

Masonic Messenger

Official Publication of the Grand Lodge of Georgia, Free & Accepted Masons

Winter 2023



MW Grand Master Ben Polston and First Lady Tammie



*Wish You
a
Happy Holidays*

Grand Line Biographies
pgs. 8-17

Masonic Home News 21-24

Grand Lodge Office: 478-742-1475

Please send changes of address to the Grand Secretary
at 811 Mulberry Street, Macon, GA 31201
on your lodge secretary's monthly report.
The editor does NOT keep the list of addresses.

Grand Lodge Officers

| | |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|
| Grand Master | Benjamin W. Polston, II (6) |
| Deputy Grand Master | Mark A. Bradley (36, 766) |
| Senior Grand Warden | Bill Shepard (717, 214) |
| Junior Grand Warden | Brian C. Coffey (271, 749, 710) |
| Grand Treasurer | Paul H. Carter (26) |
| Grand Secretary | Van S. McGee (26, 70) |
| Grand Chaplain | Frank J. Batt, III (376, 06) |
| Grand Marshal | William M. Jones (06) |
| Grand Orator | Michael H. Wilson (06) |
| Senior Grand Deacon | Tom D. Bruce (42, 216) |
| Junior Grand Deacon | Scott W. Johnson (68, 376) |
| First Grand Steward | Wiley Q. Forrester, III (292) |
| Second Grand Steward | W. David Baxter (35) |
| Third Grand Steward | Jeff L. Smith (131, 2) |
| Grand Tyler | Jeffery L. Anderson (200, 376, 06) |

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Table of Contents

Grand Lodge Notices and Events

| | |
|---|-------|
| From the Desk of the Grand Secretary..... | 3 |
| 237th Grand Lodge Results..... | 4 |
| Charters and By-Laws Committee Reports..... | 5-6 |
| 2024 Grand Master's Forums..... | 7 |
| Introducing Grand Master Ben Polston..... | 8-11 |
| Grand Line Biographies..... | 12-17 |
| Masonic Home Girls Visit the Ballet..... | 18 |
| Wills and Trusts Announcement..... | 19 |
| Grand Lodge Tax Committee Announcement..... | 20 |
| Masonic Home News..... | 21-24 |

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-------|
| <u>Orient of Georgia News</u> | 25-26 |
|-------------------------------------|-------|

| | |
|-----------------------------|-------|
| <u>York Rite News</u> | 27-28 |
|-----------------------------|-------|

| | |
|--|----|
| In Memoriam: Brother John Kierbow..... | 29 |
|--|----|

Articles

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-------|
| Commentary: "Lessons I Learned"..... | 30-31 |
| Commentary: "Follow Me"..... | 32 |
| The Traitor Returns to Georgia..... | 33 |
| Freemasonry Around Georgia..... | 34-40 |
| Veterans Corner..... | 41-42 |

| | |
|-------------|-------|
| Awards..... | 44-45 |
|-------------|-------|

| | |
|------------------|-------|
| In Memoriam..... | 46-47 |
|------------------|-------|

FORM FOR CHANGING ADDRESS FOR MESSENGER

TYPE or PRINT information requested and mail to the
Grand Lodge address on the back cover.

Name in Full _____

Lodge Name and Number _____

If you have moved, PLEASE RETURN YOUR ADDRESS LABEL ABOVE
TO THE GRAND LODGE OF GEORGIA along with your new address.

Lodge Name and Number _____

Street or P.O. Box _____

City _____

Zip Code _____

Remember, it is your responsibility to make certain your address is current.
Be certain your Lodge secretary has your correct address.

Current addresses are kept in the Grand Secretary's Office in Macon.
The Editor of the Masonic Messenger DOES NOT keep a list of addresses.



From the Desk of the Grand Secretary Right Worshipful Van S. “Mac” McGee

ANNUAL ELECTIONS

It is very important immediately after the December elections of Officers the results are entered into Grand View. Please provide phone numbers and email addresses for Worshipful Master's and Secretaries and how you want information to be listed in the Georgia List of Lodges Digital Publication. All Lodge Officers must be entered into the election return with their contact information, including email addresses. Grand View allows the Secretary, of each lodge, to choose the mailing address for where he wants Lodge mail to be delivered. This information can be entered under Lodge Settings, then go to Lodge Contact Information. Remember all election returns must be entered on or before Friday, December 29, 2023.

MONTHLY CLOSEOUTS

On the first day of each month the Monthly Closeout of the preceding month must be completed. Remember, closeouts are in lieu of paper monthly reports which are no longer necessary to submit if you are properly using Grand View.

