In the case of inclement weather, the Grand Master may select a date other than a stated communication, excepting Sunday. The Master or Secretary shall provide sufficient notification of this communication by publication in a local newspaper, email, or telephone service not less than five days prior to the communication.** [13-3.8.A.(4); 13-3.8.A.(5); 45-3.4.A; 57-3.1; Official Form 41].
3. An election of lodge officers held on any other day or in any other manner than that authorized by law shall be of no effect. [45-3.4.A].

Amendment Group 9

Proposed by Blackmer Lodge No. 127; Fellowship Lodge No. 84; Kenly Lodge No. 257; James K. Polk Lodge No. 759; Nichols W-Asheville Lodge No. 650; and Eagle Lodge No. 19

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

REG. 45-2 STATED COMMUNICATION.

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

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

Apprentice or Master Mason, further work in the emergent communication will be deferred and the business of the stated communication taken up.”

REG. 45-8 QUORUM.

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

REG. 45-9 DEGREE ON WHICH LODGE OPENED.

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

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

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

REG. 51-1 MODES OF AVOUCHMENT.

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

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

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

D. By sitting together with an Entered Apprentice or Fellow Craft during the conferring of their respective degree

REG. 59-2 MASTER.

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

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

REG. 84-4 HOW AND BY WHOM CONDUCTED.

Any of the ceremonies provided for in this chapter may be conducted by the Grand Lodge or by a subordinate lodge at the discretion of the Grand Master, but the Grand Master or his duly appointed representative shall preside. The lodge making the request for such ceremonies shall bear the entire expense thereof.

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

Amendment Group 10

Proposed by Eagle Lodge No. 19

This amendment would not allow obstructive motions.

REG. 36-4 OBSTRUCTIVE MOTIONS FORBIDDEN.

The formation of a committee of the whole, ~~the call for the previous question, and motions objecting to consideration of a matter, to lay upon the table, postpone action indefinitely, substitute one motion for another, recess and adjourn, and all are deemed~~ obstructive motions ~~and~~ are forbidden. This applies to subordinate lodges as well as the Grand Lodge. [Chapter 91].

Respectfully submitted,
William Timothy Clifford, Chairman

Resolution of the Committee on Finance

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

Resolved, That the report of the Committee on Finance shall be the first order of business at the morning session of the Grand Lodge held on Saturday, September 29, 2018, and,

Resolved, further, That all resolutions, motions, and reports asking for or carrying appropriations and expenditures not included in the 2019 proposed budget, shall be placed before the Grand Lodge before 4:00 p.m. on Friday, September 28, 2018, and,

Resolved, further, That all such matters offered after 4:00 p.m. on Friday, September 28, 2018, be carried over to the next business communication of this Grand Lodge when the 2020 budget will be considered.

Respectfully submitted,
Kevin Combs, 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 was formed in 1919 with the initial purpose of providing assistance to American servicemen re-

turning from duty during World War I. However, its charter permits it to perform other services, at a national level, which would be cumbersome or inefficient for each Grand Lodge to manage individually. As of today, the MSA performs three major functions:

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

Education and Information

Most lodges probably best know the MSA as the publisher of the *Short Talk Bulletin* — the most widely distributed Masonic publication in the world — which has been published since 1923. Several years ago the MSA began republishing a complete collection of their Short Talk Bulletins in hardback volumes suitable for collection. They are currently taking orders for **Volume VI**, which covers the years 2003-2017 and can be purchased for just \$83 through their online store at <http://shopping.msana.com/index.php>. Volumes I through V are also available through the online store. Note that Volume I is currently in limited print and may not be available for long.

In addition to the Short Talk Bulletin and a variety of other Masonic pamphlets, the MSA recently announced a partnership Copiri, the creator of the Amity mobile app. Amity is a free app available for Apple and Android mobile devices, which allows sojourning brethren to register and find lodges that are recognized by their own grand lodge when they are traveling out of their jurisdiction. There are currently over 33,000 lodges and 250 Grand Lodges spanning 47 states (plus DC and Puerto Rico) and 27 countries listed in the app. As part of this partnership, the MSA will offer recent Short Talk Bulletins for free right from the app! To download Amity on an Apple device go to <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/amity/id1145664582?mt=8> or on an Android device go to <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.copiri.amity>.

Disaster Relief

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

This is one the MSA's key services to the Grand Jurisdictions, and through their efforts they have distributed over \$10.5 million of assistance over the past 93 years.

Of special note, at last year's annual communication, Grand Master Gene Cobb made a special call to the delegates to give generously to our brethren in the Grand Lodges of Texas and Florida (and later Puerto Rico) whose jurisdictions were hit by hurricanes prior to (and immediately following) our meeting in September. As a result, we presented a check for \$20,000 to MW Bro. Simon LaPlace, Executive Secretary of the MSA, before we closed our annual session on Saturday.

Finally, it should be noted that, over the past 20 years, the Grand Lodge of North Carolina has received approximately \$340,000 in assistance from the MSA disaster relief efforts — the most recent appeal being \$50,000 in assistance for lodges and brethren effected by the flooding and power outages caused by Hurricane Matthew in 2016.

Hospital Visitation

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

The Masonic Hospital Visitation Program is a vital program that deserves our attention and one that Sonoma Lodge No. 472 takes very seriously. Seeing a need for more outreach to our brethren in the VA hospital in Asheville, the brethren of Sonoma held an emergent communication at the hospital on Tuesday, July 10, 2018. Several Grand Line officers, including MW Bro. Speed Hallman, attended the lodge meeting, where several veterans in the hospital were able to enjoy fraternal fellowship with their brethren.

If you are unable to volunteer or work as a MSA Representative, then please consider contributing to the MSA's Green Envelope Appeal (<http://www.msana.com/hvpgreenenv.asp>) commencing in October.

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

Respectfully Submitted,
P. Shaun Bradshaw, MSANA
Representative

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

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

In May 1909, Joseph W. Eggleston, Grand Master of Virginia, invited the Grand Masters from across America to meet at Alexandria-Washington Lodge No. 22 to discuss the creation of an association to build "a suitable Memorial Temple to George Washington, the Mason". On February 22, 1910, the 169th Birthday of George Washington, representatives from 26 Grand Jurisdictions, along with Jacob Dickson, Secretary of War, William H. Mann, Governor of Virginia, and William Howard Taft, President of the United States, met in Alexandria Virginia. At this meeting, the George Washington Masonic National Memorial Association was formed. A construction site on Shooter's Hill in Alexandria, Virginia, was acquired in 1915. On November 1, 1923, the cornerstone

was laid, and on May 15, 1932, the Memorial was dedicated. The design of the Memorial was inspired by the lighthouse of Alexandria, Egypt. The design incorporates the classical architecture of the Greeks and the Romans, with the 3 sections of the tower ascending in the Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian orders of architecture. The Memorial is capped with a pyramid symbolizing Light.

In 2009, restoration work on the Memorial began with the goal of completing the restoration work by 2023. Last year, it was reported that the mural by Br. Allyn Cox depicting George Washington laying of the cornerstone of the United States Capital Building had been removed for repair and restoration. This mural is a 48 x 18 foot oil on canvas painting, making its removal and restoration very complex. The restoration work to the wall and the mural were completed, and the mural has been returned to its place on the South wall of the Memorial Hall.

In January of this year, a new reception station was constructed in the North entrance of the Memorial Hall. Bronze handrails have been installed on the handicap ramps at the North and South Lodge Rooms, as well as at the main entrance of the Memorial Hall. Concrete walkways were installed in front of the Memorial along the entrance driveway. These walkways extend to the sidewalks on Callahan Drive and King Street. Progress has been made in restoring the exterior of floors 5 through 7. The restoration work involves the removal and repointing of the mortar joints, restoration of the exterior stone work, repair and replacement of lead weather caps on all the horizontal joints, and restoration and waterproofing of the roofs on the 5th and 7th floors. New LED lighting has been added to the pyramid at the top of the Memorial. The scaffolding has been removed to the 3rd and 4th floors where the exterior restoration will continue. Ongoing projects include repaving the front driveway, replacing the windows in the Memorial Hall and the restoration of Br. Cox's mural on the North wall depicting George Washington attending St. John's Day Observance at Christ Church in Philadelphia. Of note, Br. Cox also painted the murals on both walls in the Great Hall of our Grand Lodge building in Raleigh.

The George Washington Masonic National Memorial features a different Grand Lodge every month. In July, the Grand Lodge of North Carolina was the featured Grand Lodge. The North Carolina exhibit included documents and other memorabilia from Army Lodge A formed in 1918 during World War I. As part of the celebration of North Carolina, The Lodge of Nine Sisters, UD, was granted a dispensation to open at Alexander Washington Lodge No. 22 on Saturday, July 21. During this emergent communication, Br. Ryan Ferson of Cannon Memorial Lodge No. 626 was raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason with GM Speed Hallman presiding in the East and several of the Grand Line Officers and PGM Doug Caudle filling the several stations and places during the second section of the degree.

The George Washington Masonic National Memorial began a \$1 Per Member Campaign to support the restoration and continued operation of the Memorial. Currently there are 31 Grand Jurisdictions supporting the Memorial by contributing \$1 per Mason campaign. North Carolina does not currently participate in the \$1 per Mason campaign. North Carolina Masons contributed \$4,290.00 in 2017 through its \$5 per initiate campaign. It is the hope and goal of the Memorial that the remaining jurisdictions will join the \$1 Per Member Campaign. This would then fulfill the original concept the Founders envisioned, which is that the Memorial is owned and supported by every Mason

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

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

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

Respectfully submitted,
R. David Wicker, Jr., JGW, Representative

Report of the Board of Publications

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The Board of Publications has had a productive yet seemingly uneventful year thus far. The most noteworthy events to the Craft to date have been a change in chairmanship from WB Elliott Warnock to Brother Kenneth Lambert, the addition of Brother Dwight Decoskey to the Board, and our newly published social media policy.

That being said, the Board and its new members have been meeting on a regular basis and have several things in the works that will allow us to more effectively get information out to the entirety of the Craft in our great state, as well as bring more exposure to our appendant bodies — including DeMolay and Rainbow Girls. We've set up direct lines of contact with each body and have board members responsible for communicating with each other in order to streamline the process and make sure that each body really feels that they have a voice and that that voice is being heard.

We're currently constructing a social media plan that can be put out on a lodge level and help individual lodges raise awareness about the great things they're doing in their communities. Most importantly, we've found that an active social media program is instrumental when a visiting brother from out of state is looking for a lodge to visit or when a recently transplanted brother is searching for a new lodge to join. Additionally, we're taking steps forward to institute an e-newsletter that would be sent out in addition to — and more frequently than — the NC Mason. This will allow us to keep the Craft up to date with more time-sensitive material and more effectively communicate with the Craft as a whole.

We're very excited to be working with both the Committee on Masonic Education and the Committee on Masonic Public Relations more closely than we ever have in the past. There have been great opportunities this year for the three boards to work together, to the benefit of the Craft. This is something that has been needed for a while and is sure to benefit NC Masonry in a way like never before. We look forward to a great future and the unlimited possibilities realized by this newfound unity.

Overall there is a renewed sense of unity and excitement amongst the

current board members. We're all very proud and excited to be a part of Masonry in NC and look forward to impacting each and every Mason in NC with improved publications over the coming months.

Respectfully submitted,
Kenneth Lambert, Chairman

Report of the North Carolina Masonic Foundation, Inc.

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

It is a pleasure to report to you that 2017 was a successful, rewarding year for the charities served by the North Carolina Masonic Foundation. We grew NCMF assets to more than \$20 million, distributed over \$400,000 to WhiteStone and MHCO in 2017, and in 2018, we will be distributing approximately \$560,000 — about \$280,000 to each home, which is approximately a 40 percent increase.

We also helped craft capital campaigns to enlarge WhiteStone's campus and restore MHCO's pool. The NCMF kicked off the pool campaign with a \$100,000 lead gift. We established strong new financial partnerships with our lodges and our charities and reached out to brethren across the state.

The foundation at year end had \$72 million in assets under our care. Our major funds ended 2017 with strong relative performance, with increases in the Equity Fund of 19.3 percent and 4.7 percent in the Income Fund. We can and should celebrate this good news, but we can't drop the ball: 2018 is proving to be a more volatile and difficult environment.

The rising interest rate environment in 2018 has proven difficult so far, but once again the fund has performed well on a relative basis. As of June 30th, our Equity Fund had risen 2.8 percent, while the Income Fund was down by 1.2 percent.

NCMF also welcomed Past Grand Master Dan Rice to the board, replacing PGM William G. Mathis, who had served on the board since 2003. The board unanimously elected PGM Mathis and WB David Wilson, who served on the NCMF board for some 35 years until his retirement in 2016, as emeritus members.

The support of our lodges and the brothers statewide set new levels of generosity. Lodge giving increased by 20 percent this year over last, resulting in a 200 percent increase in revenue over the same period.

Other key events in a very busy year:

- We forged a new partnership with advisory firm Alex.Brown of Winston-Salem, a division of Raymond James. This group specializes in foundations and endowments and completes a search that began last summer to seek the best financial adviser out there. The move allowed us to realize an annual savings to the foundation and our Masonic subscribers of approximately \$140,000.
 - In January, we completed the sale of the Octagon House on the Jones Masonic Campus to a member of the Jones family. In addition to cash considerations, restrictive covenants attached to the remaining 63 acres were removed, allowing the remaining property to be sold for any purpose.
-

- On the communications side, we created two major fundraising pieces: a full-color poster of the “G” in lodges across North Carolina, and a photo book – *Sacred Retreats: A Tour of North Carolina Masonry*. Sales of the poster have been brisk, and we expect the same for the book, to make its debut at Annual Communication. Proceeds from sales of both pieces go to the Historic Masonic Properties Fund.
- Another new opportunity for brothers and their loved ones who want to create a legacy of generosity will be announced at Annual Communication: the Bridge Builder’s Society will honor individuals who make significant contributions to the NCMF.
- Our new web site went live online on Aug. 1, bringing new opportunities for the Craft to learn about the foundation, see what we do and who we are, and support the NCMF through a special donor button that makes it easier than ever to give.
- We are making strong use of our new charity-wide donor database system to help with reporting, acknowledgements, and donor stewardship, and work is about complete on new marketing materials that will assist us in the development of a true Planned Giving Program.
- We saw increased participation by lodges in Subscriptions and the HMP Fund in 2018. We also are continuing our work with lodges to establish perpetual funds in support of our charities.
- We assisted WhiteStone in establishing a Guardian Angel fund, giving grateful patients of WhiteStone’s Care and Wellness Center – and their families and friends – the opportunity to give in thanks for exceptional medical care.
 - The NCMF staff logged a lot of miles on the road this year, making 134 in-person donor visits, 66 visits to lodges and appendant bodies, and attending 26 special Masonic events.
- We extend special thanks to Most Worshipful Grand Master Hallman for his commitment to the Foundation’s efforts, fundraising and development work, as we continue our important work in 2019.

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

Fraternally,
The Board of Directors and staff
North Carolina Masonic Foundation

Report of the Committee on Masonic Education

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

In 2018 the GLCME’s aim is to continue providing quality education and useful information to the Craft. We have worked on fine tuning some of the existing programs as well as developing new projects.

The Speakers Bureau continues to be one of the biggest successes at getting Masonic Education to the members. Requests now come in year-round, with many Senior and some Junior Wardens planning ahead for their year in the East. We have added seven new Speakers since last Annual Communication, and several of our veteran members have put together new presentations

to keep things fresh. One of the new programs that we have been working on is designed for lodges that are struggling but don't know how to fix it. A lodge that recognizes it needs help would reach out to us, and, working off of the Lodge Self-Assessment Tool found in the Education Resources section of the Grand Lodge Website, PGM Webster will visit the lodge and assist them to identify areas of concern and develop a plan to get them back on track. This would involve follow ups with PGM Webster as well. For now it is offered under the Speakers Bureau as one of PGM Webster's Programs.

