

Reports

of

The Grand Master

The Grand Treasurer

The Grand Secretary

Boards, Commissions and Committees

at the

237th

Annual Communication

of

The Grand Lodge of

Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons

of North Carolina

Winston-Salem, North Carolina

September 27-28, 2024

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Report of the Grand Treasurer

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

I herewith submit my interim report as Grand Treasurer as of July 31, 2024, including projected expenditures for the year and suggested budget for calendar year 2025 as proposed by the Committee on Finance.

Total Funds available 01/01/2024	
(General Funds & Special Funds)	\$1,096,651
Total Receipts YTD	1,199,891
Total Disbursements YTD	(518,706)
Grand View (partial payment 7/2024)	<u>225,000</u>
Total Cash To Be Accounted For	\$ 1,552,836

<u>Deposits:</u>				<u>Amount</u>
Petty Cash				100
First Citizens Bank (operating account)				92,856
Money Markets:				
North State Bank	VARI	33,149		
PNC Bank	VARI	163,150		
First Citizens Bank MM	VARI	52,069		
Total Money Markets				\$ 248,368
Fixed Income Securities:	4/30/2024	6/30/2024	7/31/2024	
Alex. Brown Investment	\$81,619	\$684,351	\$462,903	\$ 462,903
Grand View Investment:				(\$225,000)
		Unrealized		
Investment	12/31/2023	Gain	7/31/2024	
Grand Lodge investment with NCMF	\$748,609	\$65,264	\$813,873	\$ 813,873
Total Cash & Cash Equivalents				\$ 1,618,100

(cont. on following page)

Special Funds Summary	12/31/2023	7/31/2024
Special Contingency Reserve	200,000	200,000
Emblems and Awards Reserve	21,592	28,017
Automobile Reserve	29,338	29,338
Operation Reserve	190,681	182,681
Building Reserve	185,337	185,944
Office Equipment Reserve	3,299	3,299
Retirement/Health & Life Ins.	8,000	8,000
Charity Fund	88,893	94,963
Library Fund	725	2,229
World Conference Reserve	11,000	2,055
Subordinate Lodges Real Estate Sold and Closed Accounts		
White Stone Lodge Sold 5/30/2021	20,333	20,333
White Stone checking account closed	10,616	10,616
Farmville Lodge Sold 5/2021	83,257	83,257
Farmville checking account closed	3,180	3,180
Balfour Lodge Sold 5/2024		273,362
Balfour checking account closed		7,184
Lodges donate to Building Fund	<u>1,854</u>	<u>1,854</u>
Total Special Funds	\$ 858,105	1,136,312

Liabilities

Current Liabilities		
Grand View Purchase (Balance Due)		(475,000)
Total Liabilities		(\$475,000)

Total Cash Equivalents Minus Liabilities as of 07/31/2024 **\$1,143,100**

Respectfully Submitted,
 Lewis R. Ledford, PGM, Grand Treasurer
 P. Shaun Bradshaw, PGM, Finance Chairman
 Gilbert D. Bailey, Finance Committee
 W. Charles Baret, IV, Finance Committee
 Gary L. Brant, Jr, Finance Committee
 Ronald A. Hensley, Finance Committee
 Archie L. Martin, Finance Committee
 James T. Moore, Finance Committee
 Steve M. Norris, Finance Committee
 Robert W. Rideout, Finance Committee
 J. Anthony Sessoms, Finance Committee

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, 2024, including the suggested budget for the calendar year 2025 as proposed by the Committee on Finance.

Grand Lodge of North Carolina 2025 Proposed Budget

Account Name	Actual 2023	Budget 2023	Actual 2024 through June 30	Budget 2024	Proposed Budget 2025
INCOME					
29,500 Est.					\$1,062,000
5,200					(187,200)
24,300 Est.	\$684,813	\$699,400	\$898,716	\$870,000	874,800
24,300 Est.	(26,900)	(26,900)		(24,000)	(24,300)
	\$657,913	\$672,500	\$898,716	\$846,000	\$850,500
Total Master Masons Per Capita Tax					
700	14,115	16,800	12,747	16,800	14,700
	(3,360)	(4,000)		(800)	(700)
	(6,720)	(8,000)		(8,000)	(7,000)
	4,035	4,800	12,747	8,000	7,000
1,500	33,123	32,000	35,516	32,000	32,000
	1,695	500		500	500
	14,431	12,000		12,000	12,000
	992	1,000	595	1,000	1,000
	<u>20,300</u>	<u>20,000</u>	<u>11,430</u>	<u>16,000</u>	<u>0</u>
Total Income	\$ 732,490	\$ 742,800	\$ 959,004	\$ 915,500	\$ 903,000

Grand Lodge of North Carolina 2025 Proposed Budget

Account Name	Actual 2023	Budget 2023	Actual 2024 through June 30	Budget 2024	Proposed Budget 2025
EXPENSE					
800-00					
800-01	30,500	29,000	2,500	29,000	29,000
800-04		250		250	0
800-06	0	4,250	2,125	4,250	4,250
800-07	887	1,200	683	1,200	1,200
Total 800-00 Philanthropy	31,387	34,700	5,308	34,700	34,450
Salaries and Fees					
810-00					
810-01	79,515	79,515	45,758	79,515	82,060
810-02	207,316	207,906	108,188	216,000	222,912
810-04	48,006	57,800	23,702	59,350	45,926
810-05	22,774	21,964	12,757	22,100	23,330
810-06	167	1,000	318	1,000	1,000
810-09	770	1,500	228	1,500	750
810-10	(19,076)	(18,000)	(18,000)	(18,000)	(18,000)
Total 810-00 Salaries and Fees	339,471	351,685	190,951	361,465	357,978

Grand Lodge of North Carolina 2025 Proposed Budget

Account Name	Actual 2023	Budget 2023	Actual 2024 through June 30	Budget 2024	Proposed Budget 2025
840-00					
Memberships Fees and Dues					
840-01 Masonic Service Association	1,821	2,250		2,250	2,250
840-02 Conference of Grand Masters	599	750	<u>100</u>	750	750
840-03 GMC Committee on Recognition	30	100		100	100
840-05 Northeastern Regional Masonic Conference	<u>300</u>	<u>300</u>		<u>300</u>	<u>300</u>
Total 840-00 Memberships Fees and Dues	\$ 2,749	\$ 3,400	\$ 100	\$ 3,400	\$ 3,400
850-00					
Travel and Officers Expenses					
850-01 Grand Master's Travel	9,467	9,500	11,492	9,750	9,500
850-02 Grand Master's Automobile - Reserve	7,835	8,000	715	10,000	10,000
850-03 Grand Master's Office		250	945	250	400
850-04 Grand Secretary's Travel	8,123	8,000	5,727	9,000	9,000
850-05 Grand Secretary's Automobile - Reserve	6,102	6,000	220	8,000	8,000
850-07 DDGM/DDGL Orientation, Travel Other	48,645	10,000	6,552	17,500	10,000
850-07a Regional Meetings	3,723		<u>(920)</u>		
850-07b Grand Master's District Meeting	10,014				
Total 850-07 DDGM/DDGL Orientation, Travel Other	\$ 62,382	\$ 10,000	\$ 5,632	\$ 17,500	\$ 10,000
Total 850-00 Travel and Officers Expense	\$ 93,910	\$ 41,750	\$ 24,731	\$ 54,500	\$ 46,900

Grand Lodge of North Carolina 2025 Proposed Budget

Account Name	Actual 2023	Budget 2023	Actual 2024 through June 30	Budget 2024	Proposed Budget 2025
860-00					
Boards, Commissions, and Committees					
860-01 Board of General Purposes	3,977	7,500	845	7,500	5,700
860-02 Board of Custodians	3,386	2,500	796	2,500	2,500
860-04 Masonic Public Relations	4,070	500	83,646	250	2,000
860-05 Finance Committee	156	500	229	250	100
860-06 Code Commission	202	300		250	100
860-07 Lodge Service Commission	76	100		100	100
860-08 Masonic Education	6,787	3,500	3,005	3,000	2,500
700-10 Middle Chamber Books expense					4,000
860-09 Middle Chamber Books sale, Eventbrite New Member Package	(9,950) 29,170	14,900	(5,200)	30,400	(6,400)
Total 860-00 Boards, Commissions, & Committees	\$ 37,873	\$ 29,800	\$ 33,320	\$ 44,250	\$ 10,600
Out-of-State Visitation					
870-01 Visiting other Grand Lodges	2,693	4,000	2,186	4,000	3,000
870-02 Conference of Grand Masters	10,476	7,500	10,610	7,500	6,000
870-03 Conference of Grand Secretaries	911	2,000	1,321	2,000	1,500
870-05 Regional Conference (NE)	3,502	3,750		3,750	5,000
870-06 World Masonic Conference/UGLE 300th	4,250	4,250		4,250	4,000
Total 870-00 Out-of-State Visitation	\$ 21,831	\$ 21,500	\$ 14,117	\$ 21,500	\$ 19,500

Grand Lodge of North Carolina 2025 Proposed Budget

Account Name	Actual 2023	Budget 2023	Actual 2024 through June 30	Budget 2024	Proposed Budget 2025
880-00					
Annual Communication / GLO Installation		\$ 80,000			
880-01 Grand Lodge Officers	1,141			3,250	2,500
880-02 Past Grand Masters	2,226			3,500	3,500
880-03 DDGM Travel	4,678			3,500	3,500
880-04 DDGL Travel	919			3,250	2,500
880-05 Boards, Committees, & Comm.	2,816			3,250	2,500
880-06 Guests	18,754			6,000	12,000
880-07 Auditorium, Banquets, Etc.	89,097			36,000	51,000
880-08 Ladies Luncheon					0
880-09 Printing	5,081			5,500	5,500
880-10 Installation exp.	46,478			18,000	18,000
Total 880-00 Annual Communication	\$ 171,192	\$ 80,000	\$ 0	\$ 82,250	\$ 101,000
890-00					
Miscellaneous Expenses					
890-01 Awards, Aprons, and Emblems	13,000	13,000	15,524	13,000	14,000
890-02 Grand Master's Portrait		1,000		1,000	1,000
890-04 Miscellaneous	1,796	1,000	447	1,000	1,500
890-06 Grand Lodge Library and Archive	5,500	5,500	1,814	5,500	5,000
Total 890-00 Miscellaneous Expenses	\$ 20,297	\$ 20,500	\$ 17,785	\$ 20,500	\$ 21,500
900-00					
Communications					
900-00 Communications	17,728	120,000	7,292	120,000	120,000
900-01 Communications Director			87,031		
900-03 Printing			16,906		
900-09 Internet Services/Web Page Domain	295	1,665			
900-10 NCMF Reimbursement for the NC Mason					
Total 900-00 Communications	\$ 18,023	\$ 120,000	\$ 112,894	\$ 60,000	\$ 60,000

Grand Lodge of North Carolina 2025 Proposed Budget

Acct. No.	Account Name	Actual 2023	Budget 2023	Actual 2024 through June 30	Budget 2024	Proposed Budget 2025
	EXPENSE SUMMARY					
800-00	Philanthropy	31,387	34,700	5,308	34,700	34,450
810-00	Salaries and Fees	339,471	351,685	190,951	361,465	357,978
820-00	Administration Costs	100,428	84,950	149,179	87,750	67,350
830-00	Building Expenses	96,493	71,500	38,459	70,000	72,000
840-00	Membership Fees and Dues	2,749	3,400	100	3,400	3,400
850-00	Travel and Officers Expense	93,910	41,750	24,731	54,500	46,900
860-00	Boards and Committees Office and Travel	37,873	29,800	33,320	44,250	10,600
870-00	Out-of-State Visitation	21,831	21,500	14,117	21,500	19,500
880-00	Annual Communication	171,192	80,000	0	82,250	101,000
890-00	Miscellaneous Expenses	20,297	20,500	17,785	20,500	21,500
900-00	North Carolina Mason	18,023	120,000	112,894	60,000	60,000
	Total Expenses (Series 800 - 910)	\$ 933,655	\$ 859,785	\$ 586,844	\$ 840,315	\$ 794,678
	Estimate Surplus/Deficit	\$ (201,165)	\$ (116,985)	\$ 372,160	\$ 75,185	\$ 108,322

Grand Secretary's Business Report

Brethren,

It is an honor to serve each of you, and I am grateful for your support and confidence. I am also privileged to work alongside the true heroes of our organization—the staff and support personnel of our Grand Lodge: Worshipful Brother Matthew Robbins, Assistant to the Grand Secretary; Vicki Lam, Finance Manager; Hayley Moll, Office Manager; Worshipful Brother Eric Greene, Office Administrator; Janice Wright, Events Coordinator; Worshipful Brother Don Butto, Editor of the North Carolina Mason; and Worshipful Brother Chris Wright, IT Coordinator. Our achievements could not be realized without the dedication of this full-time, part-time, and volunteer workforce. Thank you all.

In last year's report (and the year before), we established a foundational understanding of our fraternity's operations, focusing on five key areas: Grand Lodge business, Grand Lodge communications, Lodge business, Lodge communications, and philanthropy. This initial analysis served as a precursor to our goal of crafting a strategic vision supported by a comprehensive 5-, 10-, and 25-year operational plan. We have many opportunities and challenges ahead — opportunities which will allow us to have a greater impact on our communities and the world, while the challenges help us improve internally as an organization. This report will focus on internal shifts in operations, a review of Grand Lodge business, a review of Grand Lodge financial considerations, and Grand Lodge communications. Within each subsection will be an illustration of our successes and opportunities for improvement.

Grand Lodge Operations: A Shift

Since its inception in 1929, the North Carolina Masonic Foundation has been closely tied to the Grand Lodge in operations and staffing, serving as both an investment tool and the primary vehicle for charitable and philanthropic funds. However, the growing requirements and responsibilities to the Grand Lodge's membership and lodge operations, coupled with the complexities of planned and organized charitable giving through Masonry vis-à-vis the Foundation, have determined that both the Grand Lodge and the Foundation's functions should be compartmentalized to better serve our brethren and donors.

The Foundation remains the investment arm of North Carolina Freemasonry—for the Grand Lodge, our lodges, and our charities. The Grand Lodge, per the Code, is the final arbiter and director for all charitable Masonic aims. However, managing these funds and the various components of fundraising is a growing specialty that requires professional oversight and implementation. We appreciate the Foundation's Board and staff, especially Brother George Marut, Chief Development Officer, for his valuable insight and meticulous management of our fraternal funds; Worshipful Brother Chris Richardson for his insight into our lodges' cultures of giving back; and their partnership with our Special Activities Committee and its chairman, Worshipful Brother Casey Shaw. Grand Lodge, Lodge, and our charities' investments are now clearly delineated within specific accounts, and the process of their retrieval is protected by a new reporting system of checks and balances provided by our financial partner, Nottingham. Additionally, to comply with

IRS regulations, we have begun shifting all Lodge fundraising through the Foundation—a 501(c)(3) charitable non-profit. This ensures our brethren's philanthropic efforts remain compliant with IRS reporting requirements, and that our donors, brethren and otherwise, can accurately report their giving to the IRS. Each Lodge now has the ability to possess a Lodge Charity Account with the Foundation where members or the public may make donations, which the Lodge can then disburse to local or traditional charities. The technical minutia and significance of this shift cannot be overstated. This clarity in giving is increasing our members' and the public's will to give back financially.

Grand Lodge Business

This year's report builds on the foundation laid previously, diving deeper into the operational structure and financial health of both the Grand Lodge and our individual lodges. Communication is key, and Worshipful Brother Robbins and I delivered this presentation at several informational meetings across the state for the benefit of our members:

- Salem Lodge 289 in Winston-Salem on March 5
- St. John's Lodge 3 in New Bern on March 27
- Montgomery Lodge 426 in Cherokee on April 1
- Crown Point Lodge 708 in Greenville on April 11
- Snow Lodge 363 in Boone on April 15
- Wilkerson College in Raleigh on May 4
- Catawba Valley Lodge 217 in Morganton on May 9
- Long Creek Lodge 205 in Huntersville on May 13
- Lebanon Lodge 391 in Hope Mills on June 6
- St. John's Lodge 1 in Wilmington on June 11
- Selma Lodge 320 in Selma on August 6

The Grand Lodge is not only the philosophical heart of our fraternity but also operates as a critical business entity. Our presentation focused on several key areas: the Grand Lodge's corporate structure, as incorporated under Chapter X of the Laws of North Carolina in 1797; the organizational structure of its leadership and administrative components (Grand Lodge Officers, Subordinate Lodges, Boards, Committees, Commissions, and our three non-profit entities: the Foundation, the Masonic Home for Children, and WhiteStone); the Federal and State laws governing our operations, including our 501(c)10 status (a fraternal non-profit) and property tax exemption under State Statute 105-275.18; and the administrative organization of the Grand Lodge Office. Viewing the Grand Lodge as a parent corporation, with subordinate lodges functioning as franchises or branches, provides a practical framework for understanding our organizational dynamics. This perspective highlights the need to balance our philosophical and ritualistic traditions with sound business practices while drawing clear lines between these functions.

In addition to explaining our organizational structure, we emphasized the financial basis of our operations. The Grand Lodge of North Carolina

and its subordinate lodges are fraternal non-profits, exempt from most types of income or property taxes. This exemption is based on the expectation that our philanthropic and outreach efforts will offset the taxes we would otherwise pay. As Masons, we must ask ourselves, “Do we give back to our communities more than we take?” Our ongoing review of this question has revealed that fundraising by lodges (for both charity and operational needs) is disproportionate to the dues paid for basic operations. Studying these operations will provide valuable insights into the health of our fraternity and our ability to contribute to the betterment of society. We are continuing to gather information by reviewing lodge property values, operational and maintenance costs, membership size, dues, and per capita contributions.

For reference, last year’s report estimated that the lodges’ real property is under-appraised at around \$22.6 million. With nearly 325 parcels across North Carolina, the under-appraisal stems from the language of our property tax exemption in State Statutes, making it difficult to accurately gauge the true value. Adjusting for inflation, we estimate the total value of lodge properties to be closer to \$239 million. At the state’s average county and municipal tax rate (0.84%, provided by the North Carolina Department of Revenue), our lodges should collectively and annually return at least \$2 million to their communities.

$$\$239,000,000 \div 100 = \$2,390,000$$

$$\$2,390,000 \times 0.84 = \$2,077,600$$

(This should be our minimum philanthropic return to the community or charity.)

According to the 2023 Lodge Special Activities Report, our lodges returned \$833,366 to charitable purposes. Yet, based on the value of our exempted property, this figure represents only 40% of what we should aim to return to the public good. It’s also important to remember that a significant portion of lodge fundraising comes from the public (non-Masons), not strictly from Masonic sources. Gathering more data on lodge operations and charitable contributions will give us a clearer understanding of Freemasonry’s impact on the public, and we will continue this effort to strengthen our strategic planning and set meaningful goals for our members, lodges, and the Grand Lodge.

In 2022, the Grand Lodge’s operational budget was approximately \$729,000. However, the combined operational budget of our 360 lodges was about \$7.2 million. The scale of operations shifts significantly when considering the scope of work carried out by the Grand Lodge Office—a team of four full-time employees and one part-time employee working with 360 volunteer secretaries to manage the business of North Carolina Masonry.

Grand Lodge Finances

The second aspect of the Grand Lodge’s financial health is a thorough review of our budgeting process and operational requirements. The Grand Lodge’s budget has remained static since the mid-1970s, largely due to a cultural misconception that, because the Grand Lodge is a non-profit, its operational

costs should be minimal. This is simply not the case. While the Grand Lodge does not return a profit or dividend to its members, its operational strength is directly tied to its financial health. As demonstrated last year, reductions in operational spending directly affect the outreach and good that the Grand Lodge and Freemasonry can offer, both to our members and to the public.

For a detailed analysis, I refer you to last year's report, but the review is ongoing. To summarize: in addition to a 97% reduction in budgeted charitable giving (\$1.3 million in 1975 compared to \$34,000 in 2023), our basic operational needs now exceed \$1.7 million annually. This figure does not account for the needs of our primary charities, the Masonic Home for Children and WhiteStone. This is an issue that must be addressed by both our leadership and membership. Furthermore, even the reported charitable giving, as noted by the Special Activities Committee—where only \$585,132 was specifically designated to either the Home for Children or WhiteStone/MESH LLC—combined with the budgeted amounts (\$585,132 + \$34,000) totals \$619,132, which is just 36% of our charitable output from 50 years ago. To further put this in perspective, the financial needs to operate the Children's Home and WhiteStone exceed \$8 million annually, meaning that the financial contributions from our lodges and the Grand Lodge cover less than 8% of our own designated charitable obligations.

Some may view with skepticism the assertion that the Grand Lodge requires more funding for its operations. We are aware of the accusations of excessive spending by the Grand Lodge Office and its Officers. However, this frustration arises from a lack of understanding of our operational needs and standard financial management practices. The Grand Lodge has not done enough to explain its operational and philanthropic needs in clear, measurable terms, nor has it proposed specific goals to define success—whether fraternal or philanthropic. This fiscal strain has been compounded by the separation of the Grand Lodge and Foundation funds, outdated budgeting processes, and recent inflation. This is not due to any one person or group's failure but, in the Grand Secretary's opinion, stems from a historical entrenchment in tradition that blurs the lines between the business and ritualistic practices of the Grand Lodge, along with a generational shift in communication.

Above all, effective communication is essential. The Masons of North Carolina must see value in their Grand Lodge and its efforts to improve society. No matter the financial figure recommended to fund our operations, if you—our members—do not find value and meaning in our work, then there is no value to the form and function of North Carolina Masonry. I commit to working with our officers across the state to better illustrate the importance and impact of Freemasonry in our lives, our homes, and for the greater good of all. We must bridge the gap between ideals, realities, and expectations.

Despite limited resources, the Grand Lodge Officers are doing their best to review and reform outdated fiscal policies, establish best practices for lodge business operations, set clear expectations for membership participation, and reinforce the personal and fiscal responsibilities of altruism that are the hallmarks of our ancient rituals. Much of this work is tied to the new Public Relations campaign, a component of the "Not Just a Man, a Mason" promotion led by the two national Scottish Rite Jurisdictions, the Shrine, and several other North American Grand Lodges. Additionally, we are placing greater focus on lodge operational success, ritual excellence, and membership benefits.

More responsibilities are being delegated to our District Officers, Boards, Committees, and Commissions, with the expectation of increased volunteer service in our operations.

To better identify organizational deficiencies, in 2022, the Grand Lodge initiated a thorough review of its expenditures and operational needs. We are currently assessing our operations with the help of Forvis Mazars and First Citizens Bank. The law firm of Brooks-Pierce was also engaged to review our operations and provide best practices within the scope of non-profit law. Their draft report recommended unifying our mission and values while separating operational, fundraising, and ritual actions. Brooks-Pierce continues to represent the Grand Lodge in key matters, such as mediating a lawsuit involving our Masonic Temple in Asheville and providing guidance on lodge fundraising. This guidance is vital because improper fundraising practices not only risk jeopardizing our non-profit status but also harm our public image.

Forvis Mazars, an internationally recognized auditing and accounting firm, is currently reviewing the Grand Lodge's operations and financial management. Their preliminary report highlights six key areas for improvement: non-profit management strategies, operational challenges, communication, financial management, continuity of mission, and technology and marketing. Each of these areas will be referred to the relevant committee for further review and action. Additionally, our banking partner, First Citizens Bank, is helping ensure financial compliance and develop cash flow and investment strategies to strengthen the Grand Lodge's financial reserves and plan for the future.

In 2023, Past Grand Master Frazier requested a zero-based review of the Grand Lodge's budget. This process, led by Most Worshipful Grand Treasurer Lewis Ledford and Most Worshipful Shaun Bradshaw, Finance Chairman, is ongoing. Our goal is to provide a detailed report that clearly separates administrative, operational, and programmatic expenses. The budget now itemizes Annual Communication and Officer Installation expenses to show the true cost of our operations. The Finance Committee has begun meeting quarterly to review the budget and consider other financial matters. The Grand Treasurer, Finance Chairman, and Grand Secretary meet monthly to discuss financial issues. Our aim is to better oversee and manage the Grand Lodge's finances and recommend actions on our investment portfolio.

Grand Lodge Communication and How We Serve You

The success of these operational components and changes ultimately depends on the Grand Lodge leadership's ability to communicate effectively with you, the delegates. You are the Grand Lodge. Over the past year, we have made every effort to provide you with the necessary information to govern and lead your lodges effectively. I want to commend our Grand Lodge staff, who have organized countless virtual and in-person training sessions with secretaries, treasurers, and other lodge and district officers.

Last year we enumerated 12 key points in our service to the membership, which include:

1. Compiling and filing, on behalf of every lodge, its taxes and non-profit tax exemptions with the State of North Carolina and the Federal Government.
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2. Acting as the central agency for all legal questions and actions concerning lodge property, real estate, and other matters before the local and state courts and administrative offices of government on the state level and within all 100 counties.
3. Serving as the central liaison between the Grand Lodge and its subsidiary philanthropic endeavors, including the North Carolina Masonic Foundation, the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford, and WhiteStone: A Masonic and Eastern Star Community, as well as the Masonic Service Association of North America.
4. Supporting the Grand Master, his Grand Officers, and the District Officers of this jurisdiction in the execution of their duties and the mission of the fraternity.
5. Supporting and organizing the members of all Boards, Committees, and Commissions of this jurisdiction in the execution of their duties.
6. Directly coordinating the function of all lodges through the office of the local secretary vis-à-vis a centralized membership database, financial database, and communication program.
7. Processing all paperwork from lodges concerning membership petitions and affiliations.
8. Processing all paperwork and communications with our sister Grand Lodges in the United States and overseas (approximately 250 jurisdictions), as well as approximately 25 Appendant Masonic Bodies.
9. Coordinating all membership functions (awards, membership concerns, fraternal introductions, educational opportunities, and visitation).
10. Overseeing the implementation of ritualistic work.
11. Serving as a central repository for membership questions and concerns having to do with lodge procedures, disciplinary actions, corrective measures concerning the breach of Masonic law, or regulations with regard to the regularity of *administrative* work.
12. Serving as a central repository for membership questions and concerns having to do with lodge procedures, disciplinary actions, corrective measures concerning the breach of Masonic law, or regulations with regard to the regularity of *ritualistic* work.

As examples of this work, please consider that Worshipful Brother Robbins has hosted and recorded eight (8) training sessions covering Grand View database functions, including basic data entry, accounting, member engagement, and the management of petitions and prospects. Additionally, he and Vicki Lam have led more than fifty (50) in-person training sessions, lasting two to three hours each, at the Grand Lodge Office, focusing on basic processes and financial management. As of August 1, alongside Hayley Moll, Eric Greene, and Chris Wright, our Grand Lodge Office staff have fielded over 6,000 calls, totaling 634 hours of conversation and assistance to our lodges.