2024 District Conventions

| <u>District</u> | <u>Date</u> | <u>Time</u> | <u>Location</u> | <u>Host Lodge</u> |
|-----------------|--------------------|-------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1st District | March 23, 2024 | 10:00AM | Hinesville | Hinesville Lodge No. 271 |
| 2nd District | February 24, 2024 | 9:00AM | Albany | Dougherty Lodge No. 591 |
| 3rd District | March 16, 2024 | 10:00AM | Dawson | P.T. Schley Lodge No. 229 |
| 4th District | August 17, 2024 | 9:45AM | Greenville Lodge No. 321 | Loftin Lodge No. 688 |
| 5th District | September 14, 2024 | 9:00AM | Tucker | Tuker Lodge No. 42 |
| 6th District | May 4, 2024 | 9:00AM | Griffin @ Meridian Sun Lodge No. 26 | Mabel Lodge No. 255 |
| 7th District | May 10 & 11, 2024 | 9:00AM | Rome | Cherokee Lodge No. 66 |
| 8th District | May 18, 2024 | 9:00AM | Loganville | Fergus Lodge No. 135 |
| 9th District | September 28, 2024 | 9:00AM | Clarksville Lodge No. 325 | Mt. Airy Lodge No. 141 |
| 10th District | June 8, 2024 | 10:00AM | Louisville | Stonewall Lodge No. 98 |
| 11th District | September 21, 2024 | 10:00AM | Blackshear | Blackshear Lodge No. 270 |
| 12th District | April 20, 2024 | 9:00AM | Dublin | Laurens Lodge No. 75 |

Code Bill and Resolution Results of the 237th Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of Georgia F&AM

| | Edicts | |
|---------|--|--------|
| 2023-01 | Journalism Award | Passed |
| 2023-02 | Flag Display | Failed |
| 2023-03 | Name of Garden at Children's Home | Passed |
| 2023-04 | Community Engagement Award | Passed |
| 2023-05 | Appoint Assistants to other GL Officers | Failed |
| 2023-06 | When to present dues card to Raised Masons | Failed |

| | Code Bills | |
|---------|---|--------------|
| 2023-1 | Amend Chapter 77-1, Section 77-127 of the Penal Section as it pertains to carrying weapons in lodge (Amended) (Addendum 2) | Passed |
| 2023-2 | Amend MC Section 23-102.1 Flag of the United States of America | Out of Order |
| 2023-3 | Amend MC Section 77-127 so as to conform with Georgia Law | Out of Order |
| 2023-4 | Amend MC Section 12-103 paragraphs 1 and 3. Removing the requirements for a dress code (Amended) (Addendum 3) | Withdrawn |
| 2023-5 | Amend MC Section 83-401, relating to "Trial of Masters | Withdrawn |
| 2023-6 | Amend MC Section 86-102 to allow restorations from indefinite suspension for non-payment of dues by a show of hands. | Failed |
| 2023-7 | Amend MC Section 31-106, regarding sufficient notice given to a member before suspension for non-payment of dues | Passed |
| 2023-8 | Amend MC Section 4-101, of the Masonic Code of Georgia regarding the appointment of an acting assistant Grand Secretary | Passed |
| 2023-9 | Amend MC Section 77-126, of the Masonic Code of Georgia disallowing the potential ability of an Entered Apprentice or Fellowcraft Mason from applying for membership in concordant or appendant organizations | Failed |
| 2023-10 | Amend MC Section 39-101. Application, and the petition form, for the purpose of requiring a criminal background report (Amended) (Addendum 4) | Failed |

**REPORT OF
THE CHARTERS AND BY-LAWS COMMITTEE**

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Georgia, F. & A.M.

Your Charters and By-Laws Committee met in Macon on September 19, 2023, for the purpose of receiving all By-Laws amendments and other items which had been received since the 236th Annual Communication of Grand Lodge to be approved at the 237th Annual Communication.

This report is the result of the Committee's work on September 19, 2023, and will be given at this Grand Lodge Session.

We recommend that the following amendments to the by-laws be approved as submitted.

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Rising Star Lodge No. 4 | Hudson Lodge No. 294 |
| Columbian Lodge No. 7 | Cordelia Lodge No. 296 |
| Orion Lodge No. 8 | Cairo Lodge No. 299 |
| Frank F. Baker Lodge No. 46 | Bryan Lodge No. 303 |
| Senoia Lodge No. 82 | Mt. Hermon Lodge No. 304 |
| Ringgold Lodge No. 90 | Davidson Lodge No. 334 |
| Campbellton Lodge No. 76 | Lula Lodge No. 352 |
| Stonewall Lodge No. 98 | Whigham Lodge No. 356 |
| St. Marys Lodge No. 109 | Lakeland Lodge No. 434 |
| Lawrenceville Lodge No. 131 | Elm City Lodge No. 544 |
| Live Oak Lodge No. 137 | Fort Benning Lodge No. 579 |
| Cross Lodge No. 173 | Coosa Lodge No. 622 |
| Millwood Lodge No. 198 | Grove Lodge No. 652 |
| Lumber City Lodge No. 199 | Samuel S. Lawrence Lodge No. 721 |
| Hickory Flat Lodge No. 205 | Roger Lacey Lodge No. 722 |
| Fulton Lodge No. 216 | Mountain Park Lodge No. 729 |
| Duncan Lodge No. 234 | Grovetown Lodge No. 730 |
| Alpharetta Lodge No. 235 | James E. Sledge D/L Lodge No. 742 |
| Lavonia Lodge No. 241 | Metro Daylight Lodge No. 743 |
| Draketown Lodge No. 252 | Tiftarea Lodge No. 745 |
| Unicoy Lodge No. 259 | Johnnie's Hill Lodge No. 748 |
| Hazelhurst Lodge No. 283 | |

We recommend that the following amendments be returned.