The Middle Chamber has been well attended, with several inquiries into next year's class. Students from last year's class got so much from it many have returned to assist as mentors. This program is really just kicking off and already gaining attention in other states.

The Davie Academy went through several changes in both class structure and administration this year. We are currently running a three track program consisting of "The Appointed Lodge Officers," "The Elected Lodge Officers," and "The District Officer Classes." These are full day classes and are held once in each region. In an attempt to reach more members, we have added four Workshops that each run once a year in six locations on the same day. Workshops include "Lodge Budget and Finance," aimed at Secretaries and Treasurers; "Everything You Need to Know," aimed at new Master Masons; and "The Art of Chairing a Lodge Meeting" and "Committee Centric Lodge," both aimed at incoming Masters. Workshops run approximately three hours.

We are currently working on a few ideas, one of which is to have a Workshop on the Lodge System of Masonic Education teaching lodges how to get the best use of this valuable but underutilized program. Another would involve DDGMs and encouraging putting together a Masonic Education Day with one of the GLCME members present, either in a district or having a couple districts working together. It could involve each lodge giving a short presentation that has really impacted their members. The representative from the GLCME would go over all the resources available from the Grand Lodge, give a short talk on effective presentation skills, etc. We are also working on an update to the Program for Progress and a comprehensive, searchable booklet.

The GLCME along with the Publications Committee, the Public Relations Committee and the Miscellaneous Ceremonies Committee have been working together to update the More Light in Masonry Brochure and to create an interactive PDF Brochure as a companion. These two things should complement each other well giving the member a booklet welcoming them to the Craft and explaining some basics of the Fraternity with diagrams and organizational charts along with a letter from the Grand Master, leaving the PDF Brochure to give them an interactive way to learn about things outside of the lodge they joined like the appendant bodies, major Masonic events during the year, and opportunities for education and personal growth.

The GLCME would like to thank the Grand Lodge for their support and for allowing us to explore these avenues to bring quality experiences to the membership.

Respectfully submitted,
Tony Rathbone, Chairman GLCME

Report of the Committee on Masonic Public Relations

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The Committee on Masonic Public Relations convened during the 2017 Annual Communications September 21, 2017, and several other times during the 2018 calendar year.

Most Worshipful Grand Master Speed Hallman has a vision that the following committees and boards would work together with their mutual goals and duties.

- The Board of Publications
- The Committee on Miscellaneous Masonic Ceremonies
- The Committee on Masonic Public Relations
- The Committee on Masonic Education

The committee chairmen met several times and decided to work on a joint program that was requested by the Grand Master. This program worked to develop an interactive welcome packet that will be sent to new Master Masons, along with updating the “More Light in Masonry” brochure. The interactive welcome packet will be an Adobe File (PDF) emailed to new Master Masons that will give them hyperlinks to Masonic websites that might interest them and get them more involved. Both are set to have delivery dates of 2018 to the Grand Master.

The Public Relations committee is also exploring several opportunities identified by our committee members. Several discussions are being held in the committee concerning:

- A more effective communication system to inform brethren across the state
- More effective ways to engage the local media outlets about fundraisers and other blue lodge events
- Showcasing our Grand Lodge, its officers, and other charitable functions
- Working with our Prince Hall brethren to hold a joint fundraiser

These are just some of the ideas and programs being worked on by your Grand Lodge Committee on Masonic Public Relations.

Respectfully Submitted
Currie Pendleton, Chairman
Grand Lodge Committee on Public
Relations

Report of the Committee on Youth Organizations

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The Masonic Youth Committee is once again proud to announce a growth in both of our groups. DeMolay and Rainbow continue to increase ever so slightly throughout the state. There have been three requests this year for guidance on opening a new DeMolay body. This is great news and hopefully will come to fruition. The Rainbow Girls continue to increase in numbers and will host the National Rainbow Assembly here in NC in the near future. All support and

assistance is greatly needed and appreciated. Several youth bodies throughout the state have been very active, and in the Wilmington area the Masons have visited all lodges in their district to spread the word as well as having participated in many fundraisers for the bodies. A special thanks to Lenoir York Rite bodies, Gastonia York Rite bodies, and Asheville Scottish Rite bodies for nominal donations that have helped with necessities. As always funding and leaders are desperately needed, and for continued growth we will need to continue to support in both ways. Hopefully soon we will embrace our future and do so.

Respectfully submitted,
Russell E. Bridges, Chairman

North Carolina Eagle Scout Task Force

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

On Monday, October 2, 2017, the Task Force on Scouting held its first certificate presentation ceremony. The Masonic Home for Children at Oxford (Orphans Lodge room) hosted the event. Will Chriscoe, DDGM for the 13th District, presented the awards. Two Eagle Scouts were recognized with many family, friends, and Masons in attendance.

Over the course of 2018, modifications were made to the program based on some lessons learned from the initial presentation program. The committee decided to wait until late spring to attempt coordinating further ceremonies so that they would match up better with the end of the school year. However, in the process, additional delays were encountered, and we did not organize as many of these events as we hoped.

On August 6, 2018, a second presentation ceremony was organized in Chapel Hill, held at University Lodge No. 408. Most of the coordination effort was led by Keith Morgan. A dinner was held prior to the event, and the ceremony was conducted by the Master and officers of University Lodge. It was well attended by family and friends for the three Eagle Scouts who were presented their recognition certificates.

We are expecting to make the presentation ceremony available to lodges statewide soon.

Finally, after serving as chairman of this committee for just over a year, I will be stepping down from the position at the end of this year. I would like to thank the committee members for the work and participation they have put towards this task force. I wish them much success as they work to expand this program across the state.

Fraternally submitted,
Ludwik Wodka, Chairman, North Carolina
Eagle Scout Task Force
Homer Dearmin
Will Highsmith
Matt Collins
Stancel Wilson
Will Chriscoe
Keith Morgan
Jonathan Johnson
PGM Charles Lewis (advisor)

Report of the Board of Custodians

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The members who served on the Board of Custodians during the year 2018 were: Speed Hallman, Grand Master, Chairman Ex-Officio; Don Helton, Grand Lecturer, Steve M. Norris, Chairman; Tom Dolinger, Secretary; Luigi Ammons, Russ Jones, Dickie Lyon; and Mike Register, who is also the Liaison to the Board of General Purposes.

The Board of Custodians met regularly during the year, with meetings held on January 12th, April 13th, July 13th, and September 27th, 2018. The fall meeting is scheduled to coincide with the Grand Lodge Annual Communication in Winston-Salem.

Certified brethren qualifying for the Laudamus Certificate in 2018 are: Thane Rothie Black, Derita Lodge No. 715; Warren Earl Dover, Waxhaw Lodge No. 562; Herman Eugene Hall, Jr., West Gate Lodge No. 738; Kevin Donald Hardison, Relief Lodge No. 431; Phil Dennis McCraw, Granite Lodge No. 322; and James Ray Mills, Truth Lodge No. 749.

District Deputy Grand Lecturers qualifying for the Past District Deputy Grand Lecturer Certificate in 2018 are: Dennis Ray Kyle, District 4; James Warren Cook, Jr., District 8; James Daughtry Davis, District 9; John Arthur Shawver, District 12; Jeffrey Arthur Sank, District 14; Tommy Reavis Mills, Jr., District 15; Herbert Currie Lyon, District 19; William P. Horne, Jr., District 21; Matthew William Cockman, District 22; James Ray Mills, District 29; Philip Ryan Kuhn, District 31; and, Lloyd Hise, Jr., District 37.

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

Kolen Flack (Western Star Lodge No. 91)	60 Years
William Irvin Reagan (Caswell Brotherhood Lodge No. 11)	50 Years

The 2018 Certified Lecturer examinations were held according to the following schedule: August 11th — Greenville and Greensboro; August 18th — Charlotte and Wilmington; and August 25th — Asheville and Fayetteville. The examinations continued to be offered on Saturdays in an effort to be more accommodating to our certified brethren who have work conflicts. If a conflict would keep a brother from attending one of the above locations, he can petition the Board for a Special Exam. The Board expresses its sincere appreciation to the brethren at the six locations who donated the use of their facilities for the examinations.

The booklet, “Important Information Concerning the Certified Lecturers” is posted on the Grand Lodge website and is available to anyone with access to the internet. A web page sponsored by the Board of Custodians is also being maintained on a regular basis. This page includes information of interest concerning the history of the Board, latest corrections to the OSW and Bahnsen Manual, rules governing the Lecture Service and OSW/Vocabulary, various application forms, and a current roster of those Certified.

At the end of the 2017 examinations the number of certified brethren was 367. This consisted of 330 Class “A” Certified Lecturers and 37 Class “B” Certified Instructors. Unfortunately, the total number has declined by 10 as of August 1st, 2018, with the passing of the following Certified Lecturers:

Joe Max Andrews	Cabarrus Lodge No. 720	47 Years
Danial Myrl Hogue, Jr.	Andrew Jackson Lodge No. 576	26 Years
Roland McCall Smith	West Gate Lodge No. 738	28 Years
John Ralph Harrison	Fairview Lodge No. 339	54 Years
Mason Hardin Dorsey	Excelsior Lodge No. 261	34 Years
Billy Joe Joyce	Walnut Cove Lodge No. 629	18 Years
Marvin Edwin Wyatt, Jr.	Stanley Lodge No. 713	5 Years
Herman Jones, Jr.	Cliffside Lodge No. 460	42 Years
Michael Wiley Brantley	Raleigh Lodge No. 500	27 Years

One Demit (Johnathan Tyler Kight)

Fifty-five brethren are required to stand examination in 2018. The final 2018 results will be available after the last exams are held on August 25, 2018, and will be printed in the 2018 Proceedings of the Grand Lodge publication.

In 2018 the Five-Hour Mandatory Lecture Service was continued for the one hundred seventy-nine even-numbered lodges throughout the state. All one hundred seventy-seven odd-numbered lodges completed the Lecture Service in 2017. As a reminder, the Lecture Service rules were updated in 2011 to formally indicate the continuation of this mandatory five-hour service until otherwise notified. Odd numbered lodges will have their next five-hour requirement in 2019. Also, as a reminder, all lodges must participate in one five-hour District School of Instruction each year, as long as the mandatory Lecture Service is required or until determined otherwise by the Board.

The Board rolled out the Coach's Proficiency Program this year, and it has been well-received by the brethren. We have scheduled three Coach's Clinics this year in the following locations: 3/24 in Greensboro, 5/19 in Greenville, and 10/20 in Asheville. The turnout has been very good, and the number of coaches applying for the proficiency certificate has been steady. Any brother who can recite both the questions and answers qualifies for the program.

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.

Wilkerson College Lodge No. 760 held its annual Masonic Symposium on June 30th at the Masonic Temple in downtown Greensboro. In conjunction with the Symposium, the third annual Grand Master's Masonic Ritual Competition was held. The closed division was won by Lebanon Lodge No. 391. The open competition was extremely close, won by the "Down East Rascals" by ½ point over the ODP "Out to Pastures". We encourage teams to join in the fellowship of the competition. If interested please contact Don Barrier, SW Wilkerson College Lodge, for more information.

The Board of Custodians expresses its appreciation to Grand Master Speed Hallman for his enthusiastic support of the Board and the Certified Lecturer Program. The Board also wishes to thank Grand Secretary T. Walton Clapp, III; Assistant to the Grand Secretary, Jonathan Underwood; as well as Cornelia, Vicki and Hayley for their valuable assistance throughout the year.

The Board also expresses its appreciation to Grand Lecturer Don Helton for his very productive work as the Grand Lecturer for 2018. To all our certified brethren throughout the state, we extend a sincere “thank you” for your continued faithful service to our beloved Fraternity, your support of your DDGLs, and, lastly, your vigorous support of the Certified Lecturers Program.

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

Report of the Committee on Subordinate Lodge Special Activities

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The Committee on Subordinate Lodge Special Activities presents this report in supporting lodge fundraising efforts. The following report reflects fundraising numbers from January 1 through August 6, 2018, and a short summary recap of 2017:

Lodges Participating:	167		
Applications Processed:	236		
Final Reports Received/Processed:	109		
		<u>Average Per Fundraiser</u>	
Total Funds Received/Processed by lodges:	\$441,402.95	\$	4,049.57
Cost of Fund-raising:	<u>\$180,969.01</u>	\$	1,660.27
Net Proceeds:	\$260,433.94	\$	2,389.30
For Charity:	\$214,475.62		
For Lodge Building Funds:	\$ 45,958.32		

Type/Category of Fundraisers:	#		<u>Average \$ Per Event</u>
Raffles:	26	\$ 75,619.99	\$ 2,908.46
Golf Tournaments:	2	\$ 22,654.29	\$ 11,327.15
Breakfast:	16	\$ 29,226.61	\$ 1,826.66
BBQs:	16	\$ 35,839.90	\$ 2,239.99
Dinners/Fish/Chicken:	16	\$ 29,135.73	\$ 1,820.98
Other:	33	\$ 67,957.42	\$ 2,059.32

By Fund-Development Category/Charity:	#		
MHC:	64	\$ 85,187.43	\$ 1,331.05
MESH, LLC:	48	\$ 58,968.95	\$ 1,228.52
NC Masonic Foundation	32	\$ 31,854.20	\$ 995.44
Other Charities	24	\$ 38,465.04	\$ 1,602.71
Lodge Building Funds:	38	\$ 45,958.32	\$ 1,209.43

Regarding the year-end 2017:

Total Funds Received/Processed by lodges as of 12/31/17:	\$ 1,517,054.05
Cost of Fund-raising in 2017:	<u>\$ 598,149.84</u>
Net Proceeds in 2017:	\$ 918,904.21

Total Funds to Charity 2017:	\$ 745,135.07
Total Funds to Lodge Building Funds 2017:	\$ 173,769.14

All lodges are reminded that final reports of fundraising activities are due to the Committee on or before 45 days after the fundraising event; all 2018 final reports must be in to the Committee by December 31, 2018.

Respectfully submitted,
James L. Medlin, Chairman

Report of the Library Committee

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

Your Library Committee has worked hard this year to fulfill its mission to preserve, protect, and promote the records, manuscripts, artifacts, and books of the Grand Lodge. Material from several lodges, including Royal White Hart 2, Phoenix 8, Widow's Son 75, Zion 81, Joseph Warren 92, Numa F. Reid 344, and Holly Springs 115, have been submitted to the North Carolina Digital Heritage Center for digitization. We have also submitted records from Chorazin Chapter of Royal Arch Masons and Ivanhoe Commandery of Knights Templar.

Members of the committee began volunteering and entering data sets into the Grand Lodge's new library, archive, and artifact database (called PastPerfect), as well as aiding in cleaning up and refiling various Grand Lodge record sets (Lodge Service Commission reports and past years' Annual Returns). This will also help facilitate the compilation of a Masonic bibliography for North Carolina. We were happy to welcome Brother Jake Rose to our ranks as a summer intern. Brother Rose aided in cleaning up many old sets of lodge resource files and lodge service files, and organized our historic lodge minute ledger books. Brother Rose is a senior at East Carolina University and a member of Crown Point Lodge 708.

The committee met several times to discuss planning and implementing several projects, including the restoration of several portraits of Past Grand Masters William Polk (1799-1801); Hutchins Gordon Burton (1825-1826); David Williamson Stone (1837-1839); Daniel Sanford Crenshaw (1841), and George Washington Blount (1874-1875). These paintings are significant not only because they are portraits of past Grand Masters, but because they were painted by North Carolina portrait artist Jacques Busbee and are rare examples of his work from the turn of the 20th Century.