The primary takeaway from our interactions with lodge leadership is the clear need for continuous training and communication with our lodges. More broadly, the blunt, and often justifiable, frustrations of some members and lodges have led to concrete action items that the Grand Lodge Office

can address. These will allow us to better guide Masonic leadership at the Grand Lodge, District, and Lodge levels, focusing on redress and education. We recognize there is frustration with the new database system and the learning curve involved, the new Public Relations campaign and its branding, the content and distribution of the *North Carolina Mason* magazine, and the shift away from the traditional District Meeting schedule. This has left many members and lodges across the state feeling disconnected, rejected, and forgotten. It is our goal to address these issues.

While frustration was evident in many of the locations visited by the Assistant Grand Secretary and me, our visit to Selma Lodge 320 was perhaps the most uncomfortable but also the most beneficial. The jurisdiction's frustrations were articulated, and as a result, we identified several key areas for improvement: 1) communication from the Grand Lodge, 2) respect and reverence for the symbols of our Craft, 3) access to education and information on Grand Lodge operations, 4) financial transparency, and 5) member representation in decision-making. That being said, we also received positive and constructive feedback from the other 11 visits, reinforcing our conclusion that education and communication are key.

In response, the Grand Lodge Office is developing a comprehensive training program for lodge secretaries, with additional support for treasurers and masters. Your lodge officers are your representatives to the Grand Lodge and are the channels through which information and change flow. While the implementation of the new database system, Grand View, has been largely successful, it has presented challenges for lodge leaders unaccustomed to change. The duties of the lodge secretary are considerable, and many lodges lacked succession plans for this role. To address this, we have reverted to smaller in-person and virtual training sessions. We are also establishing a council of secretaries to review database functions and secretarial duties, with the goal of improving lodge management, training, and feature deployment.

Training for the rest of our officer corps is equally crucial. I urge each of you to consider the skills and adaptability of your lodge officers. The Grand Lodge Office and Grand Lodge Officers are committed to providing the necessary leadership training. We recommend expanding the Education Committee's offerings and aim to develop training programs that are on par with certificate programs offered by community colleges or non-profit organizations. Though still in the early planning stages, we are also exploring the adoption of regular lodge officer retreats and seminar programs, which could operate in tandem with, or as an addition to, a more traditional District Meeting schedule. Effective communication is key to the success of our fraternity.

Final Notes and Conclusion

As we move forward, there are several key actions we must take to secure the future of Freemasonry in North Carolina. First, we must continue refining our financial management processes, addressing the gaps in communication, and improving our strategic planning for long-term sustainability. Expanding training opportunities for lodge officers and enhancing membership engagement are essential to strengthening our fraternity at every level. We will also continue our efforts to align our philanthropic endeavors with our financial goals, ensuring that we meet the expectations of our members and the broader community. Inasmuch, the aforementioned points are just as pertinent

to our lodges as they are to the Grand Lodge. Lodges are a microcosm of the Grand Lodge. As the Grand Lodge strives to improve its business practices, our lodges must also take on the responsibility of ensuring their leadership (Masters and Wardens) and administrators (Secretaries and Treasurers) are performing diligently and credibly with the support of their brethren.

Know the Form and Function of the Organization

It is paramount to understand that the form and function of a lodge (and Grand Lodge) are scalable and vary depending on location, culture, and resources. While we maintain a wide variety of Masonic lodges and facilities, this has often proven detrimental to the health and function of Masonry in certain locations due to a lack of insight into the required resources necessary to operate.

Understand the Culture and Scalability of Your Lodge

Historically, lodges met in taverns or restaurants and typically did not own real estate. In the 19th century, lodges began building their own buildings, but these facilities almost always served dual purposes—a school, meeting hall, theater, or some other public venue—thereby contributing to the socialization of our communities. In the 20th century, lodges and temples became single-use facilities built solely for Masonic purposes. This occurred during our peak membership period, but this peak should not be considered the norm for our operations. We have returned to an era akin to our 18th and 19th-century capabilities, whereby our lodges should either meet in rented spaces or multipurpose facilities. In either case, our membership must be fiscally responsible for the financial requirements of either option.

Treat Your Lodges Like Businesses

The Grand Lodge Office has conducted substantial research concerning the disposition of its subordinate lodge properties. A sizable portion of our lodge inventory is at risk due to substantial neglect or decay caused by financial insecurity, a symptom of the disconnect between perceived cost and actual value based on generational biases. We are fortunate that our larger temples—such as those in Greensboro, Winston-Salem, and Asheville—are managed as businesses, whereby community use facilitates their upkeep, constant repair, and improvement. It is imperative that both the Grand Lodge and individual lodges work together to ensure financial stability and operational efficiency. By understanding the historical context and scalability of our lodges, and by adopting fiscally responsible practices, we can preserve the integrity and function of our fraternity for future generations. Ideally, there are substantial Masonic centers or temples in our major urban centers where the number of members can offset the costs of routine and annual maintenance.

Technology to Simplify Business Functions

The Grand Lodge Office is striving to simplify the administrative process of our lodges by moving our collective financial reporting to one shared database—Grand View. Again, based on the model of lodges being branches of the Grand Lodge, operationally, the Grand Lodge (the collection of lodges

as one corporate body) can utilize shared resources to maintain our presence across the state. The beginning component of this work is the use of our central database by our lodge leadership and administrators. Centralized record keeping and financial reporting allows the Grand Lodge to effectively work with our non-profit partners, such as First Citizens Bank, to help us derive solutions to the challenges we face as a fraternal non-profit. While we are still exploring options, this potentially includes centralized accounting and banking services, consolidated insurance options, and even collective facility management.

Ask Questions and Help Create Solutions

Your continued support and active participation are critical to our success. Do not be afraid to ask questions about how your Grand Lodge works. We must always presume that each of us actively desires to contribute to the success and well-being of our fraternity. Together, we can build a stronger, more vibrant Grand Lodge that upholds the timeless values of Freemasonry while meeting the modern demands of leadership and service. I am committed to working with each of you, our officers, and our committees to ensure that we move forward with purpose, clarity, and resolve.

Thank you for entrusting me with this responsibility; I am here to serve.

Membership Statistics

Membership 12/31/2022	32,283
Initiated.....	623
Passed.....	514
Raised.....	508
Admitted.....	175
Restored.....	<u>232</u>
Total Gains.....	915
Expelled.....	13**
Suspended UMC	3**
Excluded NPD.....	819**
Demitted.....	273
Died.....	<u>987</u>
Total Losses.....	2,095
Total membership 12/31/2023	31,103
Number of lodges as of 1/1/2023.....	353

**These figures include brothers who were members of multiple lodges & thus were dropped from more than one lodge as the result of action taken either at Grand Lodge level or, in the case of NPDs, in another lodge.

Service Awards for 2024

Twenty-Five year Service Awards presented.....	409
Fifty Year Veteran Awards presented.....	405
Sixty Year Awards	189
Seventy Year Awards	40
Seventy-Five Year Awards.....	8

Fraternally submitted,
Jonathan A. Underwood, Grand Secretary

Report of the Committee on Charity

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

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

To NWF	\$3000
To JC.....	\$1000
To DLY.....	\$1000
To BDM	\$1500
To DG.....	\$3000

Respectfully submitted,
Johnny Surles, Chairman

Report of the Grand Historian

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

This year marks the 237th Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina. Those two hundred thirty-seven years have been filled with brothers who have supported our Grand Lodge, their communities, and our nation. In that time, our fraternity and those brethren who have come before us have left us with a strong foundation to build upon. We must look to our past to help guide our future. We should honor and be proud of our history. We have the opportunity to learn from our past and the brethren who have come before us. We should strive at our current time to leave a legacy for future historians and the next generation to be just as proud of as we are of the legacy our brothers in the past have left for us.

In considering the history of our Grand Lodge we should all be able to find something of interest. Some may be interested in finding out more about the brothers who helped establish this great fraternity in North Carolina; some may find interest in the architecture of one of our older lodges, while others may find it in the progression of our degree work and ritual; or they may find interest in a variety of other topics that have shaped our Grand Lodge and this

fraternity in our state through the years. In an age when almost everything we want to know is as easy as looking it up online through our electronic devices, it is very reassuring to know that the membership in North Carolina still wants to dig deeper and find out about the origins of our fraternity in our great state. While we do not have as many members today as we have had in the past, the majority of our current membership appear to be of the same mindset of our original members. They want to see our great fraternity succeed and be around for the next generation.

One of the things that our 171st Grand Master has worked on in 2024 is ritual restoration. Grand Master Kehler held seven Ritual Restoration Symposiums throughout the state this year. Our ritual is a big part of our history. The ritual has changed some since the first lodge was founded in our state, but the moral lessons and teachings were put into our ritual for very important reasons and remain as true today as they ever were. The authors of our ritual had the foresight to know what our members needed to learn that would be of benefit to their life, our fraternity, and our society. We must as Masons remember that the authors of our ritual put thought into every aspect of it and try to live our lives by what they wanted to teach us. If we use the tenets, virtues, and moral lessons that the first Masons in North Carolina thought were so important, as guides to our lives then our fraternity will continue to prosper well into the future.

Respectfully submitted,
Brandon L. Penley, Grand Historian

Report of the Committee on Permanent Building

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The Committee on Permanent Building conducted a comprehensive walkthrough of the building and grounds, resulting in several key recommendations. Notable electrical upgrades were identified, including replacing the remaining light fixtures with LED units and upgrading the main junctions where service enters the building. The committee also recommended updating the aging security system, which is now approximately 30 years old. Given recent security concerns experienced by the staff, this recommendation was presented to and approved by the Board of General Purposes in June. Installation of the new security system was underway at the time of this report.

The committee also made recommendations regarding the building's interior. These included cleaning the HVAC system and making surface improvements to deteriorated plaster walls, worn paneling, and stained marble. Additionally, the flush valves and seats on most of the toilets require replacement. The committee is in the process of prioritizing these tasks and obtaining estimates.

Over the past year, the condenser coil in the air conditioning unit serving the main office area failed and was replaced. Several plumbing components and sections of irrigation piping in the front and side lawns were serviced or replaced, including the main irrigation line from the well to the system's distribution box, following its failure. Plaster damage from a previous leak was repaired in the Great Hall.

Plans continue to evolve to allow lodges and other entities, such as historical societies and healthcare wellness fairs, to use the building. These plans include upgrades to locks and latches on several doors, as well as the maintenance of tables, chairs, and lodge furniture.

The committee remains dedicated to the ongoing maintenance and improvement of the Grand Lodge building and encourages all members and lodges to visit their Masonic home.

Respectfully submitted,
P. Christopher Lee
Tommy R. Mills
Robert J. Scott

Report of Lodge Service Commission

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

Since our Annual Communication in September 2023, the following applications and inquiries were received and considered by Lodge Service Commission:

1. An application from Keller Memorial Lodge No. 657 to accept a donation of approximately 1/3 acre of land. The property being donated was a remnant left over after the development of a larger tract of land. The original landowner put as a condition of his sale to the developer that any unbuilt land would be donated to the Lodge. The land is contiguous to other Lodge property. After consideration of the application, the request was approved.
 2. An application from Manteo Lodge No. 521 to sell the real property located at 48338 NC Hwy 12 in Buxton, NC. The property was formerly the property of Hatteras Lodge No. 698. With the consolidation of Hatteras Lodge No. 698 into Manteo Lodge No. 521, this property is no longer being used by a Masonic Lodge, and the property will no longer be tax exempt. Based on the information provided, Lodge Service Commission was of the opinion that the sale price was adequate, and the application was approved.
 3. An application from Manteo Lodge No. 521 to sell the real property located at 307 Back Road, Ocracoke, NC. The property was formerly the property of Ocracoke Lodge No. 747. With the consolidation of Ocracoke Lodge No. 747 into Manteo Lodge No. 521, this property is no longer being used by a Masonic Lodge, and the property will no longer be tax exempt. Based on the information provided, Lodge Service Commission was of the opinion that the sale price was adequate, and the application was approved.
 4. An application from Cherokee Lodge No. 146 to purchase real property located at 1105 Martins Creek Road, Murphy, North Carolina, for the purpose of converting the property into a lodge building. The information provided in the application indicated that the purchase price for the property would deplete the Lodge of its cash on hand. In addition to the initial purchase price, the membership numbers of Cherokee Lodge along with their current dues structure would
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leave the Lodge without sufficient funds to pay for the renovations necessary to convert the property into a functioning Masonic Lodge and without the ability to address any unanticipated maintenance or repair issues. Based on the financial information provided, by majority vote, the application was denied.

5. After securing an extension of time from the seller, Cherokee Lodge No. 146 submitted a second application to purchase real property located at 1105 Martins Creek Road, Murphy, North Carolina, for the purpose of converting the property into a Masonic Lodge. After the initial denial by Lodge Service Commission, RW Jonathan Underwood went to Murphy and met with the members of Cherokee Lodge regarding their request. In addition to the information originally submitted, Cherokee Lodge provided additional information that indicated that the Lodge secured substantial donations from members to pay for the anticipated upfit costs and modified their dues structure to provide the additional income to the Lodge. After careful consideration of all the information submitted by Cherokee Lodge, the application was approved.
 6. An application from Manteo Lodge No. 521 to sell the real property located at 307 Back Road, Ocracoke, NC. The property was formerly the property of Ocracoke Lodge No. 747. With the consolidation of Ocracoke Lodge No. 747 into Manteo Lodge No. 521, this property is no longer being used by a Masonic Lodge, and the property will no longer be tax exempt. The Lodge Service Commission previously approved the sale of this property under the same terms and conditions. However, the original buyer withdrew their offer during the due diligence period. Based on the information provided, Lodge Service Commission was of the opinion that the sale price was adequate, and the application was approved.
 7. An application of Liberty Lodge No. 45 to enter into a long-term lease for a cell tower on an unused, but contiguous, portion of their Lodge property. As this is the first time such a long-term lease has been brought before Lodge Service Commission, after this matter was considered, the Chair brought the matter to the Grand Master and the Board of General Purposes such that they could consider the ramifications of such a long-term contract and submit any questions or make any recommendations they may have to Lodge Service before a final decision was issued. After fully considering the application and considering the discussion of the members of the Board of General Purposes, the application was approved with certain terms and conditions as set out in the decision.
 8. An application from Biscoe Lodge No. 437 to sell the real property located at 320 Eldorado Street, Troy, NC. The property was formerly the property of Troy Lodge No. 718. With the consolidation of Troy Lodge No. 718 into Biscoe Lodge No. 437, this property is no longer being used by a Masonic Lodge, and the property will no longer be tax exempt. Based on the information provided, Lodge Service Commission was of the opinion that the sale price was adequate, and the application was approved.
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9. An application from Wallace Lodge No. 279 to construct a building to be used as a Masonic lodge on real property currently owned by the Lodge. Based on the application, it appeared that Wallace Lodge had sufficient financial resources to pay the costs of constructing the building. In addition, the Lodge voted to increase their dues to be certain that there was sufficient income to pay for the ongoing operational costs and maintenance of the new lodge. After careful consideration, the application was approved.
10. The Chair received a request from Pilot Lodge No. 493 in Pilot Mountain, NC, regarding a condemnation action brought by the City of Pilot Mountain for a temporary sewer easement across the front of the property owned by the Lodge. A condemnation action is not a matter properly considered by Lodge Service Commission. Nevertheless, the Chair will work with Pilot Lodge to see if there is some resolution that can be reached with the City.

I would like to thank the members of Lodge Service Commission, Brothers Doug Calhoun, John Hudson, Jay Chaulklin, Aaron Jackson, and James Blankenship for their dedication and service to this committee.

Respectfully submitted:
R. David Wicker, Jr., PGM, 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 two Grand Lodges. This Grand Lodge subscribes to the services of the Commission on Information for Recognition of the Conference of Grand Masters in North America to gather information and investigate whether the grand lodge in question satisfies the conditions of regularity. The Commission's guidelines or Standards for Recognition are as follows:

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

Grande Oriente da Bahia

The Grande Oriente da Bahia requested recognition on 18 July 2023. The Commission on Information for Recognition lists this as a regular Grand Lodge in their 2020 proceedings. The Committee on Fraternal Correspondence recommends approving recognition to the Grande Oriente da Bahia.

Grand Orient of Rio Grande do Norte, Brazil

Grand Orient of Rio Grande do Norte (Brazil) requested recognition on 9 December 2023. They are recognized by the United Grand Lodge of England, however it is unclear that the Conference of Grand Masters of North America's Commission on Information recognizes them as regular. The Committee on Fraternal Correspondence recommends tabling this request until further research can be performed as to the legitimacy and origin of this Grand Lodge.

Respectfully submitted,
Douglas L. Caudle, PGM, Chairman

Report of the Judge Advocate

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

This report is prepared this 23rd day of July 2024 and most respectfully submitted for your information and disposition.

1. **Docket No. 926:** Brother CGS, a Master Mason and Member of Albermarle Lodge No. 703, was charged in a one-count complaint alleging Un-Masonic Conduct in violation of Regulation 86-2(27) of The Code. On or about September 19, 2018, Bro. CGS was found guilty after a jury trial in Stanly County Superior Court of Assault With a Deadly Weapon Inflicting Serious Injury in violation of N.C.G.S. 14-34(B) [Class E Felony]. Bro. CGS was sentenced to a 20-33 month suspended sentence and placed on supervised probation for 36 months. Bro. CGS appealed his conviction to the N.C. Court of Appeals.

Bro. CGS was served with the complaint on September 26, 2018. The case was held open until a decision was rendered from the appellate courts. On or about December 31, 2020, an opinion was filed with the N.C. Court of Appeals overturning the conviction because the judge did not give a jury instruction on self-defense and remanded the case to the trial court for a new trial. On or about December 6, 2021, Bro. CGS entered a plea of guilty pursuant to North Carolina v. Alford to Assault Inflicting Serious Injury in violation of N.C.G.S. 14-33 [Class A1 Misdemeanor]. Bro. CGS was sentenced to a 30-day suspended sentence and placed on supervised probation for 12 months.

The Judge Advocate entered an Order of Dismissal of the Complaint on April 10, 2024.

2. **Docket No. 989:** Brother ELE, Jr., a Master Mason and Member of Durham Lodge No. 352, was charged in a two count complaint alleging Un-Masonic conduct in violation of Reg. 86-1.5, 86-2.27, and 86-2.28 of The Code. On or about July 13, 2023, Br. ELE entered a plea of guilty in two counts of INDECENT LIBERTIES WITH A CHILD in violation of N.C.G.S. 14-202.1 [Class F Felony]. A verdict of guilty was entered in Person County Superior Court and Br. ELE was sentenced to 16-29 months in the custody of the NCDOC, and other terms and conditions upon release from custody.

Br. ELE was served with the complaint. Upon his failure to answer or respond, Default was entered and Br. ELE was expelled

from Masonry by the Decision of the Judge Advocate on the 18th of December, 2023.

3. **Docket No. 990:** Brother TJH, a Master Mason and Member of St. John's Lodge No. 3, was charged in a complaint that he emailed a small portion of the OSW to a few other Master Masons in his Lodge. The Brother was charged with several counts of Un-Masonic conduct. By request of the Judge Advocate, the Grand Master ordered Br. TJH to appear before the Judge Advocate. The Brother was also ordered to fully and completely answer all of the questions of the Judge Advocate.

Br. TJH appeared before the Judge Advocate at the Grand Lodge Office and answered all questions posed to him in a forthright manner. Upon consideration of the circumstances, the Judge Advocate, in his discretion, entered an Order to Stay the proceeding in this matter, pending the completion of various terms and conditions by the Brother. Br. TJH has completed the first condition and is making appropriate and suitable progress to the completion of the final condition within the time allowed. It is anticipated that prior to the Annual Communication, Br. TJH will fulfill his commitment to complete the terms of the Order Staying the proceeding. The Stay remains in effect as of this submission.

4. **Docket No. 991:** Brother WTT, a Master Mason and member of Leaksville Lodge No. 136, was charged with Un-Masonic conduct, in a multiple count complaint. Based upon an audit of the Lodge accounts, Br. WTT was accused of failure perform his duties as Secretary of the Lodge as they related to the Budget, using Lodge funds for unapproved projects, hiring his family to perform reconciliation for the Lodge Accounts, and use of Lodge funds for personal benefit.

Br. WTT filed an answer denying the charges, and a Trial Commission was empaneled on November 17, 2023, at the Grand Lodge Office. The Judge Advocate presented the testimony of the Auditor and his findings. Br. WTT appeared before the Trial Commission and gave testimony. Upon hearing all the evidence and arguments of the parties, the Trial Commission found Br. WTT guilty of Un-Masonic conduct and entered a judgement suspending him until November 17, 2028.

5. **Docket No. 992:** Br. JFM Jr, a Master Mason and member of Wilmington Lodge No. 319, was charged by the Judge Advocate, in conformance with Regulation 91-3, with Un-Masonic conduct. The complaint alleged that Br. JFM had been hired by another Master Mason to install a "whole house generator" system in the new home the Master Mason was constructing. Upon receiving payment in full, Br. JFM failed to install the system and failed to refund the payment. The Brother brought a civil action again Br. JFM, and a default judgment was enter against Br. JFM.

In a multiple count complaint, Br. JFM was charged with Un-Masonic conduct in violation of the Code. [see Regulation 86-1.3(C), 86-2 (41), 86-2(28), 52-3(1), (4), (7), (13), (14)] Br. JFM was served with the complaint. Upon his failure to answer or respond, Default was entered, and JFM was expelled from Masonry by order of the Judge Advocate on December 18, 2023.

6. **Docket No. 993:** Br. PTT, a Master Mason and member of Blackmer Lodge No. 170, was removed as Secretary of Blackmer Lodge by Order of the Grand Master on November 8, 2023. A complaint for Un-Masonic was filed alleging that Br. JTT repeatedly conducted himself in a manner to bring discredit and reproach upon himself, his Lodge, and Masonry by verbally abusive, harsh, and hostile language directed to the Office Manager for the Grand Lodge and other employees of the Grand Lodge, as well as directly to the Grand Secretary. On other occasions Br. PTT sent an email to the Grand Lodge making rude and accusatory remarks about the Grand Master's published message on the budget for the Grand Lodge.

Br. PTT was charged for his failure to abide by the requirement of the Code and his continued insubordination and neglect of his duties in violation of Regulation 2-1, 2-6(2),(5),(7). Additionally he was charged with failure to keep and perform his obligations as a Master Mason pursuant to Regulations 52-3 (1),(2),(5),(7),(11),(13). Further he was charged with failure to discharge his duties as a Master Mason under Regulation 86-2(1) and (7) of the Code.

Br. PTT was served with the complaint via personal service by the District Deputy Grand Master as his mailing address filed with the Grand Lodge was invalid. Upon his failure to answer or respond, Default was entered, and PTT was expelled from Masonry by Decision of the Judge Advocate on March 20, 2024.

7. **Docket No. 994:** Brother WCW, a Master Mason and Member of Washington Lodge No. 675, was charged in a one-count complaint alleging Un-Masonic Conduct in violation of Regulations 86-1(5), 86-2(27), 86-2(28) of The Code. On or about October 20, 2023, Bro. WCW was found guilty after a jury trial in Beaufort County Superior Court of Second Degree Murder in violation of N.C.G.S. 14-17(B) [Class B1 Felony]. Bro. WCW was sentenced to 300-408 months in the N.C. Department of Adult Correction. Bro. WCW appealed his conviction to the N.C. Court of Appeals.

Bro. WCW was served with the complaint. The case is currently held up until a decision is rendered from the appellate courts.

8. **Docket No. 995:** Brother DAP II, a Master Mason and Member of Cherry Point Lodge No. 688, was charged in a two-count complaint alleging Un-Masonic Conduct in violation of Regulations 86-1(5), 86-2(1), and 86-2(11) of The Code. The Complaint alleged that Bro. DAP posted inappropriate and explicit material publicly on social media, and ignored the requests of the Master of Cherry Point Lodge and the DDGM of the 7th Masonic District to take these posts down.

Bro. DAP filed an answer denying the charges, and a Trial Commission was empaneled on April 5, 2024, at the Grand Lodge Office. Bro. DAP did not appear for trial and the Trial Commissioners found him guilty of all specifications. Bro. DAP was expelled from Masonry by order of the Judge Advocate on April 10, 2024.

9. **Docket No. 996:** Brother REH II, a Master Mason and Member of Shelby Lodge No. 744, was charged in a two-count complaint alleging Un-Masonic Conduct in violation of Regulations 86-1(2), 86-1(5), 86-2(2), 86-2(28), 86-2(29), 86-2(39) of The Code. On or about March 9, 2015, Bro. REH entered a plea of guilty to one count of Driving

While Impaired in violation of N.C.G.S. 20-138.1 [a Misdemeanor]. A verdict of guilty was entered in Cleveland County District Court, and Bro. REH was sentenced to a 60-day suspended sentence and placed on unsupervised probation for 12 months. On or about July 23, 2018, Bro. REH entered a plea of guilty to one count of Driving While Impaired in violation of N.C.G.S. 20-138.1 [a Misdemeanor]. A verdict of guilty was entered in Cleveland County District Court, and Bro. REH was sentenced to a 12-month suspended sentence and placed on supervised probation for 18 months. The Complaint further alleged that Bro. REH made numerous public social media posts including hate speech against various religions, and taking a man's wife and children from him.

The Judge Advocate attempted to have Bro. REH served with the complaint on multiple occasions by certified mail, personal service, and certified email, but was unsuccessful in all respects. Default was entered, and Bro. REH was expelled from Masonry by the Decision of the Judge Advocate on June 19, 2024.

10. **Docket No. 997:** Brother CRT, a Master Mason and Member of Cookeville Lodge No. 502, was charged in a three-count Complaint alleging Un-Masonic Conduct in violation of Regulations 86-1(2), 86-1(5), and 86-2(28). On or about July 10, 2023, Bro. CRT entered a plea of guilty to one count of Domestic Violence Protective Order Violation in violation of 50B-4.1(A) [Class A1 Misdemeanor]. A verdict of guilty was entered in Cleveland County District Court, and Bro. CRT was sentenced to a 20-day suspended sentence and placed on unsupervised probation for 12 months. On or about March 7, 2024, Bro. CRT entered a plea of guilty to one count of Simple Possession Schedule II Controlled Substance in violation of N.C.G.S. 90-95(D)(2) [Class 1 Misdemeanor]. A verdict of guilty was entered in Iredell County District Court, and Bro. CRT was sentenced to pay a fine and court costs. On or about February 26, 2024, Bro. CRT entered pleas of guilty to two counts of Animal Abuse in violation of N.C.G.S. 14-360 [Class 1 Misdemeanors] and two counts of Allow Livestock to Run at Large in violation of N.C.G.S. 68-16 [Class 3 Misdemeanors]. Verdicts of guilty were entered in Lincoln County District Court, and Bro. CRT was sentenced to a 45-day suspended sentence and placed on supervised probation for 18 months.