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Social Lodge No. 1 | Battle Hill Lodge No. 523 |
| Meridian Sun Lodge No. 26 | Stone Lodge No. 715 |
| Seminole Lodge No. 83 | Brunswick Lodge No. 717 |
| Oostanaula Lodge No. 113 | Palmetto Daylight Lodge No. 755 |
| Sandy Springs Lodge No. 124 | |
| Folkston Lodge No. 196 | Carroll County Masonic Convention |
| Dacula Lodge No. 433 | |

Fraternally Submitted,

Donald C. Combs, PGM, Chairman
Frank F. Baker Lodge No. 46

Keith Hales, PM
Pickens Star Lodge No. 220

Philip E. Harris, Sr., PM
Rose Hill Lodge No. 484

**FINAL REPORT OF
THE CHARTERS AND BY-LAWS COMMITTEE**

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Georgia, F. & A.M.

Your Charters and By-Laws Committee met in Macon on October 23, 2023, for the purpose of a second review of returned By-Laws amendments and other items which had been received since the 236th Annual Communication of Grand Lodge and the first review on September 19, 2023.

This report is the result of the Committee's work on October 23, 2023, and was given at the 237th Annual Communication on October 24, 2023.

We recommend that the following amendments to the by-laws be approved as submitted.

Social Lodge No. 1
Meridian Sun Lodge No. 26
Seminole Lodge No. 83
Sandy Springs Lodge No. 124
Dacula Lodge No. 433

Pembroke Lodge No. 469
Battle Hill Lodge No. 523
Stone Lodge No. 715
Brunswick Lodge No. 717
Palmetto Lodge No. 755

The following By-Law Amendments were not returned after the first review on September 19, 2023.

Atlanta-Peachtree Lodge No. 59
Oostanaula Lodge No. 113
Live Oak Lodge No. 137
Folkston Lodge No. 196
Dacula Lodge No. 433

Newington Lodge No. 503
Battle Hill Lodge No. 523
Helena Lodge No. 536
Carroll County Masonic Convention

Fraternally Submitted,

Donald C. Combs, PGM, Chairman
Frank F. Baker Lodge No. 46

Keith Hales, PM
Pickens Star Lodge No. 220

Philip E. Harris, Sr., PM
Rose Hill Lodge No. 484



As the Masonic year unfolds, MWB Ben Polston has announced this year's Grand Lodge Forums - an educational and informational series for Brethren across our jurisdiction. These forums, led by the Masonic Education and Leadership Development team, will be supported by the collective strength of our Grand Lodge Officers and DDGMs.

The main goal of these forums is to get members and officers clued up on key topics. We'll be covering officer duties in-depth, plus prepping our future leaders with all they need to know.

The events will also help to amplify the membership experience by showcasing the benefits and responsibilities of Lodges and bringing renewed attention to our members and prospects. This effort will involve cultivating new members while supporting and nurturing current and disengaged Brethren.

Well-done ritual within lodges is essential, and the team will lean heavily upon district custodians to bridge any gaps that will make Brethren and officers more successful. More detailed and in-depth training with custodians will be done within other venues. Still, this focal point emphasizes the importance of sharing resources and connecting Lodges with appropriate experts within our custodian team.

Finally, the forums will highlight our duty to charity, focusing on our Masonic Home. We will explore how lodges and organizations can support and enhance their charitable offerings, including our Masonic Home. These events aim to raise funds and awareness and encourage hands-on involvement from our brethren, fostering a direct connection with the charitable work that is a hallmark of our Masonic identity.

Planning and coordinating community outreach programs and service projects will demonstrate the impact of our fraternal bonds in tangible ways. The teams will help Brethren build solid planning efforts to show the profane world who we are and what we stand for.

The schedule for the upcoming forums is as follows:

January 13th - Registration 8 AM/Start 9 AM:

- Cordele - Cordelia #296
- Savannah - Scottish Rite Center
- Greenville - Greenville #321
- Rome - Cherokee Lodge #66

January 27th - Registration 8 AM/Start 9 AM

- Augusta – Scottish Rite
- Marietta – Kennesaw #33
- Macon – Grand York Rite Building
- Gainesville – Gainesville Lodge #219



Introducing Most Worshipful Benjamin "Ben" Wesley Polston, II Grand Master of Masons in Georgia

In the spirit of humility and with a heart full of gratitude, I am honored to have been elected as the Grand Master of Masons in Georgia. The confidence placed in me is a sacred trust I will uphold with the utmost integrity and dedication. I am profoundly aware of the magnitude of this position and look forward to working closely with Brethren across the state to continue nurturing our craft as we navigate new waters while staying true to our deep Masonic foundations.

Core Values and Personal Life

From my early days on the family farm in Marianna, Florida, the value of hard work was instilled in me. I was guided by the principle that a man's worth is measured by his deeds. And this helped inspire the motto for my term: *"Be a man, Be a Mason, Be a gentleman."* This creed has been the cornerstone of my personal and Masonic journey, shaping my actions within the fraternity and beyond.

My faith in God has been the guiding light of my life, providing strength and direction through all of life's endeavors. It is this faith that has nurtured a deep sense of commitment to my family, my community, and the Masonic Brotherhood. My amazing and supportive wife, Tammie, and our children, Dana, Leigh, and Makenzie, are the bedrock of my world. Together with our sons-in-law and grandchildren, we share a life enriched by love, laughter, and the blessings of our creator.

Education, Career, and Community Involvement

I earned a degree in Economics from Florida State University, a foundation that has supported a rewarding three-decade career.