The committee is happy to announce the publication of Dr. Ric Berman's book, *From Roanoke to Raleigh: Freemasonry in North Carolina, 1730-1800*. A prolific author and historian, Dr. Berman was able to illustrate through his latest work the economic and social connections that were the foundation of Freemasonry's connectivity between North Carolina and Great Britain in the 18th Century. The committee is also happy to report that so many of our brethren in North Carolina, as well as our Grand Lodge, were able to aid in the acquisition of information for Dr. Berman during the writing of his book.

As Dr. Berman's book is now available, the committee hopes that by the end of this year a second printing of Thomas Parramore's, *Launching the Craft: The First Half-Century of Freemasonry in North Carolina*, will be available to the membership and public. Members of the committee, Grand Lodge staff, and staff in the Print Shop at Oxford, have worked diligently to review, re-edit, and proofread Parramore's 1975 classic. The committee also anticipates the second printing of the volume I of *NOCALORE: Being the Transaction of the North Carolina Lodge of Research*. This work, largely edited and compiled by

the late J. Raymond Shute, has been out of print since 1932, but long sought after. The committee hopes it may be available by the beginning of the Annual Communication in September, and more volumes to follow soon afterward.

The committee invites and welcomes visitors to the Grand Lodge's Library and looks forward to aiding those interested in North Carolina's Masonic heritage.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jonathan A. Underwood, Chairman

Report of the Grand Lodge Committee on Personnel

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

On September 23, 2017, the delegates at the Annual Communication passed **amendment group 6**, which established the Committee on Personnel as a standing committee of the Grand Lodge of North Carolina (Reg. 34-23.25 Committee on Personnel). Prior to this, the committee had been appointed on an ad hoc basis since 2013 to provide guidance for personnel matters arising from the employment of staff by the Grand Lodge of North Carolina.

Since its inception the committee has reviewed and updated the Personnel Policy of the Grand Lodge of North Carolina to ensure compliance with state and federal laws and regulations, implemented and conducted annual employee performance reviews, and made annual salary and benefit recommendations to the Grand Lodge Committee on Finance.

In 2018 the committee followed the procedures established by previous chairs whereby:

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

This year the committee met with the Grand Secretary on May 9, 2018, at the Grand Lodge offices. Prior to this meeting the Senior Grand Warden (chair) and Junior Grand Warden (vice chair) met with the Grand Lodge staff in an open forum to discuss any matters they wished to present to the committee. Following these discussions, the Grand Secretary was asked to provide input and review his evaluations of the performance (including salary recommendations) of each member of the Grand Lodge staff. As part of the salary discussion it was noted that the failure to pass the per capita increase in 2017 might impact the Finance Committee's ability to provide all requested increases.

The SGW noted that he and the JGW met briefly with each member of the

staff prior to the committee meeting, and each praised the Grand Secretary's leadership and commented on the positive work environment and family atmosphere within the office.

Overall, the Grand Secretary is extremely pleased with the performance of each staff member and recommended that all office staff be given **at least** a Cost of Living adjustment based on the prior year's inflation index.

The committee made two key recommendations for the Grand Secretary:

1. Work with Bro. Bryan Jones to perform a **salary market analysis** to ensure each of the staff members are currently being paid within an acceptable salary range for the type of work performed and given the location of the work.
2. Work with the JGW (and others as needed) to **review the current evaluation process** to ensure it is as efficient as possible and provides suitable information to the Personnel Committee to act upon.

On August 3, 2018, the SGW met with the Finance Committee and made the salary recommendations as part of the 2019 budget. With the exception of the Grand Secretary, who chose to forgo any salary increase, all other increases were adopted as recommended by the Personnel Committee. During this same meeting, the results of the salary market analysis were presented. The analysis indicated that all but one of the Grand Lodge staff, including the Grand Secretary, are paid below the median salary level for similar types of jobs in the Raleigh area. It is our hope that the delegates of this Annual Communication consider these facts when voting for the 2019 budget and any potential per capita increases.

Respectfully submitted,
P. Shaun Bradshaw, Senior Grand Warden and Chair
R. David Wicker, Jr., Junior Grand Warden and Vice Chair
Gene Jernigan, Past Grand Master
Dalton Mayo, Past Grand Master
Bryan Jones, Past Master
Larry Thompson, Jr., Senior Grand Deacon and Observer

Report of the Scholarship Committee

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The Grand Lodge Scholarship Committee went to work remotely to review this year's scholarship applications. The committee divided up the applications and carefully reviewed each one. Once again the response to the scholarship offering this year was extremely popular among high school seniors, with over 300 applications received for 15 scholarships valued at \$1,000 each. Each committee member responsible for a region selected two winners along with a third possible alternate for consideration. The scholarship winners all demonstrated strong academic performance balanced with extensive community/volunteer service and extracurricular activities. We are most excited to have been able to award 15 scholarships this year and hope, through the generosity of the brethren, that we will be able to award even more next year.

Respectfully submitted,
J. Dean Richardson, Chairman

Report of the Ad Hoc Grand Lodge Transition Planning Committee

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

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

The committee set about its work immediately after the installation of Grand Master Hallman, meeting on December 21, 2017, and again on February 13, 2018. Additionally, members of the committee have met with and interviewed the current Grand Lodge of NC staff, and have prepared and circulated an information questionnaire to the Grand Lodges of Massachusetts, California, Michigan, Virginia, and Ohio. Responses from those sister jurisdictions, who have similar characteristics to our Grand Lodge, and who demonstrate elements of best practices in management, have been received, catalogued, and summarized for review. Additionally, members of the committee have comprehensively reviewed our existing policy and personnel manuals and the relevant provisions of The Code.

The committee will be reconvening to prepare a menu of recommendations to guide the current and future Grand Masters, and to serve as a resource to the Board of General Purposes in planning for transition. The Committee expects to present its recommendations to the Grand Master by November 1, 2018.

Failing to plan is planning to fail. Proper Prior Planning Prevents Pitifully Poor Performance.

Fraternally submitted:
Bryant Webster, PGM, Chair
Lewis Ledford, PGM
A. Gene Cobb, Jr., PGM
Shaun Bradshaw, SGW
R. David Wicker, Jr., JGW
Kim Lyda

Report of the Ad Hoc Masonic Renewal Committee

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

In 2017, Grand Master A. Gene Cobb, Jr., established an ad hoc committee to research the issues concerning Masonic membership throughout the jurisdiction. MW Grand Master Speed Hallman chose to continue the work of this ad hoc committee, renaming it the Masonic Renewal Committee. At its first meeting on January 12th, the committee discussed some of the statistics and findings identified in 2017, drafted a mission statement for itself, and agreed to develop a presentation that could be shared with subordinate lodges at their request.

Mission Statement

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

Less than two weeks after the initial meeting, the draft presentation was ready, and several lodges began taking advantage of the opportunity to have a member of the committee come and speak to them about the committee's mission and findings.

One of the biggest concerns of the Grand Master's – and one he spoke of frequently in his District Meetings – was the increase in how many newly raised Master Masons chose to drop their membership within two (2) years of joining. Not only was he concerned about the statistics themselves, but even more so, understanding why these men – these brethren – chose to simply stop paying their dues. As a result, the Grand Master worked with the Grand Secretary's office to identify the members who had been raised since 2014 and subsequently let their membership drop due to non-payment of dues. He then directed the Grand Line Officers to contact each of these brethren with a simple survey asking their thoughts about why they joined, what they believed they received from their membership, and what caused them to drop their membership.

A total of 248 brethren were identified and each GLO was assigned 20-25 of these men to contact. Of the 248 contacts, 32 letters were undeliverable due to bad addresses or the forwarding service was no longer in effect. Of the 216 NPJ members that did receive the letters 21, or roughly 10%, responded.

For those that responded, the reasons for dropping fell into four main categories:

- Seven (7) men indicated that their work and/or family **schedules** and responsibilities had changed to the extent that they believed they could not remain active. These men still hold the fraternity in high regard and hope to restore their membership once things settle down for them.
- Five (5) men had **moved out of the state** and chose to allow their membership to drop or (in one case) actually affiliated with a local lodge in their new state of residence.
- Four (4) men allowed their membership to drop because their **perceptions of the lodges didn't match the reality** of what they saw. Piques and quarrels among the members of the lodge, racism, and other "unbrotherly" conduct were specifically mentioned.
- Three (3) men indicated that they had **financial hardships** and chose to let their membership drop rather than asking for any type of assistance from the lodge.

The response rate for this survey aligns with typical response rates found in similar types of surveys and, while small, it's fair to extrapolate a few key points from the responses that were received.

First, while a few men found something different from what they expected, most of the respondents continued to hold a favorable view of the fraternity and want to continue their membership if/when their circumstances (financial, schedule, location) change. For those that were “disappointed” by what they found, they understand that it might only be an issue in the lodge they joined and realize that another lodge might be better suited for them.

Second, regardless of the reason these men dropped their membership, it is recommended that lodges periodically reach out to their NPD’d brethren to check on them, see how they are doing, and determine what, if anything, in their circumstances might have changed. These men previously sought “Light in Masonry,” and showing that we continue to care about them may create opportunities for restoration.

Third, as much as possible, lodges should attempt to keep track of their NPD’d members and maintain valid contact information for these men in MORI. We never know when one of them may be interested in returning to the fraternity, but feel guilty about having not paid their dues or simply don’t understand the process of returning. By maintaining contact with them, we remove these barriers to restoration and create opportunities for these men to restore their membership.

Finally, it should be noted that the Grand Line Officers also reached out to the lodge secretaries and/or members who were NPD’d over the past three years despite having been members for 50 or more years. Of the 55 brethren who fell into this category we found:

- Four (4) of the members had dropped their membership voluntarily
- Eight (8) of the members had passed away while they were still in good standing
- Fifteen (15) of the members were dropped because they did not respond to dues notices or fundraising requests. What was most troubling about this is there seemed to be no attempt at personal contact with these brethren and, in some cases, downright negligence. For example, one 52-year member was dropped because he would not respond to letters that were sent to him. This brother lives less than 10 miles from the lodge, and no one from the lodge bothered to personally check on him or his circumstances.

Generally speaking, the Grand Line Officers found it troubling how few lodge secretaries and/or WMs bothered to respond to requests for information about these brethren. One is left to wonder what type of brotherly love and affection exists when the officers of a lodge can so easily dismiss and neglect their duties toward long-time members.

Respectfully submitted,
Steve Norris, Chairman
P. Shaun Bradshaw
Russell Bridges
William B. Brunk
D. Allen Surratt

Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Membership Services

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The Grand Master appointed a special committee and charged it with recommending whether or not our Grand Lodge should implement a centralized dues notice process that improves services and provides conveniences to brothers and lodges. The recommendation is to be based on an analysis of the costs versus the benefits of implementing such a system and a determination of how such a system might benefit our brothers and lodges.

The committee is to consider the practical aspects of how such a centralized process might work, including considerations of the timing and content of dues notices; estimated costs for printing and postage; the role of online, email, and/or web-based renewals; the possibility of accepting online bank drafts and credit card payments; and, how the Grand Lodge and subordinate lodges might coordinate and communicate with one another to make the process more efficient and effective. Further, the committee is to consult with other grand jurisdictions to determine if best practices in other states can be adopted for our benefit.

The committee is further charged to offer ideas and examples of how lodges can reduce NPDs, and to recommend best practices associated with member services and retention.

The committee is composed of current and former secretaries (with Jonathan Underwood, Assistant to the Grand Secretary, *ex officio*) as follows:

Jack Barnett, Veritas Lodge 769 and 39th District Deputy Grand Master
Doug Calhoun, Sophia Lodge 767

Dave Cashion, Blue Ridge 435 and Glenville 551 lodges and BGP

Bill Faison (chairman), Lux Libertas Lodge 772 and BGP

Russell Jones, Lafayette Lodge 83 and Board of Custodians

Don Kehler, former secretary of Bula Lodge 409 and Grand Marshal

Keith Morgan, Mosaic Lodge 762 and GL Code Commission

Randy Ward, Shallotte Lodge 727

The committee has met twice and focused on the use of MORI as a platform for such a system. Further the committee will participate, along with the Grand Lodge Officers, in the evaluation of Grand View, a lodge management system that competes with MORI, as it considers how to improve the dues collection experience for our brothers and lodges.

The Committee will also consider the wording of the NC Official Forms 23 (Official Notice of Delinquency) and 25 (Notice of Exclusion for Non-Payment of Dues), and how these notices to our members might be improved.

Respectfully submitted,
Bill Faison, Chairman

Final Report
of
Grand Master
A. Gene Cobb, Jr.
to
the
Grand Lodge
of
Ancient, Free and Accepted
Masons
of North Carolina
at
Winston-Salem, North Carolina
September 28, 2018

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

As prescribed in The Code, I am pleased to make my final report of activities and our accomplishments in the year 2016-2017. It was a joy for me to serve as your Grand Master and my gratitude for your hospitality, respect, and dedication to the Craft made this not only a humbling experience for me, but an honor to serve as your 164th Grand Master.

I refer the Brethren to the approved interim report from the 2017 Annual Communication and in this final report will include information that includes the period from September 21, 2017, to December 2, 2017.

State of the Craft

Freemasonry faces many challenges in the future. We live in a world that demands instant access to information and immediate responses to questions about everything. The push for instant everything may sacrifice the quality of excellence on our altar of promise.

We must continue to go to work daily in the pursuit of excellence. To that end, we cannot pass budgets that are not adequately funded in our subordinate lodges or the Grand Lodge. We are not the ward of the cheap. We are a cut above! Our forefathers gave sacrificially to ensure excellence in this fraternity, and no less can be expected of us.

Previous Grand Masters have voiced concern about guarding the West Gate. This year, there have been offenses handled by the Judge Advocate and the Grand Master that have no place in our fraternity. Investigation committees must be careful, and lodges must set dues high enough to deter the approach of cowans and eavesdroppers, as well as curiosity seekers and troublemakers who would disturb the peace and harmony this fraternity requires.

As I leave this office, our relations as a Masonic family are the best they have been since I can remember. I pray this continues. It is particularly gratifying for me that the Craft has embraced Grand Master William Richardson Davie so favorably. I pray this continues as well.

We must, however, be willing to actively support our three charities, education, youth, the George Washington National Memorial, and the Masonic Service Association better in the future. The more we connect beyond ourselves, the brighter Masonic light will shine in the world and the more relevant we will be in an ever-changing world.

I rejoice that we gave \$30,000.00 to MSA for hurricane disaster relief during our Annual Communication last year, as well as the extra efforts made by our lodges beyond this amount in 2017. Continuation of the Masons Can program, started by Grand Master Webster, will help the Second Harvest Food Bank make a difference in a hungry world.

Necrology

I witnessed my first Masonic funeral when I was seven years old. My grandfather, John Moody Cobb, was laid to rest at Crestview Cemetery in Roanoke Rapids. It made an impression on me as a youngster, and as a pastor by vocation, I have known how significant the presence and power of words and actions are when we celebrate the life of those who now rest from their labors. I give thanks for him, J. C. Robbins, Ken Fritts (my coach), Bill Simpson, Vic

Dowd, and a host of others who helped me become a Mason.

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

I do trust that this solemn remembrance will remind us all of the fact that we stand on the shoulders of great men, mentors, friends who have made us what we are today.

District Officers Conference

In October of 2016 after the Annual Communication, I met with the District Deputy Grand Masters in Raleigh at the Grand Lodge Building. This was part of a three-year cycle to get our officers to WhiteStone, the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford, and the Grand Lodge office building. We had an excellent meal prepared by Cary Lodge No. 198 and spent the day on Saturday rolling out a plan for lodge excellence called the William Richardson Davie Lion and Pillar Lodge of Excellence. The name for the award was chosen for two reasons. First, I wanted to honor the longest serving Grand Master in our history, William Richardson Davie. Second, the lion and pillar were his chosen mark for the Royal Arch degrees he took in the Fayetteville after the Revolutionary War.