The Judge Advocate attempted to have Bro. CRT served with the complaint on multiple occasions by certified mail, personal service, and certified email, but was unsuccessful in all respects. Default was entered, and Bro. CRT was expelled from Masonry by the Decision of the Judge Advocate on June 19, 2024.

11. **Docket No. 998:** Brother MTH, a Master Mason and Member of James K. Polk Lodge No. 759, was charged in a six-count Complaint alleging Un-Masonic Conduct in violation of Regulations 86-1(5), 86-2(1), 86-2(11), 86-2(9), 86-2(29), 86-2(36), and 86-2(58) of The Code. The Complaint alleged that Bro. MTH regularly created social media content available for public consumption that included revealing secrets of Symbolic Freemasonry, habitually taking the name of God in vain, and promoting an organization claiming to be Masonic that the Grand Lodge of North Carolina does not recognize.

The Judge Advocate attempted to have Bro. MTH served with the complaint on multiple occasions by certified mail, personal service, and certified email, but was unsuccessful in all respects. Default was entered and Bro. MTH was expelled from Masonry by the Decision of the Judge Advocate on April 30, 2024.

Bro. MTH subsequently filed a Petition to Open Default which was granted on May 21, 2024. Bro. MTH filed an answer denying the charges, and a Trial Commission was empaneled on June 21, 2024. The Judge Advocate presented evidence before the Trial Commission, and Bro. MTH gave testimony. Upon reviewing all the evidence and arguments of the parties, the Trial Commission found Bro. MTH guilty of Un-Masonic Conduct and entered a judgment expelling him as of the date of the trial.

Respectfully submitted,
Matthew W. Cockman
Judge Advocate

Report of the Committee on Bylaws

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

Your committee on Bylaws of Subordinate Lodges reports that amendments to the bylaws of the following lodges were approved during the year 2023-2024. They are as approved.

Lodge Name	No.	Article	Remarks
New River	736	8	Change meeting time to 7:00pm
	736	9	Initiation fee increased to \$250
	736	10	Dues increased to \$100 + per capita
	736	11	Affiliation fee increased to \$120
	736	13	Allowance for Committee on Charity increased to \$200 / case
Troy	718	13	Allowance for Committee on Charity increased to \$500 / case
Leaksville	136	10	Dues increased to \$99 + per-capita in 2024
			Dues increased to \$124 + per-capita in 2025 and thereafter.
Seaboard	378	8	Change meeting time to 6:30pm
Andrews	529	9	Initiation fees increased to \$150
	529	10	Dues increased to \$100
	529	22	Added Q: No use of tobacco in the lodge
Waxhaw	562	9	Initiation fees increased to \$150
	562	10	Dues increased to \$130

Wilmington	319	10	Dues increased to \$94 + per capita
	319	11	Affiliation fees increased to \$25
	319	20	Marked as obsolete
	319	22	Removed unnecessary language in section D, removed Section N, & reordered sections below that. Added prohibition on the use of tobacco products in the lodge room.
	319	24	Updated language to conform with Uniform Bylaws as per The Code
Fort Bragg	667	10	Dues increased to \$200 + per capita
Eno	210	9	Initiation fees increased to \$200
	210	10	Dues increased to \$125 + per capita
	210	11	Affiliation fees increased to \$25
Gate City	694	10	Dues increased to \$75 + per capita
Mooreville	496	9	Initiation fees increased to \$200
	496	10	Dues increased to \$175 + per capita
	496	11	Affiliation fees increased to \$200
Thomas M. Holt	492		Full Revision
Grimesland	475	10	Dues increased to \$135
Crown Point	708		Full Revision
William T. Bain	231	10	Dues changed to \$94 + per capita
Eagle	19	9	Initiation fees increased to \$250
	19	10	Dues increased to \$110 + Per Capita
	19	11	Affiliation fees increased to \$250
Traphill	483	10	Dues increased to \$150
Lillington	302	9	Initiation fees increased to \$100
	302	10	Dues increased to \$100 + per capita
	302	11	Affiliation fees increased to \$50
Stokesdale	428	10	Dues increased to \$80 + per capita
	428	19	Add special voting procedure
Liberty	714	11	Eliminate affiliation fee
Jefferson Penn	384		Full Revision
East LaPorte	358	1	Updated lodge address
	358	3	Submitted Lodge Seal
	358	4	Updated to conform with Uniform Bylaws
	358	8	Updated the location of the lodge

James K. Polk	759	10	Dues increased to \$197 + per capita in 2024
			Dues increased to \$207 + per capita in 2025
			Dues increased to \$217 + per capita in 2026
			Dues increased to \$227 + per capita in 2027
			Dues increased to \$247 + per capita in 2028
	759	22	Mark Clause 18 as OBSOLETE
JJ Crowder	743	10	Dues increased to \$100 + per-capita
Stanly	348	8	Stated 1st and 3rd Thursday at 7:30pm
Relief	431	8	Annual Communication in November
	431	10	Dues increased to \$135 + per capita
Sanford	151	10	Dues increased to \$160 + per capita in 2024
			Dues increased to \$180 + per capita in 2025
			Dues increased to \$200 + per capita in 2026
Vandora	745	10	Dues increased to \$165 + per capita
Columbus	102	9	Initiation fees increased to \$300
	102	10	Dues increased to \$115 + per capita
Denver	757	8	Annual Communication in November
Marietta	444	10	Dues increased to \$100 + per capita in 2024
			Dues increased to \$110 + per capita in 2025
			Dues increased to \$120 + per capita in 2026
			Dues increased to \$130 + per capita in 2027
			Dues increased to \$140 + per capita in 2028
			Dues increased to \$150 + per capita in 2029
Montgomery	426	10	Dues increased to \$64 + per capita
Hiram	40	10	Dues increased to \$165 + per capita
Fellowship	687	10	Dues increased to \$115 + per capita
Lebanon	207	10	Dues increased to \$110 + per capita

Hanks	128	10	Dues increased to \$125
Oconee	427	10	Dues changed to \$100 + per capita
Yadkin	162	10	Dues changed to \$100 + per capita
Yadkin Falls	637	8	Annual Communication in November
	637	9	Initiation fees increased to \$150
	637	13	Allowance for Committee on Charity increased to \$200 / case
	637	19	Clarified verbiage concerning officers
	637	22	Add prohibition on use of tobacco
East Gate	692	10	Changed dues to \$100 + per capita
St. John's	13	9	Initiation fees increased to \$250
	13	10	Dues increased to \$250
	13	11	Affiliation fees increased to \$250
	13	19	Add alternative voting procedure
Clay	301	10	Dues increased to \$100 + per capita
Fellowship	84	22	Alcohol prohibition removed
Conover	709	13	Allowance for Committee on Charity increased to \$250 / case
	709	11	Affiliation fee of \$100 added
Blue Ridge	435	10	Dues increased to \$40 + per capita
Knights of Solomon	764	8	Change stated communication for June to 2nd Saturday
	764	13	Allowance for Committee on Charity increased to \$500 / case
Ayden	498	10	Dues increased to \$110
Roman Eagle	550	10	Dues lowered to \$164 + per capita
Knights of Solomon	774	10	Dues increased to \$60 + per capita
Bingham	272		Full revision
Mt. Pleasant	573	10	Dues increased to \$150 + per capita
Mint Hill	742	9	Initiation fees increased to \$240
	742	10	Dues increased to \$150
MESH	771	10	Dues increased to \$91
	771	19	Add special voting procedure
Wendell	565	3	Change Lodge Seal
Morning Star	85	10	Dues increased to \$114 + per capita
WG Arnold	683	8	Stated 1st and 3rd Thursday at 7:30pm
Denton	404	9	Initiation fees increased to \$125
Ionic	583	9	Initiation fees increased to \$150
	583	10	Dues increased to \$90 + per capita
Lafayette	83	10	Dues increased to \$114 + per capita
Casar	579	10	Dues increased to \$125

	579	11	Affiliation fee increased to \$125
Seaboard	378	10	Dues increased to \$100 + per capita
Pythagoras	249	10	Dues increased to \$200
St. Patrick's	617	10	Dues increased to \$175
Mingo	206	8	Change meeting times
	206	10	Dues increased to \$100 + per capita
	206	11	Add affiliation fee of \$25
	206	20	Mark as obsolete
Knights of Solomon	766	10	Dues increased to \$53 + per capita
Pigeon River	386	8	Stated 3rd Monday at 7:00pm
	386	10	Dues increased to \$96 + per capita
Sophia	767	1	Add lodge number to the name
	767	3	Add Seal of the lodge
	767	10	Dues increased to \$400
Seaside	429	10	Dues increased to \$145 + per capita
Beulaville	658	10	Dues increased to \$114 + per capita
Riverside	606	10	Dues changed to \$150 + per capita
	606	13	Allowance for Committee on Charity increased to \$500 / case
Maiden	592	10	Dues increased to \$115 + per capita
Apex	584	9	Initiation fees increased to \$200
	584	10	Dues increased to \$105 + per capita
Phoenix	8	10	Dues increased to \$114 + per capita
Stanley	713	10	Dues increased to \$125 + per capita
Gaston	263	8	Annual Communication in November
Bladen	646	8	Stated 2nd Monday at 7pm
Belhaven	509	9	Initiation fees increased to \$175
	509	10	Increase dues from \$100 to \$150
Veritas	769		Full Revision
Blue Ridge	435	11	Affiliation fee increased to \$76
Elkin	454	9	Initiation fees increased to \$200
	454	10	Dues increased to \$130 + per capita
Lexington-Memorial	473	10	Dues changed to \$85 + per capita
WG Arnold	683	10	Dues increased to \$119 + per-capita
Newell	739	8	Annual Communication in December
	739	9	Initiation fees increased to \$250
	739	10	Dues increased to \$74 + per capita
	739	13	Allowance for Committee on Charity increased to \$500 / case
	739	18	Allowance for emergency repairs during recess increased to \$5000

Leaksville	136		Full Revision
Elberta	654	10	Dues increased to \$150 + per capita
Junaluskee	145	19	Add special committee
Pilot	493	9	Initiation fees increased to \$175
	493	10	Dues increased to \$185 + per capita
	493	11	Affiliation fee increased to \$100
Southern Pines	484		Full Revision
JJ Crowder	743	17	Updated to match Uniform Bylaws
Revolution	552	10	Dues increased to \$129 + per capita
Shallotte	727	11	Affiliation fee increased to \$50
Renfro	691	11	Affiliation fee increased to \$50
Waccamaw	596	10	Dues increased to \$150 + per capita
Relief	431	22	Alcohol prohibition removed
Conover	709		Full Revision
Pilot	493		Full Revision
Grassy Knob	471		Full Revision
Olin	226	9	Initiation fees increased to \$300
	226	10	Dues increased to \$150 + per capita
	226	11	Affiliation fee increased to \$186
Dan River	129	8	Stated 1st & 3rd Monday at 7:00pm
Person	113	8	Stated 2nd & 4th Tuesday at 7:30pm
Charles M. Setzer	693	10	Dues increased to \$264 + per capita
Catawba	248	10	Dues increased to \$120 + per capita
Cherokee	146	9	Initiation fees increased to \$250
	146	10	Dues increased to \$120+ per capita
Oak Island	758	9	Initiation fees increased to \$200
Providence	678	8	State 2nd Thursday at 7:30pm
	678	8	Update street address
	678	8	Annual Communication in December
Perquimans	106	8	Stated 1st & 3rd Tuesday at 7:00pm Nov-Mar, and 8:00pm Apr-Oct
	106	9	Initiation fees increased to \$150
	106	10	Dues increased to \$100 + per capita
	106	11	Affiliation fee increased to \$125
Kenly	257	10	Dues increased to \$200 + per capita
Chadbourn	190	8	Stated changed to 2nd Thursday @7:30pm
	190	10	Dues increased to \$200 + per capita
Vanceboro	433	8	Stated time moved to 7:00pm
Yadkin	162	13	Allowance for Committee on Charity increased to \$500 / case
Mooreville	496	9	Initiation fees changed to \$175

Cherryville	505		Full Revision
Green Level	277	10	Dues increased to \$115 + per capita
Henderson	229	10	Dues changed to \$125
	229	1	Update lodge address
Bladen	646	10	Dues increased to \$150
Numa F. Reid	344	8	Annual Communication 1st stated in Nov
	344	10	Dues increased to \$220 + per capita
Olin	226	9	Initiation fees changed to \$200
Adoniram	149	10	Dues increased to \$100
Currituck	463	10	Dues increased to \$120 + per capita
Statesville	27	9	Initiation fees increased to \$260
	27	10	Dues increased to \$260
Friendship	388		Full Revision
Belhaven	509	11	Affiliation fee increased to \$50
Harmony	299	10	Dues increased to \$150 + per capita
Wallace	279	10	Dues increased to \$200 + per capita
Franklinton	123	9	Initiation fees increased to \$200
	123	10	Dues increased to \$104 + per capita
	123	11	Affiliation fee increased to \$104
Cherokee	146	8	Change address
Phoenix	8	9	Initiation fees increased to \$150
	8	11	Affiliation fee increased to \$36

Respectfully submitted,
Jonathan Underwood, Chairman

Report on the Committee on WhiteStone

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 237th Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of North Carolina. For 112 years, our home in Greensboro has provided care for our senior brothers, sisters, and family members in need. Some 350 residents call WhiteStone home. The community employs nearly 270 full- and part-time employees and operates on a \$22 million annual budget. The continued growth of the community 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 and toured our home. We are grateful for the assistance of the Executive Director, Brother Mark Lewis, for his assistance with our work, and for the Chairman of the Board, MW Brother Gene Jernigan's, consistently outstanding leadership throughout the year. We also extend our appreciation 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 growing number of prospects waiting to become residents.

Background

The Masonic and Eastern Star Home of North Carolina, Incorporated owns and operates a continuing care retirement community known as “WhiteStone: A Masonic and Eastern Star Community” located in Greensboro, North Carolina. The Community began operation in 1913 and was the first Masonic Fraternal Home in the United States created solely for the caring for the elderly. In addition, the Community is the oldest retirement home in the State of North Carolina. The name “WhiteStone” is based on the Community’s first Administrator, Mr. White, and its first residents, Mr., and Mrs. Stone. The Corporation is organized as a nonprofit corporation under the laws of the State of North Carolina and has been determined to be an organization exempt from federal income taxes under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

History

The Community was inspired in the early 1900s by two Masonic individuals (Mr. Clymer and Mr. Monroe) who were visiting a fellow Mason at a county home for the aged and were dismayed by the living conditions of the elderly gentleman. From this visit, the Masonic individuals were determined that the Grand Lodge could do a better job of taking care of its older members. In 1903, a resolution was passed by the Grand Lodge to start a home for the aged, and in 1908 the Grand Chapter decided to join as well. In 1912, 26 acres of land were purchased in Greensboro, and construction began on the site of a former tree nursery. Over the next 112 years, the Community would continue to grow and fulfill its mission of serving thousands of its elderly Masonic and Eastern Star members thanks to the continued generous support of both the Grand Lodge and the Grand Chapter members throughout North Carolina as well as their respective foundations.

Operating Highlights

- \$22 M annual operating budget
- Approximately 270 FT/PT employees
- Completed construction on \$74M Expansion / Repositioning Project in 2023
- Introduced new assisted living level of care to campus as part of the expansion
- Administered \$1.4M in charitable care for 2023

Charity Summary

WhiteStone is proud to carry on the tradition of providing aid to fraternally affiliated seniors both residing on the campus of WhiteStone

and living independently throughout North Carolina. In 2023, charitable care and services worth approximately \$1.4 million was delivered to more than 70 fraternally-affiliated seniors through the partnership of the MESH Foundation, LLC, and WhiteStone.

The Fraternal Friendship Program (formerly the Outreach Program) continues to see growth across the state, assisting members in their home during their time of need. Since its inception in 2016, the program has grown to the level of providing \$140K in charitable care in 2023. Assistance comes in many forms, from that of emergency and long-term financial assistance as well as case management. 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 program has developed into 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.

Assistance through the NC Masonic and Eastern Star Outreach Program is available by calling Mrs. Jenna Grant, Director of the Fraternal Friendship Program at (336) 601-5593.

Conclusion

Our committee wishes to thank the Grand Lodge, along with 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 MESH Lodge #771, which meets at 2:00 pm on the second Saturday of each month. The Brethren and their lodge might also think about adopting a WhiteStone 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 Brother Mark Lewis if you would like to explore any of these ideas.

Finally, the committee encourages every brother, as well as every lodge, to strongly consider regular contributions in support of WhiteStone and the 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 throughout the state. North Carolina Masons can be proud of the good work they are doing in support of their aging brethren.

Respectfully submitted,
Phil Johnson, Chairman
Andrew Wood
Matthew Korff
Michael Harrelson
Norman Goering
Stephan Owen
Herman Reeves
Todd Frye
Paschal Dobbins
Ray Kivett, Jr.

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

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

MHCO would like to thank everyone for all the support provided as the 150th Sesquicentennial officially closed in December with the York Rite Christmas Observance in the York Rite Chapel. The celebratory events were wonderful opportunities to share the good news of your beloved Children's Home with others who might be interested in helping support the Mission. SGIG Gene Cobb and the Scottish Rite provided an amazing Chapel Service with UNC standout Phil Ford as guest speaker, reprising his appearance at the orphanage in the 1970s. Mr. Ford's message to the children was heartfelt and meaningful. Homecoming was wonderful, depending on what day you were able to attend. The rain on Saturday dampened our ability to parade, allow the bands play, and enjoy all the fun outside; however, Friday and Sunday were very good celebratory days as the weather cooperated. As mentioned, the York Rite Christmas Observance was the final official celebration of the Home's 150th year of service and placed the meaning of the year-long event rightfully on our collective belief and thanks to the Great Architect of the Universe.

MHCO chose to continue to offer the Black-Tie Gala and Saints John Celebration this year, both of which were well received. Clifton Truman Daniel, President Truman's oldest grandson, shared wonderful accounts of life that occur with your grandpa being President. MHCO would like to personally share our appreciation to every person who made these events memorable, safe, and thankful.

The MHCO census continues to remain strong. The challenge of hiring married couples to be Houseparents led to Bemis Cottage being closed. Good news is MHCO is preparing to reopen Bemis, which will meet the needs of several young ladies requiring the support of the Transitional Living Cottage environment. The Independent Living Program census has recently increased due to a developing partnership with Job Corps in Kittrell. Several young persons have been admitted to MHCO recently after they have completed their program at Job Corps. Five children in the program were able to be adopted by their Houseparents. The primary goal is always to seek permanency for the children by returning home or finding alternate living arrangements when appropriate. MHCO cannot say thank you enough to the Houseparent families who opened their lives to accept the children as their own.

MHCO served a total of 75 residents in 2023, a 20% decrease from the previous year. While this might sound negative, the successful discharge rate in 2023 was 82%. The CARE Trauma Informed Model of Care is likely a reason the discharge rate is so positive.

MHCO continues to be open to interviewing couples to be Childcare Worker Houseparents and still needs one couple in order to be fully staffed. Many couples have served extensive tenures at MHCO, with some retiring and others reaching that milestone. If you know of any couples who would be interested in working together in a live-in structure to make a positive impact with children or families in need of services, please have them call 919-693-5111 or visit mhc-oxford.org. It is a blessing to be able to have a career dedicated to helping children in troubled circumstances.

The students are continuing to attend tutoring and participate in extracurricular activities. For the fourth quarter, ten students earned Honorable Mention, nine earned Honor Roll, and three earned “A” Honor Roll receiving straight A’s. Two with straight A’s are high school students. Eight students realized at least a five-point increase in their GPA from the previous quarter. The Campus Avg GPA finished at 81. Youth are active in DeMolay, CHAMPS, band, and school sports. Two just returned from National Sojourners and had an “awesome” time, both asking to attend again next year. Several are working in the community with 78% of the youth in TLC and 100% in ILP currently employed. Fifteen younger children are working in Kid\$Earn jobs on campus. One high school student graduated this year. Students are continuing their education in Nursing, HVAC, and other career building opportunities. One student earned his CDL and is currently working as a truck driver. One seeks to join the National Reserves, and another is considering joining the Military to become a pilot.

Baccalaureate was a very nice event. Alum Shayne Whitaker was the speaker and gave a very personal message on the importance of the Home and perseverance. The inclusion of students rising to other levels was continued, celebrating all the rising students.

The Home is doing well financially in 2024. Income and expenses are both slightly under budget projections as of the end of June. Preliminary numbers indicate that income is approximately \$27,000 under budget and expenses are approximately \$150,000 under budget projections at the end of June 2024. The School of Graphic Arts realizes revenue over expenses by \$1,600 for the year through the end of June. Special thanks to SGA Manager Thomas Boyd and his team and to all who utilize the Print Shop for their printing needs. The furniture project is continuing to go well with \$140,000 received.

The Grand Master Challenge continues to have a positive impact along with the dedicated work of the AGO. For the year, recurring giving is up 6% in number of donors, with a modest monetary increase. Approximately thirty lodges have met the GM Challenge of five members committing to donate \$12.50 per month for three years. The impact is important for the Mission. The question is what if 300 lodges participated and what if each lodge had ten members make the commitment as a way to fulfill their obligation? Brethren, recurring giving and annual gifts are the foundation needed to make sure the children have the opportunity to overcome their traumatic situations and move toward a life of success and happiness. If you or others are interested in providing a recurring or annual gift, visit the website at mhc-oxford.org, and hit donate now. You can also call 919-693-5111 and work with the staff to set up a recurring or annual gift. Remember your Calendar donation in the return envelope as an efficient way to make your annual gift.

The Community Support Center (CSC) is starting to have a profound impact in providing and extending services to children and families. In 2023 MHCO’s provision of resources and coordinating collaboration resulted in 21,979 persons served. MHCO did not specifically provide services outside of the Residential Programs, but all the partner organizations state the collaboration is allowing them to reach more persons in need. This was an increase of 285 persons served in 2022. MHCO has directly served and/or provided resources for 322 persons to date this year. The outreach component is just beginning, and families locally and across the state are beginning to receive support through the CSC.

Mark your calendars for October 11th and 12th as we celebrate Homecoming. Friday's Band is Brightest Light, and Saturday's Band is Cory Luetjen & The Traveling Blues Band. The Parade will step off at 11am. The biggest change is that the Parade will begin on lower campus and remain on campus due to a number of reasons. The BBQ competition will be the only food offering, except for two dessert trucks and a coffee truck. Sides will be provided thanks to a gracious donor. BBQ will be available for a donation. Please consider joining the festivities.

Please refer to the Lodge Email, Children's Chatter, which is sent to your Lodge Secretary and the Master for current information. Please help invite MHCO to talk to groups in your area who are working with families in need. Please consider making a monthly recurring gift. Please continue to pray for your Children's Home. We feel your prayers and believe we are blessed. Thank you, Brethren, for being the cornerstone of your beloved Home. The light you shine to guide the children today shines on for generations.

MHCO is especially appreciative of the GL Committee on MHCO. The Committee has been highly active on and off campus supporting the Mission. Aside from attending Board and Committee meetings and the Board Orientation, the GL Committee has helped process and problem solve needs at MHCO. Committee members have led the 23rd District Campaign to raise funds for the Furniture Campaign. Other members have led coordination and funding efforts to allow the children to attend a Carolina Panthers football game. Several attended the Black-Tie Gala, helping secure our guest speaker, provide auction items, and get others interested in MHCO. Members have helped market the Home through local community activities and resources and have been a MHCO Ambassador. MHCO appreciates the GL Committee on MHCO's support in so many facets.

Respectfully Submitted,
Michael Register, Chairman
Andrew J. Akers
Donovan R. Arnold
Russell E. Bridges
Gary L. Cooke
Ronald A. Hensley
Jonathan S. Johnson
James T. Moore
James E. Paschal
Gregory D. Rohaly

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 Kevan D. Frazier, PGM, and Grand Master Donald E. Kehler, are to be considered during this Annual Communication.

Frazier Order No. 4

To PTT:

It was brought to my attention by the Grand Secretary that on Tuesday, November 7, 2023, you called the Grand Lodge Office at approximately 3:00 p.m. to inquire of the disposition of dues cards for your lodge for the ensuing year. A staff member of the office informed you of their tardiness, whereupon you proceeded to accuse, speak over, argue, and berate the said employee of this Grand Lodge unprovoked. Your actions, speech, and demeanor toward an employee of this institution are unacceptable behaviors as a Master Mason.

Further, it was brought to my attention that you held a similar conversation with the Grand Secretary on Wednesday, August 9, 2023, at approximately 12:45 p.m. Whereupon, following a frustrated email sent by you to the Grand Lodge Office, the Grand Secretary called to discuss with you the objects of your frustration with our fraternity. You then apparently proceeded to likewise accuse, speak over, argue, and berate the Grand Secretary as he attempted to converse with you in a cordial manner to alleviate your frustrations.

Yet, you further called the Grand Lodge Office and perpetrated similar derogatory conversations against other members of the staff this past June and Spring.

And, further, it was brought to my attention that a member of your lodge wrote the Grand Lodge on Thursday, September 14, 2023, stating you “wrote a powerful letter” to the lodge implying the Grand Lodge intended to increase per capita without consideration of members who cannot pay said per capita and that “The Grand Lodge should be like any other Lodge within the state and learn to live on the income that it has coming in and not try to squeeze the members for more funds,”—all of which is erroneous and nefarious. The Grand Secretary requested a copy of this letter, which was never delivered over to the Grand Lodge. You will hereby deliver a copy of the letter you wrote and presented to the members of your lodge forthwith.

And, yet, on October 21, 2023, you posted a statement upon each of your lodge’s members’ dues invoice stating “DUE TO THE GRAND LODGE INCREASE IN THE PER-CAPITA TAX, WE REGRET TO INCREASE OUR DUES, BUT STARTING IN 2024, WE INCREASED [sic] OUR DUES TO 111.00 PER YEAR.”

You have no right to make commentary within a communion of our lodge, save it be an order or directive of the Master of the Lodge.