As active members of Rockdale Baptist Church, Tammie and I find joy in our service and fellowship. Our love for nature's splendor is woven through our family tapestry, binding us in shared experiences and cherished memories.

Masonic Journey and Philosophy

Esteemed roles and meaningful accolades have marked my Masonic path, each reflecting the noble labor we undertake in the quarry of life. The honors bestowed upon me within the Masonic community are not merely personal achievements but symbols of our collective strength and unity.

My involvement in the Scottish Rite, York Rite, Shrine, as well as other Masonic bodies has been a profound opportunity to extend the hand of fellowship and fortify the bonds of our venerable institutions, including:

- Perpetual Member and Past Master of Golden Fleece Lodge No. 6, Covington, GA.
- Perpetual Member of Cottondale Lodge No. 206, FL.
- Served in various capacities within the Covington York Rite Bodies, including High Priest, Illustrious Master, and Commander.
- Most Illustrious Grand Master for the Grand Council of Royal and Select Masters of Georgia in 2016.
- Recipient of numerous Masonic honors, including the Royal Arch Mason of the Year, Cryptic Mason of the Year, and Knights Templar Cross of Honor.
- Past Webmaster for York Rite of Georgia and Editor of the Knights Templar Magazine Supplement for Georgia.
- 33° Scottish Rite Mason, Valley of Atlanta, and Venerable Master of the Lodge of Perfection.
- Life Member of the Royal Order of Scotland and Past Sovereign of Alexander Conclave, Red Cross of Constantine.
- Past Governor of W. Joe Clark York Rite College No. 203 and recipient of the Order of the Purple Cross.
- Member and Past Prior of Cherokee Rose Priory No. 56, Knights of the York Cross of Honor.
- Member of various Masonic bodies, including the Knight Masons, Allied Masonic Degrees, and the Order of St. Thomas of Acon.
- Life Member of the Mystic Shrine, Yaarab Shrine in Atlanta, and Past Director of Atlanta Court No. 91, Royal Order of Jesters.

A Vision for the Future & Excitement for the Coming Year

As I embrace the role of Grand Master, I am ever mindful of the enduring principles that unite us: faith in the Grand Architect of the Universe, the strength of our fraternal bonds, and the relentless pursuit of personal betterment. Together, we shall continue to build upon the robust foundations laid by those who have gone this way before, striving to embody the gentlemanly virtues our fraternity extols.

As we enter the holiday season, my wife Tammie and I wish everyone the warmest wishes for a safe, joyful, and Merry Christmas to you and your families. May this time be filled with the laughter of loved ones, the company of new and old friends, and the light of hope that guides us into the New Year.

Before we get to work, let's take some time to cherish the bonds of Brotherhood and the shared values that unite us.

As your Grand Master, I am proud to share my vision and initiatives that embody our Masonic values and traditions. Our program, guided by the motto "**Be a Man, Be a Mason, Be a Gentleman**," focuses on the importance of work ethic, symbolized through the industrious bee, a central emblem in our Masonic heritage.

I am excited to introduce a range of lapel pins, including Tammie's Pin, the Veterans Pin (Georgia Revolutionary Minuteman), and the First Responder Pin ("First in Last Out"). These pins are more than just symbols; they represent our commitment to the community and the nation.

My dedication and that of the DDGMs and Grand Lodge Officers are steadfast in serving our brethren. We are here to support and guide every Mason in our jurisdiction. If you'd like to request an official visit, contact your DDGM, preferably by email, to schedule.

Our election procedures emphasize commitment to transparency and efficiency. It is now imperative for lodges to submit their election results promptly, focusing on the Top 5 Officers and the Ambassador, to ensure continuity and effective leadership within our fraternity.

Education and engagement are critical pillars of this year's program. We have scheduled eight forums focusing on MELD officer training across various cities. These forums are essential for developing and nurturing the next generation of Masonic leaders.

- ★ January 13, 2024, in Cordele, Savannah, Greenville, and Rome.

- ★ January 27, 2024, in Augusta, Marietta, Macon, and Gainesville.

Our Lodge of the Year Program concentrates on areas crucial to our growth and effectiveness: Membership growth, ritual excellence, engaging lodge meetings, involvement with the Masonic Home, and local community service. We have also created an online form, allowing for greater ease and flexibility in applying for the program while offering a paper version for those who prefer that method.

We have set ambitious goals, including a success rate of over 50% in Raising Master Masons and restoring suspended Masons for non-payment of dues. I strongly encourage participation in the MELD Leadership Conference and the Georgia Masonic Academy. As Grand View continues to be the Masonic hub for Georgia, we aim for 65% participation in usage and engagement on the platform.

Charitable endeavors are at the heart of our mission. The Masonic Home remains our primary focus, with the return of the Ambassador Program, which will play a pivotal role. Key events include Ambassador Appreciation Day, the Triple 24 Campaign for recurring donations of \$24 per month for 12 months, an annual golf tournament, and a 5K race. Our Legacy Gift Campaign aims for \$2.5 million, and the First Ladies Project is dedicated to supporting young adults transitioning to independence.

In our journey towards modernization, we are embracing digital transformation, which includes transitioning to digital formats for planning packs, lodge lists, addresses, and dues cards. This effort is cost-effective and aligns our rich traditions with the modern world. We will beta-test digital solutions in selected lodges to ensure a seamless transition while maintaining the utmost data privacy.