During the meeting with the DDGMs, we realized we would need to tweak the program, and for those who stayed with it, honors were given at the Annual Communication. Launching and continually tweaking it in the District meetings was a joy, yet I realize it was frustrating in this initial year for some lodges; however, it also made my repetitive speech a whole lot easier.

I also met with District Deputy Grand Lecturers in October 2016 at the Greensboro Masonic Temple to hear their unique concerns and share with them my ideas for the upcoming district meetings. We have outstanding lecturers in this jurisdiction. To call attention to their presence and the need for more Certified Lecturers, I asked the resident DDGL to lead the closing charge at each district meeting this year in whatever way he chose. They roared with excellence. I thanked them for it during their meeting at Annual Communication 2017.

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

I cannot thank our District Officers enough for their leadership and service. They served with distinction all across the state. I trust the new District Officers will continue their work of excellence.

Honorary Title of Past District Deputy Grand Master

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

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

Honorary Title of Past District Deputy Grand Lecturer

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

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

District Meetings

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

“Let’s go to work” were some of my father’s last words on his way to the paper mill each day when I was a child. We went to work in Greenville, Lumberton, Dunn, Wilmington, Sanford, Wilson, New Bern, Jacksonville, Raleigh, Oxford, Greensboro, Mount Airy, Deep Gap, Franklin, Asheville, Shelby, Lenoir, Chapel Hill, Kannapolis, Trenton, Garner, Roxboro, Elizabeth City,

Manteo, Washington, High Point, Mount Gilead, Huntersville, Brevard, Thomasville, Shallotte, Ocean Isle, Littleton, Murfreesboro, Cary, Salisbury, and Newton for various district meetings and other functions. In each place we worked, we had fun, we celebrated, and we talked about the multiple concerns we have here in North Carolina.

District meetings were open to the public this year because we invited non-Mason speakers who are vital to our work, including Worthy Grand Master of Eastern Star Linda Hyatt; NC Mason editor, Beth Grace; photographer, Melody McBride; and Chief Development Officer for the NC Masonic Foundation, Jeff Hensley. In Manteo and Deep Gap, I was pleased to welcome my wife Brenda at our meetings. I believe the more we involve our wives and families, the better off Freemasonry will be. The decision to be “open” was made based upon who was present and what the agenda would be that evening. Several members engaged in a conversational style of reporting for not more than 3-4 minutes per topic. Everyone roared with excellence.

The personal highlight of the District meetings happened for me on May 16, 2017, at Blackmer Lodge No. 127 in Mount Gilead. WB Ernest Tedder interrupted my journey to the East by the North side of the altar. There were a few whispers as I entered the room without my jewel. Only a few people knew that WB Tedder had it. WB Tedder had presented my original apron on April 6, 1993, when I was initiated at Blackmer. What a joyous moment this was when WB Tedder gave the apron lecture and placed the jewel of the Grand Master on my shoulders before I went to the East. I will appreciate this moment for as long as I live – a moment few of us in this office have the opportunity to experience. Thank you Blackmer 127, and thank you, WB Tedder.

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

One of the great and fun things to do this year has been to post the videos on the Grand Master’s Facebook page. One never knows when one might appear. The video of the pushups for raising the goal of \$12,000 before we “kick the bucket” and the Memorial Day video in Thomasville garnered more than 10,000 views! Apparently, these successful and impromptu videos were well received and anticipated from the Craft. These videos were a great way to get our word out and to let the Craft know what is happening in “real time.” We all appreciate how Beth Grace and the Board of Publications are doing a super job at keeping us in the public eye.

We must unify our efforts in charity now and in perpetuity. The Masonic Home for Children at Oxford, WhiteStone, and the NC Masonic Foundation are our worthy charities. I enjoy explaining why every Mason in North Carolina would be pleased to share his generosity with these charities. I accept the challenge to change the conversation about our charitable giving and invite everyone else to do the same. Helping others is what we do as Masons, and “injury to ourselves” seems impossible at the minimal level of just \$9 per year. Grand Master Hallman has raised the bar to \$15 per year. Let’s roar with more!

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

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

Joseph Montfort Medals

MW Bryant Webster was given the highest honor for service we can bestow upon a North Carolina Mason, the Joseph Montfort medal. This was my first action as Grand Master following installation. PGM Webster's service to Scouting, to our beloved fraternity, to his community through pro bono legal service for which he was honored, and most especially his effort to help save WhiteStone must not only never be forgotten, but also embraced as present and future needs unfold. Though he did not agree with me, I have felt for many years that MW Brother Bryant Webster was one of the most deserving members of our Craft to receive the Montfort. He said, "It's too soon." I said, "No it's not." This time, I had the last word.

WB Oscar Keller was given the second Montfort at his place of business: Parkview Retirement Home in Sanford, North Carolina. WB Keller's commitment to the care of the elderly, the development of his community, along with his dedication to the highest principles of Freemasonry and family serve as a lasting influence on all of us. Upon our return from the Grand Lodge Officers Retreat on January 16, 2017, RW Brothers Speed Hallman, Mack Sigmon, and Shaun Bradshaw accompanied me on a visit to meet their 95-year old brother. The Montfort was given later that week as friends, family, and members of Buffalo Lodge No. 172 in Sanford gathered around him at Parkview.

The third Montfort was given on October 12, 2017, at the cornerstone of Old East on the campus of the University of North Carolina. It was presented to direct descendants of William Richardson Davie and was the first posthumous Montfort Medal given. Grand Master Davie's accomplishments need no further explanation or justification. While there are many Masons in North Carolina deserving of this honor, there are also many who have died without ever being fully recognized for their outstanding service. To deny this opportunity any longer was a decision I considered very carefully. The descendants gave the Montfort medal back to the Grand Lodge, and it will be on permanent display by Davie's portrait in the Grand Lodge building.

Physical Disabilities

Per The Code, it is the responsibility of the Grand Master to approve all petitions for the degrees on which the petitioner indicates a physical disability. The DDGM must investigate those and make a recommendation. We have had an extraordinary number of such disability waivers this year, a total of 25. I have approved all, and on several of them I noted to use "extreme caution." Like Grand Master Webster before me, I believe a large number of injured military veterans are petitioning our lodges.

Dispensations

It is the province of the Grand Master to issue dispensations to lodges for specific activities outside the standard practice or their approved bylaws. Again, there seem to have been a much more significant number than is usual. I take this as a sign of healthy activity and creativity among our lodges. As of this writing, I have approved the following 43 dispensations:

1. Elect Officers - Ocean 405
2. Stated Communications - Knights of Solomon 764
3. Elect Officers - Corinthian 542
4. Elect Officers - Roman Eagle 550
5. Change time of Stated - William Pitt 734
6. Stated Communications - Knights of Solomon 768
7. Elect Officers - Shallotte 727
8. Stated Communications - Wilkerson College 760
9. Other Place - Federal Point 753
10. Elect Junior Warden - Eureka 317
11. Stated Communications - Lux Libertas UD
12. Other Place - Ashlar 765
13. Other Place - Zion 81
14. Dispense with Stated - Zion 81
15. Other Place - Ashlar 765
16. Elect Master - Leaksville 136
17. Outdoor - Clay 301
18. Other Place - Ayden 498
19. Other Place - Ashlar 765
20. Elect Senior Warden - P P Turner 746
21. Outdoor - King Solomon 138
22. Other Place - Knights of Solomon 768
23. Outdoor - Crown Point 708
24. Other Place Railroad - Spencer 543
25. Elect Master - Seaside 429
26. Elect Junior Warden - Cherry Point 688
27. Elect Master - St. Pauls 474
28. Other Place - Ashlar 765
29. Dispense with Stated - Gaston 263
30. Dispense with Stated - Berne 724
31. Dispense with Stated - Perquimans 106
32. Dispense with Stated, add Stated - Wilkerson College 760
33. Other Place - Phalanx 31
34. Elect Master - Clay 301

35. Stated Communication - Knights of Solomon 768
36. Outdoor - Yadkin 162
37. Outdoor Battlefield - Buffalo 172
38. Other Place - State College 770
39. Dispense with Stated - Zion 81
40. Other Place - Lux Libertas UD
41. Other Place Battleship - St. John's 1
42. Elect Master - Stanly 348
43. Other Place Rendezvous Mountain - Liberty 45

Emergent Communications

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

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

An Emergent Communication of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina was held on the campus of the University of North Carolina on Thursday, October 12, 2017, for Constituting and Consecrating Lux Libertas Lodge No. 772.

An Emergent Communication of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina was held on Monday, October 22, 2017, to dedicate a marker for Unanimity Lodge No. 7 in Edenton. The marker commemorates the lodge's 176-year history of meeting in the historic Chowan County Courthouse.

Whitestone: A Masonic and Eastern Star Community

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

Brother Mark Kolada, the executive director, has moved up in Life Care Services to a regional director position. During the time of transition at WhiteStone, we are very grateful to Mark and Eric Dudasko for their service. Brother Kolada will continue to give oversight to WhiteStone, and we are delighted he is doing so.

Every brother should visit WhiteStone and MHCO within one month of being raised a Master Mason. Lodges need to make this happen. Although we cannot require it, I can and do strongly recommend it. Getting proper information and staying the right course is how we best work and best agree. Visit WhiteStone. See what we see. Experience what we experience. You will be glad you did it. You will want to give as liberally as possible to WhiteStone, and in

so doing experience the joy every true Mason has in remembering the elderly.

Masonic Home for Children at Oxford

It has long been the custom of Masons in North Carolina to give very well to the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford. This year, it was my joy to share gifts at Christmas and graduation with our children. Our children are wonderful! The MHCO is not only a great place to be a kid, but also a great place for a kid to grow up and become an excellent young adult. Over 10,000 children have been served over the last 145 years. It is indeed God's work. We celebrated another year of accreditation in August after our Board meeting and heard beautiful testimonies from our staff from "the heart."

Past Grand Master Dewey Preslar is our board chairman, and he leads the team in breakthrough thinking in each meeting. Upon my last conference in Oxford, I was humbled by the thought of getting to participate in the initial diversification of the Board through its nominating committee years ago. To see the fruits of those labors through the years is pure joy!

I commend the MHCO Board of Directors for now including every member of the Grand Line on one of their committees. Our Shrine Temples have been back to Oxford for the Masonic Homecoming each October, bearing witness to our cooperative efforts. We are continually making plans to welcome MHCO alumni back to their home. Executive Director Kevin Otis and his exceptional staff have made significant and positive changes in the last year. At Homecoming, we had a great time with Jim Quick and Coastline before dedicating the basketball court to Terry Dewey Preslar!

Our continued support of the MHCO is vital to the future development of children and adults who make a difference in our society. There is an exciting vision for the future at Oxford, and every Mason would do well to learn more about it.

North Carolina Masonic Foundation

The Foundation was formerly referred to as "the silent partner." We have worked together this year to remove that stigma and replace it with a roar that is "loud, clear, and proud."

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

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

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

We can and must do more. As the Foundation helps our Homes, it is also in a unique position to help our lodges. Accordingly and in response to information learned from the Form 39 report, I will continue to ask the Foundation

board to help subordinate lodges get more involved by decreasing the minimum subscription rate from \$25,000 to \$10,000. We will all be better off when this happens.

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

Veterans' Hospital Visits

I visited the VA hospitals in Asheville and Salisbury. Our Masonic Service Association Representatives who act on our behalf at those facilities are doing yeoman's work to reach out to our Masons and other veterans. We continue to need volunteers for our VA hospitals, and this would be a very worthwhile Lion and Pillar Lodge of Excellence project. At the Asheville campus, I was privileged to participate in the presentation of the Order of the Long Leaf Pine and a Masonic Award for a 70-year Mason, Brother Wayne Carringer. All of us are grateful to him for his service to our country as he was a survivor of the Bataan Death March. It was also my privilege to visit three brothers at the VA in Salisbury. We need to visit more and build relationships with our Masonic veterans. Many from World War II and Korea have died. Only 31% remain alive from the Vietnam War. On August 12, I visited a 102-year-old brother in Newton who was a decorated Marine from World War II. It means so much to our veterans to have us visit, spend time, shake their hands, listen to them, and show appreciation. Honoring our veterans by volunteering to spend a few minutes with them as often as possible is the least we can do. I commend Grand Master Hallman for his emphasis on this program in the 2018 year.

World Conference of Grand Lodges

We did not attend the World Conference in Madagascar this year but did attend and participate in the 300th Anniversary of the United Grand Lodge of England October 29-31, 2017, in London England. The Grand Secretary and I were humbled by the overwhelming peace and good fellowship that prevailed in London. It was my privilege to meet the Duke of Kent, Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England for 50 years. The Tercentenary Program was phenomenal and being able to represent the best jurisdiction in the world was a most humbling experience.

Conference of Grand Masters of North America

February 19-22, 2017, together with our Deputy Grand Master, Right Worshipful Brother Speed Hallman, our Senior Grand Warden, Right Worshipful Brother Mack Sigmon, our Junior Grand Warden, Right Worshipful Brother Shaun Bradshaw, our Grand Treasurer, Most Worshipful Brother Lew Ledford, our Grand Secretary, Right Worshipful Brother Walt Clapp, and our Assistant to the Grand Secretary, Brother Jonathan Underwood, we represented the Grand Lodge of North Carolina at the North American Conference of Grand Masters, held this year in Omaha, Nebraska. This was the first time since I've been in the elected Grand Line that the wives of the four principal officers attended.

The expenses for our wives are always paid by the Grand Line Officers, not the Grand Lodge. To have all four with us made the trip a double blessing and it allowed them to see what we do. We continued to experience the improvements Grand Master Webster brought to the Conference during his year of chairing the Planning Committee. It was humbling to have lunch with

the Grand Masters of Newfoundland, Russia, and Kazakhstan. Aside from the fellowship we experience and the friends/connections we make at the Conference, we can bring ideas back to North Carolina that are best practices in other jurisdictions. One of the best parts of attending this Conference is being able to see firsthand how we are doing things so well here in North Carolina and are about to do them even better.

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

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

Summons and Summary Trial

There were two summary trials this year. The first involved un-Masonic conduct which led to expulsion. The second summary trial involved un-Masonic conduct that led to a suspension. These items are referred to the Committee on Appeals.

A summons was issued to three Masters and three Temple Board Members in Asheville to have a conversation about publicity and use of the Masonic Temple. Our Code is sufficient concerning all concerns raised at this meeting. Peace and harmony prevailed at our meeting and remains the expectation.

Visitation and Special Activities

Every year, the Grand Master is elected and begins a schedule that resembles a full-time job. Below and in the pages that follow is a brief account of the places I've visited and things I've been doing since the election at the 2016 Annual Communication. As of December 2, 2017, it represents at least 29,096 Masonic contacts, 42,752 miles driven and flown, 367 written correspondences, at least 3,345 emails, and at least 2,558 phone calls. There are many contacts, emails, and phone calls that I never took the time to document. It is a privilege to serve the Craft, and I thank everyone for the support and respect given to the office of Grand Master. The dates above represent days I traveled. On every day of my term as Grand Master, travel, email, phone calls, or meetings of some kind occurred. Being Grand Master is a full time job. I have submitted the following summary of activity for the Grand Master in 2017.

It was also my pleasure to present service certificates to three brethren from the jurisdictions of Delaware, New York, and Pennsylvania this year. The

association with these brethren and their respective Grand Masters through the relationships I've been blessed to share over the years is a treasured memory I will enjoy the rest of my life.