In consideration of these offenses, whereby you have abused and verbally harassed the staff of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina, and under the authority granted to me per Regulation 58-1, “If in the judgement of the Grand Master...any officer of a subordinate lodge...is guilty of unmasonic conduct, misconduct, neglect, unlawful acts of commission,

serious or flagrant omission in the performance of his official duties, or of conduct that would bring reproach upon the brother or upon the Craft, the Grand Master, should he deem it to be for the good of Masonry, may suspend the offending brother from his office...”

BE IT KNOWN, that according to Regulation 58-1 of The Code, and for the good of the Masonic Fraternity in general, I hereby ORDER you suspended from the office of Secretary of Blackmer Lodge 170,

BE IT FURTHER ORDERED that you will return all books, accounting information, lodge papers, the vocabulary, keys, and any other such property pertaining to your former office to the Master of Blackmer Lodge 170,

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that you will not hold any position, office, trusteeship, proxy, or any other office of fraternal trust, until such time as the charges now pending against you shall be adjudicated, at which time your restoration to office or permanent removal may be in effect.

The details of these issues have been turned over to the Worshipful Judge Advocate for his review and proceedings.

Given under my hand and seal, this 8th day of November, A.D. 2023, A.L. 6023.

Kehler Order No. 1

To the Officers and Members of the re-constituted 2nd Masonic District of North Carolina

In conformity with Reg. 26-1 of The Code, I hereby ORDER the reconfiguration of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Masonic Districts. Under this Order, Currituck Lodge 463, located at Coinjock; Manteo Lodge 521, located at Manteo; and Providence Lodge 678, located at Columbia, are now constituent lodges of the 2nd Masonic District.

These lodges and their members shall abide by the rules, regulations, and edicts of the Grand Lodge and Grand Master, and pay due obedience to his direct representative, the Worshipful District Deputy Grand Master Michael L. Andrews, whose term of service shall be considered to have begun on 2 December 2023.

It is thereby his duty to abide by and follow the guidance of Reg. 26-3 whereby he is responsible:

1. To visit each subordinate lodge in his district as often as convenient but not less than once a year.
2. To bring the lodges in his district into closer relations with each other and with the Grand Lodge. (Reg. 43-2.12)
3. To preside therein upon the occasion of his official visitations.
4. To examine thoroughly its records and accounts.
5. To inform himself fully as to the condition of the lodge, the number of its members, and the regularity of their attendance. (Reg. 45-14)
6. To inquire into all the affairs of the lodge and the administration thereof.
7. To make such suggestions and recommendations to the officers as he deems necessary to insure a full and prompt compliance with the law of the Grand Lodge.

8. To instruct or counsel officers and members in any particular wherein he may find they need information and particularly to recommend attention to the moral and benevolent principles of Masonry.
9. To caution the brethren in the admission of petitioners for the degrees.
10. To confer with the officers and members concerning non-affiliated and unaffiliated Masons.
11. To endeavor, if he should discover in his district any Masonic error or any un-Masonic conduct, to correct the same immediately by Masonic means; and if he judges it expedient, to report the same immediately to the Grand Master. (Reg. 71-9)
12. To take possession of the funds and property of any dormant or extinct lodge in his district and transfer the same to the Grand Secretary or to comply with any instructions given by the Grand Secretary in regard to the same. (Reg. 49-7.4)
13. To perform such other services and executive duties as may from time to time be assigned to him by the Grand Master.
14. On each official visitation, and as often as he may deem it necessary, he shall call for and personally examine the Vocabulary assigned to the several lodges in his district, and shall require a strict compliance with Regulation 24-3 in regard to each book. He shall examine the lodge's copy of The Code to see that all amendments thereto have been properly posted. He shall immediately report any irregularities found by his examination to the Grand Master. The duty herein described is mandatory and may not be omitted for any reason. (Regs. 59-12.9 & 86-2.55)

Given under my hand and seal at Nags Head, North Carolina, on this the 9th day of January, A.D. 2024; A.L. 6024.

Kehler Order No. 2

To the Master, Wardens, and Secretary of Wendell Lodge No. 565:

It has been brought to my attention by the the District Deputy Grand Master of the 14th Masonic District that Wendell Lodge No. 565 balloted on an application for affiliation on April 9, 2024, and elected the brother to membership. However, this was after he illegally withdrew his petition upon learning of the Committee's of Investigation's preliminary report and before that Committee announced their findings in Lodge. Subsequently, the former Secretary of the Lodge irregularly resubmitted this application for ballot and misinformed the lodge of the Committee of Investigation's report. And, further, a non-member of the Lodge was permitted to participate in the balloting on the said illegal petition.

The ballot taken on April 9, 2024, to elect Brother AB to membership is clearly illegal under the positive language of Regulation 68-1.2 and the aforementioned brother is not a member of Wendell Lodge No. 565. However, given the extraordinarily confused circumstances of the entirety of this affiliation process, and the intended withdrawal of the application for affiliation, I do not find it appropriate to invoke my authority under 68-8 to order a rebalot without further confusing the situation.

Therefore, it is my ORDER that the Officers and Members of Wendell Lodge No. 565 be reacquainted with and reeducated on the entire application and balloting process and its various procedures as outlined in Chapter 68 of The Code at the earliest convenience and under the direction of the District Deputy Grand Master, which strict instruction to fully acknowledge and obey the procedures for petitioning and applying for membership in this Grand Jurisdiction.

This Order shall be read to the lodge at the next stated communication, entered on the minutes of that communication and a proper notation made on the margin of the minutes for April 9, 2024, referring to this Order and the date it was recorded in the minutes.

Given under my hand and seal at Manteo, North Carolina, this 29th day of May, 2024.

Kehler Opinion No. 1

An inquiry was made by the Chairman of the North Carolina Masonic Foundation, Inc. requesting an interpretation of Regulation 49-7.9, which states that the assets of a defunct lodge are to be “transferred to the North Carolina Masonic Foundation.” This inquiry arose following the proposed establishment of a limited liability corporation by the Grand Lodge to invest the assets of defunct lodges for the future use of lodges facing financial distress or economic emergencies.

Regulation 49-7.8-9 states that the assets of a defunct lodge shall first be applied to the payment of its debts under the direction of the Grand Secretary. After settling these debts, any remaining balance shall be “transferred” to the North Carolina Masonic Foundation, Inc. To “transfer” means to move from one place to another. Without additional clarifying language, the moving of assets from one location to another does not result in a change in the ownership of those assets.

Regulation 49-7.9 was amended at the Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge and became effective on January 1, 2022. The original language of Regulation 49-7.9 stated, “If anything remains after the just debts of the defunct lodge are paid, it becomes the sole property of the Grand Lodge.” The amendment aimed to better define the handling of defunct lodge property and codify the current procedure.

The North Carolina Masonic Foundation was approved and created by delegates at the Annual Communication of 1929, with its charter established to promote philanthropy in line with the objectives of the Grand Lodge of North Carolina and its subordinate Lodges.

In addition to its philanthropic objectives, the Grand Lodge codified the North Carolina Masonic Foundation as an investment vehicle in the Code of 1948. According to Regulation 35-2 of The Code of 1995, as amended through January 1, 2024, the Foundation is named custodian of Grand Lodge funds and property and is tasked with managing and investing these funds for the best interest of the Grand Lodge, unless otherwise directed. This practice is illustrated by the longstanding separation of Grand Lodge and subordinate lodge subscription accounts held within the North Carolina Masonic Foundation on behalf of Grand Lodge, subordinate lodges, and other entities.

In line with the language of Regulation 35 and specifically Regulation 35-2.1 and 35-2.2, the North Carolina Masonic Foundation is required to obey all orders and directives given by the Grand Lodge regarding the funds in its care, charitable and investment funds.

Upon request of the Chairman of the North Carolina Masonic Foundation, in consultation with the Chairman of the Lodge Service Commission, and in conformity with Regulation 13-2.2 of The Code, which empowers the Grand Master to decide all questions of usage, order, and Masonic law not otherwise provided for or that are ambiguous.

It is therefore my official opinion that in conformity with Regulation 49-7.8, following the payment of all just debts, the net proceeds remaining from the sale and/or disposition of real and physical property of a defunct lodge shall be transferred into an account to with the North Carolina Masonic Foundation, Inc. That account is to be managed by the North Carolina Masonic Foundation, Inc., but the ownership of the corpus remains with the Grand Lodge of North Carolina. This is in accordance with Regulations 35-2 and 49-7.9. The funds of defunct lodges shall be deposited into a separate account for the Grand Lodge's investment and use in conformity with Regulation 35-2.1. The Grand Lodge can then utilize these funds for just and proper Masonic or charitable purposes.

Given under my hand and seal this 27th day of August, 2024, in Manteo, North Carolina.

Amendment Group 1

The following amendment has been submitted by Grand Master Kevan D. Frazier.

This amendment would require all lodge trustees to ensure their lodge carries Directors and Officers insurance and Errors and Omissions insurance (D&O and E&O Insurance).

Chapter 43 – Subordinate Lodge Powers and Duties

Reg. 43-2 – Powers and Duties

REG. 43-2.14 A lodge shall keep its property insured for reasonable replacement cost, against loss or damage by fire and other hazards. A lodge shall also insure its officers and agents with Directors and Officers insurance and Errors and Omissions insurance. Any lodge failing to insure its property or its officers shall not be granted permission to ask for assistance from other lodges of this jurisdiction on account of loss except by the Grand Lodge on recommendation by the Grand Master. (60-1.3.F) It shall be malfeasance of the three principal officers and the Trustees of the lodge pursuant to Reg 13-3.5 if the lodge fails to keep its property insured as here provided. It shall be malfeasance pursuant to Reg 13-3.5 if the Secretary fails to timely issue a voucher to pay a properly submitted bill for insurance resulting in the loss of insurance coverage, and it shall be malfeasance pursuant to Reg 13-3.5 if the Treasurer fails to timely pay a properly issued voucher to pay for insurance resulting in the loss of insurance coverage if the lodge has the funds to pay the bill. *(This Regulation amended, effective January 1, 2022.)*

Amendment Group 2

The following amendment has been submitted by Grand Master Kevan D. Frazier.

This amendment would amend Regulation 34 to permanently create an Insurance Management Committee. It would also establish a new subsection in the Table of Contents of the Code for this Committee.

Chapter 34 – Grand Lodge Committees

Table of Contents

Committee on Insurance

Reg. 34-26 Members

Reg. 34-27 Matters Referred

Reg. 34-28 Duties and Powers

Chapter 34 – Grand Lodge Committees

Committee on Insurance

REG. 34-26 MEMBERS. The Committee on Insurance shall consist of five members, appointed by the Grand Master, each of whom shall be a member in good standing and competent of insurance best practices.

1. Members of this committee shall not bid, participate, or contract insurance services for the Grand Lodge, nor shall their associates, family members, or any other person whereby a conflict of interest may be of disservice to the fraternity.
2. The Grand Master shall name the chairman of the Committee on Insurance.
3. At each annual communication of the Grand Lodge the Grand Master shall appoint one member to serve for five years.
4. A vacancy in the Committee on Insurance occurring when the Grand Lodge is in recess shall be filled by the Grand Master until the next succeeding annual communication of the Grand Lodge when the vacancy shall be filled for the unexpired term on nomination of the Grand Master-elect and confirmation of the Grand Lodge.
5. A quorum of the Committee on Insurance shall consist of three or more members.

REG. 34-27 MATTERS REFERRED Matters which shall be referred to the Committee on Insurance and its duties relative to these and other things are as follows.

1. To review all proposals to establish, amend, or cancel any guidelines or policies related to the Insurance Coverage applicable for all properties of the Grand Lodge of North Carolina or properties of subordinate lodges.

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

REG. 34-28 DUTIES AND POWERS. The duties and powers of the Committee on Insurance are as follows.

1. To annually review annually the list of current subordinate lodges to ensure each lodge has insurance coverage.
2. To ensure each subordinate lodge, not under the umbrella coverage of the Grand Lodge of North Carolina, has adequate coverage for all requirements specified throughout the Code, including but not limit to coverage for fundraisers and required bonding levels for lodge treasurers and secretaries.
3. To recommend to the Board of General Purposes of any additions, revisions, deletions, or amendments to the Grand Lodge Insurance Policy.

Amendment Group 3

The following amendment has been submitted by Grand Secretary Jonathan A. Underwood.

This amendment would amend Regulation 19 to permit the option of allowing electronic voting at the Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge as many other grand jurisdictions are currently and have been doing for several years.

Chapter 19 - Voting in the Grand Lodge

Reg. 19-1 - Methods of Voting

REG. 19-1 METHODS OF VOTING. The methods of voting in the Grand Lodge shall be: by call of the roll; written paper ballot; electronic ballot; by show of hands; and by standing.

Amendment Group 4

The following amendment has been submitted by Grand Master Kevan D. Frazier.

This amendment would amend Chapter 39 to add a new Regulation, 39-14, which would allow the formation of a new lodge, Long Leaf Pine Lodge No. 777 as a temporary holding lodge. This will allow displaced brethren, (members of defunct lodges who did not merge with another lodge, brethren who may be unaccounted for due to medical or other unknown reasons) to have a continuing membership until they can find a suitable lodge, or their location can be established allowing membership at a lodge best suited for their current needs.

Chapter 39 – Lodge Under Dispensation

Reg. 39-14, New Amendment

REG. 39-14 TEMPORARY HOLDING LODGE. The Grand Lodge shall institute a temporary holding lodge, to be a temporary home lodge for any displaced brother who has lost his previous membership, not of his own free will and accord, but due to his previous lodge becoming defunct, his becoming unaccounted for due to medical or other unknown reasons. Membership of this grand jurisdiction and as a member of this temporary lodge will continue until he can find a suitable lodge, or his location and health is established. Once the most suitable option is determined, his membership shall be transferred to a lodge best suited for his current location, including any special requirements as may be needed.

Amendment Group 5

The following amendment has been submitted by Grand Secretary Jonathan A. Underwood.

This amendment would amend Regulation 77-1 and Chapter 44, Article 10, to define dues as the amount required by each subordinate lodge to discharge their necessary duties and obligations plus the per capita approved by the grand lodge. This would eliminate the need to update the lodge by-laws when per capita rates are modified.

Chapter 77 – Dues

Reg. 77-1 – Minimum Dues

REG. 77-1 MINIMUM DUES. Each lodge shall fix in its by-laws and shall collect such annual dues, inclusive of per capita when applicable, from its membership as may be necessary to enable it to maintain itself and discharge all of its duties and obligations. (5-2.2). (This regulation amended, effective January 1, 2004.)

Chapter 44 – Uniform Code of By-Laws for a Lodge
Article 10 – Membership Dues

ARTICLE 10

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

NOTE: An amendment to Section 1 of this article shall not become effective until January first next following the date it is approved by the chairman of the Committee on By-laws of Subordinate Lodges. (77-2; 77-3). (This article amended, effective July 31, 2000.)

Alternative Form for Article 10, Section 1

SECTION 1. The annual membership dues in this lodge shall be _____ dollars (\$____) which each member shall pay in advance on or before the first day of January.

NOTE: An amendment to Section 1 of this article shall not become effective until January first next following the date it is approved by the chairman of the Committee on By-laws of Subordinate Lodges. (77-2; 77-3). (This article amended, effective January 1, 2003.)

Amendment Group 6

The following amendment has been submitted by Grand Master Kevan D. Frazier.

This amendment would amend Regulation 68-3.12, Regulation 68-3.13 and Regulation 68-3.15 to require a minimum of two black cubes to reject a petitioner for the degrees or affiliation from being elected. It also amends Reg. 44-7, Article 19, Third Alternative Form, in the Uniform By-laws concerning the alternate ballot process if adopted by subordinate lodges.

Chapter 68 – The Secret Ballot

Reg. 68-3.12, Reg. 68-3.13, Reg. 68-3.15 – Procedure

REG. 68-3 PROCEDURE. After the reports of the Grand Secretary and the Committee of Investigation have been received the ballot shall be taken as follows.

12. If the Master finds that the ballot is clear, or that there is more than one two black cubes, he shall ask the Wardens how they find the ballot and not until then, shall he proclaim the result. (If a lodge has enacted the alternate ballot procedure under special local provision Article 19 of lodge bylaws, pursuant to Chapter 44, that procedure

shall be supplemented after and/or in place of the procedure set forth here.) *(This subsection amended, effective January 1, 2009.)*

13. In case ~~only one~~ or two black cubes appear, the Master shall not then declare the result but immediately at the same communication order a rebalot without discussion on the part of the members or any intervening act or business, the result of the rebalot shall be declared, and it shall be final except as provided in Regulation 68-8. (63-5.4; 68-8.2). (If a lodge has enacted the alternate ballot procedure under special local provision Article 19 of lodge bylaws, pursuant to Chapter 44, that procedure shall be supplemented after and/or in place of the procedure set forth here.) *(This subsection amended, effective January 1, 2009.)*
15. In any secret ballot, white balls are affirmative votes and black cubes are negative votes. A ~~unanimously favorable~~ ballot of no more than two black cubes ~~white balls~~ shall be required to elect a petitioner or an applicant, or to adopt any proposition submitted to the secret ballot. (If a lodge has enacted the alternate ballot procedure under special local provision Article 19 of lodge bylaws, pursuant to Chapter 44, that procedure shall be supplemented after and/or in place of the procedure set forth here.) (42-9; 65-1; 75-11.2; 75-11.3; 75-11.4; 75-11.5). *(This subsection amended, effective January 1, 2009.)*

Chapter 44 – Uniform Code of By-Laws for a Lodge

Reg. 44-7, Article 19, - Third Alternative Form, Voting on membership

Article 19, Third Alternative Form

SECTION— When voting upon issues requiring the use of the ballot box (Petitions for the Degrees, Applications for Affiliation, Honorary or Life Memberships), if one or two black cubes ~~is~~ are found on the examination of the ballot, the Master shall destroy the ballot and require the members to ballot again, cautioning them that white balls elect, and black cubes reject and reminding them to vote for the good of Masonry. If a one or two black cubes ~~is~~ are found after the second ballot, the Master shall not immediately announce the result, but shall require the person(s) casting the black cube to communicate his reason for the negative vote to the Master, who shall keep the identity of the person making the objection in strictest confidence. At the next stated meeting, the Master shall reveal the reason given for the negative vote, but not the identity of the member(s) casting the black cube. The Master will then ask the lodge to vote, by a show of hands, on the validity of the reason for the black cube(s). The majority vote shall govern whether the candidate is elected. If the brother casting the black cubes does not present his reasons to the Master within one week, the Master shall, at the next stated communication, declare the candidate elected and the lodge shall proceed as if there had been no black cubes cast. *(The subsection amended, effective January 1, 2009.)*

Amendment Group 7

The following amendment has been submitted by Grand Secretary Jonathan A. Underwood.

This amendment would amend Regulation 11-1.2 to change the category of the Grand Chaplain to one requiring installation and consistent with Code requirements of subordinate lodges. This position has been installed as early as 1959 but the Code has never been amended to reflect this practice since 1948. Regulation 11-1.3 would permit, at the Grand Master-elect's discretion, to install the grand lodge officers listed in this category if he so desires.

Chapter 11 – Grand Officers’ Rank, Designation, Title, Qualifications, Term, and Succession of Office

Reg. 11-1.2, 11-1.3 – Officers

REG. 11-1 OFFICERS. The elective and appointive officers of the Grand Lodge, their ranks, designations, and titles shall be as follows:

2. The appointive grand officers who shall be installed either in person or by proxy are as follows: (12-6; 17-1; 17-2; 17-4).

1. Senior Grand Deacon	Worshipful
2. Junior Grand Deacon	Worshipful
3. Grand Marshal	Worshipful
4. Two Grand Stewards	Worshipful
5. Grand Tyler	Worshipful
<u>6. Grand Chaplain</u>	<u>Worshipful</u>

3. The appointive grand officers who ~~shall not~~ may be installed are as follows: (17-5; 17-6; 17-7; 17-8; 17-9.1).

1. Grand Chaplain	Worshipful
<u>1</u> 2. Grand Historian	Worshipful
<u>2</u> 3. Grand Lecturer	Worshipful
<u>3</u> 4. Grand Orator	Worshipful
<u>4</u> 5. Judge Advocate	Worshipful

Amendment Group 8

The following amendment has been submitted by Grand Secretary Jonathan A. Underwood.

This amendment would amend Regulation 16-1.30 as Obsolete since this process is made available electronically through the Grand Lodge Membership management program.

Chapter 16 – Duties of the Grand Secretary

Reg. 16-1.30 – Duties of the Grand Secretary

REG. 16-1 DUTIES OF THE GRAND SECRETARY. The duties of the Grand Secretary are as follows.

30. ~~To prepare and furnish to each subordinate lodge, before November fifteenth of each year, blank returns in duplicate for annual returns, the subordinate lodge to complete both copies forwarding the original to the Grand Secretary and retaining the copy for its permanent file. (Chapter 47).—Obsolete~~

Amendment Group 9

The following amendment has been submitted by Grand Secretary Jonathan A. Underwood.

This amendment would amend Regulation 29-7.2 to remove the requirement of printing annually the roster of each grade and class of lecturer in the proceedings. The practice of printing the roster in the annual proceedings ceased in 1964 when the Board of Custodians agreed to print the roster in a separate publication, however, the Code was never amended to reflect this change. This separate printed publication was provided annually until 2004. As a cost savings, printing ceased in 2005, but the roster has been made available electronically since that time.

Chapter 29 – Board of Custodians, Masonic Education, Lecture Service

Reg. 29-7 – Class of Lecture

REG. 29-7 CLASSES OF LECTURERS. The Board of Custodians is authorized, in its discretion:

2. To establish a roster for each grade or class authorized by it, on which shall be posted the names of each brother qualified for the roster of each grade or class. These rosters shall be published annually by the Board of Custodians and made available in an electronic format. ~~printed in the Annual Proceedings of the Grand Lodge.~~
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Amendment Group 10

The following amendment has been submitted by Grand Secretary Jonathan A. Underwood.

This amendment would amend Regulation 43-2.4, Regulation 45-2 and Reg. 44-7, Article 8 to update the current practice of bi-monthly or quarterly stated meetings, without the requirement of a dispensation as currently allowed for lodges such as Orphans, Lux Libertas, Sophia, Veritas, Prometheus, & Lodge of the Nine Sisters.

Chapter 43 – Subordinate Lodges Powers and Duties

Reg. 43-2.4 – Powers and Duties

Chapter 45 – Communications of a Lodge

Reg. 45-2 – Stated Communications

Reg 44-7 – Uniform By-laws

Article 8 – Stated Communications

REG. 43-2 POWERS AND DUTIES. Some, but not all, of the powers and duties of a lodge are as follows. (2-4; 4-2).

4. A lodge shall hold at least one stated communication each calendar month or it may choose in its by-laws to meet bi-monthly or quarterly, except as provided in Regulation 45-2 or by dispensation of the Grand Master *(This section amended, effective January 1, 2004.)*

REG. 45-2 STATED COMMUNICATION. A lodge shall hold at least one stated communication each calendar month, however, it may provide in its by-laws to meet bi-monthly or quarterly, to omit any or all stated communications during either or all of the months of June, July, and August and those falling on legal holidays, or to omit a stated communication by dispensation of the Grand Master. *(This regulation amended, effective January 1, 2003.)*

REG. 44-7 UNIFORM BY-LAWS. The Grand Lodge recommends that each lodge adopt by-laws conforming to the articles hereinafter set forth.

ARTICLE 8

First Alternative Form for Article 8, Section 1

SECTION 1. A stated communication of this lodge shall be held bi-monthly on _____ of each ~~month~~ during the months of _____ at _____M.

Second Alternative Form for Article 8, Section 1

SECTION 1. A stated communication of this lodge shall be held quarterly on _____ of each month during the months of _____ at _____ M.

Amendment Group 11

The following amendment has been submitted by Grand Secretary Jonathan A. Underwood.

This amendment would amend Regulation 45-3.4.H as Obsolete since the requirement for Waiver of Jurisdictions for subordinate lodges no longer exists.

Chapter 4 – Communications of a Lodge

Reg. 45-3.4.H – Emergent Communications

REG. 45-3 EMERGENT COMMUNICATIONS. Emergent communications of a lodge may be held at any time at the pleasure of the Master as provided by law and the usages of the Craft. (45-1.2; 45-3.1; 45-4; 45-5; 59-2.5; 59-9.6).

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

H. ~~Grant a waiver of jurisdiction, or (42-9) Obsolete~~

Amendment Group 12

The following amendment has been submitted by Grand Master Donald E. Kehler.

This amendment would amend Chapter 10, Sec. 10-1, to permit a prompter distribution of all proposed amendments to the Code.

Chapter 10 – Amendments to the Constitution

Sec. 10-1 – Manner of Amendment

Chapter 10

Amendments to the Constitution

SEC. 10-1 MANNER OF AMENDMENT. Except when a general revision of THE CODE is ordered by the Grand Lodge, as provided in Section 10-2, or any part of this Constitution or any of the Regulations can be amended, repealed, revised or altered in the following manner:

2. Any such proposal shall be referred to the Committee on Masonic Jurisprudence which shall report thereon, with its recommendations, at the next annual communication of the Grand Lodge.

~~A. By unanimous consent of the Grand Lodge, action on any such proposal may be taken at the same annual communication at which it is presented.~~

A. The Grand Secretary shall, within 90 days after the submission deadline, electronically publish each proposed amendment on an approved electronic database as well as send electronic notice to the Craft via email or other electronic method deemed appropriate to ensure due and timely notice is given of the proposed amendments. The Grand Secretary shall also send a copy of each proposed amendment via mail to the Secretary of each subordinate lodge.

B. Any proposal which is properly published as described in section 2.A may be taken up at the annual communication at which it is presented. Amendments which are not properly published as described in section 2.A may be taken up at the annual communication at which it is presented only by unanimous consent of the Grand Lodge.

C. A lodge or any member of a subordinate lodge may object to an amendment being taken up at that annual communication under Section 10-1.2.B on grounds that they did not receive due and timely notice of the amendment as required in Section 10-1.2.B. Such objections must be submitted to the Grand Secretary in writing no later than July 1. Objections will be ruled on by the Committee on Masonic Jurisprudence. Failure to file a timely objection as provided in this subsection shall be deemed a waiver of the right to object at that annual communication.

~~B–D. The Grand Lodge shall not act, unanimously or otherwise, on~~

any proposal at the same session of the annual communication at which it is received if it is received later than noon of the second day of such annual communication at which it is received.