Communication is evolving with the official use of the Grand Lodge of Georgia's Facebook page, although comments will be restricted to uphold our standards of respect and decorum.

Enhancing the quality of our lodge meetings is also a priority. Focusing on hospitality is vital, with Stewards and Deacons playing a pivotal role in welcoming members and guests. Expectations include well-organized meetings, adherence to rituals, and maintaining our lodges to the highest standards.

The Grand Lodge Annual Communication will feature enhanced visual aids, additional viewing monitors, better electronic voting, and a strict focus on etiquette. I will not tolerate any form of disrespectful conduct, and we will act like Masons during this and all proceedings.

I am also pleased to introduce our Grand Master's merchandise line, available for donation to benefit the Masonic Home and the Georgia Masonic Charities Foundation:

- ★ Bronze Coins featuring my motto and, the Golden Fleece symbol and honeybee hive, designed for keychain attachment. Donation: \$10.
- ★ Set of GM Coins: Includes bronze, PM Nickel, 50-year gold coin, and limited edition 1 troy ounce solid silver—donation: \$100.
- ★ Grand Master's knife: Red Bone canoe design. Donation: \$50.
- ★ Grand Master ties: Gold custom design by Craftsman Apron, available in longer neckties and bow ties. Donation: \$50.
- ★ Pocket squares: Matching design. Donation: \$20.
- ★ Grand Master cufflinks: Donation: \$15 per set.
- ★ Black baseball caps: With leather logos featuring honeybee design. Donation: \$35.

In closing, let us step forward into the future with the unwavering spirit of unity and brotherhood that has always been the cornerstone of our esteemed Fraternity. As we approach the festive season, may the light of brotherly love and the warmth of Masonic fellowship fill our hearts and homes.

As we celebrate the joys of this season and the blessings of brotherhood, let us remember our duty to extend the hand of friendship, charity, and kindness within our Masonic family and all humanity.

May the Grand Architect of the Universe bless each of you with peace, prosperity, and happiness during this holiday season and always.

Fraternally and with the warmest holiday wishes,

Benjamin W. Polston, II Grand Master





Introducing Right Worshipful Paul Carter Grand Treasurer

I was born in Griffin, Georgia, and after graduating from Griffin High School, I continued my education at Armstrong State College in Savannah.

My career began with the Georgia State Patrol in 1980, which eventually led me to form and command the Criminal Interdiction Unit in response to the tragic events of September 11th. My work in law enforcement took me across the United States and abroad, teaching criminal interdiction, narcotics enforcement, and criminal apprehension to fellow officers from all corners of North America and several other countries. My professional development includes graduating from the Drug Enforcement Administration's Drug Unit Commanders Academy in Quantico, Virginia, and the Secret Service Dignitary Protection School in Beltsville, Maryland.

Parallel to my service in law enforcement, I nurtured a passion for craftsmanship, leading to a successful venture as the CEO of a retail distribution business that specializes in providing imported and exotic woods for the furniture and cabinet industries.

In my Masonic life, I was raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason on June 27, 1983, at Roger Lacey Lodge #722. I affiliated with Meridian Sun Lodge #26 in 2006, ascending to the position of Worshipful Master in 2013 and taking on the responsibilities of Chaplain in 2019 and Secretary since 2020. My dedication to Masonry was further recognized when I was appointed as District Deputy to the Grand Master in 2018 and as the DDGM District Leader of the 6th Masonic District in 2021. I have also served on the Georgia Masonic Home Board of Trustees, contributing to various sub-committees since 2021.

I was appointed Assistant State Chairman of District Deputies to the Grand Master in 2022 and later installed as Grand Treasurer on September 9, 2023. I had the great honor of being one of the founding members of the Georgia Masonic Academy and have chaired the Grand Lodge Entertainment Committee for two different Grand Masters.

Additionally, since 1983, I've been a member of the Scottish Rite Valley of Savannah and joined the Yaarab Shrine in 1985.

Family and Freemasonry are the cornerstones of my life. I am blessed to share this journey with my soulmate, Sharon, and I take great pride in being a father and a grandfather to two delightful granddaughters. Upholding the family legacy of Masonry, which stretches back several generations, is a responsibility and honor I carry with deep humility.

Introducing Worshipful Brother Jeff Smith Third Grand Steward



Jeff Smith has been an active freemason for 30 years. He was initiated in Lawrenceville Lodge #131 on September 21, 1993, Passed on October 5, 1993, and Raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason on October 19, 1993. He served as Master of Lawrenceville Lodge in 2000, the lodge's 150-year anniversary. He has also served as a lodge historian. He is a plural member with Fulton Lodge #216.

Worshipful Brother Smith is a Past President of the Gwinnett County Masonic Association and currently serves the Fifth District Line as Senior Deacon. He has been a member of the Georgia Lodge of Research since 2009.

The Grand Lodge of Georgia has utilized Smith in several roles. He served as Prosecutor for the Ninth District from 2008 until 2018 when he was appointed to the Committee on Appeals and Grievances. He was appointed to chair that committee in 2019 and has served in that capacity since that time. Smith has also served on the Committee on Recognition and some ad-hoc committees of the Grand Lodge. He has served as an instructor at the Leadership Conference since 2017.