FINAL REPORT ON ACTIVITY OF THE GRAND MASTER 2016-2017

Date	Place	Purpose
9/24/2016	Winston-Salem	Elected at Annual Communication
9/27/2016	Raleigh	Board of Publication for first round interviews - NCGL Building
10/1/2016	Jacksonville	Prayed with leaders of WRD Leadership Academy: Semper Fidelis
10/7/2016	Greensboro	Board of Publication for first round interviews Greensboro Masonic Temple
10/8/2016	Oxford	Attended and participated in MHCO Homecoming
10/11/2016	Chapel Hill	Attended and participated in University Day UNC-CH at Memorial Hall
10/12/2016	Greensboro	Stated Communication Scottish Rite Meeting Greensboro Masonic Temple
10/17/2016	Sanford	Entered Apprentice Degree at Buffalo 172
10/18/2016	Fuquay-Varina	Entered Apprentice Degree for Lux Libertas UD
10/19/2016	Raleigh	Chartering of State College Lodge 770
10/20/2016	Greensboro	Interviews for new Editor of NC Mason
10/20/2016	Greensboro	Greensboro Scottish Rite Reunion (17th Degree)
10/21/2016	Greensboro	Meeting with DDGLs
10/21/2016	Greensboro	Greensboro Scottish Rite Reunion (30th Degree)
10/24/2016	Chapel Hill	Phone Conference with NCMF re Communications Director Hire
10/28/2016	Raleigh	DDGM Meeting
10/29/2016	Raleigh	DDGM Meeting
11/1/2016	Halifax	Royal White Hart 2
11/3/2016	Hillsborough	Lux Libertas UD

11/9/2016	Greensboro	Scottish Rite Meeting 32nd Degree with GM & SGIG
11/10/2016	Oxford	MHCO dinner in cottages
11/11/2016	Oxford	MHCO Board Meeting
11/11/2016	Greensboro	Led Grand Officer Line Meeting
11/12/2016	Greensboro	WhiteStone Board Meeting
11/12/2016	Greensboro	Chartering of MESH Lodge 771
11/16/2016	Raleigh	Meeting with Jeff Hensley, Beth Grace, Bill Faison, Speed Hallman
11/18/2016	Sanford	All day preparations for Installation
12/1-3/2016	Chapel Hill	Installation/Presentation of Montfort #1 to MW Bryant Webster PGM
12/3/2016	Chapel Hill	Board of Publications: Code Amendment
12/6/2016	Mount Gilead	Blackmer 127 Visit
12/7/2016	Roanoke Rapids/	Meet with CCB/Deliver Christmas Gifts/
	Oxford/Greensboro	York Rite Christmas Program
12/8/2016	Roanoke Rapids	Widows Son 519
12/10/2016	Kernersville/Raleigh	Installation of Officers Kernersville 669/ York Rite Christmas Program
12/12/2016	Sanford	Election at Sanford 151
12/14/2016	Greensboro	Scottish Rite Meeting
12/19/2016	Sanford	Catechism #3 and Installation Buffalo 172
12/20/2016	Raleigh/Sanford	Grand Lodge Building/Visit with Oscar Keller, Chris, and Kevin
12/25-31/2016	VACATION	Every Grand Master should plan periodic ones
1/3/2017	Halifax	Installation of Royal White Hart 2
1/4/2017	Greenville	Install 8 of 10 lodges in District 6
1/5/2017	Sanford	Meetings with Chris and BOP
1/6/2017	Sanford	Buffalo 172
1/7/2017	Sanford	Shrine events/Davie Cancelled
1/10/2017	Hillsborough	Foundation and Eagle Lodge
1/11/2017	Greensboro	Scottish Rite
1/12/2017	Sanford	Grand Line Elected Officers met

1/13-15/2017	Pine Knoll Shores	Grand Line Officer Retreat
1/16/2017	Sanford	Visit with Oscar Keller and Grand Line
1/20/2017	Sanford	Presentation of Montfort # 2 at Parkview Retirement to Oscar Keller
1/21/2017	Burlington, Greensboro	Lynch Lodge, Davie Academy, Ed Becton funeral, Demolay
1/22/2017	Raleigh	Dedicate Marker for First Presbyterian
1/23/2017	Lumberton	District 18 Meeting: St. Alban's 114
1/24/2017	Dunn	District 11 Meeting: Mingo 260
1/25/2017	Wilmington	District 12 Meeting: Wilmington 319
1/27-28/2017	New Bern	Sudan Ceremonial and 100th Anniversary
1/30/2017	Sanford	District 20 Meeting: Buffalo 172
1/31/2017	Wilson	District 15 Meeting: Wilson 712
2/2/2017	Halifax	Lux Libertas UD
2/3/2017	Durham/Raleigh	Car Service/Meetings
2/6/2017	Jacksonville	National Sojourners in Jacksonville at Semper Fidelis 680
2/7/2017	Greensboro	Greensboro OES Initiation
2/8/2017	Greensboro	Greensboro SR and Centennial Planning
2/9-11/2017	Oxford & Greensboro	MHCO and WhiteStone Board Meetings
2/11/2017	Greensboro	Middle Chamber
2/13/2107	Raleigh	Meetings
2/18-22/2017	Omaha, Nebraska	Conference of Grand Masters of North America
2/24/2017	Greensboro	Scottish Rite Orient Leaders
2/27/2017	Raleigh	Risk Management Meeting, Raleigh Temple
3/3/2017	Raleigh	Board of General Purposes
3/4/2017	Charlotte	One Day Ceremonial Oasis Shrine
3/6/2017	Sanford	Buffalo 172
3/7/2017	Halifax	Royal White Hart 2
3/8/2017	Mount Gilead	Blackmer 127
3/10/2017	Raleigh	Meeting with delegation from Congo
3/11/2017	Catawba	Riverside Lodge Ham Day
3/15/2017	Raleigh	Raleigh Masonic Temple Matters
3/20-21/2017	Greensboro	Grand York Rite

3/21/2017	Mount Airy	District 25 Meeting: Granite 322
3/22/2017	Greensboro	District 23 Meeting: Corinthian 542
3/23/2017	Deep Gap	District 33 Meeting: Ashler 373
3/27/2017	Franklin	District 41 Meeting: Junaluskee 145
3/28/2017	Asheville	VA Hospital Visit/District 39 Meeting: Biltmore 446
3/29/2017	Boiling Springs	Sam Ervin Museum/District 35 Meeting: Friendship 388
3/30/2017	Lenoir	District 34 Meeting: Hibriten 262
3/31/2017	Raleigh	Code Matters at Masonic Building
4/3/2017	Sanford	Buffalo 172: Third Degree
4/4/2017	Halifax	Royal White Hart 2
4/5/2017	Raleigh	Meetings
4/12/2017	Halifax	Speaker for Halifax Day 2017
4/13/2016	Vocational	Holy Week/Easter
4/19/2017	Trenton	District 7 Meeting: Zion 81
4/20/2017	Garner	District 15 Meeting: Vandora 745
4/24/2017	Roxboro	District 19 Meeting: Person 113
4/25/2017	Halifax	District 8 Meeting: Royal White Hart 2 Hen & Hog
4/26-27/2017	Greenville, SC	South Carolina Grand Lodge
4/28-29/2017	Greensboro	Greensboro/Charlotte Scottish Rite Reunion
4/29/2017	Kannapolis	Quarry Degree moved to Stokes Lodge
5/1/2017	Elizabeth City	District 1 Meeting: Eureka 317
5/2/2017	Manteo	District 2 Meeting: Manteo 521
5/3/2017	Washington	District 3 Meeting: Washington 675
5/4/2017	Greensboro	Lux Libertas Lodge UD
5/5-6/2017	Raleigh	Wilkerson College Graduation
5/10/2017	Greensboro	Grand Master's Banquet
5/11-13/2017	Oxford & Greensboro	MHCO and WhiteStone Board Meetings
5/13/2017	Greensboro	Middle Chamber
5/14/2017	Lumberton	Sixty Year Award, Hobart Britt
5/15/2017	High Point	Numa F. Reid 344 Veterans Night
5/16/2017	Mount Gilead	District 24 Meeting: Blackmer 127
5/17/2017	Huntersville	District 31 Meeting: Long Creek 205
5/19-20/2017	Brevard	Dunn's Rock 267 - 150th Anniversary
5/24-27/2017	Raleigh	Raleigh Masonic Temple and Amran Shrine Matters

5/28-29/2017	Thomasville	Memorial Day Parade and Festivities
5/29-6/3/2017	Shallotte/Ocean Isle	Board of General Purposes
6/7/2017	Raleigh	Meetings at Grand Lodge Building
6/11-12/2017	Durham	NC Grand Chapter Order of the Easter Star
6/13/2017	Raleigh	Meeting with State Legislators
6/19/2017	Littleton	Fellowcraft Degree, Royal Hart 497
6/21/2017	Raleigh	Various Meetings
6/24/2017	Asheville/Durham	Funeral & St. John the Baptist Day with Mosaic 762 and State College Lodge 770
6/26/2017	Raleigh	Rainbow Girls Assembly
6/29-7/6/2017	Vacation	Every Grand Master should plan periodic ones
7/7/2017	Greensboro	Letters from Home for Rite Care
7/9-10/2017	Maggie Valley	York Rite Summer Assembly
7/10/-13/2017	Daytona Beach, FL	Imperial Shrine
7/15/2017	Albemarle	Third Degree at Albemarle 703
7/17-20/2017	Toronto, Canada	Grand Lodge of Ontario: Toronto
7/21-22/2017	Indianapolis, IN	Northeast Conference Indianapolis
7/24/2017	Raleigh/Littleton	Meetings and Third Degree at Royal Hart 497
7/28-29/2017	Winston-Salem	Scottish Rite Leadership Weekend
7/30-8/3/2017	Vacation	Every Grand Master should plan periodic ones
8/3/2017	Oxford	Lux Libertas Lodge - Entered Apprentice Degree
8/5/2017	Oxford	Davie Academy
8/7/2017	Ahoskie	American George 17 Seventy-Year Award to Joe Dickerson, decorated WWII veteran
8/8/2017	Salisbury Cary	VA Hospital Visit Ribbon Cutting at Cary 198 with Highway Patrol
8/9/2017	Greensboro	Greensboro Scottish Rite
8/10-11/2017	Oxford	MHCO Board Meeting
8/11-12/2017	Greensboro	WhiteStone Board Meeting
8/12/2017	Newton	Josephine Pruitt 100th Birthday visitation and visited WWII decorated

		veteran, Bro. Joe Noble
8/13/2017	Greensboro	Scottish Rite 33rd degree Team Practice
8/16/2017	Raleigh	Meeting at Grand Lodge Building
8/18-23/2017	Washington, DC	Supreme Council of Scottish Rite
8/24/2017	Roanoke Rapids	District 8 Meeting: Widow's Son 519
8/28/2017	Troy	357 Production Podcast
8/30/2017	Raleigh/Sanford	Summary Trial/Third Degree Sanford 151
9/13/2017	Greensboro	Scottish Rite
9/16/2017	Greensboro	Fundraiser Revolution 552
9/17/2017	Greensboro	33rd Degree Team Practice
9/19-23/2017	Winston-Salem	Annual Communication
9/23/2017	Greensboro	SASA Installation of Officers
9/25/2017	Raleigh	Grand Lodge Meetings
9/29/2017	Raleigh	Prince Hall Grand Lodge
9/30/2017	Raleigh	100th Anniversary Raleigh Scottish Rite
10/1/2017	Greensboro	33rd Degree Team Practice
10/2/2017	Raleigh	Grand Lodge Meetings
10/3/2017	Weldon	District 8 Meeting at Ralph's BBQ
10/7/2017	Wilmington Greensboro	Breakfast Meeting, Davie Academy, WhiteStone wedding
10/8/2017	Greensboro	33rd Degree Team Practice
10/11/2017	Raleigh/Greensboro	Grand Lodge Meeting, Scottish Rite
10/12/2017	Chapel Hill	Attended and participated in University Day at UNC-CH, Chartered Lux Libertas 772, Presented Montfort Medal to William R. Davie - Posthumous
10/13/2017	Oxford	Homecoming Festivities
10/18/2017	Raleigh	Summary Trial at Grand Lodge Building
10/20-21/2017	Greensboro	Scottish Rite Orient Reunion
10/23/2017	Edenton	Courthouse Dedication Unanimity 7
10/24-11/1/2017	London, England	300th Anniversary of Freemasonry
11/2/2017	Hillsborough	Install Officers of Lux Libertas 772
11/3/2017	Greensboro	Grand Master's Roast
11/4/2017	Cary/Durham	Davie Academy/Funeral
11/5/2017	Greensboro	33rd Degree Team Practice

11/7/2017	Raleigh/Halifax	Grand Lodge Meetings, Royal White Hart 2
11/8/2017	Greensboro	Scottish Rite
11/9-11/2017	Oxford/Greensboro	MHCO/WhiteStone Board Meetings
11/12/2017	Greensboro	33rd Degree Team Practice
11/17-18/2017	Winston-Salem	Scottish Rite Honors Day
11/21/2017	Waxhaw/Asheville	Davie Graveside Ceremony with Grand Lodge of South Carolina and Asheville Temple
11/22/2017	Oxford	Thanksgiving with children at MHCO
11/27/2017	Albemarle	Service Awards at Albemarle 703
11/28/2017	Raleigh	Meeting at Grand Lodge
11/30/2017	Chapel Hill	Meeting with Prince Hall Leadership
12/1-2/2017	Chapel Hill	Board of General Purposes Grand Lodge Officers Installation

Recommended Legislation and Business Continued

My recommendations for legislation are included below.

1. We must empower the Secretaries of the Lodges to oversee a process in MORI that will enable the Annual Audit, Year End Report and Form 990 information to be collected, reported, and filed in one action. Being financially responsible reduces the risk of improper handling of funding and aids the work of DDGMs in the lodges with appropriate Code revisions in 2019 at the very latest.
2. Continuation of the work of the Risk Management Team to help ensure safety in our Lodges.
3. Continuation of the Masonic Renewal Committee to address issue of “making Masons as opposed to members” while addressing vital membership and financial matters, as well as matters related to our relevance in society and our future.
4. Support for efforts to work with Prince Hall and AF&AM of North Carolina.
5. Support for the Scouting Task Force, chaired by Ludwik Wodka.
6. Continuation of Lion and Pillar to promote programs of excellence as set forth by future Grand Masters with the flexibility to help subordinate lodges be creative in their community.

See the following Orders and Opinions as submitted along with the fiscally responsible recommendations for Per Capita I hope and pray are forthcoming.

Cobb Opinion 1

All Masons are accountable to The Code of the Grand Lodge of North Carolina.

On June 22, 2017, an official response to concerns raised by the Judge Advocate regarding “complaints from our appendant bodies seeking resolutions for incidents” was given by the Grand Master.

Since that time, other matters requiring a disciplinary review have occurred in this jurisdiction which leads the Grand Master to issue the following official opinions.

That the Judge Advocate only hear and address cases that are presented in accordance with our laws, rules, and regulations relating to Masonic offenses as they appear in The Code.

That in the event the Judge Advocate is presented a case that needs to be referred to another Masonic related organization, who, in his judgment, should hear and act on these matters before we address it as a matter related to The Code, he may refer the matter to the York Rite, Scottish Rite, Shrine, Order of the Eastern Star, Amaranth or another Masonic order recognized in North Carolina.

That when other Masonic related organizations act in accordance with their procedures to address matters of procedure and discipline, the Judge Advocate may concur or not concur and dispense procedural or disciplinary actions as called for by The Code that is concurrent with other Masonic related organizations.

Given under my hand and seal as an opinion on the nineteenth day of October 2017 in Sanford, North Carolina.

Arnold Gene Cobb, Jr., Grand Master

Cobb Opinion 2

Intentional hospitality that promotes peace and harmony within the fraternity is a welcomed practice in many jurisdictions around the world. North Carolina has engaged in such intentional efforts for many years, and I hope that this will continue.

While not all Masons agree about all things, guarding against intemperance and excess is something about which we all agree. Being diligent, prudent, temperate, and discreet is something about which we all agree.