3. If the proposal is not acted upon as provided in Section 10-1.2.A or as provided in Section 10-1.2.B, it shall be published in the Proceedings of the Grand Lodge under the caption, PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE CODE, and within six months prior to the next annual communication the Grand Secretary shall prepare and mail a copy of any such proposal to each subordinate lodge and one copy to each officer and member of the Grand Lodge, as well as post it on an approved electronic database and send electronic notice to the craft.
4. If upon the report of the Committee on Masonic Jurisprudence, such proposal shall receive not less than two-thirds of the votes cast, the proposal shall be declared adopted; but it shall not take effect until January first following its adoption, unless otherwise provided by the Grand Lodge at the time of its adoption. (This subdivision amended, effective September 27, 2002)
5. When an amendment to this Constitution or Regulation is under consideration, it may be amended if the proposed amendment is germane to the subject.
6. When this Constitution or Regulations becomes effective, all previous Constitutions, Regulations and enactments of this Grand Lodge which are inconsistent herewith are repealed but those on which it is silent, or those referring to matters not provided for by it, remain in force as provided in Section 7-4.1.
7. The repeal of existing laws shall not affect any act done, right accrued, offense committed, or proceedings commenced prior to the time when such repeal takes effect.

Amendment Group 13

The following amendment has been submitted by the Committee on Finance.

This amendment would amend Regulation 13-4 by adding additional restrictions on the power of the Grand Master as related to the annual budget adopted by the delegates of the Grand Lodge. It also amends the duties of the Grand Treasurer, expands the Powers and Authority of the Board of General Purposes and the Finance Committee.

Chapter 13 – Powers, Duties and Expenses of the Grand Master

Reg. 13-4 – Restriction on Powers

REG. 13-4 RESTRICTIONS ON POWERS. The Grand Master has no authority to:

14. Amend or modify the budget adopted by the Grand Lodge at its Annual Communication unless and until such budget amendment or modification has been considered by the Committee on Finance, a recommendation is made by the said Committee to amend or modify

the budget and thereafter, the budget amendment or modification is adopted by not less than a 2/3 majority vote of the Board of General Purposes.

15. Spend, cause to be spent, authorize, direct, instruct, or order the Grand Treasurer or the Grand Secretary to disburse or expend funds of the Grand Lodge in an amount in excess of \$500 or 10%, whichever is greater, above any budgeted item adopted by the Grand Lodge at its Annual Communication unless and until such expenditure has been considered by the Committee on Finance, said Committee has, by simple majority vote, recommended such expenditure and thereafter, the expenditure is approved by not less than a 2/3 majority vote of the Board of General Purposes.

This amendment shall become effective upon adoption.

Chapter 15 – Duties of the Grand Treasurer

Reg. 15-1.7 – Duties of the Grand Treasurer

REG. 15-1 DUTIES OF THE GRAND TREASURER. The duties of the Grand Treasurer are as follows.

7. To pay warrants drawn on him authorized by the Grand Lodge or the Grand Master, not inconsistent with Regulation 13-4.15, and executed by the Grand Secretary.

This amendment shall become effective upon adoption.

Chapter 28 – Board of General Purposes

Reg. 28-3.5 – Powers and Authority

REG. 28-3 POWERS AND AUTHORITY. The objects and purposes, powers and authority, and limitations of the Board of General Purposes shall be as follows:

5. To receive and consider all recommendations referred by the Committee on Finance to expend funds in excess of \$500 or 10%, whichever is greater, above any amount set forth in the budget adopted by the Grand Lodge at its Annual Communication. Approval of any such expenditure shall require an affirmative vote of not less than 2/3 of the members of the Board of General Purposes.

This amendment shall become effective upon adoption.

Chapter 34 – Committee on Finance

Reg. 34-4 – Matters Referred

Reg. 35-5 – Duties and Powers

REG. 34-4 MATTERS REFERRED. Matters which shall be referred to the Committee on Finance and its duties relative to these and other things are as follows.

4. Consider all requests by the Grand Master, the Grand Treasurer or the Grand Secretary to expend funds of the Grand Lodge in excess of \$500 or 10%, whichever is greater, above any amount set forth in the budget adopted by the Grand Lodge at its Annual Communication.

REG. 34-5 DUTIES AND POWERS. The duties and powers of the Committee on Finance are as follows.

4. To address all requests by the Grand Master, the Grand Treasurer or the Grand Secretary to expend funds in excess of \$500 or 10%, whichever is greater, above any amount set forth in the budget adopted by the Grand Lodge at its Annual Communication and thereafter to make such recommendation to the Board of General Purposes, as may be appropriate, to approve or to refuse the expenditure of funds in excess of \$500 or 10%, whichever is greater, above any amount set forth in the budget adopted by the Grand Lodge and its Annual Communication.

This amendment shall become effective upon adoption.

Amendment Group 14

The following amendment has been submitted by Grand Master Donald E. Kehler.

This amendment would amend Regulation 20-1.1 to increase the Per Capita from \$35.00 to \$40.00 annually.

Chapter 20 – Per Capita Tax and Initiation Fee

Reg. 20-1 – Established

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 ~~thirty-five dollars (\$35.00)~~ forty dollars (\$40.00) 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 the Fifty-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 regulation amended effective January 1, 2023.*)

Respectfully submitted,
Matthew C. Robbins, Chairman
Committee on Unfinished Business

Report of the Representative to the Masonic Service Association

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

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

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

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

Education and Information

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

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

Disaster Relief

Since 1923, the MSA has collected and distributed over \$15.3 million in assistance to multiple Grand Jurisdictions following natural catastrophes.

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

In the last 25 years, North Carolina has been the recipient of over \$340,000 in assistance from MSA disaster relief efforts.

Hospital Visitation

The Masonic Hospital Visitation Program has been the foundation service of the MSA from its very beginning, and it continues to be a primary focus. With approximately 180 Hospital Representatives and State Coordinators, as well as hundreds of other volunteers at nearly every Veterans Administration (VA) Medical Center and many state veterans' hospitals, this is without a doubt the

finest public relations program ever undertaken by the Masonic Fraternity.

The MSA's network of volunteers contribute untold hours of volunteer assistance to our veterans across the nation every year. Assistance extends beyond mere "visitations" and includes reading to them, writing letters for them, personal errands, taking them to Chapel Services, or to other parts of the hospital where testing or treatment is to be provided. In short, the role of MSA volunteers is humanitarian in nature. Many veterans have no family or friends and are all alone. The Masonic Hospital Visitation program provides a personal touch to help spark a smile or a ray of hope in a segment of the population that is, all too often, forgotten.

If you find yourself interested in volunteering or working as an MSA Representative, we would love to hear from you. If you are unable to contribute your time, then please consider contributing financially to the MSA's Green Envelope Appeal (<http://www.msana.com/hvpgreenenv.asp>).

Respectfully Submitted,
Steve M. Norris, Senior Grand Warden
MSANA Representative

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

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

I am pleased to serve this year as your Representative to the George Washington Masonic National Memorial Association. This is a wonderful time to plan your visit to the Memorial. The Memorial celebrated its cornerstone centennial in 2023. One-hour tours are being conducted on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays. Additionally, if you visit the GWMemorial.org website, you can take a virtual tour of this historic edifice and explore the other educational offerings of this significant site.

This year marked the inaugural Grand Master's train trip to the Memorial on March 12th, co-sponsored with the North Carolina Scottish Rite. Masons from around the state boarded a train at each NC stop heading to Alexandria, VA. Great fun and fellowship was had by everyone. I encourage you to attend next year's trip, which will take place on March 10-12, 2025. Be sure to book the appropriate train in business class (noted on the form) to ride with the brethren from North Carolina!

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

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

Representatives from twenty-six Grand Lodges gathered on that day to endorse the erection of the Memorial, and the George Washington Masonic

National Memorial Association was formed. Ten years after the first official meeting of the Association, the concept of a colossal building as a Memorial lighthouse to Washington was approved by the Grand Lodges of the United States. The Memorial Association was determined not to borrow money for this undertaking. Construction only proceeded as money was collected for each stage of the project.

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

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

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

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

At its 233rd Annual Communication, the Grand Lodge of North Carolina voted to join the George Washington Masonic National Memorial Association's \$1 per member program to support the upkeep and preservation of this important historic structure. The George Washington Masonic National Memorial Association, Inc. is a non-profit organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, and all contributions are tax-deductible to the full extent permitted by law.

I urge each Mason to travel and visit this lasting monument to Masonry or consider the Grand Master's train trip to the George Washington Masonic Memorial.

Cordially and fraternally,
Gilbert D. Bailey, Junior Grand Warden
Representative, GWMNMA

Report of the Board of Publications

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

Your current Board of Publications consists of Brothers Larry Thompson, Jr., Chairman; Alvin Billings; Thomas Pope, Jr.; Anthony Rathbone; and Russell Scull. Per Regulation 34-20, the Board of Publications is charged with establishing the policies for the publication of Masonic news and information through various media, including print and electronic, and to encourage and promote the use of technology for communicating the message of Masonry amongst the lodges and by the Grand Lodge. The Board shall select the editor

and have editorial supervision of the North Carolina Mason and all similar news and informational publications, in all forms and formats. In addition to establishing policies for communicating the message of Masonry within our grand jurisdiction, we are tasked with doing so on a budget of \$120,000 per year.

We are pleased to report that your Board has secured W. Brother Don Butto as the new Editor for our publications, who has quickly proven his value. Our goal with the relatively new magazine format was to create a “timeless” publication with stories of enduring interest for the Craft in a high-quality format. This would be a magazine that anyone with a passing interest could pick up long after the original printing and read articles that are as relevant at the time of reading as they were when originally published. Our hope is that the magazine would also serve to pique the curiosity of potential new members by sharing the story of North Carolina Freemasonry.

One item that we struggled with as we focused on creating what we describe as a “Masonic lifestyle” magazine versus our decades-old newspaper format was how to deliver news of notable events, special degrees, service awards, lodge milestones, etc. This was quickly resolved by our Editor who created the new online supplement. The supplement will be our tool to deliver news of importance that may have time sensitive content that would otherwise not be suitable for a quarterly magazine.

Two challenges that the Board needed to address at once was the cost of the magazine layout — which W. Brother Butto has now brought in-house — as well as the cost of mailing the magazine, which amounted to almost half of our yearly budget due to postal rates increasing in July 2023. The answer called for a non-traditional approach. The Board, with the approval of the Grand Master, opted to try a test case with bulk cases of magazines being mailed directly to a select number of lodges who agreed to join the pilot program rather than mailing the magazine directly to their individual members. The lodges were tasked with delivering the magazines to members who were not able to attend lodge to pick up their copy. Our test lodges reported back with favorable responses, and stories of renewed connections, which led to a decision to fully implement bulk mailings directly to the lodges for an 80-percent cost savings in postage. Obviously, this approach will not work for our out-of-state members, and there is a process in place to make sure these brothers receive an electronic version or printed copy of the North Carolina Mason.

Our Editor has also created a repository for the North Carolina Mason as well as the online supplements which can be found at www.NCMasonMag.org. This webpage is dynamic in that it continues to evolve with essential information for our lodges and membership. This website consists of a landing page that displays the current issue of the North Carolina Mason as well as the current online supplemental publication. There are separate tabs for information related to our publication schedule, article submissions, a distribution plan for the magazine through our lodges, and a library of past publications.

In closing, we would like to thank our Grand Master and Grand Secretary for their support and encouragement as we have continued to refine our operations by implementing new strategic goals to achieve our mission. A special thank you is also due to George Marut, Chief Financial Development Officer, and LCS Development for their continued support and aid in helping

offset publication costs through WhiteStone: A Masonic and Eastern Star Community advertisements. It is an honor to serve our fraternity by telling “our story” in printed and digital formats. Keep those stories coming!

Respectfully submitted,
Larry Thompson, Jr., Chairman
Alvin Billings
Thomas Pope Jr.
Anthony Rathbone
Russell Scull

Report of the North Carolina Masonic Foundation, Inc

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

It is my pleasure to report that 2023 was a year of growth and accomplishment for the North Carolina Masonic Foundation, demonstrating our continued commitment to the charities we serve.

Financial Performance and Distributions

In 2023, the Foundation distributed a total of \$665,304 to Masonic and Eastern Star Home / Fraternal Friendship and the Masonic Home for Children (MHCO), marking an increase in support from the previous year. In 2024, we are proud to announce that this distribution will increase significantly to a total of \$838,266. The rising support underscores our commitment to these vital institutions.

Fund Performance

Our financial funds have shown resilience despite market challenges:

- **Equity Fund:** One-year return of 18.68%, three-year return of 4.78%, and five-year return of 15.04%.
- **Income Fund:** One-year return of 5.92%, three-year return of -1.19%, and five-year return of -3.52%.

Fundraising Success

Our efforts in fundraising for the MHCO’s 150th celebration have been met with great success. To date, we have secured \$300,000, exceeding our initial goal. The Foundation also worked with four key donors in creating a national marketing and fundraising opportunity with Xfinity race series. A car, driven by Jeremy Clements at Charlotte Motor Speedway in May 2023, proudly carried the message of 150th MHCO to race fans in-person and across the nation on TV.

Strategic Developments

We transitioned our investment advisor relationship from Alex Brown & Sons to CAPTRUST. This strategic move aims to reduce costs and enhance the services we offer to the Craft, positioning the Foundation for even greater success. Additionally, we have created a new and more secure portal through

which our shareholders can safely view, deposit and request funds.

Accomplishments and Partnerships

We continue to foster strong financial partnerships with our lodges, supporting their fundraising efforts through initiatives like the Lodge Charity Account program. These partnerships are key to securing new and innovative funding avenues, both internally and externally.

Leadership and Board Expansion

In 2023, the Foundation welcomed Grand Line Officer Gilbert Bailey and welcomed back Past Grand Master Dan Rice to another term on the Board, expanding our board from 5 to 7 members. Their leadership and vision continue to guide our mission forward.

Outreach and Engagement

Our staff has been on the road, making 440 in-person donor visits, 256 visits to lodges and appendant bodies, and attending 38 special Masonic events. These efforts are critical in maintaining and growing our network of support across the state. Additionally, the Foundation unveiled a new logo and website which can be found at www.mfnc.org

In conclusion, the North Carolina Masonic Foundation remains steadfast in its mission to support our Masonic charities and communities. The successes of 2023, from financial growth to expanded outreach, are a testament to our collective commitment to making a difference.

Respectfully submitted,
John Burns, Chairman of the Board of Directors
North Carolina Masonic Foundation

Report of the Committee on Youth Organizations

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

Rainbow Girls

NC Rainbows held their Grand Assembly in Greensboro in June. As part of the NC Miss Service Project, care packages were assembled that were delivered to all attendees for Rainbows Supreme Assembly. Hannah Silber of Raleigh was installed as the new Grand Worthy Advisor.

Rainbow Girls has had a productive and rewarding year. Projects include a statewide event in support of NC Miss Service project in Smithfield; volunteering to be “buddies” in support of Children’s Miracle League; attending and assisting with the Fayetteville Walk to End Alzheimer’s; and the Greensboro Assembly providing Thanksgiving Lunch for First Responders who were on duty for the holiday. The Peppermint Ball was held in conjunction with NC DeMolay at the Masonic Center in Winston-Salem. More than 20 ladies and gentlemen attended. NC Rainbows also donated 26 bears to Shriners Children’s Hospital in Greenville, SC, in support of the NC Grand

Miss Service Project. The bears are given to patients to calm their nerves prior to surgery. Rainbows worked all morning at the Great Landscape Day at the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford.

The annual Leadership Conference was held in the Winston-Salem Masonic Center, with the theme “A Day of Positivity and Encouragement.” Grand Worthy Advisor Madi White and Supreme Deputy Anna Nall attended NC OES Grand Chapter Annual Session. NC hosted the 50th Biennial Supreme Assembly. NC’s Kay Letterman presided over the proceedings. Ritual Competitions were held on Monday. NC won the Opening/Closing ritual competition and placed 2nd in the Initiation Ritual Competition. Marisa Tang of Greensboro won the Super 7 Ritual Competition by reciting for memory all seven color stations that are depicted during an initiation. Brother Bill McMillan provided the lecture on the Lambskin Apron and its meanings to the entire assembly. This was the culmination of two years preparation to host this international event.

Just as the DeMolay, the Rainbow Girls are always looking for members and Masonic guidance. They too compete with other youth groups for membership and participation.

DeMolay

A brief summary of the NC State Association of the Order of DeMolay is as follows. Eight Chapters in operation, with a total membership of 94 and 33 advisors.

The Chapters have been active at both the local level and at the Association level. However, there are several major issues to be noted. The Executive Officer for the jurisdiction has resigned. A new Personal Representative has been appointed. There is a serious shortfall in funds for the operation of the Association at the jurisdictional level. Organization membership continues to decline. Advisor registration and support is in decline. There is a serious lack of support from the Masonic Lodges and community. There is a serious lack of communication between the State Association and the Masonic community.

The Scottish Rite has increased their funding for the Youth Groups in NC. Applications are online and ready for use. Scholarships offered in NC are also listed on the web page. The Scottish Rite challenges all Masonic Bodies in NC to show their support of our Masonic Youth through sponsorship and leadership.

MHCO

Fifty-seven youth are in care. This census does not reflect the four children who were adopted by their houseparents and continue to reside on campus. The Campus has been busy with summer employment, educational activities, and summer trips. Four residents formed a golf team and played in the Fellowship 687 Golf Tournament. Two cottages participated in the Pig Jig, sharing their thanks with the teams. The Campus has continued to be busy with several fun and educational activities, such as Summer Enrichment, Urban Air, Par-Tee Shack, Angel Island, Justice Theater, National Sojourners, and helping wash cars for the Public Service Appreciation Day at MHCO.

The Troutman Awards Ceremony celebrated the 4th Quarter results. Ten students earned Honorable Mention, nine earned Honor Roll, and three earned

“A” Honor Roll receiving straight A’s. Two with straight A’s are high school students. Eight students realized at least a five-point increase in their GPA from the previous quarter. The Campus average GPA is 81.

Employment levels are Direct Care – one youth working, and two others have submitted applications; TLC 78%, ILP 100%, Combined 88%. Fifteen residents are doing Kid\$Earn jobs on campus. No youth are currently in Driver’s Ed on campus.

Summary

Youth programming is challenged by competition for youth’s time and commitment. We are all aware of the important impact Rainbow, DeMolay, and other youth programs can have for youth. Please join the Scottish Rite in helping financially support the DeMolay and Rainbow Girls. Please consider being an advisor, encourage youth to join, and be active in your local Masonic Youth Programs. Again this year, we implore the local Masonic Leadership to take an active role in helping develop youth programming. If you have any questions, please reach out to DeMolay and Rainbows to see how you can help our children learn, grow, and develop. Special Thanks to Russell and Stephanie Bridges, Bill and Mandy McMillan, and John Walston for their support in this report. Thanks to all.

Respectfully submitted,
Kevin Otis
MHCO Administrator

Report of the Committee on Masonic Public Relations

To the Grand Master of Masons in North Carolina; his Right Worshipful and Worshipful Grand Officers; the Members of the Grand Lodge of North Carolina; and especially to the Craft and its Most Worshipful, Right Worshipful, Worshipful, and Brethren all:

I am pleased to offer this Report for the 2024 Annual Communication on behalf of the Committee:

Key Updates

- **Singer Marketing Project Success:**

The Singer project has delivered outstanding results with a Cost Per Lead significantly lower than anticipated. Consequently, we are reallocating more marketing funds towards micro-tests and enhancing focus in high-priority membership areas.

- **Press Release Integration:**

The Public Relations Committee has successfully operationalized and integrated the press release form with the NC Mason and its new Online Supplement.

- **Training Initiatives:**

In conjunction with the Grand Lodge Office and Committee on Education, we have developed three training modules for DDGMs

and Secretaries on utilizing the new marketing prospects system and Grand View.

Current Initiatives:

- Two-way Craft-centered messaging between the Grand Lodge, Lodges, and the public.
- Enhancing Grand View-driven messaging, listening to our Brothers.
- Managing the Singer Marketing Program with focus on metrics, budget maximization, exploratory testing, Google/website search engine optimization, and digital content engagement.
- Expanding online presence and marketing channels.
- Providing statistical and technical support.

Integration of Cost-Effective Communication Software

In our continued effort to optimize communication within our organization, the Public Relations Committee has successfully tested and plans to integrate cost-effective (\$50/month) AI-Content software. This software is a small monthly fee and within the budget set for the Public Relations Committee and will be a good investment which we can opt out of at any time. This strategic move has streamlined our internal communications and enhanced our ability to maintain robust and continuous contact with all stakeholders through training.

Development of Education and Resource Programs

Recognizing the critical importance of training new leaders and the ever-present scarcity of resources, the committee has dedicated significant time to developing comprehensive education and resource programs. These initiatives are designed to empower members at all levels with the knowledge and tools they need to effectively communicate the values and mission of our organization. Key programs introduced include:

- **Training Modules for DDGMs and Secretaries:** We have collaborated with GL Office and Committee on Education to create three detailed training modules focusing on the use of our new marketing prospects system and Grand View. These trainings are designed to ensure that all district officers and secretaries are proficient in utilizing these systems to their full potential, thereby enhancing our outreach and engagement capabilities.

Membership Awareness Campaigns

Increasing membership awareness has been a focal point of our public relations strategy aimed at raising awareness about the benefits of membership and the positive impact of our organization within the community. These initiatives include:

- **Social Media Campaigns:** Targeted social media campaigns have been deployed to highlight member stories, community projects, and the core values of our organization. These campaigns are designed to engage both current and prospective members, fostering a sense of community and belonging.
 - **Press Releases and Media Outreach:** Regular press releases and media outreach efforts have been undertaken to ensure our activities and achievements are well-publicized. This has included
-

collaboration with local media outlets and the distribution of content through our integrated press release form.

Press Release Form and Development of N.C. Mason Supplement

To further enhance our communication efforts, WB Don Butto, Editor of the NC Mason, developed the N.C. Mason Supplement as a funnel for craft-generated content. This was a natural extension of our mission to drive two-way communications from the Craft to the Craft. This supplement serves as a dedicated platform for members to share their stories, achievements, and experiences. It is integrated with our main publication, the NC Mason, and its online counterpart, ensuring a broad reach and consistent messaging. The supplement has been instrumental in:

1. **Amplifying Member Voices:** Providing a platform for members to share their narratives, thus fostering a deeper connection within the Masonic community.
2. **Highlighting Community Impact:** Showcasing the positive impact of our initiatives and projects, thereby enhancing our public image and community relations.
3. **Facilitating Knowledge Sharing:** Encouraging the exchange of ideas and best practices among members, contributing to the overall growth and development of our organization.

In conclusion, the Public Relations Committee has made significant strides in enhancing our communication capabilities, developing educational resources, increasing membership awareness, and amplifying member-generated content through the N.C. Mason Supplement. These efforts are aligned with our commitment to fostering a transparent, informed, and engaged membership.

I'd like to end with a short letter:

Dear Brother:

**PLEASE USE THE LODGE PRESS RELEASE FORM
TOOL ON GRAND VIEW TO SEND US ALL YOUR
WONDERFUL PHOTOS OF LODGE DINNERS, AWARDS
NIGHTS, DEGREES, LODGE HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS,
LODGE FAMILY DAYS, OR ESPECIALLY COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT EVENTS!.**

**YOU MIGHT END UP ON THE FRONT PAGE OF THE NC
MASON SUPPLEMENT. OR THE BACK PAGE. EITHER
WAY, CONGRATULATIONS! YOU MADE IT.**

Respectfully submitted,
Julian C. Setzer, Chairman
Christopher T. Canipe
Michael E. Cline
John S. Harder
Albert J. Terrell, III

Report of the Committee on Masonic Education

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

It has been a fruitful year for the Committee on Masonic Education. Brothers from around the state have taken part in our programs, and it is clear that there is a real hunger for Masonic Education in North Carolina.

As our jurisdiction continues to integrate more and more with Grand View, our committee is following suit. This year, we moved much of our enrollment and deployment of online sessions of Davie Academy to Grand View Seminars, including our new session The Master's Trestleboard, which is a workshop specifically for new Masters.

Under the leadership of WB Jason Caldwell, Davie Academy will continue to expand in the coming year. In partnership with the Committee on Public Relations, we plan to roll out a variety of trainings for lodge officers in 2025, ranging from Secretaries workshops to classes on membership engagement. Unlike previous workshops, we are planning to offer many of these classes pre-recorded and on-demand, which would dramatically increase their accessibility.

The Speakers Bureau has also seen some major changes this year. There is now a clear pathway for a presenter to become part of the Speakers Bureau, which simply involves having two members of the Committee on Masonic Education view and approve the specified presentation. We continue to see a great deal of interest in the Speakers Bureau, both from presenters and lodges, so we are excited to welcome more brothers into the fold. More information about this process will be posted on the Speakers Bureau section of the Grand Lodge website.

I would like to share my appreciation for the members of our Grand Jurisdiction who give their time, effort, and interest to creating, maintaining, and attending the excellent educational programs we offer. Participation in these programs has made North Carolina one of the leaders of Masonic Education in the United States, and I believe that we are seeing firsthand the effects that education can have on brothers who embrace it.

I am grateful for continued opportunity serve as Chairman of this committee, and I'm excited to see what comes next for Masonic Education in North Carolina.

Respectfully submitted,
Noah Goode, Chairman

Report of the Board of Custodians

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The members who served on the Board of Custodians during the year 2024 were: Donald E. Kehler, Grand Master; Dwight W. Crews, Grand Lecturer; Ludwik J. Wodka, Chairman; Stephen M. McCraw, Secretary; Brett A. Huffman; Christopher L. Wright; Randy D. Ward; Philip C. Lee; and Anthony J. Rathbone, who served as liaison with the Board of General Purposes.

The Board of Custodians met regularly during the year, with meetings held on January 12th, April 12th, July 12th, and September 26th, 2024.

- Certified brethren qualifying for the Laudamus Certificate in 2024 are:

First	Middle	Last	Lodge
Jeffrey	Lynn	Bullington	Corinthian No. 542
Lance	Baxter	Hegler	Mooresville No. 496
Philip	Dean	Hensley	Ocean No. 405
Phil	Dennis	McCraw	Granite No. 322
John	William	Riffert, Jr.	Washington No. 675
Perry	Harlee	Sellers	Shallotte No. 727
John	Arthur	Shawver	St. John's No. 1

- District Deputy Grand Lecturers qualifying for the Past District Deputy Grand Lecturer Certificate in 2024 are:

District	Full Name	Lodge
3	Hylar Wayne Cox	Atlantic Lodge No. 294
11	Edward Earl Wells, PGL	Hiram Lodge No. 98
12	Randy Daryl Ward	Shallotte Lodge No. 727
15	Tommy Reavis Mills, Jr.	Green Level No. 277
19	John Christian Fluke	Oxford Lodge No. 122
20	Jeffrey James Troccoli	Columbus No. 102
33	Thomas Lee Hartman	Ashe Lodge No. 594
35	William Royce Peeler	State Line No. 375
37	Gary Wayne Pyatte	Bakersville No. 357
38	Claude Ray Harrill	Kedron Lodge No. 387
39	Jimmy Dean Blair	Hominy Lodge No. 491

- District Deputy Grand Lecturers qualifying for the Past District Deputy Grand Lecturer Certificate in 2023 after the final 2023 Annual Report was submitted and having served extended years or less than three consecutive years were:

District	Full Name	Lodge
9	Harold Vernon Stafford	Corinthian No. 230
22	Dwight Wayne Crews	Bula Lodge No. 409
24	Jerry Randolph Browning, III, PGL	Blackmer Lodge No. 127

Certified Lecturer Brothers Ray Anderson, Numa F. Reid No. 344, and Robert Keith Braswell, Steele Creek No. 737, received their 50-year Certified Lecturer award in 2024.