In addition to Blue Lodge activity, Smith has been active in the Scottish Rite. He has been a member of the Valley of Atlanta since 1994 and currently serves the Valley as an officer in the Consistory line and a member of the Valley Executive Board. Smith served as the Valley Director of Work from 2019-2022. He was decorated with the K.C.C.H. in 2021. Smith has been a member of the Scottish Rite Research Society since 2009, has been a member of the Wisdom, Strength & Beauty Club since its inception in 2009, and he is a recipient of a Master Craftsman certificate. Jeff serves as a director for the Scottish Rite Foundation of Georgia.

Smith is also active in the York Rite bodies. He has been a member of Taylor Chapter #48 R.A.M., and he is a Past High Priest (2016). He is also a member of N. T. Pirkle Council #65 R&SM, and he is a Past Illustrious Master (2016). He has received the Order of High Priesthood and the Order of the Silver Trowel. He is a member of Arnold de Troye

Commandery #31. The highest office he has held in the Commandery is Captain General.

Other bodies in which Brother Smith holds membership include the Royal Order of Scotland (life member), the Grand College of Rites, the Philaethes Society, the Tall Cedars of Lebanon – Georgia Forest #181, the Order of Athelstan – Georgia Court #124, Knight Masons – Carl F. Lester, Jr. Council #65, S.R.I.C.F. – Georgia College, and St. Ambrose Conclave of the Red Cross of Constantine. Brother Smith is very active in the Allied Masonic Degrees. He is a member and Past Sovereign Master of Zarthan Council #329. He currently serves as secretary/treasurer. He is a Knight Commander of the Royal Order of the Red Branch of Eri and a recipient of the Fourth Grade of the Ancient and Masonic Order of the Scarlet Cord.

Outside of Freemasonry, Worshipful Brother Smith served as a police officer for 35 years retiring as a Captain at the Lawrenceville Police Department. He completed a Doctorate in Emergency Management and has taught undergraduate and graduate criminal justice and emergency management courses for Georgia Gwinnett College, Troy University, Georgia State University, and Texas A&M International University. He also operates a consulting company that specializes in Accident Reconstruction and Police Policy. Jeff serves on the Board of Directors of Behavioral Health of Georgia.

Jeff is married to his best friend and soulmate, Katie, who has worked for Children's Healthcare of Atlanta for over 30-years. Katie, like Jeff, is very active in the local community and is involved in several activities and non-profits. She is a published author with several successful historical fiction novels centered in Atlanta, and she is also a talented painter whose work is often displayed and sold at the Monroe Walton Center for the Arts. Jeff and Katie live in Lawrenceville with their furry children: Augie and Sherman.



Introducing Worshipful Brother Jeffery Anderson Grand Tyler

I was born in Clifton Forge, VA, and spent my early years in Clifton Forge. Schools are a treasure trove of memories and the beginning of friendships that have lasted a lifetime – and thanks to the wonders of social media, we're all still connected.

In high school, I threw myself into sports, dabbling in football, basketball, baseball, and track. But it was the gridiron where I truly felt at home. My passion for football followed me to college at East Tennessee State University, where I proudly played on a football scholarship. Two standout moments? Beating Terry Bradshaw and Louisiana Tech in his final college game – Terry and I have remained friends since – and being the first to graduate in four years with an engineering degree while playing football.

My stint with Western Electric in Winston Salem, North Carolina, was cut short when the draft called my number. Before I knew it, I was off to basic training and Southeast Asia – a place whose actual name stirs up memories I'd instead leave untouched.

Returning stateside, I jumped back into work with Western Electric, which soon led me to the secret shores of the Marshall Islands with Bell Laboratories for two years. My career path then wove through various roles within the Bell System – from South Central Bell to BellSouth, and finally to AT&T. I eventually landed in Atlanta, finishing my career as Director of Facilities and Planning.

On the home front, I'm blessed with my wonderful wife of 26 years, Penelope Elliott Anderson. She's my rock, keeping me active and happy. My two sons, one in Louisiana with his family and the other in Kentucky, pridefully filled me. They're good men, devoted to their families, and have given me two grandchildren – a lively 9-year-old boy and a 29-year-old granddaughter who's making her way in Louisiana.

My Masonic journey mirrors the diversity of my professional life. Raised a Master Mason on March 3, 2011, I've since served as the Past Master of Walton Lodge #200. I'm deeply involved in the Masonic community, from the Scottish Rite Valley of Middle Georgia, where I'm a 32° KCCH, to Covington York Rite's past leadership positions. I'm active in Cherokee Rose Priory #56 KYCH, the Red Cross of Constantine New Convent Conclave, W Joe Clarke York Rite College #203, and Henry Hooper Council # 312 of the Grand Council Allied Masonic Degrees. Additionally, I'm a Legion of Honor Member at Al Sihah Shrine and a two-time Past Worthy Patron at the Madison Chapter #335 Order of the Eastern Star.

Each step in Freemasonry has been as enriching as the last, and I look forward to continuing this fulfilling journey.

Introducing Worshipful Brother Frank Batt Grand Chaplain



I was born in New Orleans, to Frank and Floyd Batt, and my childhood was a blend of city life during the academic year—filled with duck hunting, crawfishing, and fishing in the local swamps and marshes—and country experiences in Columbia, Mississippi, during the summers. This unique upbringing allowed me to appreciate the nuances of both environments. I have one sister, Donna Styles, a source of pride as a retired Navy Captain.