Accordingly, each of us is responsible for our actions. Therefore, in the event any Masons, lodge, or group of lodges host a “hospitality” room at any time or place in this jurisdiction, it is my official opinion that they assume responsibility and accountability for both the hospitality and the behavior of those who participate; and shall be liable for their conduct in accordance with The Code.

Given under my hand and seal this the nineteenth day of October 2017 in Sanford, North Carolina.

Arnold Gene Cobb, Jr., Grand Master

Cobb Opinion 3

In the effort to address better financial practices throughout the Craft and to reflect best practices, annual audits need to be performed every year.

Our MORI system can provide valuable assistance in this process if the year-end reports are printed out, reviewed, and signed by three members of the lodge. The Grand Secretary is fully capable of working with the subordinate lodge secretaries and coordinating with MORI such changes as will be necessary for future years to provide accurate and effective audits.

Accordingly, and after testing the continued use of Form 39 during my year as Grand Master, it is my opinion that the end-of-the-year report in MORI

should be adjusted such that it will allow beginning and ending balances of lodge funds that account for income and expense reporting sufficient for lodges in the future such that Form 39 will become obsolete.

Given under my hand and seal this the twenty-third day of November 2017 in Sanford, North Carolina.

Arnold Gene Cobb, Jr., Grand Master

Cobb Opinion 4

This opinion will begin to address issues of affiliation with Prince Hall Freemasons.

The Grand Secretary has requested an Official Opinion regarding the affiliation of Prince Hall Affiliate (PHA) Freemasons within our sister jurisdictions who are not yet recognized by our sister jurisdictions, but otherwise conform to the ancient usages and Landmarks of the Fraternity and derive their legitimacy, historic usages, and warrants from African Lodge No. 459, chartered by the Premier Grand Lodge of England (now the United Grand Lodge of England) on 29 September 1784. In compliance with his request, I am giving you my Official Opinion.

On 19 September 2008 and 22 September 2015 the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina resolved that the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Affiliate Grand Lodges within the United States were regular in their workings, usages of Masonic Law, and adhered to the ancient Landmarks of our Fraternity.

Considering the Resolutions of this Grand Lodge in 2008 and 2015, it is my opinion that members in good standing of Prince Hall Affiliate Grand Lodges may apply for affiliation to a lodge in this Grand Jurisdiction per Regulation 75-1 (the Right to Apply for Affiliation) as regular and recognized Masons.

Given under my hand and seal in Sanford, North Carolina, this the 27th day of November 2017.

Arnold Gene Cobb, Jr., Grand Master

Acknowledgments and Special Appreciation

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

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

I always wanted to be a Mason. Blackmer Lodge No. 127 took me in, gave

me opportunities to get involved in the work, and helped make me a Mason. My brothers in Royal White Hart No. 2 welcomed me home and helped me through the years as I prepared for this office, notably WB Wilbur Garner, who was coached by my grandfather and graciously sat in the East at my installation. The Greensboro Scottish and York Rite, the Sudan Shrine, the William B. Barrow Order of the Eastern Star have shown me the very best of this fraternity, and I am deeply indebted to them all, especially the late William H. Simpson, PGM; the Reverend Victor Dowd; and Helen Collie, PWGM.

Being part of the formation of MESH Lodge No. 771 and Lux Libertas No. 772 provided opportunities for me to give back to the fraternity that has given so much to me in friendship, morality, and brotherly love.

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

Everyone functions best when we work as a team. Your elected and appointed Grand Line strives for excellence, and the truth is we are better at it some days than others. It would be misleading to say that everyone respects us because we all know there are those who harbor ill-will toward those who serve in positions of authority. It is so easy to say that we would act differently when we do not always know the facts. This year, I learned that whenever I encounter a brother with such feelings, we always, without exception, have a better understanding after a conversation. Relationships have to start somewhere, even if they begin at a point of disagreement. When we build relationships, we create a solid foundation and a most beautiful temple. We must continue to guard the West Gate, but we must also lead those who will not honor friendship, morality, and brotherly love to the door of the East Gate.

When we go to work, our work roars loud and proud. I've had the best Deputy Grand Master in Speed Hallman I could have ever asked for from God. He has faced unwarranted criticism for his intense faithfulness to the fraternity, and all of us are better Masons for his great example. Grand Master Hallman along with every other officer had to step forward a whole year as Right Worshipful Jimmie Hicks stepped out of the Grand Line. Most Worshipful Speed Hallman and Right Worshipfuls Mack Sigmon and Shaun Bradshaw formed a great team with me quickly. We worked tirelessly to cover the state, give our best, and move things along the best we knew how to do. Worshipful Brothers David Wicker, Larry Thompson, Kevan Frazier, and the two appointments I made to the line, Don Kehler and Bobby Rideout, will prove over time to be wise and effective leaders for our future. With the addition of Steve Norris, the Grand Lodge Line is as reliable as it has ever been and excellence will direct our path for many years to come. Our continued support of them ensures

our brightest future. We are all a family. All 35,000 of us.

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

I must confess, in closing, that this has been a challenging year. While serving as Grand Master, I also led a 1,400 member congregation, only missing five Sundays, preaching over 200 times, conducting four weddings, 18 funerals, 26 baptisms, and raising hundreds of thousands of dollars for the work of St. Luke United Methodist Church where I serve as lead pastor. I worried that our attendance might decrease and that there might be something undone. There was no decrease, and everything known to me was accomplished. It was difficult, but not impossible in part due to the support and strength I received from each of you.

We are living in a time when we will be judged by others for the comments we make to and about one another through social media. When I created the Task Force on Raffles it was to create a healthy and effective dialogue regarding civil, moral, and Masonic law around the raffle issue and what types of activity might best represent our Craft to the public. Every Mason I spoke with about this matter agreed with my actions and understood that it was not political. It was not religious. Every brother who spoke with me realized how it was a false accusation to call it such. It grieves me to know that those who make such false accusations have, themselves, made political and religious issues and even engaged in what could be considered electioneering concerning our gentle Craft. My prayer is that brotherly love will prevail and every moral and social virtue will cement us as a jurisdiction. I know of no one in the Grand Lodge elected or appointed line who has ever sought to deny any citizen of this country their rights. The Great Light of Masonry teaches us not to bear false witness against our neighbor. As far as it comes to my knowledge, no Grand Line officer has ever advocated a change in constitutionally guaranteed rights. I completely support each of them as well as the actions taken since I left office because I know they were all done with the highest ideals of our fraternal foundations at heart and in mind. Truth will prevail regarding this matter. I look forward to the day we can do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God and one another.

No one knows how much time and personal sacrifice is required of this office when they come into it. We only serve for a year in North Carolina, and that's a good thing. It is good and pleasant to have time for my family again, particularly my son John and his new wife Heather. While I appreciate everyone's patience and understanding with me these many years, I most especially appreciate and thank the first lady of Masons in North Carolina for 2017, my wife, Brenda.

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

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

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

Interim Report
of
Grand Master
Speed Hallman
to
the
Grand Lodge
of
Ancient, Free and Accepted
Masons
of North Carolina
at
Winston-Salem, North Carolina
September 28, 2018

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

– “Why We All Should Begin 2018 as Entered Apprentices,”
masonsleadbetter.com

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

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

The State of the Craft

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

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

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

I have also seen evidence of a very few members who are not as mindful of our teachings. I say “seen evidence of” instead of “met,” because these men are more likely to vent on social media than seek to engage in civil conversations when we differ. I deliberately say “members” instead of “Masons” because I consider some of these men to be mere carriers of dues cards. By word and deed they loudly and proudly assert their indifference to our beautiful system of morality. When I encounter such brethren I reflect on the quote above and strive to remember that the divine glows within all of us — in upright Masons as well as in those who appear to have slunk in through poorly guarded west gates. My hope is that the latter group, who may have been misled about Masonry's pur-

pose, or who may have misunderstood who and what we are, will see the light. I hope those who will not or cannot see the light will slink back out. Masonry is not for everyone, and a dues card in your wallet doesn't make you a Mason.

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

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

Highlights of the Year to Date

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

Fittingly but entirely by coincidence, my first visit to a lodge as Grand Master was to University No. 408 in Chapel Hill on Dec. 4 to see two UNC students raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason. I was delighted to be asked to play second base for the degree when that position needed to be filled at the last minute.

Honoring Our Veterans

There were many days when I felt blessed to serve as Grand Master on account of the brethren I was able to meet. Four such days and four brethren — all veterans — are particularly memorable.

On Jan. 31, I visited Zion Lodge No. 81 in Trenton to present a 60-year award to **Bro. Tom Harriett**. Bro. Harriett was aboard the USS St. Louis in Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941. He and the St. Louis survived the aerial attack and a torpedo fired at the ship as she headed to sea. At 3 p.m. on a Wednesday afternoon his lodge was full of brethren and townspeople who turned out to honor him, not only for his service to our nation but for being an outstanding friend, neighbor, and citizen. It was deep regret that I learned Bro. Harriett entered the Celestial Lodge May 24.

On April 11 at the District 1 meeting in Edenton I recognized **Bro. Marshall White**, a D-Day veteran and member of Eureka Lodge No. 317. Bro. White landed on the beach at Normandy on June 6, 1944, as a sailor aboard LST-293. We learned of his passing on June 17, just after the 74th anniversary of the day Bro. White helped begin the liberation of Europe.

On April 30 I met **Bro. Wayne Carringer**, a survivor of the Bataan Death March, at the Charles George VA Medical Center in Asheville. Bro. Wayne greeted me in the lobby, driving a scooter flying an American flag and with a square and compass emblem affixed to the rear. He locked eyes with me and asked a pointed question: "How come you guys [grand masters] only come here once a year?" I didn't have an answer, but I did have an idea. Before I left that day we had scheduled an emergent communication of Sonoma Lodge No. 472 for July 10 at the hospital. The meeting would honor Wayne and all brethren at the hospital. Sadly, Bro. Wayne laid down his working tools on July 1.

We held the emergent communication at the VA hospital in Bro. Wayne's memory, and we were blessed to have a number of veterans with us in lodge,

including WWII Navy veteran **Bro. Edwin Horhorouny** (AKA Bro. Hoho), who described his wartime experiences on the USS Montague. We were honored to have two distinguished out-of-state guests at the meeting: MWB Michael D. Smith, Grand Master of South Carolina; and Simon LaPlace, Past Grand Master of Connecticut and Executive Secretary and Director of Hospital Visitation for the Masonic Service Association of North America.

I'm indebted to the brethren who visited Bro. Wayne with me in April and made something happen that to my knowledge has never been done: a North Carolina lodge meeting in a VA hospital. Thank you MWB Berry Rigdon; Sonoma Lodge No. 472 Master Butch Allison; WBs John Burchfield, Gene Canter, Bill McEntire, and Ron Sortino; and the brethren of Sonoma Lodge.

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

I urge lodges to organize visits to veterans in our VA hospitals in Asheville, Salisbury, Durham, and Fayetteville, and support our dedicated MSA volunteers. For more on the Masonic Service Association of North America's Hospital Visitation Program, see msana.com.

Activities Around the State

On April 19 I spoke at Mosaic Lodge No. 762's open house in Chapel Hill. Mosaic meets in the beautiful Dialectic Society Chamber in UNC's New West building, and it's steadily making connections with students and the campus community.

Your Grand Line participated in the 13th Annual Carolina Masonic Pig Jig, held May 18-19, under the team name Grand Swine. Despite torrential rain we enjoyed fellowship with the brethren assembled for competition at the State Fairgrounds in Raleigh. Grand Swine was led by JGW David Wicker. DGM Mack Sigmon, Grand Marshal Don Kehler, and I rounded out the team. Consider joining the fun and supporting Masonic charities by entering the 2019 competition, expected to be held May 17-18.

In June I attended three community events benefitting or involving the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford, and at each one I enjoyed seeing WB Kevin Otis, Administrator of the Home, and his wife Kevin Otis.

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

On June 21 Hamlet Lodge No. 532 held a gospel concert on the campus of Richmond Community college. Three outstanding quartets performed free of charge, and all proceeds from sponsorships and ticket sales benefitted our Home. Well done, WM David McCall and brethren!

June 29 was an especially memorable day. I went to the Denton Farm-Park for the 48th Annual Southeast Old Threshers' Reunion. Bro. Brown Loflin created and owns the park. His nephew, WB Tim Loflin, helps manage

events there. This year the 22-mile tractor ride and an auction benefitted the Home. It was an honor to ride at the front of the parade with Tim, who surprised me by switching seats and allowing me to take the wheel while we were moving. After the parade Denton Lodge No. 404 held an emergent communication in the FarmPark's church building. I presented three 50-year certificates and pins, including one to Bro. Brown Loffin. A highlight was the presentation of honorary memberships in Clyde Lodge No. 453 to WM Jason Parker and SW Chad Graham. Bros. Parker and Graham came to the aid of brethren from Clyde at last year's annual communication, and Clyde Lodge expressed its appreciation in a most fraternal manner. The spirit of brotherhood was powerful that day. Thanks to the Loffins for hosting us and designating our Home as the featured charity this year, to 27th District DDGM Jimmy Myers for his leadership, to WB Kirby Matthews for coordinating the Masonic activities, to Denton Lodge JD Matthew Holland and Tyler Jeff Kirkman for being my friends and brothers, and to all of the officers and brethren of Denton Lodge for making it a great day. I understand that 32 Masons, including 17 past masters, camped in the FarmPark campground that weekend, and that Masons have been camping at the Threshers Reunion for 40 years. Maybe I'll see you there next year.

On May 28 DGM Mack Sigmon and I participated in the North Carolina Memorial Day Parade and Celebration in Thomasville. Thomasville Lodge No. 214 represented Masonry well in their community that day. Lodge members, with sponsorship from Food Lion, handed out 1,900 hot dogs and drinks to spectators. After walking in the parade I was happy to find a job in the kitchen working alongside WM Andy Thomas; Jem Wiles, a 19-year-old Mason raised in November; and Aguztin Benites-Reynolds, a Fellowcraft at the time. I returned to Thomasville June 30 to see Bro. Aguztin raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason.

On April 14 I participated in the Great Landscaping Day at the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford. Oxford native, Grand Tyler and WB John Speed and I started the day in Shipman Cottage at an emergent communication of Andrew Jackson Lodge No. 576. After the meeting we accompanied our Salisbury brethren to the Home's beautiful cemetery, God's Half Acre, where we planted two dogwood trees and spread mulch. I look forward to returning when the dogwoods are in bloom. The landscaping day is a great service and fellowship opportunity for lodges, and the Home appreciates the help. Please put April 13, 2019, on your calendar, round up some brethren and tools, and go. I understand that an outdoor degree is being contemplated for the 2019 event.

We celebrated North Carolina Weekend at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial in Alexandria, VA, July 20-22. Saturday began with a trip to Mount Vernon, where Bro. Matt Parker, SW of Lodge of the Nine Sisters UD, and I laid a wreath at George Washington's tomb and placed an apron on his marble sarcophagus. That's a Masonic moment I'll never forget. That afternoon, during an emergent communication of Lodge of the Nine Sisters, in the memorial's beautiful lodge room, I was honored to play King Solomon for a Master Mason degree conferred for Cannon Memorial Lodge No. 626. I hope the Mount Vernon visit and North Carolina degree at the memorial will become an annual event.

I also enjoyed playing the role of King Solomon in Master Mason degrees for Spencer Lodge No. 543's Railroad Degree held April 21 at the NC Transportation Museum, at Eagle Lodge No. 19 on June 12, and at Kernersville Lodge

No. 669 on June 16. As of this writing I'm scheduled to reprise the role for the District 28 Quarry Degree in Concord on Sept. 8.

On Aug. 1 I convened a joint meeting of members from Gastonia Lodge No. 369 and King Solomon Lodge No. 704 to discuss the potential sale of their building and merger of the lodges. At this writing their requests are under consideration.