The 2024 Certified Lecturer examinations were held according to the following schedule: August 10th - Greenville and Greensboro; August 17th - Wilmington and Charlotte; August 24th - Fayetteville and Asheville. The examinations continue to be offered on Saturdays to be more accommodating to our certified brethren who have work conflicts. The Board expresses its sincere appreciation to the brethren at the six locations who donated the use of their facilities for the examinations.

At the end of the 2023 examinations the number of certified brethren was 302. This consisted of 275 Class “A” Certified Lecturers and 27 Class “B” Certified Instructors. Since the 2023 exams we have lost 13 brothers to death or other causes, bringing our total number down to 289. Thirty-four brethren were required for re-examination in 2024, not including the fourteen brethren that received one-year extensions in 2023. We have also received four applications for new certified brothers, four applications to upgrade a B certificate to an A certificate, and three applications to reinstate. The final 2024 results will be available after the last exams are held on August 24th.

It is our sad duty to announce the passing of the following certified brethren since our last annual report:

Full Name	Lodge	Years of Service
Ray Anderson	Numa F. Reid No. 344	50
Ray Howard Coltrane	Liberty No. 714	28
Virgil Chase Crump	Long Creek No. 205	35
Walter William Grahling, Jr.	Phalanx No. 31	46
Richard LeRoy Harris	Federal Point No. 753	28
Kenneth Wayne Hinson	Cherryville No. 505	32
Royal Sanford Jarvis	Thomasville No. 214	49
Frederick Earl Oglesby	Franklin No. 109	53
William Irvin Reagan	Caswell Brotherhood No. 11	55
Leroy Beaman Whitfield	Jerusalem No. 95	69
Victor Albert Willis	Cherryville No. 505	40

The booklet “Important Information Concerning the Certified Lecturers” is posted on the Grand Lodge website and is available to anyone with access to the Internet. A webpage sponsored by the Board of Custodians is also now being maintained on a regular basis. This page includes information of interest concerning their history, latest corrections to the OSW and Bahnson Manual, rules governing the Lecture Service and OSW/Vocabulary, various application forms, and a current roster of those certified. We are in the process of making this same information available on Grand View.

In 2024 the (5) five-hour mandatory Lecture Service or Modified Ritual Instruction Program (MRIP) was continued for all lodges throughout the state. As a reminder, the Lecture Service rules were updated in 2022 to formally indicate the continuation of this mandatory five-hour service until otherwise notified.

Grand Master Donald E. Kehler and Grand Lecturer Dwight W. Crews offered Lodge Ritual Symposiums in seven locations throughout the State from February through April. At these symposiums both breakfast and lunch were provided, fellowship was enjoyed, and instruction was given similarly to the format of Schools of Instruction.

To continue a practice reestablished in 2011, the Board again unanimously recommended that the Lodge System of Masonic Education program be recommended for use by all lodges and that they fully participate in this program to properly instruct their candidates as they begin and journey through their Masonic degrees.

The fraternity has had 169 Coaches apply for and complete the Coaches Proficiency Exam. Once passed, the Coach receives a certificate and card. This being a one-time exam there is no expiration date on the card. To pass the exam, the coach must recite both the questions and answers to the catechisms of the three degrees and have a general knowledge of certain Masonic terms and symbols.

The Board of Custodians expresses its appreciation to Grand Master Donald E. Kehler for his support of the Board of Custodians and the Certified Lecturer program, and to Grand Secretary, Jonathan A. Underwood; Assistant Grand Secretary, Matthew Robbins; and the Grand Lodge staff: Hayley, Vicki, and Eric, for their valuable assistance during the year.

The Board also expresses its appreciation to Grand Lecturer Dwight W. Crews, for his thoughtful care and concern to our gentle craft and his faithful service to it.

The Board continues to look at how to best preserve our time-honored traditions, while also looking forward for ways to inspire and serve our brethren and fraternity today. This task would not be possible without the vigorous support of the certified brethren throughout the state. We extend a sincere “thank you” for your continued and faithful service to our beloved fraternity, and to the Certified Lecturer Program. Lastly, to our District Deputy Grand Lecturers, thank you for all the hours of instruction given, all the miles driven, and your tireless contributions to your lodges, your districts, and this Grand Jurisdiction.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ludwik J. Wodka, Chairman
Stephen M. McCraw, Secretary

Report of the Commission on Subordinate Lodge Special Activities

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The following report of the Commission on Subordinate Lodge Special Activities was submitted as of July 15, 2024.

Your Commission consists of Masons that freely volunteer their time to support Blue Lodge fundraising events. Our goal is to help Lodges find a way to hold their requested events, while staying within the CODE and applicable laws, both at the Federal and State levels. Additionally, we work with Lodges to ensure that they have adequate insurance coverage for their events.

In 2023, it took the Commission an average of 4 days to process a new application. On average, fundraising events lasted 50 days, with final reports being submitted 32 days after the event date.

In 2023, the approximately 32,000 Masons in North Carolina delivered \$830,492 (\$25.95/Mason) to charities from their 232 fundraising activities, retaining \$2,873 from raffles for Lodge activities. On average, each fundraising event generated \$3,623 in net proceeds. This report does not include contributions to charity by Lodges that do not hold fundraising events or contributions by Lodges to charity that work directly with NCMF to coordinate their event.

The Commission on Subordinate Lodge Special Activities presents this report in supporting lodge fundraising efforts. The following report reflects fundraising numbers for events held in 2023.

Vital Statistics for 2023

Number of Active Lodges in NC	361			
Lodges Participating in Fundraisers	170	47%		
Applications Received:	232			
Final Reports Received:	230	99%		
Total Applications & Final Reports Processed:	462			
Final Reports Past Due:	1	0.4%	<u>Avg / Fundraiser</u>	
Total Gross Receipts:	\$1,295,498.84			\$ 5,632.60
Total Expenses:	\$ 462,132.61	36%		\$ 2,009.27
Net Proceeds:	\$ 833,366.23			\$ 3,623.33

Net Proceeds by Fundraiser Category

Category	#	Amount	ROI	Avg / Category
Gun Raffles	38	\$ 191,571.28	63%	\$ 5,041.35
General Raffles	27	\$ 66,387.70	66%	\$ 2,458.80
Golf Tournaments	19	\$ 178,511.90	70%	\$ 9,395.36
BBQ	38	\$ 128,224.32	56%	\$ 3,374.32
Breakfasts	8	\$ 16,016.36	55%	\$ 2,002.05
Dinners	23	\$ 91,958.46	58%	\$ 3,998.19
Food Sales - Other	18	\$ 37,733.90	66%	\$ 2,096.33
Merchandise Sales	5	\$ 10,704.72	60%	\$ 2,140.94
<u>Other</u>	<u>39</u>	<u>\$ 112,257.59</u>	<u>77%</u>	\$ 2,878.40
Total	215	\$ 833,366.23	55%	

Net Proceeds by Charity Category

Charity	#	Amount	Avg / Category
MHCO	173	\$ 425,117.61	\$ 2,457.33
MESH, LLC	67	\$ 101,631.99	\$ 1,516.90
WhiteStone	52	\$ 58,382.65	\$ 1,122.74
NCMF	82	\$ 157,015.80	\$ 1,914.83
Other Charities			
Chosen by Lodges	40	\$ 88,344.34	\$ 2,208.61
Lodge Building Funds	0	\$ --	\$ --
<u>10% Retained Raffle Proceeds</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>\$ 2,873.84</u>	<u>\$ 359.23</u>
Total	414	\$ 833,366.23	\$ 2,012.96

Summary for 2023

Total Gross Receipts:	\$ 1,295,498.84
Total Expenses:	\$ 462,132.61
Net Proceeds:	\$ 833,366.23

The one (1) lodge with past-due final report follow:

District	Lodge	Description	Event Date	Final Report Due Date
23	271	Pork butt sale	11/13/2022	12/28/2022

Respectfully submitted,
Kenneth C. (Casey) Shaw, Chairman

Report of the Personnel Committee

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina

The Grand Lodge Committee on Personnel continued to work under Reg. 34-23 of the Code, as it was approved by this Grand Lodge in 2017. The Committee was established to ensure compliance with state and federal laws and regulations, to implement and conduct annual employee performance reviews, and to make annual salary and benefit recommendations to the Grand Lodge Committee on Finance.

In 2024, the Personnel Committee met on three occasions following the established protocols with regard to its duties and obligations. The first meeting was to discuss and approve the job description and salary of the new editor of the North Carolina Mason as requested by the Board of Publications.

Our second meeting was to discuss and recommend to the Committee on Finance salaries for the office staff to be included with the proposed budget of the Grand Lodge for 2025 to be considered at Annual Communication.

The third meeting was to review portions of the Forvis Report pertaining to personnel. Utilizing funds from the Drewry Fund, an outside firm was retained to evaluate the operations and staffing of the Grand Lodge Office. The results of that report will be used by the appropriate committees, including Personnel, to make recommendations for future operations.

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

Respectfully submitted,
Steve Norris, SGW, Chairman
Gilbert Bailey, JGW
Shaun Bradshaw, PGM
Asa Buck
Homer Dearmin

Report of the Scholarship Committee

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The Grand Lodge Scholarship Committee went to work to review this year's Charles Edward Cathey Masonic Scholarship applications. The committee divided up the applications and carefully reviewed each one. Over one hundred applications were received. The scholarship winners all demonstrated strong academic performance balanced with extensive volunteer service and extracurricular activities within their communities. We are most excited to have been able to award 15 scholarships valued at \$1,000 each. We hope that, through the generosity of the brethren, additional scholarships can be awarded each year.

Respectfully submitted,
Grand Lodge Scholarship Committee
Bro. Joseph B. Walls – Chairman
Bro. Rory J. Byers
Bro. William L. Dill

Report of the Committee on Necrology

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of North Carolina:

The 2024 Report of the Necrology Committee recognizes all those among us who have passed from this earthly life here to that glorious and celestial lodge above where the Supreme Architect of the Universe presides. We are eternally grateful for each life that has touched our fraternity in so many ways from family, to mentors, to friends. Each of these relationships is cherished, and our gratitude is most sincere.

The number of deaths is in the Secretary's Report to the Annual Communication. Each will be remembered in our Necrology Service held during Grand Lodge's Annual Communication.

There have been no Past Grand Masters who laid down their working tools since our last gathering.

We are pleased to report that a new North Carolina Masonic Funeral Manual has been approved and will be published. It will include revisions to the 2012 edition and instructions on combining other fraternal funeral rites with our traditional ceremonies, found in Ceremony 14.

While we have always encouraged the memorization of these ceremonies, they are written to be memorized or effectively read and conducted with as few as two people so as not to deny a worthy brother of Masonic Rites, if requested.

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

Final Report
of
Grand Master
Kevan D. Frazier
to
the
Grand Lodge
of
Ancient, Free & Accepted Masons
of
North Carolina
at
Winston-Salem, North Carolina
September 27, 2024

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

Love Your Neighbor and Lead a Reformation

Last year, Grand Master Thompson called for a Masonic Revival, a time to return our focus to Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth, and a time to prepare ourselves to do the work necessary to revitalize our institution. Revivals are about remembering and reconnecting with our values and grounding ourselves as we reinvigorate ourselves and our institutions. From this work we discovered that while our core values remain as strong and vital as ever, some of our operational systems have become outdated and outmoded. The pandemic both exposed and accelerated the need to reform some of our practices so that we might better live our values.

Even though we are emerging out of Covid, we still face a pandemic, a pandemic of selfishness and self-centeredness in our culture. Whether from greed, fear, or simple ignorance, we have become way too much about ME and not about WE. You see it in our politics, our social media, and in our institutions, including, at times, our own. The rhetoric has become vitriolic. We seem unable to disagree with each other without hatred in our hearts, or invectives on our lips. We get caught in the trap of otherness, turning our backs on those who don't look, act, or believe as we do. I truly fear that this self-centeredness will unravel our great Republic, a Republic built on communitarian values of neighbor helping neighbor and love for our fellow man. Our communities, our country, and our world are calling out to us as Masons to step up yet again, to spread our tenets of Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth, to transform our society, to move from a culture of ME to one of WE. We are being called upon not to just AID, but to LEAD a Reformation. Let Brotherly Love, Truth, and Relief be our charge and let us start this reformation at home.

First and foremost, let me be clear:

THERE IS NOTHING WRONG WITH MASONRY.

MASONRY IS NOT BROKEN.

MASONRY IS NOT OBSOLETE.

MASONRY IS NOT DYING.

It is as relevant today as it has been for centuries. The tenants of our fraternity are still the foundation of a great society, our landmarks are still the guideposts of a transformative organization, and our leadership is still an essential working tool for our communities.

Masonry will outlast us all. The only question is are we willing to do the work right now that is needed to ensure that our beloved fraternity remains a useful working tool in our communities today, that men might learn how to be better men so that they can provide much needed leadership in our society, now and centuries into the future.

To Lead this Reformation, we have got to sharpen our working tools. And while the pandemic has worn down many of our tools, if we are honest with ourselves, we will acknowledge that many of them were already dull. Brothers, there is no need to debate what dulled them. We've learned our lessons from the past and know what to do moving forward. Let's just pull out our whetstones and our flints so that our tools are sharp as we hew our Ashlars toward perfection.

Can a group of 30,000 men in North Carolina change the world? Absolutely! It was a handful a Masons in a tavern in Boston who cooked up a wild scheme to throw tea off a ship in the harbor that ushered in a revolution, a new nation, and the transformation of the world.

The very tenants of our order — Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth — are our starting points. They reflect that simply-put important call from the Great Architect of the Universe, to love our neighbors and that Masonic foundation of meeting on the level.

The level is a tool made use of by stone masons for laying horizontals so that a building doesn't lean to one side or the other, lest over time it collapse. As Freemasons we use the symbol of the level to illustrate the fundamental equality of humans. Masons meet on the level by stripping off all of the distinctions that the outside world, such as religion, politics, and race, which are used to separate us. By stepping away from the distinctions that separate us, we can work together to improve ourselves, helping each other to learn how to be better men so that when we leave our sacred retreat and mix again with the world, we can do good unto others.

The Grand Master's pin for my year is a visual representation of the fundamental quality of all human beings. It is an antique level, to remind us that Masons meet on the level and that the Great Architect of the Universe gave us one great commandment, TO LOVE OUR NEIGHBORS. And that he does so with no qualifiers as to gender, race, sex, sexuality, religion, social class, wealth, or any other characteristic. It is not "love this neighbor but not that one", it is simply, "love your neighbor."

In the days before modern bubble levels, antique levels had a string and pendulum suspended in the middle, which had to be adjusted periodically. On my pin you will notice that the pendulum is hanging a little low, indicating that it needs to be recalibrated, as a reminder that as humans we must continually recalibrate our efforts to meet people on the level.

Meeting on the level is how we in Masonry approach that one great commandment from our Creator, and that work begins, first and foremost, at home. Harmony being the strength and support of all institutions, but more especially our own.

Harmony within leads to harmony without. Working together as Masons within our own fraternity will strengthen our work as leaders in our communities. Let us find common ground with each other in the lodge as practice for doing the same when we leave our sacred retreats. From 2023 and beyond, let us Lead a Reformation.

Communication, transparency and proper instruction are keys to leading a reformation and the foundation of much of my work as Grand Master.

Grand Master's Videos

During my year of service, I sent regular video message to the Craft talking about key issues facing the jurisdiction. Comments from brothers indicate the videos were well-received and that brethren appreciated the transparency.

Regional Meetings

I took a different approach to district meetings and piloted 5 regional meetings along the I-40 corridor and in metro Charlotte. These were day-long workshops designed to give brethren the training and tools they need to strengthen their lodges. It is unreasonable to expect Masons to do good work without the tools to do so. Additionally, several traditional district meetings were held in smaller cities and more rural parts of the state.

NC Mason

In 2023 the NC Mason was retooled from a newspaper to a magazine. That proved to be a heavy lift, made all the heavier with the retirement of Beth Grace, who served for several years as editor of the publication. Three issues of the NC Mason were published in 2023 and a new long-term plan crafted for 2024 and beyond. The NC Mason is one of the largest single expenses of the Grand Lodge and its financial viability one of the elements of the per capita increase approved in 2023.

NC Masonic Foundation

I spent a good amount of time with the brethren of the North Carolina Masonic Foundation to strengthen the ties that bind. The Foundation is an extraordinary tool that our brethren had the foresight to create nearly a century ago, long before such entities were the operational norm. Today NCMF manages a large portfolio of Grand Lodge, local lodge, appendant body, and Masonic charity funds. With its professional development staff, opportunities abound for growing the corpus to serve not only our traditional charities at the Masonic Home for Children and WhiteStone, but to grow our ability to support children and the aged, both in the fraternity and throughout North Carolina.

There has been a long-standing issue concerning a deposit of funds placed in the Foundation in 1981 following the sale of land adjacent to the Grand Lodge, and many conversations as to whether those funds were under the control of the Foundation or were the funds of the Grand Lodge. In October 2023, the brethren of the Foundation and the Grand Lodge sat down at the table in brotherhood and discussed a solution to move forward concerning the disposition of the funds for both the Grand Lodge and the Foundation. The evolution of those funds over the past 40 years was complicated, being wrapped into non-profit funds and there being almost no accounting from the Foundation or the Grand Lodge concerning the funds. We were able to come to a resolution together in October that we would close this chapter and move on—that the money is in the Foundation and there to serve all the purposes

of Masonry and its charitable endeavors through the Foundation. And, from there the Foundation would make available on an annual basis funds that still meet its 501(c)3 mission to the direct support of the work of the Grand Lodge. The Grand Lodge & NCMF have accepted this agreement, and it is my hope that we do not have revisit this controversy again. Brethren, this has been a long standing concern, and I am really thankful for brotherly love prevailing and us working together to make sure we can provide support through the Grand Lodge to keep our institution strong because if our institution is not strong, we won't have charitable endeavors, and we need to be able to do all of this together.

150th Anniversary of MHCO

Last year marked the 150th Anniversary of the founding of the Masonic Home for Children in Oxford (MHCO). Over the past century and a half our Home has helped more than 11,000 children grow up in a safe and loving community to go on to have prosperous and fulfilling lives. The 150th year kicked off on February 11, 2023, with a magnificent black-tie fundraising gala hosted by the Scottish Rite. Some 350 people attended the celebration. In June, following a Grand Lodge table lodge, the Eastern Star hosted a day-long ice cream social at the Home, which was attend by several hundred people. Homecoming in October got rained out, but we all still had a great time being in community as we hung out inside the buildings to stay dry. The traditional York Rite Christmas Observance in December closed out a great year of celebration. As part of this year's MHCO fundraising goal to increase the number of annual givers to the home, I issued the Grand Master's Challenge for every lodge to have at least 5 monthly givers. So far we've had twenty-six lodges commit to five of their members donating at least \$12.50 to the Home every month for at least three years, with one hundred thirty-two donors in total. That's a \$19,800 impact on our Home.

Fraternal Friendship Fund

Several years ago, as part of the reorganization of the Masonic and Eastern Star Home in Greensboro into WhiteStone, the MESH LLC was created to continue to support brothers and Eastern Star members who needed financial assistance to live at WhiteStone. A few years ago, the MESH LLC was rebranded into the Fraternal Friendship Fund and expanded its service to brothers and stars to include not only those living at WhiteStone, but also to provide assistance needed wherever they may reside throughout the state. As the 150th Anniversary of MHCO begins to wrap up we are kicking off a new campaign to increase the funding and expand the reach of the Fraternal Friendship fund with the goal of not only supporting Masons and Stars but eventually again people throughout North Carolina.

Lodge Loan Fund

Thanks to the leadership of Brother John Burns and his ad hoc committee we were able to create a Lodge Loan Fund as a stop-gap measure for financially struggling lodges who need certain, approved funds for major system repairs or replacement where insurance and cash on hand is unavailable or insufficient. The fund was initially funded with a \$100,000 transfer from the sale of lodge

property and is a Grand Lodge fund, not a North Carolina Masonic Foundation Fund, but will be invested to continually grow the fund.

Lodge Insurance

As I concluded my term, I worked with incoming Grand Master Don Kehler to establish an ad hoc committee on Risk Management and Insurance. This committee was to review what should be expected of all lodges in regard to insurance in order to sufficiently protect our officers, members, and property. The committee will also lead the exploration of a state-wide policy to reduce costs for all lodges.

Lodge Rentals

At the conclusion of my term, I issued guidance to clarify the use of rental revenue for lodge and temple expenses. This has been a confusing issue for some time for lodges and the opinion was offered to make it easier to account for and use those dollars within the framework of The Code.

A complaint was filed with the North Carolina Real Estate Commission against the event management firm which managed rentals for the Asheville Masonic Temple. The complaint argued that the person renting out rooms for short-term uses, such as reunions, weddings, birthdays, etc., had to have a real estate brokers license. Because this could have had a significant impact on lodges throughout the state, the Grand Lodge aided the Asheville Masonic Temple. In the end, the Real Estate Commission did not find merit in the complaint, and no changes to our rental systems were necessary.

Raleigh Masonic Temple

A permanent physical home for the Raleigh Masonic Temple Company has been a contentious issue for several years. In October of 2023, incoming Grand Master Don Kehler, Grand Secretary Jonathan Underwood, and I met amicably in brotherly love with the board of the RMT and began a new chapter to create a Masonic Center in North Raleigh. Work on this important endeavor has continued throughout 2024 and appears it will soon bear fruit. This work is a testament to the brothers of the RMT whose leadership has brought this about.

Freemasons Hall

Last year I directed the Grand Lodge Executive Office be renamed Freemasons Hall, and to appear as such on electronic maps and registered through Google, being that there continued to be much confusion surrounding the term “Grand Lodge” and modern interest and searches for Freemasonry failed to direct individuals to “Grand Lodge,” but that Freemasons Hall is common nomenclature for most Masonic Grand Lodge buildings in the United States, Europe, and South America.

Long Leaf Pine 777

Late in 2023, I formed Long Leaf Pine Lodge 777 by dispensation to act as an administrative holding lodge for lodge-less members, such as those who are 50-year plus members of defunct lodges, previously-expelled members restored to membership following restoration by the Grand Lodge delegates, and other such members who, for various reasons, need a place to “park” their membership for a short duration. Brothers whose lodges’ charters have been suspended or arrested are not eligible for membership in this lodge. Holding lodges such as this have become more common in several jurisdictions around the world to ensure that we are able to appropriately protect the memberships of our brothers.

Lodge Anniversaries

I had the privilege to preside over the 250th Anniversary of the founding of St. John’s Lodge 3, the 200th Anniversary of Eagle Lodge 19’s building in Hillsborough, and the 125th anniversary of the founding of Pilot Lodge 493 in Pilot Mountain. It is exciting that we are moving to a time to be able to celebrate the lengthy presence of Freemasonry in North Carolina.

75-Year Award

I had the rare and extraordinary honor (along with Past Grand Master Mack Sigmon) of presenting Brother Edwin R. Church of Mt. Pleasant Lodge 573 with his 75-year award. Brother Church became a Mason on November 27, 1948, and at age 99 remains an active member of his lodge and community. Only a handful of us will ever receive a 75-year award, and it was a true honor to be able to present Brother Church his certificate and pin.

Though I was not able to personally present every award, the following brethren also achieved this significant milestone in 2023 and are to be commended for their continued dedication and service to the fraternity:

Name	Lodge	Date Raised
Thomas J. Mann	Phalanx Lodge 31	June 29, 1948
Daniel A. Jones	Sanford Lodge 151	December 7, 1948
Richard C. Morgan	Vance Lodge 293	August 28, 1948
Warren B. Mathis, Jr	Snow Lodge 363	June 25, 1948
Meredith L. Craig	Newell Lodge 739	November 23, 1948

Mergers

In 2023, I approved the merger of Ocracoke Lodge 747, Hatteras Lodge 698, and Manteo 521, under the name Manteo 521. I also approved the merger of Ashlar Lodge 765 and Atkinson Lodge 612 under the name Atkinson Lodge 612. Cabarrus 720 and Allen-Graham Lodge 695 merged to become Allen-Graham/Cabarrus 695. Lastly, Stonewall Lodge 296 consolidated into Skewarkee Lodge 90 and Troy 718 consolidated into Biscoe Lodge 437.

Appendant Bodies

The Grand Lodge of North Carolina continues to have model relations with its appendant and related bodies which include: the Scottish Rite, the York Rite Bodies, the Ancient Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine, the Eastern Star, the Order of the Amaranth, the National Sojourners, DeMolay, Rainbow Girls, and a recently added Chapter of The Grotto. I had the honor of attending the installation of officers at two of North Carolina's three shrine temples, the statewide meeting of the York Rite Bodies, and to serve as the host Grand Master for Imperial Shrine, the international annual gathering of Shriners in Charlotte.

International Visits

In 2023, I had the pleasure to represent the Grand Lodge of North Carolina at the Tercentenary Celebration of Anderson's Constitutions of 1723, the document that frames modern Masonry. It was an honor to represent one of world's oldest Masonic jurisdictions at this important celebration of our Craft hosted by the United Grand Lodge of England in London.

I was also honored to represent North Carolina at the World Conference of Grand Masters, which was held in Jerusalem in May of 2023. This gathering of the global leadership of Freemasonry is not only a time of international brotherhood, but also an occasion to align our global fraternity. When we welcome a man to enter the West Gate we are not only welcoming him to our lodge but into a global brotherhood. It is why the ballot box is so important. Our vote for a man to receive the degrees of Freemasonry not only welcomes him into our lodge but into the jurisdiction and the entire global fraternity.