In my earlier years, I served as an altar boy, played football and baseball, sang in my middle school opera, and achieved the Eagle Scout rank in the Boy Scouts.

I pursued higher education at the University of New Orleans on a baseball scholarship and completed my bachelor's degree in management/communications at Concordia University.

Professionally, I enjoyed a fulfilling 40-year career with Bell/AT&T, beginning in 1977 in the Drafting Department and eventually serving as the Logistics and Credentials Manager for the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta—a role that prompted my move to the Atlanta area, where I continued to progress in my career until retirement.

Now, my wife Lisa and I are settled in Milledgeville, Georgia, in our lakeside dream home. We are blessed with five children: Robert (married to Kate), Charlie (married to Courtney), Stephen (married to Jennifer), Celeste, and Kristen (married to Brian). Our eight grandchildren, ranging from 4 to 28 years old—Marissa, Rachel, Ally, Madison, Chloe, Caroline, Hayes, and Finn—add immeasurable joy to our lives.

In retirement, I remain active, enjoying bass fishing, deer hunting, and participating in community life through Northridge Christian Church, various couples' groups, and a men's prayer group.

My Masonic journey is a cornerstone of my life, serving as Past Master of Madison Lodge No. 376 and a member of Golden Fleece Lodge No. 6.

I'm also active in the Scottish Rite of Atlanta, where I chair the VMAP and RiteCare programs. I am also involved with Covington Chapter No. 71, Covington Council No. 41, and St. Bernard Commandry No. 25.

As a Past President of the East Side Scottish Rite Association, I've had the honor of providing scholarships to JROTC cadets. My fraternal affiliations include the YAARAB Shrine, Alexander Conclave of the Red Cross of Constantine, the Royal Order of Scotland, and the Royal Order of Jesters.



Introducing Worshipful Brother Mike Jones Grand Marshal

I'm William Michael Jones, but you can call me Mike. I was born in Walton County, Georgia, and I'm a local. After walking the halls of Newton County High School as a student, I served in the US Army from 1970 to 1972, which instilled a deep sense of duty and discipline. Post-service, I focused on education, earning my stripes at DeVry Institute of Technology.

Family is the cornerstone of my life; my wife Deborah and I are proud parents and even prouder grandparents to a bustling brood of two children, five grandchildren, and nine great-grandchildren.

My Masonic journey is a tapestry of service and leadership. As a Past Master of Golden Fleece Lodge no. 6, I've dedicated countless hours to coaching both my brethren at Golden Fleece and at neighboring lodges. Multiple stints as director of work only scratch the surface of my involvement. My administrative acumen has been honed through roles like assistant custodian for the 8th district and serving as an 8th District Master.

The York Rite holds a special place in my Masonic journey. I've been entrusted with the leadership as Past High Priest of Covington Chapter no. 71, commanded respect as Illustrious Master of Covington Council no. 41, and bore the mantle of Grand Sentinel for the Grand Council Royal and Select Masters. I've wielded the sword as Commander of St Bernard Commandery no. 25 and infused energy and passion into my role as past president of Yaarab Shrine and the Alcoy Shrine Club.

The Scottish Rite Valley of Atlanta has also benefited from my commitment, where I've served as past president of the East Side Scottish Rite Association. I've pursued excellence in the Ralph C. James Council No. 311 as a past sovereign master, charted courses as past Governor of W. Joe Clarke York Rite College No. 311, and upheld chivalric traditions in Cherokee Rose Priory No. 56. My Masonic circle extends to the Alexander Conclave Red Cross of Constantine in Covington, Georgia, reflecting a lifetime of devoted service and fraternity.

In every role, I've sought not just to lead but to enlighten, guiding others as I go and forever striving to be a beacon of Masonic values in Georgia.

Introducing Most Worshipful Brother Mike Wilson Grand Orator



Past Past Grand Master Wilson was born in 1953 at St. Joseph Hospital of Atlanta to Mr. Harold S. Wilson and Ms. Willine D. Gooch. He was raised in Lithonia, Georgia and was educated in Dekalb and Atlanta Public Schools. As a boy he enjoyed hunting, fishing, and riding motorcycles. Most Worshipful Brother Wilson had an older sister Charlotte (now deceased) and younger brother Danny who is married to Jane's sister who lives in Ohio. He met his beautiful bride Jane in 1992 and they were married in 1994 and have been happily married for twenty-five years. Jane and he have six children (three boys and three girls), twenty grandchildren (thirteen boys and seven girls), and four great grandchildren (one boy and three girls). At the age of thirteen Past Past Grand Master Wilson started working in his father's roofing business. After completing high school, he would begin to work full time in the business, and when his father retired, he would take over ownership of the family business. Jane and Past Grand Master Wilson are partners (or members) at The Cross Church of Loganville and they are happy that some of their children and grandchildren attend at the same church and worship with them.