On Aug. 9 I helped Goldsboro Lodge No. 634 celebrate its centennial. It was a festive evening attended by members and their families, with Eastern North Carolina barbecue on the menu, and a program including service awards and a presentation on the lodge's history.

June 4 was a great day to be Grand Master, as I watched brethren from Clemmons Lodge No. 755 and West Bend Lodge No. 434 give bicycles to the top readers in grades K through 5 at Morgan Elementary School. Old Town Lodge No. 751 was one of the first lodges to start a Bikes for Books program. If you had seen the faces of those children when we rolled their new bikes into their classrooms, you'd be starting a Bikes for Books program for your lodge. We'll be talking about this at the annual communication.

Susan and I attended the 30th District St. John's Day worship service June 10th at Wesley Memorial United Methodist Church in Statesville, led by Rev. Chris Fitzgerald, a member of Harmony Lodge No. 299. The text for his sermon, "Building a temple in the heart," was from 1 Kings 8:12-19. All hymns were by Masonic composers. A Trestleboard Service (our Bible presentation) was offered by WB Bill Thompson, and the Benediction (our closing charge) was delivered by WB Keith Rash. Brethren in attendance wore white aprons. Masonry's light was shining brightly that day in a house of worship. Consider coordinating a similar service for your lodge or district.

I attended a St. John's Day feast on June 24 at Meadow Branch Lodge No. 578 in Wingate and enjoyed a program on the 300th anniversary of the United Grand Lodge of England presented by PGM Gene Cobb.

Out of State Visitations

I've been honored to represent you at communications of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the District of Columbia (December), the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the State of New York (April), and the United Grand Lodge of England (in March, and at my own expense).

District Meetings

I'm grateful to the 27 lodges that hosted district meetings this year. I understand that hosting requires a great deal of work and sometimes causes a fair amount of stress. The lodges and brethren never failed to be welcoming, hospitable, and attentive to my message. The opportunity to visit lodges, catch up with old friends and make new ones made the district meetings a high point of the year.

District meetings were held as follows:

Date	District	Host Lodge	Location
Jan 29	16	Granite 191	621 Bolling St, Clayton
	30	Crown Point 708	1104 Charles St, Greenville
	31	Lafayette 83	305 Chaney Ave, Jacksonville

Feb	27	11	Coharie 379	976 Autryville Rd, Salemburg
	28	12	Shallotte 727	5072 Main Street, Shallotte
Mar	1	13	Millbrook 97	2400 New Hope Rd, Raleigh
	5	24	Balfour 188	632 Sunset Ave, Asheboro
	6	22	Dan River 129	110 Decatur St, Madison
	7	20	Columbus 102	121 East St, Pittsboro
	20	18	Maxton 417	123 S Florence St, Maxton
	21	10	Harmony 340	108 S Railroad St, Pikeville
	26	32	Phalanx 31	500 N Sharon Amity Rd, Charlotte
	27	23	Revolution 552	802 16th St, Greensboro
Apr	2	33	Snow 363	240 Temple Dr, Boone
	3	37	Cranberry 598	193 Main St, Elk Park
	4	30	Harmony 299	143 E Memorial Hwy, Harmony
	10	2	Manteo 521	101 Hwy 34/264, Manteo
	11	1	Unanimity 7	215 E Water St, Edenton
	12	8	Enfield 447	137 SE Railroad St, Enfield
	23	28	Stokes 32	51 Brumley Ave, Concord
	24	29	Beaver Dam 276	605 E Main St, Marshville
	25	36	Gastonia 369	214 South St, Gastonia
	30	39	Veritas 769	80 Broadway, Asheville
May	1	40	Oconee 427	62 Clifton Ave, Bryson City
	2	38	Kedron 387	229 Fifth Ave W, Hendersonville
	3	34	Hickory 343	30 Catawba Valley Blvd SE, Hickory
	15	19	Eagle 19	142 W King St, Hillsborough

Lodge representation at district meetings is an expectation, but 26 lodges were not represented this year. I regret that five lodges were not represented in district meetings this year or last year: Winston Lodge No. 167, Creasy Proctor Lodge No. 679, Advance Lodge No. 710, Enterprise Lodge No. 752, and Clifford Duell Lodge No. 756. Lincoln Lodge No. 137 has been absent for three years. I am asking these lodges to explain their absences.

Dispensations

I have approved the following 76 dispensations thus far:

1. Elect Senior Warden - Montgomery 426
2. Elect Officers - Rockingham 495
3. Other Place - French Broad 292
4. Dispense with Stated - Shallotte 727

5. Elect Officers - Wilkerson College 760
 6. Elect Officers - Marietta 444
 7. Elect Officers - Orphans 761
 8. Master of two Lodges - Knights of Solomon 768
 9. Dispense with Stated - New River 736
 10. No Charter - St. John's 1
 11. Elect Junior Warden - 624
 12. Elect Officers - 418
 13. Stated Communication - Knights of Solomon 768
 14. Elect Officers - Adoniram 149
 15. Dispense with Stated - J. J. Crowder 743
 16. Elect Junior Warden - Knight of Solomon 764
 17. Dispense with Stated - Orient 395
 18. Dispense with Stated - Liberty 714
 19. Dispense with Stated - Fallston 356
 20. Elect Officers - Adoniram 149
 21. Stated Communications - Knights of Solomon 768
 22. Elect Junior Warden - Corinthian 230
 23. Other Place - Kernersville 669
 24. Dispense with Stated - Currituck 463
 25. Dispense with Stated - Spencer 543
 26. Other Place Railroad - Spencer 543
 27. Other Place - Ionic 583
 28. Other Place - Lodge of the Nine Sisters UD
 29. Other Place - Ionic 583
 30. Elect Junior Warden - Knights of Solomon 768
 31. Stated Communications - Knights of Solomon 768
 32. Elect Senior Warden - Conover 709
 33. Other Place - Ionic 583
 34. Dispense with Stated - J. J. Crowder 743
 35. Other Place - Corinthian 542
 36. Dispense with Stated - Blackmer 127
 37. Elect Treasurer - Allen-Graham 695
 38. Other Place WhiteStone - Bula 409
 39. Dispense with Stated - Walnut Cove 629
 40. Outdoor - King Solomon 138
 41. Other Place - Andrew Jackson 576
 42. Stated Communications - Wilkerson College 760
 43. Dispense with Stated - Wilkerson College 760
-

44. Stated Communications - Knights of Solomon 764
45. Dispense with Stated - Harmony 340
46. Other Place - Kernersville 669
47. Other Place - Mosaic 762
48. Outdoor - William Pitt 734
49. Dispense with Stated - Newport 706
50. Dispense with Stated/Other Place - Lux Libertas 772
51. Other Place - Lux Libertas 772
52. Other Place - Piedmont-Pioneer 685
53. Other Place - Piedmont Pioneer 685
54. Other Place - Ayden 498
55. Other Place - Fellowship 687
56. Elect Senior Deacon - Bailey 411
57. Other Place - Sonoma 472
58. Dispense with Stated - Berne 724
59. Other Place - Denton 404
60. Other Place - Lebanon 391
61. Other Place - Wilkerson College 760
62. Dispense with Stated - Grifton 243
63. Other Place - Temple 676
64. Other Place - Lodge of the Nine Sisters UD
65. Elect Junior Warden - PP Turner 746
66. Other Place - Lodge of the Nine Sisters UD GWMNM
67. Other Place - Knights of Solomon UD Waynesville
68. Other Place - Veritas 769
69. Dispense with Stated - Veritas 769
70. Dispense with Stated - Zion 81
71. Dispense with Stated - Wilkerson College 760
72. Outdoor - Casar 579
73. Other Place - Knights of Solomon UD
74. Stated Communication - Knights of Solomon UD
75. Other Place, Battleship - St. John's 1
76. Grand Lodge, Lynch Lodge

Physical Disabilities

When petitioners disclose physical defects or disabilities which may prevent them from conforming to the requirements of our three degrees, Reg. 66-2 requires the Grand Master's approval before lodges can accept their petitions. To date I have received sixteen (16) such petitions. In each case the District Deputy Grand Master met with or contacted the petitioner, investigated his circumstances, and recommended approval. I accepted the DDGMs' recommendations and approved these petitions with the notation "Approved for dis-

ability only.” It is the responsibility of the lodges to follow the normal process for investigation and balloting for these petitioners.

Board of General Purposes

The duties of the Board of General Purposes are enumerated in Chapter 28 of our Code. Its purview for oversight and management of Grand Lodge enterprises, activities and programs is sweeping. As a practical matter, the board is also the Grand Master’s best source of advice, good counsel, expertise, and accumulated Masonic wisdom.

The board met in Raleigh on March 2 and May 18. It is scheduled to meet Sept. 27 in Winston-Salem and Nov. 30 in Hickory.

I appointed WBs Bill Faison of Hillsborough and Mike Register of Asheboro to terms ending in 2020, and WB Ben Wallace of Troy to an unexpired term ending in 2019. These are superbly qualified Masons who will keep the good of Masonry at the forefront of every decision they make.

Gun Raffle Directive

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

On Feb. 20, after consulting with the committee, I issued a directive on gun raffles. I was happy to discuss the directive with every brother who approached me with concerns, and I heard from an equal if not greater number who expressed their support.

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

Many thanks to WB Kahn and his raffle committee, and WB Medlin and members of the special activities committee, for their hard work and leadership on this issue.

Montfort Medals

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

On April 12, 2018, in sight of Montfort’s grave and in Montfort’s home lodge, Royal White Hart Lodge No. 2 in Halifax, I presented my first Montfort Medal to Past Grand Master Gene Cobb. MWB Cobb, a Halifax native and past master of Royal White Hart, has served Blue Lodge, Scottish Rite, York Rite, and Shrine Masonry with freedom, fervency, and zeal. His term as Grand Master in 2017 was marked by a relentless emphasis on our duty to support our charities. He conceived and launched the Lion and Pillar Lodge of Excellence program, which was inspired by the leadership of PGM and Haligonian William R. Davie. The Lion and Pillar award has benefitted a number of lodges

and raised the sights of brethren across the state. PGM Cobb helped start two lodges, MESH Lodge No. 771 and Lux Libertas Lodge No. 772, and he is also a past master of Blackmer Lodge No. 127, where he was initiated, passed, and raised. We will remember his constant admonition of “Let’s go to work,” and I will always be grateful for his mentorship and wise counsel.

The remaining two Montfort Medals will be presented at this annual communication.

District Deputy Grand Masters and District Deputy Grand Lecturers

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

The DDGMs and DDGLs met with me Nov. 3 and 4, 2017, at White-Stone to review and refine plans for 2018. After a joint session the DDGMs and DDGLs met separately.

On the DDGM side I wish to thank WB Rob Morrell for his leadership in helping plan and execute the program, WB Chris Hall for presenting case studies and success stories from the districts, and WBs Charles Barrett, Jon Canupp, and Mike Kenlan for sharing their insights with the group.

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

Honorary Title of Past District Deputy Grand Master

I recommend that this Grand Lodge grant the honorary title of Past District Deputy Grand Master to the several brethren who are now eligible in accordance with the provisions of Reg. 12-5 of The Code.

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

Emergent Communications of the Grand Lodge

An emergent communication of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina was held at Eagle Lodge No. 19 in Hillsborough on Dec. 1, 2017, for the purpose of installing Grand Lodge officers.

A second emergent communication of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina was held at Hominy Lodge No. 491 in Candler on June 3, 2018, for the purpose of dedicating a cornerstone at Hominy Baptist Church. The cornerstone graces an addition to the church that was made possible by WB Jack and Sister Carolyn Ferguson, whose philanthropy has enriched the lives of many in their region. We attended an inspirational Sunday service at Hominy Baptist for the church's graduating seniors, led by Rev. Joe Yelton, before dedicating the cornerstone. Special thanks to Rev. Yelton, MWB Bryant Webster, PGM Berry and Roseanna Rigdon, Hominy Lodge JW Chris Miller, DDGM Jack Barnett, DDGL Gus Sims, Dee Blake, and the brethren of Hominy Lodge for joining together to honor the Fergusons so appropriately and so well.

Lodges Under Dispensation

On July 7 we granted a dispensation to Knights of Solomon UD at Waynesville Lodge No. 259. This will be our fourth Knights of Solomon lodge to form since 2010, joining No. 764 in Charlotte, No. 766 in Jacksonville, and No. 768 in Holly Springs. Members of the Knights of Solomon are united by a love of motorcycling and a desire to support Masonic and community charities. They are representing Masonry well in their communities.

The Lodge of the Nine Sisters UD is scheduled to receive its charter Oct. 5, pending approval at this annual communication.

Summonses and Summary Trials

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

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

Two of the above-mentioned brothers failed to appear in response to Masonic summonses on two different occasions. As a result of the failure of these two brothers to obey the first Masonic summons, the Judge Advocate issued a complaint for un-Masonic conduct. Each of the brothers was served with the complaints. Thereafter, each of these two brothers failed to appear before the Trial Commission. Before hearing evidence, the Trial Commissioners waited more than two hours for each of the brothers to appear. After hearing evidence, the Trial Commission found each of the brothers guilty of un-Masonic Conduct. The Code proscribes that the penalty for failure to answer a Masonic summons is expulsion, and that punishment was entered.

The Conference of Grand Masters and Grand Secretaries of North America

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

The Northeast Conference of Grand Masters

In July I participated in the Northeast Conference of Grand Masters, Deputy Grand Masters, and Grand Secretaries in Warwick, RI, accompanied by DGM Mack Sigmon, SGW Shaun Bradshaw, JGW David Wicker, and PGM and Grand Treasurer Lew Ledford. This conference is an opportunity to network with Masonic leaders in our region, learn how they are addressing issues that concern us, and share ideas for better ways to serve the Craft. Every year I've attended, I've brought ideas back home for us to try. At this conference I learned from other jurisdictions about a promising database system that we may want to use, a program that helps struggling lodges, an amnesty program for those dropped for NPD, and a new-member survey that helps identify issues of concern to newly-raised Masons.

Masonic Home for Children at Oxford

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

WhiteStone: A Masonic and Eastern Star Community

I encourage you to read the report of the administrator of WhiteStone: A Masonic and Eastern Star Community and the report of the Grand Lodge committee on WhiteStone, for the most up to date information on our 106-year-old home for senior Masons and Stars. I'll add a personal note. When you visit WhiteStone you'll find a beautiful and comfortable home, operated by a friendly and knowledgeable staff and managed by professionals. Masons who have been in the Craft a decade or more understand that WhiteStone is a success story almost beyond belief. Our gifts to WhiteStone and the MESH LLC help house and provide services to deserving fraternal residents, and support outreach services that help brothers and sisters stay in their homes. I encourage you to visit, tour the facilities and see for yourself how Masons in North Carolina are helping brothers and sisters live their golden years in dignity and comfort.

The North Carolina Masonic Foundation, Inc.

A report from the North Carolina Masonic Foundation is found elsewhere in your Reports book, but I wish to add a personal note. The Foundation is a bulwark. Founded in 1929, months before the market crash that wiped out so many fortunes and destroyed so many lives, the Foundation has stood beside and behind our homes and has made it possible for them to not only survive, but thrive. It also holds and manages funds for the Charles Cathey Scholarship, which helps bright young North Carolinians pursue higher education. In recent years, under the leadership of Chairman Mike Faulkenbury and his board members, the Foundation has stepped up its efforts to encourage all of us to provide philanthropic support for the programs we hold dear. It's also offering new services to lodges, such as professional fund management and opportunities for lodges in historic buildings to receive support for renovations and restoration. Lastly, the Foundation provides opportunities for planned giving that allow us to support Masonic charities and provide income to us and our beneficiaries, thereby creating our legacies while providing for our families. I have happily joined with Foundation leaders and staff to help make the case for increased support, and I have made my planned gift. I hope you will consider how you can create your own legacy through Masonic charity and with the help of the Foundation.