Montfort Event and Awards

I was pleased in March 2023 to convene the first ever gathering of living Montfort Award recipients. The Joseph Montfort Medal is the highest award that can be bestowed upon a Freemason by the Grand Master of North Carolina. Joseph Montfort was Treasurer of the Province of North Carolina, Colonel of Colonial troops, a patriot, and ardent Freemason. Montfort was most likely born in the colony of Virginia some time around 1724 and died in North Carolina on March 25, 1776. He was a member of Royal White Hart Lodge at Halifax.

Montfort's exuberance for the fraternity led to his commission as Provincial Grand Master on January 14, 1771. Montfort's commission, which hangs in the Grand Lodge Office in Raleigh, was granted by Henry Somerset, the fifth Duke of Beaufort and Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of England. Montfort's short tenure as Provincial Grand Master proved to be a watershed for the development of Freemasonry in North Carolina. Montfort tirelessly promoted and organized the fraternity into an efficient and productive organization. He chartered at least ten lodges and helped reorganize a half dozen more and laid the foundation for the creation of the Grand Lodge in 1787. It was my honor that night to celebrate the previous recipients and present the Montfort Award to Past Grand Master, Most Worshipful Dwight M. (Mack) Sigmon. At Annual Communication I had the privilege to present the award to Worshipful Brother Stephen A. Campbell, long-time Grand Historian, and — for the first time — to a member of our

brother jurisdiction: Most Worshipful Daniel “D.T.” Thompson, Grand Master of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina.

Table Lodge

While a number of lodges in North Carolina hold annual table lodges — lodge gatherings that intertwine dining and an emergent communication — it was my honor to call the first table lodge of the Grand Lodge of North Carolina in over 200 years. The gathering was also intended to reignite St. John’s Day, one of Freemasonry’s most important holidays, and one that has fallen out of use in recent decades in our jurisdiction. The Grand Lodge Table Lodge was also part of the celebration of the 150th Anniversary of the founding of our children’s home in Oxford.

The Ties That Bind Vermont and North Carolina

In 2018, Zion Lodge 81 was nearly destroyed as a result of Hurricane Florence. The lodge building was not only damaged, but Zion lost most of its lodge furnishings as well. It so happened that Brother Paul Mosher’s lodge in Vermont was merging with another lodge and had a lodge full of furnishings it no longer needed. With the help of Grand Secretary Walt Clapp and Worshipful Brother Johnny Surlis of Zion Lodge, the furnishings from the Vermont lodge were gifted to Zion. Jump ahead to 2023, and Brother Mosher is now the sitting Grand Master of Vermont, and he and I had the privilege of presiding over an extraordinary night recognizing brothers helping brothers. It was a bit of a teary-eyed night as the depths of our fraternal brotherhood were shared.

Honorary Title of Past District Deputy Grand Master

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

Name	Lodge	District
Jerry O’Neal Combs	Manteo Lodge No. 521	2
Brian Keith Phelps	Charity Lodge No. 5	5
Warren George Taylor	Doric Lodge No. 568	7
Matthew Trey Korff	Queen City Lodge No. 602	9
Aaron Bruce Jackson	Mingo Lodge No. 206	11
Thomas Roland Jackson, III	Kenly Lodge No. 257	16
James Leonard Pugsley	Lebanon Lodge No. 391	17
Herman Lester Reeves, Jr.	Carthage Lodge No. 181	21
Andrew Ray Hartman	Allen-Graham Lodge No. 695	28
Gary Lee Cooke	West Gate Lodge No. 738	31
Brian McKennley Turner	Matthews Lodge No. 461	32
Randall Jerry Collins	Waynesville Lodge No. 259	40

Honorary Title of Past District Deputy Grand Lecturer

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

Name	Lodge	District
Douglas Heath Brickhouse, Sr.	Eureka Lodge No. 317	1
James Warren Cook, Jr	Widow's Son Lodge No. 519	8
Daniel Lee Short	St. Paul's Lodge No. 474	17
Jerry Randolph Browning, III	Blackmer Lodge No. 127	24
Roy Carlton West	Lexington-Memorial Lodge No. 473	27
Robert Alexander Burgess, Jr.	Union Lodge No. 618	28
Parker Colson Dunlap	Kilwinning Lodge No. 64	23
Edward Joseph Steel	Matthews Lodge No. 461	32
Patrick Gerard Howard	Junaluskee Lodge No. 145	41

Necrology

During my time as Grand Master, we lost 987 brethren to death. We grieve the loss of our brothers and know that they are now in a better place. We offer our continued thoughts and prayers to their families and thank them for sharing their loved ones with our fraternity during each of their Masonic journeys.

Lion and Pillar Recipients

The following lodges received recognition for their participation in the Lion and Pillar Lodge of Excellence Program and for their continued growth and active participation in their communities.

Platinum Level Lion and Pillar

Lodge	District	Location
St. John's Lodge No. 3	7	New Bern
Caswell Brotherhood Lodge No. 11	22	Yanceyville
Eagle Lodge No. 19	19	Hillsborough
Greensboro Lodge No. 76	23	Greensboro
Zion Lodge No. 81	7	Trenton
St. Alban's Lodge No. 114	18	Lumberton
Cleveland Lodge No. 202	35	Shelby
Mingo Lodge No. 206	11	Dunn
William G. Hill Lodge No. 218	14	Raleigh
Kenly Lodge No. 257	16	Kenly
Fuquay Lodge No. 258	15	Fuquay-Varina

Hibriten Lodge No. 262	34	Lenoir
Wilmington Lodge No. 319	12	Wilmington
Campbell Lodge No. 374	30	Troutman
Jefferson Penn Lodge No. 384	22	Reidsville
Lebanon Lodge No. 391	17	Hope Mills
Bald Creek Lodge No. 397	37	Burnsville
Bula Lodge No. 409	22	Burlington
Relief Lodge No. 431	16	Benson
Thomas M. Holt Lodge No. 492	22	Graham
Pilot Lodge No. 493	25	Pilot Mountain
Raleigh Lodge No. 500	14	Raleigh
Cannon Memorial Lodge No. 626	28	Kannapolis
Semper Fidelis Lodge No. 680	4	Jacksonville
Steele Creek Lodge No. 737	32	Charlotte
Old Town Lodge No. 751	26	Winston-Salem
Lux Libertas Lodge No. 772	19	Hillsborough

Standard Level Lion and Pillar

Lodge	District	Location
Oxford Lodge No. 122	13	Oxford
Dan River Lodge No. 129	22	Madison
Leaksville Lodge No. 136	22	Eden
Carthage Lodge No. 181	21	Carthage
Bingham Lodge No. 272	22	Mebane
Wallace Lodge No. 279	11	Wallace
Durham Lodge No. 352	19	Durham
Shallotte Lodge No. 727	12	Shallotte

Physical Disabilities

The Code requires District Deputy Grand Masters to individually meet with any petitioners who state they have a physical disability in order to be able to advise the Grand Master as to whether the petition should proceed through its normal process. This process is in place to help determine whether any physical concessions might be needed during degree work, as well as if the applicant would be able to proceed through the degrees and if he would become an immediate financial burden to the lodge.

During my time as Grand Master, the Grand Lodge forwarded twenty-five (25) such petitions during my tenure. Based on the information provided by the District Deputy Grand Masters as gleaned from their personal interviews with the petitioners, I was able to approve all twenty-five (25) petitioners to proceed through the degrees.

Dispensations

During the period from December 3, 2022, through December 2, 2023, I issued eighty-five (85) Dispensations for various lodge needs and situations. Listed below are the Dispensations issued:

1. Master two lodges - Widow's Son 519
 2. Master two lodges - Millbrook 97
 3. Move stated - Southern Pines 484
 4. Election of officers - Yadkin 637
 5. Other place - Knights of Solomon 764
 6. Elect Senior Warden - Mooresville 496
 7. Other place - Cherokee 146
 8. Elect Master - Angier 686
 9. Conduct business at emergent - Excelsior 261
 10. Elect Master - Chadbourn 190
 11. Elect Master - Unanimity 7
 12. Other place - Knights of Solomon 766
 13. Move stated - Orphans 761
 14. Brunswick Town Degree- Lux Libertas 772
 15. Elect Senior Warden - Palmyra 147
 16. Move stated - South Fork 462
 17. Move stated - Phoenix 8
 18. Other place - Knights of Solomon 774
 19. Elect Master - Proctorville 643
 20. Elect Junior Warden - Greenville 284
 21. Move stated - Neill S. Stewart 556
 22. Other place - Knights of Solomon 768
 23. Other place - Manteo 521
 24. Other place - Knights of Solomon 776
 25. Other place - Veritas 769
 26. Other place - Berne 724
 27. Virtual stated - Wilkerson College 760
 28. Other time - Southern Pines 484
 29. Other time - Royal White Hart 2
 30. Degree at other place - Lux Libertas 772
 31. Elect Senior Warden & Junior Warden - Greenville 284
 32. Elect Junior Warden - Pigeon River 386
 33. Elect Master - Revolution 552
 34. Other place - Knights of Solomon 766
 35. Outdoor Degree - Greenville 284
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36. Outdoor Degree - Orphans 761
 37. Other place - Fellowship 687
 38. Move stated - William G. Hill 218
 39. Elect Junior Warden - Friendship 763
 40. Elect Senior Warden & Junior Warden - Albemarle 703
 41. Move stated - Thomasville 214
 42. Other place - Knights of Solomon 766
 43. Outdoor degree - Carthage 181
 44. Move stated - Mingo 206
 45. Elect Junior Warden - Kedron 387
 46. Other Place - Wilkerson College 760
 47. Emergent Communication - Denton 404
 48. Move stated - Palmyra 147
 49. Cancel stated - Cannon Memorial 626
 50. Cancel stated - Perquimans 106
 51. Other place - William G. Hill 218
 52. Cancel stated - Orr 104
 53. Harvest moon degree - Union 618
 54. Other place - Widows Son 519
 55. Cancel stated - Gate City 694
 56. Other place - Gate City 694
 57. Cancel stated - Zion 81
 58. Other place - Phalanx 31
 59. Other time - Greensboro 76
 60. Move stated - Liberty 45
 61. Other place - Wilkerson College 760
 62. Move stated - Excelsior 261
 63. Other place - Mingo 206
 64. Other place - Phalanx 31
 65. Civil War Degree - Bald Creek 397
 66. Other place - Mosaic 762
 67. Other place - William G. Hill 218
 68. Other place - Kernersville 669
 69. Elect officers - Lodge of the Nine Sisters 773
 70. Other place - State College 770
 71. Master two lodges - Knights of Solomon 774 & Hominy 491
 72. Other place - Greensboro 76
 73. Move stated - Lux Libertas 772
 74. Other place - Sophia 767
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75. Move stated - Tabor 563
76. Other time - Junaluskee 145
77. Other time - Casar 579
78. Elect Treasurer - Knights of Solomon 764
79. Elect Senior Warden - Mt. Pleasant 573
80. Other time - Kedron 387
81. Move stated - Palmyra 147
82. Master of two lodges - Knights of Solomon 768
83. Other place - Clemmons 755
84. Elect Senior Warden - Kedron 387
85. Other place - Widow's Son 519

Orders

During the period from December 3, 2022, through December 2, 2023, I issued four (4) Orders. Listed below are the Orders issued:

1. **To Red Springs Lodge 501:** for the purpose of declaring the election of the lodge's officers null and void and ordering a new election, due to the original election taking place on a date other than that prescribed in the lodge's bylaws without prior dispensation from the Grand Master. Issued December 12, 2023.
2. **To Holly Springs Lodge 115:** for the purpose of declaring the ballot null & void and ordering a re-ballot on a petition for Brother CJB by Holly Springs Lodge 115 due to the failure of the Lodge to follow proper affiliation certification procedure prior to balloting on the application. Issued July 20, 2023.
3. **To Stokesdale Lodge 428:** for the purpose of declaring the ballot and subsequent election & installation as lodge Secretary null & void and ordering a re-ballot on an application for affiliation for Brother WTT, Jr., by Stokesdale Lodge 428 due to the failure of the Lodge to follow proper affiliation certification procedure prior to balloting on the application. Issued August 4, 2023.
4. **To Blackmer Lodge 170:** for the purpose of removing the Secretary of the lodge from office due to various transgressions of the duties of his office and acting in a manner which violated his obligations as a Master Mason. Further forwarded the matter to the Judge Advocate, whose actions may be found in his report elsewhere in this book. Issued November 8, 2023.

Acknowledgements

It is a great honor to serve as the 170th Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina. I am thankful to W. Brother J.R. Yarnall for introducing me to Freemasonry. At the time he was the husband of a work colleague who hosted me and my friend Steve Green for dinner at the Asheville Masonic Temple one night before a stated

communication. The camaraderie and warm reception we received, coupled with the history and intrigue of Masonry got us hooked. I am thankful that my entire Masonic journey has been with one of my oldest and dearest friends and business partner, W. Brother Steve, as well as with my other business partner and buddy, Brother Jason Riggs. There are not words to express my appreciation for their friendship and brotherhood.

To the brothers of my home lodge, Mt. Hermon Lodge 118, thank you for your years of support. Serving on the Grand Line has often meant not being present at my home lodge. I am especially grateful to W. Brother Yarnall and W. Brother Lonnie Darr for being my coaches and for W. Brother Gus Sims for teaching me all the degrees as I moved through the chairs at Mt. Hermon. I am also thankful to the brothers of Mt. Hermon for adding my portrait to the Gallery of Grand Masters in the Asheville Masonic Temple, noting my service as the eighth member of our lodge to serve as Grand Master.

When Past Grand Master, Most Worshipful Brother Bryant Webster asked me to join the Grand Line in 2015, I was beyond surprised and said bluntly “Well, no one will win the bet this year on your appointment to the line.” At that point, I had not been involved with NC Masonry at a statewide level. State office was not something I was seeking. He said he knew, and that was why he was asking me to serve, to help stir things up a bit, modernize, and bring NC Masonry into the twenty-first century. I’ve worked to do that since the day I was appointed.

I am proud to be a Mason and especially to be a Mason in North Carolina. While we still have much work to do, our hearts and minds are in the right place as we continue to serve our communities. As one of the older Grand Jurisdictions in the world, it is imperative that we continue our leadership role within the greater fraternity. We are fortunate in North Carolina to have a great team of professionals managing the daily affairs of Freemasonry to help us achieve our goals. The administrative team at the Grand Lodge Office is one of the very best in the country. Vicki Lam, Hayley Moll, and Worshipful Brother Eric Green go above and beyond every day in service to our Craft. With some 30,000 members and 350+ lodges, ours is not a small operation. I am also thankful for the able leadership of Right Worshipful Brother Jonathan Underwood, our Grand Secretary, and Worshipful Brother Matthew Robbins, our Assistant Grand Secretary. Simply put, these men are brilliant; they serve the fraternity well beyond their compensation, and their talents not only serve our Craft but propel it forward. I am honored to be both their brother and their friend.

Our Grand Lodge in North Carolina is not just surviving but thriving thanks to an extraordinary group of leaders who serve in our Grand Line. It is an absolute pleasure to serve with them. Each lead our Craft well. I want to especially recognize Grand Master Don Kehler who worked arm in arm with me. Thank you, too, to our great group of Past Grand Masters. What a blessing it is to have the Wisdom of Solomon only a phone call away.

I want to offer my heartfelt thanks to our District Deputy Grand Masters and our District Deputy Grand Lecturers. Brothers would likely be surprised at how often these important leaders are called into action. Let me also acknowledge the leaders of each of our lodges including brothers that wear the jewels and those that wear white aprons. It is at the lodge that Masonry is practiced and cultivated. Thank you for your dedication to our Craft. I also

want to offer a special note of thanks to Veritas Lodge 769 and to Nichols-West Asheville Lodge 650 for the kind gift of honorary membership. Likewise, being a civilian, I am humbled to have been given honorary membership in the National Sojourners. What an honor to be part of this body which brings together Masons who have served in the Armed Forces.

My mom did not live to see me serve as “grand poohbah,” as she called it. My dad is no longer mobile but was able to see the journey in photographs. I am so thankful to them for their unconditional love and support, and for bringing me up in a household where everyone had worth and no one was ever disparaged because of race, gender, religion, sexuality, or anything else. Likewise, my friends outside of the fraternity, especially Griffin, Bradley, Chris, and Greg, who have been so supportive of this journey that they know so little about. I am truly blessed to be surrounded by a family of blood relatives and dear friends, who offer their love so freely.

There is nothing wrong with Masonry. Masonry is not broken. Masonry is not obsolete. Masonry is not dying. It is as relevant today as it has been for centuries, but it does face several important challenges as we continue to transform into a twenty-first century organization. What I do know for sure and what I do know for certain is that we are up to the challenge and that we will thrive and not just survive. May the Great Architect of the Universe continue to bless our work.

Respectfully and Fraternaly,
Kevan D. Frazier
Grand Master, 2023

Interim Report
of
Grand Master
Donald E. Kehler
to
the
Grand Lodge
of
Ancient, Free & Accepted Masons
of
North Carolina
at
Winston-Salem, North Carolina
September 27, 2024

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

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

Welcome to the 237th Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina. It has been a privilege and an honor to serve as the 171st Grand Master since our formal inception in 1787. Welcome to Winston-Salem, NC, which is again the host city for our Annual Communication.

It has been a pleasure to travel and serve our grand jurisdiction, encouraging our members to focus on the lessons of the ritual of Freemasonry. Our seven ritual restoration symposiums held throughout the state this year were a delight for me. I believe they were also a great experience for our Grand Lecturer, Dwight Crews from Bula Lodge 409, in Burlington.

Pursuant to the requirements of Regulation 13.2.5 of The Code, I present my Interim Report for 2024. Listed below is a brief overview of various events and activities that have occurred through late August 2024.

State of the Craft

I visited twenty-eight lodges throughout our grand jurisdiction. Among these visits were seven Ritual Restoration Symposiums, twenty visits with appendant bodies, three district meetings, participation in the Galaxy Gala, and four out-of-state visits, as of the end of July. More on these events are included later in this report.

Thanks to the work and reports from our DDGMs and DDGLs, most of our lodges are healthy and performing well. Their ritual work is very good, with a fair amount of new initiates being brought to light. Many of these lodges are fully engaged in their communities. They are noted for including family members in lodge activities, and participating in successful fundraisers for our charities.

Several lodges that are struggling appear to have “lodge bosses” that are restricting growth, and who may be teaching opinions that do not align with the teachings of Masonry.

Some lodges suffer from a lack of new material to work with. To assist in alleviating that problem, with the assistance of the North Carolina Masonic Foundation, an identity campaign has been initiated. More than one thousand prospective leads have been generated in the state since the campaign was launched in April.

Several lodges have merged this year. This is not an easy feat to accomplish, especially as the merging lodges struggle to preserve each of their historical identities, and must choose which lodge names and numbers will remain. Additionally, filling the chairs with eligible, worthy, and well-qualified individuals who have a passion for the teachings of Masonry may present further challenges.

Major repairs are still required for some lodge buildings, and some of the lodges are in dire financial straits. There are always creative solutions to any problem, once the problem is identified. Our next generation of Masons will inherit the same issues unless these lodges make the tough decisions to merge, sell their buildings and regroup in temporary locations, or surrender their charters.

Creative solutions must come from the local lodge level. Lodges should utilize the tools provided by the Grand Lodge to adopt a realistic view regarding the actual costs required to operate and maintain a building, and plan for its future upkeep. Great results can happen, when all the members are at work, and neither envy, discord, nor confusion is suffered to interrupt or disturb the peace and good fellowship which occurs in all regular and well-governed lodges. There are sparks of growth in so many of our lodges due to good attitudes and positive mentorship. Remember that change is not to be feared. There can be no growth without change, and growth is the essence of life.

I spoke about the bench in a few lodges this year. As we enter into World Series season, recall that there are nine players necessary to fill the diamond. There are, in most lodges, nine officer chairs inside the lodge when it is open in due form. If even one or two of your chairs are empty, then your team is not all there on the “field,” properly running the business of your lodge. Who does your lodge have on the bench, ready to get in the game?

2024 Initiatives

Initiatives for 2024 focused on education and enjoyment of the ritual as well as on having some fun as we travel and learn. There is no better way to enjoy Masonry than to get into it a little deeper each day. Each new piece is like a new verse to an old tune, and each verse teaches a moral lesson. The cadence of the words that have been strung together and perfected over the centuries is quite beautiful.

The Board of Custodians, along with my Grand Lecturer, traveled to seven locations this year to participate in the Ritual Restoration Symposiums. These locations were chosen so that no brother should have to travel more than two hours to participate. North Carolina is a big state, and more than six hundred Masons came to enjoy the work and participate in the symposiums. I used the name Ritual Restoration from the platform set in place by past Grand Lecturer, Randy Browning, to encourage the proficiency of the work in lodges that were suffering.

With the assistance of the brethren in attendance, I opened the Grand Lodge of North Carolina on an Emergent Communication in each location. Six of the seven times, we opened on the first degree of Masonry, for two reasons. The first reason being to make sure the ground did not open and swallow us up; the second reason was to start the conversation about allowing lodges to open on the first degree to conduct their business. This has been a subject of debate for years, and I believe it is time to reconsider the amendment. The proposal was to allow individual lodges to amend their own by-laws, allowing an individual lodge to open in due form on the first degree, and conduct business on the same. This proposal would allow that lodge to further engage the entered apprentice by providing him with the opportunity to participate more often. There are minute books around the State that provide evidence that this has been a custom in the past.

After going through the first degree, we called from labor to refreshment, and enjoyed good fellowship over lunch. The Grand Lodge was then opened on the Master Mason degree, and proper instruction was exemplified covering the second and third degrees. Labor was dispensed with in the Master Mason Lodge. The Grand Lodge was called from refreshment to labor on the first degree, and the EA lodge closed in ample form. Labor was resumed on the Master Mason degree, and the Grand Lodge was closed in ample form.

Gathering in Fayetteville for the third Ritual Restoration, two lodge rooms were available to us. The attending Junior and Senior Deacons were segregated and given proper instruction on the second degree lecture. It is the official minimum standard of the work that the Senior Deacon confers the lecture on the second degree. Well, “Old Joe” always gives the second degree lecture. It would be beneficial for “Old Joe” to teach the Junior Deacon the lecture. Otherwise, he is keeping the men in those stations from learning one of the most important parts of their Masonic journey through the chairs. “Well, nobody ever told me I was supposed to give the lecture on the second degree as I was approaching the senior deacon chair.” That is a poor excuse, but a valid one. If we are not talking to our brothers and assisting them along the path, I am afraid our fraternity is missing the point. Please don’t wait until your stewards and Junior Deacons become Senior Deacons before you enlighten and assist them along their paths.

An idea was born in 2023 to host Tranquility Lodge No. 2000 from the Grand Jurisdiction of Texas, in North Carolina to promote the Seventh Step of our Masonic teachings. Mike Cline of William G. Hill Lodge No. 218, and member of Tranquility Lodge, was the project lead. On April 27, with the assistance of University Lodge No. 408 in Chapel Hill, we had an extraordinary day of fellowship and Masonic education. After a light breakfast, the Grand Lodge of North Carolina opened an Emergent Communication, welcomed our guests and the officers of Tranquility Lodge, proceeded with our work, and enjoyed lunch. That evening, we participated in a Festive Board, held in the planetarium on the campus of The University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill. It was an awesome event, and more light was received than given. Thank you, WB Mike and all involved.

Grand Master’s Fundraisers

This year I initiated two projects to raise awareness and to generate funds for our North Carolina Masonic Foundation. Donors were rewarded with either the Grand Master’s Ale, or one of the More Light in Masonry hats that were available.

Please refer to the Summer 2024 edition of the *North Carolina Mason* for the description and purpose of the “Grand Master’s Ale” project. GrandMastersBrew@gmail.com

The More Light project grew from having received a Power Cap as a gift. The power cap is a baseball cap which has two LED lamps powered by small replaceable batteries, built into the bill of the hat. Five hundred hats were procured and embroidered with the square and compasses and the words “More Light.” Additionally, another one hundred hats were embroidered with the image of my Grand Master’s lapel pin.

All proceeds from these projects are to help boost the Foundation’s funds,

and will assist in furthering the mission of our benevolence throughout North Carolina, in perpetuity.

Joseph Montfort Medals

Each Grand Master has been given the privilege by The Code since April 17, 1940, to present three Joseph Montfort Medals. Immediately after being installed as Grand Master, I presented my first medal to Worshipful Brother Dwight Wayne Crews of Bula Lodge No. 409, who had just been installed as Grand Lecturer for the Grand Lodge of North Carolina. Dwight has been around the block more than once as a DDGM and a DDGL, and has provided me with much motivation along the way. He made it fun to learn the work, and has been a mentor to so many men. Thank you, Dwight for your labors, and for making our Ritual Restoration Symposiums a great success. It has been an honor to travel together all these years.

My second medal was given to WB James Clifford Frost of St. John's Lodge No. 1 in Wilmington, and Past Master of Joppa Lodge No. 401 in Old Fort, NC. Jim was instrumental in my initial steps to initiation, spoke at my father's funeral, and has always been available for friendship and a laugh during my 38-year Masonic career.

My third medal was awarded to WB Jerry O'Neal (Neal) Combs, Secretary of Manteo Lodge No. 521, DDGM of the 2nd Masonic District, and Past Grand Tyler. Neal helped welcome me to Roanoke Island in 2017 and demonstrated his love of the Craft by being what I refer to as omni-present and always willing to gather the troops. I also noticed over time that the local lodge relied upon him immensely. Thanks for your work, WB Neal.