Appendant bodies

The Scottish Rite

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

The York Rite

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

The Shrine

In January I attended the installations of our three Shrine potentates and their divans: Johnny Burgess of Oasis in Charlotte on Jan. 6; Bob Downen of Amran in Raleigh on Jan. 24; and Teeny Jones of Sudan in New Bern on Jan. 27. As I've said many times, I'm proud to be a North Carolina Mason and Shriner. The Shrine's philanthropy and service to humanity through Shriners Hospitals is unparalleled, and Blue Lodge Masonry could profitably adopt the Shrine's methods for involving spouses and families in their activities. I also participated in the South Atlantic Shrine Association (SASA) meetings in New Bern in March, and I attended the Imperial Shrine sessions in Daytona Beach, FL, in July. I'm grateful to our three Shrine temples and their potentates for their hospitality at these events, for their friendship, and for their dedication to Masonry and Shrinedom. As of this writing I'm looking forward to the SASA meetings in Myrtle Beach Sept. 21-22, and I'm happy to note that our Junior Grand Steward, Steve Norris, a Past Potentate of Sudan Shrine, is president of SASA this year.

National Sojourners and Heroes of '76

On Feb. 5, at Semper Fidelis Lodge No. 680 in Jacksonville, I was honored to be installed as a member of the National Sojourners. WB Ron Sortino, who at the time was national president of the Sojourners, participated in the ceremony. I returned to Semper Fidelis on Aug. 4 for initiation into the Heroes of '76, an affiliate and auxiliary organization of the Sojourners. Susan accompanied me and was made a Camp Follower. The Heroes degree was inspiring, patriotic and memorable, and I'm grateful for the confidence of the members who sponsored and initiated me into this outstanding organization. You will see the Heroes of '76 participating in the opening ceremonies of this Annual Communication.

The North Carolina College of SRICF

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

The Order of the Eastern Star

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

Youth organizations

On Jan. 13 I attended DeMolay initiations and a DeMolay degree held at my home Lodge, Eagle Lodge No. 19 in Hillsborough. I found the young men to be impressive and the ritual to be beautiful and meaningful. Masons who have not witnessed DeMolay work will have an opportunity to do so at this Annual Communication. I encourage every Mason to reach out to DeMolay, learn more about this outstanding organization, and support its growth in our grand jurisdiction.

The Grand Assembly of North Carolina International Order of the Rainbow for Girls invited me to its meeting June 25 in Raleigh, where I was received and made remarks.

The Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of North Carolina

On Sept. 29, 2017, as Grand Master-elect, I attended the annual communication of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina.

This November marks the 10th anniversary of mutual recognition between our Grand Lodges. Last year GM Gene Cobb and Prince Hall GM Milton F. “Toby” Fitch appointed a working group to plan an anniversary celebration. I met with the group on Feb. 12 and May 21. They have announced plans to hold a celebratory dinner on Oct. 27 in Raleigh. More information and on-line registration will be available before our annual communication.

Masonic Education

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

I’ll note here that PGM Doug Caudle, whose inspiration and efforts helped launch the Davie Academy, and who ensured that the Academy would offer outstanding programs in each region of the state, this year turned the reins over to WB Rob Morrell. I’m grateful to MWB Caudle for all that he has done to spread light, and I know WB Morrell well enough to know that the Academy will do great things in the years ahead.

Wilkerson College

On April 28 I had the honor of addressing 38 graduates of Wilkerson College at their commencement ceremony in Raleigh. The 2018 class was named for WB Morty Jayson, a friend and a fine man and Mason who was instrumental in Wilkerson College’s creation and development. WB Morty was a past master of Cary Lodge No. 198 and Wilkerson College Lodge No. 760. He left us, much too soon, this past October. On Aug. 17 I participated in the meeting of the College’s Board of Regents in Greensboro.

Lion and Pillar Lodge of Excellence Award

The Lion and Pillar Lodge of Excellence award was launched in 2017 under MWB Gene Cobb’s leadership. I am grateful for MWB Cobb’s assistance with the program this year. Lodges qualified by meeting requirements in five categories: Education, Patriotism, Philanthropy, Masonic Membership, and Affiliated Connections. In 2017, 56 lodges received the award. This year 34 lodges qualified, with eight first-time winners and 26 second-timers. First-time recipients are denoted with asterisks. Congratulations to the 2018 Lion and Pillar Lodges of Excellence. Your certificates will be presented Friday afternoon at this Annual Communication.

Eagle 19
 Zion 81
 Jerusalem 95
 Fulton 99
 Columbus 102
 Mt. Lebanon 117 *

Oxford 122
 Mingo 206
 William G. Hill 218
 Kenly 257
 Bingham 272
 Pleasant Hill 304
 Wilmington 319
 Granite 322 *
 Campbell 374 *
 State Line 375
 Jefferson Penn 384
 Bald Creek 397
 Bula 409 *
 Elkin 454 *
 Thomas M. Holt 492
 Pilot 493
 Mooresville 496 *
 Mount Holly 544 *
 Andrew Jackson 576
 Cannon Memorial 626
 Semper Fidelis 680
 Piedmont-Pioneer 685 *
 Albemarle 703
 Berne 724
 Steele Creek 737
 Mosaic 762
 Ashlar 765
 Lux Libertas 772

* denotes first-time recipient

The “Lynch Lodge”

On Feb. 3 I had the pleasure of attending the “Lynch Lodge” in Burlington. This is not one of our 371 chartered lodges. Bro. Steve Lynch periodically opens his “lodge” building, where he coaches candidates and which serves as his museum devoted to Masonry, George Washington, the military, and law enforcement. Membership is open to Masons and want-to-be Masons. Family members are welcomed. Steve and Betsy provide the biscuits, juice, and coffee and make sure that everybody is greeted and makes new friends. We will open an emergent communication of the Grand Lodge on Oct. 6 at the Lynch Lodge for the purpose of Masonic education. I’m looking forward to Steve’s hospitality and the rare and wonderful sense of fellowship that he creates.

Necrology

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

We are grateful for the service of these prominent brethren, and we cherish our memories of every brother within our circle who has traveled to that undiscovered country. The will of God is accomplished. So mote it be. Amen.

The Definition of Insanity and New Initiatives for 2018

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

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

Grand Lodge Committee Appointments

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

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

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

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

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

Budget Transparency

I've thought for a long time that our budgeting and budget reporting should be clearer and more transparent, and that members should have the opportunity to comment and ask questions well before we seek budget approval at the Annual Communication. This year I asked WB Kevin Combs, chairman of the Finance Committee, to hold an open meeting and work session on the 2019 budget. The Aug. 3 meeting, at the Grand Lodge building in Raleigh, attracted about 30 non-committee members. Kevin went through the budget line by line and answered all questions. I'd call it a success, with those

in attendance gaining a better understanding of Grand Lodge finances, and committee members and Grand Lodge officers hearing firsthand about issues of concern. I appreciate the dedication of the committee members and Grand Lodge officers who took time away from work and traveled great distances to engage with our membership. At this writing we are planning two webinars for September, where the budget will be presented for the benefit of brethren who couldn't travel to Raleigh for the open meeting.

At my direction, the Finance Committee is also developing a policy for reimbursements of Grand Lodge officer and committee member travel expenses. The Code provides direction for some, but not all, such expenses. Enacting a uniform policy is fiscally responsible and a sound business practice, and officers and committee members will benefit by knowing the rules before they accept their positions. A draft policy is due for review and comment by the BGP at this annual communication, with final approval expected in December.

Masonic Renewal

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

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

Grand Lodge Transition

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

In the spirit of not doing things the way we've always done them because we've always done them that way, I formed the Ad Hoc Grand Lodge Transition Planning Committee and asked MWB Bryant Webster to serve as chairman. This committee is helping to ensure that our Grand Lodge is able to respond to the expected retirement of our Grand Secretary quickly with the benefit of thoughtful advance preparation. Its charge is to evaluate the current Grand Lodge management model, examine other administrative models such as those employed by the grand lodges of Massachusetts and California, and make recommendations for a transition process to be enacted upon the Grand Secretary's notification of his retirement. The committee will consider the fraternity's current and future needs, incorporate membership and financial trends and forecasts in its deliberations, consider best management and business practices for a non-profit, membership-based organization of our type and size, and deliver its recommendations to the Grand Master and the Board of General Purposes by Nov. 1.

Recommendations may include proposed amendments to the Code that

are needed to effect any desired changes for the future. The report and its recommendations are not to be considered binding upon the Grand Master or Board of General Purposes at the time of transition. My intention is that we will be prepared to implement, if necessary, a new operational model that's appropriate for the smooth and efficient functioning of our Grand Lodge administrative functions.

Membership Services

We've seen a substantial increase in members exiting Masonry by NPD. Meanwhile, our system for issuing dues notices and collecting member payments would be familiar to our grandfathers, if not our great-grandfathers.

As a member of six lodges, I see a wide variety of dues notices. One lodge sends a friendly and informative letter with its dues notice, telling me about lodge events and accomplishments during the year and asking me to renew my membership. It emphasizes that my continued support is important. Another lodge sends only the familiar blue return envelope with the amount due written on it. Which lodge is doing more to reduce its NPDs?

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

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

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

The committee will consult with other grand jurisdictions to determine if best practices in other states can be adopted for our benefit. It is also encouraged to offer other ideas and examples for how lodges can reduce NPDs and to offer ideas and examples of best practices associated with member services and retention that it encounters during the course of its work.

While we will benefit from improved communications and processes at dues time, note well that the number one way to reduce NPDs is to keep brethren engaged and hold meetings that make them want to come to lodge.

I'm also asking the committee to find more convenient ways for us to pay dues. Monthly bank and credit card drafts are commonplace for bill payments. Why can't we pay monthly, and automatically? As a member of six lodges, I'd appreciate the option to pay monthly. I hasten to add that we will maintain your option to stand in line to pay at the secretary's desk, or mail a check at year-end, if that's your desire.

The committee is consulting with MORI staff to determine how we could

make more innovative use of its features. Committee members will also attend a demonstration of a competing Masonic database system and will recommend whether we should stay with MORI or move to a new vendor. This decision will be based on costs, benefits, ease of use and convenience for our members. I believe very strongly that we all benefit, financially as well as functionally, if we reevaluate our business relationships regularly and ensure that we have the best possible system at the lowest possible cost.

Committee Coordination

This year I charged the Committee on Masonic Education, the Board of Publication, the Public Relations Committee, and the Committee on Masonic Ceremonies to confer, discuss their priorities for the year, and work together to achieve them. In previous years these committees have worked in isolation to achieve their goals. I believe that their missions and interests overlap and that the Craft benefits when they collaborate. The result has been impressive, with an update of the More Light in Masonry brochure for Entered Apprentices and development of an interactive new member packet. See their committee reports for details.

The Letter G: A Force for Good in North Carolina

Our NC Mason editor, Beth Grace, and photographer Melody McBride brought to fruition an idea I've wanted to tackle for some time. They asked lodges across the state to send photos of their Letter Gs, and they also visited lodges and shot photos themselves. The result is a beautiful, glossy 16 x 20 poster printed by the School of Graphic Arts in Oxford and featuring 70 Gs from across the state. The tagline is "The Letter G: A Force for Good in North Carolina." The poster comes with a key that identifies each G by lodge. The poster sells for \$30 and proceeds benefit historic lodge preservation in North Carolina. Grace and McBride are working on a book featuring historic and notable lodges, and it's expected to be available at the Annual Communication. I thank them for their creativity and their commitment to Masons and Masonry.

The Statewide Traveling Degree Gavel

We introduced the North Carolina Traveling Degree Gavel Jan. 29 at the 16th District meeting at Granite Lodge No. 191 in Clayton. The gavel promotes fellowship across the state and encourages brethren to attend degrees in other lodges. A lodge room full of brethren from a wide area makes the degree even more special for the candidate, and it has the potential effect of aiding the host lodge with degree work. A journal accompanies the gavel to chronicle its stops and record the names of candidates.

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

The North Carolina Masonic Calendar

The North Carolina Masonic Calendar debuted on our Grand Lodge website this year under the News and Calendar of Events tab. The calendar fea-

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

Acknowledgements and special thanks

When you see a turtle on the fencepost, you know it didn't get there by itself. That goes for lodge officers and Grand Lodge officers. Each of us has been lifted and inspired by others. I cited three unforgettable Masonic mentors the day I was appointed to the Grand Line and the day I was elected Grand Master: My coach, Jake Jacobs; my friend, Walter Klein; and my cousin, Tom Speed.

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

I'm dazzled by the diverse skills, knowledge, and dedication that our Grand Line officers bring to the table, to address whatever tough issue has been before us. I'm grateful for every one of them. Each brings unique skills and perspectives — and brains and heart and soul — to the job, and I'm thankful that I can call on them at any time for any reason. I've been with these men many times, late at night, in all kinds of weather, in meetings well over a hundred miles from home. We communicate by phone, text, and email at all hours. They are always giving their best, whether it's working through a Grand Lodge problem, or helping a subordinate lodge, or lifting a brother in crisis. Brethren of the Grand Line, I sleep better at night knowing you are there, and I'm very excited about our Grand Lodge's future under your leadership.

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

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

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

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

I've known for some time that our Grand Lodge has an outstanding, pro-

fessional, and dedicated staff. This year I discovered how utterly indispensable each member of the team really is to the orderly and efficient functioning of this sprawling and complex enterprise of 371 lodges and 38,000 members. Thank you Walt Clapp, Jonathan Underwood, Cornelia Doherty, Vicki Lam, and Hayley Moll.

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

In 2010 Grand Master Ledford asked me to join the Grand Line. When I discussed it with Susan that night she said, if you love the organization, you don't say no to this. It is all about love: brotherly love, relief and truth; faith, hope and charity.

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

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

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

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

What are we doing for the next generation or Masons, and the next, as the particles flow through the hourglass? How will we use the time that remains before we pass Masonry to a new generation?

Brethren, the world's greatest fraternity is now in our care, and we will determine its future. We do not need to look to our history to see our best days.

We know what we need to do to be successful. We just need to do it. I'm excited by the possibilities of the next year and the next decade, and I'm absolutely convinced that the best is yet to come. I'm grateful for the opportunity to serve this fraternity which I love, and which has been so important to my family as well as to our state, nation, and world.

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

Prelude

Opening PrayerGrand Chaplain

Eulogy/Eulogies

MW Charles Edward Cathey, PGM.....MW Berry Rigdon, PGM
W Michael Wiley Brantley, PM Grand Historian...MW A. Gene Cobb, Jr.,
PGM

Scripture Reading2 Kings 2:9 -13

Oration.....“Passing on the Mantle” Grand Chaplain

A Time of Remembrance

*(Brothers will be offered an opportunity to call out the names of masons
who have passed who have been important in their lives)*

Song“Be Still, My Soul”
sung together; words either in the program or projected
for the brothers to be able to read

Funeral Grand Honors

BenedictionGrand Chaplain

Postlude

Be Still My Soul

Lyrics

1. Be still, my soul: The Lord is on thy side;
With patience bear thy cross of grief or pain.
Leave to thy God to order and provide;
In ev'ry change he faithful will remain.
Be still, my soul: Thy best, thy heav'nly Friend
Thru thorny ways leads to a joyful end.

2. Be still, my soul: Thy God doth undertake
To guide the future as he has the past.
Thy hope, thy confidence let nothing shake;
All now mysterious shall be bright at last.
Be still, my soul: The waves and winds still know
His voice who ruled them while he dwelt below.

3. Be still, my soul: The hour is hast'ning on
When we shall be forever with the Lord,
When disappointment, grief, and fear are gone,
Sorrow forgot, love's purest joys restored.
Be still, my soul: When change and tears are past,
All safe and blessed we shall meet at last.

Text: Katharina von Schlegel, b. 1697;
trans. by Jane Borthwick, 1813-1897