Physical Disabilities

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

Dispensations

As of the printing of this report, I have granted 79 dispensations for various Lodge needs and situations. They are listed below:

1. Other place - Lafayette 83
2. Other place - Lincoln 137
3. Other place - Orient 395
4. Emergent Communication - Orient 395
5. Move stated - Excelsior 261

6. Move stated - Cherokee 146
 7. Cancel stated - Shallotte 727
 8. Cancel stated - Friendship 763
 9. Cancel stated - Carthage 181
 10. Cancel stated - Relief 431
 11. Move stated - Phoenix 8
 12. Move stated - Creasy Proctor 679
 13. Cancel stated - Scotch Ireland 154
 14. Move stated - St. John's 1
 15. Cancel stated - Ocean 405
 16. Move stated - Neill S. Stewart 556
 17. Other place - Queen City 602
 18. Elect officers - Lodge of the Nine Sisters 773
 19. Master of two lodges - Lodge of the Nine Sisters 773
 20. Move stated - Clay 301
 21. Move stated - Person 113
 22. Other place - Knights of Solomon 764
 23. Other place - Knights of Solomon 766
 24. Other place - Knights of Solomon 768
 25. Other place - Knights of Solomon 776
 26. Other place - Knights of Solomon 774
 27. Other place - Excelsior 261
 28. Cancel stated - Grassy Knob 471
 29. Move stated - Monroe 244
 30. Other place - Cherokee 146
 31. Other Place - Knights of Solomon 768
 32. Cancel stated - Mooresville 496
 33. Elect Senior & Junior Wardens - Excelsior 261
 34. Move stated - Royal White Hart 2
 35. Cancel stated - Grassy Knob 471
 36. Other place - Wilkerson College 760
 37. Emergent communication - Wendell 565
 38. Other place - Cherokee 146
 39. Cancel stated - Gate City 694
 40. Virtual stated - Wilkerson College 760
 41. Other location - Unanimity 7
 42. Outdoor degree - Orphans 761
 43. Host Civil War Research Lodge 1865, VA - Bingham 272
 44. Host Tranquility Lodge 2000, TX - University 408
-

45. Railroad Degree - Spencer 543
46. Cancel stated - Spencer 543
47. Other place - Matthews 461
48. Outdoor degree - Radiance 132
49. Move stated - Atkinson 612
50. Move stated - Knights of Solomon 768
51. Emergent communication - Lodge of the Nine Sisters 773
52. Emergent communication - Knights of Solomon 764
53. Emergent communication - Lux Libertas 772
54. Emergent communication - Cherokee 146
55. Emergent communication - Junaluskee 145
56. Cancel stated - Lawndale 486
57. Emergent communication - William G. Hill 218
58. Other place - Cherokee 146
59. Other place - Semper Fidelis 680
60. Other place - Yadkin Falls 637
61. Emergent communication - St. John's 13
62. Emergent communication - Mt. Hermon 118
63. Elect Junior Warden - Snow 363
64. Other place - Semper Fidelis 680
65. Cancel stated - Grassy Knob 471
66. Emergent communication, Tennessee Cave Degree - Monroe 244
67. Emergent communication - Raleigh 500
68. Cancel stated - Oxford 122
69. Cancel stated - Montgomery 426
70. Other place - Greensboro 76
71. Cancel stated - Granville 380
72. Cancel stated - Greensboro 76
73. Cancel stated - St. Patrick's 617
74. Cancel stated - Lucama 527
75. Cancel stated - Laurinburg 305
76. Cancel stated - Gastonia 369
77. Cancel stated - Widow's Son 519
78. Cancel stated - Mt. Pleasant 573
79. Cancel stated - Fellowship 687

Orders

During my tenure as Grand Master, I have issued two Orders and one Opinion for various Lodge needs and situations. These are outlined in the Unfinished Business section of this reports book.

Lodge Losses and Gains

To date, your Grand Lodge has had no activity in this area.

Necrology

Five hundred and thirty Master Masons passed away in 2024, as of the submission of this report.

Emergent Communications

Ten emergent communications of the Grand Lodge of North Carolina have been conducted during my term, as of the time of this submission, and are as follows:

Seven Ritual Restoration Symposiums:

1. 4th District - Jacksonville, February 3, 2024
2. 5th District - Ahoskie, March 2, 2024
3. 26th District - Winston-Salem, March 16, 2024
4. 13th District - Oxford, March 23, 2024
5. 31st District - Charlotte, April 6, 2024
6. 17th District - Fayetteville, April 13, 2024
7. 40th District - Waynesville, April 20, 2024

Galaxy Gala, April 27, 2024

Rededication of Oak Island Lodge, June 8, 2024

Rededication of Kannapolis Masonic Center, July 13, 2024

District Meetings

In addition to our seven symposiums, three district meetings were held in the fifth, eighth, and fortieth districts. Thank you to my grand lodge officers and many of our Past Grand Masters and Deputy Grand Masters for attending these meetings, the symposiums, and our Galaxy Gala.

The North Carolina Masonic Foundation, Inc.

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

That report will not reflect the sincere gratitude that this Grand Lodge owes to the Foundation. They have helped direct the investment of our funds, provided funding for our publications and operations, and this year have assisted me in countless ways. Thank you for your work in the quarries. If your lodge needs a prudent way to invest excess cash that is separate from your operating funds, talk to the Foundation about creative ways to invest for your lodge's future. If you need assistance with legacy planning on a personal level, the Foundation is also available to assist you. <https://mfnc.org>

WhiteStone: A Masonic and Eastern Star Community

WhiteStone, our Masonic and Eastern Star Home Community in Greensboro, turned 112 years young in 2024. If you have never visited our home here, I encourage you to do so and see what your donations are supporting. Several years ago, we established a fund called the Masonic and Eastern Star Home LLC. Please note that a donation to this foundation, made out to *MESH Foundation LLC*, qualifies as a 501(c)3 tax deductible donation. Donating to this fund guarantees that your contributions will go to support only Masonically-connected residents both internally, as well as those served through the Outreach program.

A hearty thank you goes out to Most Worshipful Gene T. Jernigan, PGM 2006, our Chairman, and to the entire team of the Board of Directors for their many hours of service and generous support to ensure our home in Greensboro continues to be successful. A report from your Junior Grand Deacon and the Committee on WhiteStone from this Grand Lodge is provided elsewhere in this book of Reports. Please feel free to visit their website at <https://www.liveatwhitestone.org/donate/> and select the dropdown menu to donate to your favorite designation.

Masonic Home for Children at Oxford

Our Masonic Home for Children at Oxford turned 151 years young this year. If you have not taken the opportunity to visit our home in Oxford, I encourage you to do so and see your donations at work. Donations to our Children's Home can be made out to *MHCO*, which also qualifies as a 501(c)3 tax deductible charity.

A word of thanks goes out to Chairman, Most Worshipful Speed Hallman, PGM 2018, and the Board of Directors for their many hours of service and continued support to ensure our home in Oxford remains successful. <https://mhc-oxford.org>

A report from your Senior Grand Deacon and the Committee on the Masonic Home for Children from this Grand Lodge is provided elsewhere in this book of Reports. Please reach out to your MHCO Ambassadors to update the lodges in your district on activities and needs for operating our home.

Veterans Hospital Visits

Visitation continues to be limited by the fact that veterans who are Masons must voluntarily provide that information to the facility staff, as privacy rules prohibit us from inquiring. The Veterans Administration Hospital Visitation Program, sponsored by the Masonic Service Association, is provided for entirely by voluntary contributions. Contributions are received from Grand Lodges across the country, who have specifically voted to allot special funds specifically for this use.

North Carolina has four Veterans Administration Hospitals: Asheville, Salisbury, Durham, and Fayetteville.

Board of Custodians and Grand Lecturer

It was an honor to attend the first Board of Custodians meeting on January 12, 2024, as Grand Master, and to initially preside as Chairman ex-officio, as required by our Code. WB Ludwig Wodka was elected as Chairman. I had the honor of serving on this Board from 2009 to 2013, as Grand Lecturer in 2009. This was my first Grand Lodge board or committee appointment, having been a member for 23 years at the time. Once again, my thanks to Most Worshipful Dan C. Rice, PGM 2009, for this appointment. It was a life changing experience. I was fortunate enough to have met and traveled in Masonry with Worshipful Brother Dwight Crews, who has served as my Grand Lecturer for this year.

A report from the Board of Custodians of this Grand Lodge is provided elsewhere in this book of Reports.

Honorary Title of Past District Deputy Grand Master

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

Name	Lodge	District
Jonathan McCray Moore	Orr Lodge No. 104	3
Jeffrey Kenneth "J.K." Hall	JerusalemLodge No. 95	6
Larry Burcham Holder	Eno Lodge No. 210	19
Charles Glenwood Adams, III	Angier Lodge No. 686	20
Clifford Thomas Shrewsbury	Walnut Cove Lodge No. 629	22
Roger Lee Millner	Liberty Lodge No. 714	24
Robert Martin Blair	West Bend Lodge No. 434	26
James Robert Mullis	Truth Lodge No. 749	29
William Thomas Bridges, Jr	Hibriten Lodge No. 262	34
Christopher Todd Canipe	Cleveland Lodge No. 202	35
Wiley Branch Kessler, III	Kedron Lodge No. 387	38
Benjamin Augustus "Gus" Sims	Kedron Lodge No. 387	39
Kevin Dwight Roper	Clay Lodge No. 301	41

Honorary Title of Past District Deputy Grand Lecturer

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

Name	Lodge	District
Hylar Wayne Cox	Atlantic Lodge No. 294	3
Edward Earl Wells	Hiram Lodge No. 98	11
Randy Daryl Ward	Shallotte Lodge No. 727	12
Tommy Reavis Mills, Jr	Green Level Lodge No. 277	15
John Chrstian Fluke	Oxford Lodge No. 122	19
Jeffrey James Troccoli	Columbus Lodge No. 102	20
Thomas Lee Hartman	Ashe Lodge No. 594	33
William Royce Peeler	State Line Lodge No. 375	35
Gary Wayne Pyatte	Bakersville Lodge No. 357	37
Claude Ray Harrill	Kedron Lodge No. 387	38
Jimmy Dean Blair	Hominy Lodge No. 491	39

Lion and Pillar Lodges for 2024

The following lodges received recognition for their participation in the Lion and Pillar Lodge of Excellence Program and for their continued growth and active participation in their communities.

Platinum Level Lion and Pillar

Lodge	District	Location
Phoenix Lodge No. 8	17	Fayetteville
Eagle Lodge No. 19	19	Hillsborough
Greensboro Lodge No. 76	23	Greensboro
Zion Lodge No. 81	7	Trenton
St. Alban's Lodge No. 114	18	Lumberton
Dan River Lodge No. 129	22	Madison
William G. Hill Lodge No. 218	14	Raleigh
Kenly Lodge No. 257	16	Kenly
Hibriten Lodge No. 262	34	Lenoir
Wilmington Lodge No. 319	12	Wilmington
Campbell Lodge No. 374	30	Troutman
Jefferson Penn Lodge No. 384	22	Reidsville
Lebanon Lodge No. 391	17	Hope Mills
Bula Lodge No. 409	22	Burlington
Pilot Lodge No. 493	25	Pilot Mountain

Raleigh Lodge No. 500	14	Raleigh
Cannon Memorial Lodge No. 626	28	Kannapolis
Semper Fidelis Lodge No. 680	4	Jacksonville
Angier Lodge No. 686	20	Angier
Gate City Lodge No. 694	23	Greensboro
Shallotte Lodge No. 727	12	Shallotte
Steele Creek Lodge No. 737	32	Charlotte
Old Town Lodge No. 751	26	Winston-Salem
Lux Libertas Lodge No. 772	19	Hillsborough

Standard Level Lion and Pillar

Lodge	District	Location
Stokes Lodge No. 32	28	Concord
Oxford Lodge No. 122	13	Oxford
Bald Creek Lodge No. 397	37	Burnsville

Conference of Grand Masters of North America

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

The annual meeting for 2024 was held February 16-21 in Seattle, Washington. RW Senior Grand Warden, Steve Norris; RW Junior Grand Warden, Gilbert Bailey; RW Grand Secretary, Jonathan Underwood; and WB Matthew Robbins, Assistant Grand Secretary, were in attendance. We were also honored to be accompanied by Past Grand Master and Sovereign Grand Inspector General in North Carolina, Dr. A. Gene Cobb.

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

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

This year's conference was held in Roanoke, Virginia, on July 18-21. Right Worshipful Brother Steve Norris, Senior Grand Warden; Right Worshipful Jonathan Underwood, Grand Secretary; and PGM Lew Ledford, Grand Treasurer, were in attendance. Separate breakout sessions were held for the grand secretaries.

Membership Services

After 6 months of due diligence by many distinguished brethren, on June 30, 2024, I executed documents on behalf of the Grand Lodge of North Carolina that were necessary to acquire a shareholder's stake in our database company, Grand View. This strategic investment, made after thoughtful deliberation and due diligence, including a thorough review of its financial statements, profitability, and technology, is expected to deliver valuable financial and operational benefits to our fraternity. I and others determined that this acquisition, in partnership with the Grand Lodges of California, Minnesota, and Pennsylvania, is a sound long-term investment that gives us significant influence over the improvement of existing electronic services within the platform, and the implementation of new technologies. These advancements will unify our fraternity through better communication, streamlined accounting, and improved record-keeping.

This investment was not funded by Grand Lodge operational funds, nor were monies from any special or reserve accounts used. This investment is derived from an exchange of long-term assets, specifically real estate graciously gifted to the Grand Lodge by a 65-year Mason of Burnsville Lodge No. 717. This brother's generous gift has made the future of our fraternity more secure, reflecting his philanthropy and deep love for North Carolina Masonry. We honor his investment by utilizing his gift to benefit all Masons. We anticipate an annual return that will increase our fraternity's invested reserves, and offset Grand Lodge operational costs. We view this as a means for the Grand Lodge to derive income independent of per capita contributions. We recognize that the cost of living is rising, and we believe this investment is a significant step toward alleviating the growing financial burden on our members.

In-State Visitation and Special Activities

Order of the Eastern Star I was honored to speak at the Grand Chapter OES Annual Session on June 10 in Durham, bringing greetings from our Grand Lodge. I spoke to the group about change and growth, and was happy to hear of Betty Jo Yommer and David Hans Bramigk's successful year.

Shrine North Carolina has enjoyed, and continues to enjoy, excellent relationships with all three Shrine Temples. The dedicated Masons who are members of Amran, Oasis, and Sudan Shriners are doing great work in supporting their 22 Shriners' Hospitals for Children. Our Temples in 2024 are led by Ill. Sir Mike Gubernick (Amran), Ill. Sir Shea Fadel (Oasis), and Ill. Sir Randy Simpson (Sudan). I was delighted to attend the installations for each Potentate and his Divan officers.

Scottish Rite We are fortunate to enjoy the great leadership of Illustrious and Most Worshipful Brother Dr. A. Gene Cobb, PGM, Sovereign Grand Inspector General for the Orient of North Carolina. Supporting language disorders clinics is the main charity supported by this group. There are currently clinics at the universities of East Carolina and Appalachian State.

My home Valley, the Valley of Greensboro, honored me with a Table Lodge

meeting on June 12th. We enjoyed an evening of good food, fellowship, and comments from the guys that know from whence I came.

York Rite Bodies The Grand York Rite Bodies of North Carolina have enjoyed a successful year. I was honored to speak at the Greensboro York Rite Bodies' celebration honoring their past leaders, Jeff York, Mike Daniels, and Hugh McLaurin. I also attended the York Rite Summer Assembly for the Sunday picnic and spoke to the group at the Monday opening.

Youth Organizations I have been impressed by the work of our youth organizations as the DeMmolay continues to grow around the State, and enjoyed speaking at the Grand Assembly of the Order of the Rainbow Annual Assembly held in Greensboro on June 24. If any Master Mason in the state has not witnessed the rituals of our youth organizations, I ask you to consider looking into them at your earliest convenience. You, as a Mason in good standing, are entitled to do so.

National Sojourners On December 11, 2023, I was inducted into the Old Fort Chapter No. 553, as an Honorary Member of the National Sojourners, in Morganton, NC, and became a Member in Perpetuity. I want to thank all members who made this special honor possible.

Miscellaneous Through the end of July, I have participated in several degrees, installations, lodge anniversaries, building re-dedications and award presentations.

Out-of-State Visitations

My first out-of-state trip was to the 87th annual Shrine Bowl of the Carolinas, held in Spartanburg, SC. It was a pleasure being on the field at halftime, to watch as our King and Queen made their entrance. Since the first game in 1937, over eighty million dollars has been raised from this event, which supports the Shriners' Hospital in Greenville, SC, and twenty-one other Shriners' hospitals across the United States.

My second trip after installation was to represent North Carolina in the jurisdiction of Massachusetts, via an invitation to participate in their Saints John celebration held December 26 and 27, 2023. Melody was able to join me on this trip, and we enjoyed the time in the northeast corner of our country.

As reported in the *North Carolina Mason*, I was able to travel to Washington, DC, with Illustrious Dr. A. Gene Cobb, Jr., for a visit to the George Washington Masonic National Memorial. We journeyed with other brethren along the Amtrak corridor from Charlotte to Roanoke Rapids. This was an amazing trip, and I highly recommend it to anyone who has not taken the opportunity to visit in the past. We were also treated to a wonderful meal and the Ceremony of Remembrance performed by the Valley of Washington, DC. The Valley fed us and covered the bus trip from Alexandria to downtown DC. We extend our gratitude to the Valley of DC for an extraordinary experience.

As is customary, the three Shrine Temples — Amran, Oasis, and Sudan

— invited my wife and me to attend the 150th Imperial Session from June 30th through July 4th in Reno, Nevada. We are thankful for the support we continue to receive from our North Carolina Temples.

Wilkerson College, the Davie Academy, and the Middle Chamber

Wilkerson College is sponsored jointly by the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, Orient of North Carolina, and by the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina. The college was created with a single mission in mind: to provide Freemasonry with the best trained leaders possible. It was named in honor of retired General H. Lloyd Wilkerson, who was formerly Sovereign Grand Inspector General of the Scottish Rite in North Carolina. He was also the first Master of Wilkerson College Lodge No. 760. A strong team of officers fully dedicated to the mission of the College continues to lead this valuable educational resource in our state. The curriculum set forth by the college is of great assistance in preparing principle officers to face challenges with confidence and a sense of direction. The College graduated 39 brothers this year. To demonstrate the exponential difference that a single idea can make, 755 members have graduated from this curriculum over the past 22 years. Deacons can get more information in three sessions of the college than I gathered in the first fifteen years of Masonry. I encourage your lodge to budget this curriculum to assist in strengthening your lodge's long term bench.

The Davie Academy is another resource offered by our grand jurisdiction that is available for non-deacon officers and any member not currently eligible to attend Wilkerson College. The curriculum provides online training via your Grand View portal, and specializes in subjects to help manage the operation of a lodge. Both you and your lodge will benefit greatly from looking into this program. Members can also use these presentations as Masonic education inside the tyled lodge.

If you are looking to improve your knowledge of allegory and symbolism, the Middle Chamber program is available a few times each year. In 2024, several of the graduates returned to refresh and reiterate the valuable education that our brothers offer. This program has been shared throughout the country, and the creators have offered guidance on how similar educational programs can be set up.

We are fortunate to have such extraordinary educational programs available for our members. I hope each of you will take advantage of some of these during your Masonic journey.

Summons and Summary Trial

At the time of this report, I have issued no summonses, nor summary trials as your Grand Master. I hope that trend continues for the rest of my tenure. There were, however, several summonses issued by the Judge Advocate, for non-Masonic conduct, or a Trial Commission. I refer you to the Report of the Judge Advocate for details of those actions. Each item will be reviewed, and a recommendation made to the delegates at our 2024 Annual Communication for their consideration.

Recommended Legislation

I am currently evaluating two recommendations on future Legislation modifications that I believe would be appropriate and beneficial to our craft. A decision will be made before my term as Grand Master expires, and if applicable, will be submitted before the December 31st deadline.

Acknowledgements and Special Appreciations

I am deeply honored to have been elected on September 30, 2023, and officially installed as the 171st Grand Master of Masons in North Carolina on December 2, 2024, in Duck, NC. It was sixty-five years to the date that my father, William James Kehler, Jr., was raised to the Sublime Degree in Wellsville, New York. Dad raised me in July 1986, and laid down his working tools in 1998. His patience and willingness to walk up to anyone and say hello and introduce himself are hallmarks that I try to emulate to this day. The “Look into it” campaign came from him when he asked me in 1986 if I had ever looked into Masonry? My mother, Helen, who is ninety-one years of age, was able to make the more than five hundred mile trip to attend the installation, thanks to my brother and sisters, and my children.

None of my travels for the last 24 years would have been any fun without my wife, Melody McBride, who helped arrange the installation of our Grand Line Officers, and many other events that we all have been able to enjoy. The countless hours helping me in my brokerage business, starting and managing the Temple Publishers, my role as Secretary of the Scottish Rite, and attention to all the little details of so many things, so that I didn’t have to worry about them, did not go unnoticed. Words just cannot describe the joy that she has brought me and the Craft.

My immediate praise and thanks to MW Kevan Frazier, Past Grand Master of Masons in North Carolina 2023, for creating a smooth path before me, so that we could make a difference. Thank you, sir, for your extraordinary efforts to move us forward in this important period.

I am fortunate to be an active member of two lodges, Bula Lodge No. 409 in Burlington, NC, and Manteo Lodge No. 521 in Manteo, NC. The brethren have made my journey in Masonry most memorable. Thank you to all who have participated with zeal and attention, this year in particular. You all are a gift.

A particular and more precise note of thanks to Mike Andrews, DDGM of the second masonic district, and Clifford Shrewsbury, DDGM of the twenty-second district, for their strict attention to so many details of our installation, and my travels across the state. Your efforts have been priceless.

For years, Worshipful Brother Johnny Surlis and Worshipful Brother Bobby Meadows have directed many of our annual grand lodge installation ceremonies. I was honored to watch them shine, not only at our Installation of Officers, but also during their flawless performance at the 200th anniversary of Zion Lodge No. 81 in Trenton. They are a big part of the magic that makes us all look good, and I thank them for all their efforts. Many thanks to WB Mike Harrelson of Columbus Lodge No. 102 in Pittsboro for rallying the Knights of Saint Andrews from around the state to be my Honor Guard for the Installation of Grand Line Officers. Thank you also, to the Knights.

Our Past Grand Masters have laid a solid foundation that allows us to thrive, and they have done so since our inception as a Grand Lodge in 1787. Words cannot adequately express our appreciation for all that they have done and continue to do for us. Each past and current Grand Lodge Officer is proud to be a part of this Grand Line family.

I offer my thanks to my Grand Lodge Officers for their continued support of my year as Grand Master. Thank you to my Grand Lecturer, Dwight Crews, for all of your efforts this year. I'd like to specifically thank my Grand Orator, Al Terrell, for also serving as my occasional chauffeur. Additional gratitude goes to Grand Marshal, Alvin Billings; Senior Grand Steward, Joey Transou; and Junior Grand Steward, Dave Cashion, for their attendance and support this year. Their patience and counsel regarding the many details of managing the business of this Grand Lodge is valued and appreciated. Be assured that each of you has my continued assistance and support going forward.

Our District Deputy Grand Masters, District Deputy Grand Lecturers, and Board & Committee members provide a voluntary service that is essential in the management of our grand jurisdiction, with many donating their time and money for the betterment of North Carolina Freemasonry. I thank each of you for serving on our team for 2024. Deputy Grand Master Robert Rideout took over leadership of our identity campaign and the management of the more than one thousand prospects who have contacted us since our April launch. WB Eric Greene, CL, DDGM, and member of Holly Springs Lodge No. 115, in conjunction with our Grand Lodge office staff, have filtered these potential members, and directed them to the proper district for further examination. Our District Deputy Grand Masters took on this additional assignment, and were instrumental in the execution of this project. Thank you all.

Our District Deputy Grand Lecturers have filled an important role in keeping us in tune with the ritual and teaching of the principals that we hold so dearly. We continue to search for the one percent of the one percent of men that are able to learn the work by heart. This is desirable not simply so they can recite the words, but so that they may feel them. It should be our goal that brothers can recall and relate the story as intimately as if they had lived the story themselves, and as objectively as if they had played every role within. Thank you to the Board of Custodians and to our District Deputy Grand Lecturers.

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

It is impossible for our grand jurisdiction to be successful without the work of our staff at the Grand Lodge Office. Many thanks to RW Jonathan Underwood, WB Matthew Robbins, Vicki Lam, WB Eric Greene, and Hayley Moll for all that they continue to do for the approximately thirty thousand members of our fraternity.

Janice Wright has been a blessing in helping us stage our events and make travel arrangements this year. She and Chris Wright smoothed out many of our frustrating hiccups along our path. I appreciate your efficiency, patience, and help. We can never thank each of you enough.

I would like to offer a special thanks to WB Calvin Rogers for his assistance in helping with design of my Grand Master lapel pin. After the final prototype was designed, Brother Calvin entered the celestial lodge above. WB Clifford Shrewsbury picked up the ball and took it to the goal line. The final design reflects exactly my message for 2024. It reminds us that we should all look into learning and teaching the work a little more, and encourages the profane to look into Masonry and the beautiful system it teaches.

Special thanks also to Most Worshipful A. Gene Cobb, Jr. (my Masonic father who appointed me to the Grand Lodge Line in 2017), and his wife Brenda. You afforded Melody and me a very special opportunity, and we can never thank you enough for your continued support and wise counsel during our journey. MW Dan C. Rice gave me an chance to experience the Grand Lodge workings a little deeper, by appointing me as Grand Lecturer in 2009. What an eye-opening experience the last fifteen years have been. Thank you MWB Dan.

For a more detailed report of my travels and the business of your Grand Lodge please refer to the minutes of the Board of General Purposes.

Cordially and fraternally,
Donald Edward Kehler
Grand Master, 2024

Necrology Service

GRAND MASTER: Brother Junior Grand Warden, what is the hour?

JUNIOR GRAND WARDEN: Low Twelve: time to call the Craft to remembrance of our deceased brethren.

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

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

GRAND MASTER: Most Worshipful A. Gene Cobb, Jr. will lead our Necrology Service. Brother Grand Chaplain, lead our devotion.

The one so designated begins after prayer:

MASTER: What man is he who lives and shall not see death? Shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave? (Psalm 89:48)

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

MASTER: When he dies he shall carry nothing away; his glory shall not descend after him.

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

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

ORATION AND EULOGIES

MASTER: We now remember all Master Masons, all Fellow Craft, and all Entered Apprentice. Each one was loved. Each one was special. We bow our heads to remember them and, as we are led in our hearts, say their name aloud or silently with thanksgiving for their life among us.

MASTER: The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

“Let us live and die like the righteous, that our last end may be like His!”

RESPONSE: God is our God forever and ever; He will guide even unto death!

MASTER: Almighty God, into your hands we leave with humble submission the souls of our deceased brethren.

FUNERAL GRAND HONORS (*Optional*)

MUSICAL SELECTION

Amazing grace how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me.

I once was lost, but now am found, was blind, but now I see.

When we've been there ten thousand years, bright shining as the sun,

We've no less days to sing God's praise than when we first begun.

GRAND MASTER: The purposes of the Committee on Necrology having been accomplished, we will now close this Grand Lodge of Sorrow. Before I declare this Grand Lodge of Sorrow closed, Brother Grand Chaplain, lead our devotion.

GRAND CHAPLAIN: Most glorious God, you have made all things and called them good. With you, a new day comes and with it, eternal hope, peace, and joy. Send us forth from this place today and cause us with confidence to pray:

Every morning, lean thine arm upon the windowsill of heaven, and gaze upon thy Lord. And, with this vision in thine heart, turn strong to meet the day.

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