Most Worshipful Brother Wilson was raised to the Degree of Master Mason in 1993 at Lithonia Lodge No. 84 and served as Worshipful Master of that Lodge in 2000 and again in 2001. He also served as Master of E.A. Minor No. 603 in 2006. Most Worshipful Brother Wilson is also a dual member of Golden Fleece Lodge No. 6, joining there in 2008. He has served as President of Dekalb County Masonic Association, is a

Past Ambassador to Masonic Children's Home, and founding member of the 8th District Memorial Association. Past Grand Master Wilson is a member of Royal Arch, Council, and Commandery and has served as the head of all three of those bodies. In 2014 he honorably served Georgia as the Most Excellent Grand High

Priest of all Royal Arch Masons for the State of Georgia. Two years later, he was honored with the distinction of being named

Cryptic Mason of the Year for 2016. Past Grand Master Wilson has been honored to receive the Knights of the York Cross of Honor and is currently a member of Georgia Priory No. 39 as well as Cherokee Rose Priory No. 56. He is an honored member of Luther Palmer York Rite College, and Alexander Conclave, Red Cross of Constantine where he is a Past Sovereign. Additionally, he is a member of the Royal Order of Scotland, and Knight Masons. In the Allied Masonic Degrees, Past Grand Master Wilson is a member of three Councils in this state including Georgia Council No. 304 AMD, Augusta Council No. 327 AMD, and Henry Troy Hooper Council No. 312 AMD, and has served as Sovereign Master of both Augusta Council and Henry Troy Hooper Council.

In addition to the York Rite Bodies, Most Worshipful Brother Wilson is a member of the Scottish Rite and has been honored with the rank and decoration of Knight Commander Court of Honor in that body and has been coroneted with the 33rd Degree.. He has been very active on the stage crew at Scottish Rite for many years and been active in the 14th Degree. With the Associated bodies of the Scottish Rite, he is Past President of East Side Scottish Rite Association and serves as Assistant to the Personal Representative for the Valley of Atlanta. Past Grand Master Wilson is also a member of Yaarab Shrine, Knights of Mecca, and the Royal Order of Jesters.

A Day of Enchantment For the Girls of the Masonic Home of Georgia



Golden Fleece Lodge No.6, renowned for its commitment to community and philanthropy, recently hosted a remarkable cultural event that enriched and delighted many. This day was organized for the girls from the Masonic home, demonstrating the Lodge's dedication to nurturing community spirit and brotherhood.

The event's highlight was visiting the Porter Performing Arts Center in Covington to witness a performance of the Nutcracker, a timeless ballet and a holiday season staple. Known for its enchanting music and captivating dance, *The Nutcracker* transports audiences to a world of dreams and fairy-tale wonder. This performance, sponsored by Dr. Billy Dobbs of Golden Fleece Lodge No.6, showcased the Lodge's commitment to providing enriching experiences to the younger generation. Grand Master Ben Polston, a Past Master of Golden Fleece, also attended the evening's activities.

Following the ballet, the girls were served a delicious meal at Golden Fleece, prepared by their Ambassador, Worshipful Brother, and past master of Golden Fleece, Brandon Hudson. Events like these are crucial in strengthening the bonds between the Masonic family and the broader community, reflecting the values of Freemasonry in action.

It is an inspiring example of how Freemasonry reaches out into the community to spread joy, culture, and camaraderie. The event provided entertainment and joy for the girls from the Masonic home. It emphasized the importance of supporting and investing in our youth's cultural and social development and our Home in Macon.

The event at the Porter Performing Arts Center, followed by the warm hospitality at the Lodge, will undoubtedly remain a cherished memory for the girls, fostering a sense of wonder, joy, and community spirit at the heart of Masonic values.

Please consider our Children's Home or the Georgia Masonic Charities Foundation in your will or trust. You can use either of the forms below to assist your attorney in preparing to support our Home or Charities for years to come.

**PLEASE REMEMBER OUR CHILDREN
IN YOUR WILL OR TRUST**

Something similar to either or both of the following simple provisions can be added to your will or trust to make a bequest to your Masonic charities.

MASONIC HOME

To provide for our children at the Masonic Home:

I give, devise and bequeath to the Masonic Home of Georgia, EIN 58-0140568, located at Macon, Georgia, the sum of \$_____dollars.

OR

The rest, remainder, and residue of my estate I give, devise and bequeath to the Masonic Home of Georgia, EIN 58-0140568, located at Macon, Georgia.

GEORGIA MASONIC CHARITIES FOUNDATION

To support the GACHIP program, Eagle Scout Awards, DeMolay, Rainbow and other youth programs as well as other Masonic Charities:

I give, devise and bequeath to Georgia Masonic Charities Foundation, Inc., a Georgia corporation, EIN 58-2266408, located at Macon, Georgia, the sum of \$_____dollars.

OR

The rest, remainder, and residue of my estate I give, devise and bequeath to the Georgia Masonic Charities Foundation, Inc., EIN 58-2266408, located at Macon, Georgia.

Please provide a copy of the foregoing provisions to the attorney who will be preparing your last will and testament.

Dear Brother Secretaries,

Each lodge individually is required to file at least one annual return with the Internal Revenue Service each and every year since 2007.

If your lodge had less than \$50,000 in Gross receipts for 2023 it is required to file a 990-N on-line. If your lodge has more than \$50,000 in Gross receipts you are required to file either a 990-EZ or a 990, you should consult a Certified Public Accountant for this.

The 990 series is due by the 15th day of the fifth month after your year end, May 15th for calendar year ends. A copy of Forms 990 should be mailed to Georgia Department of Revenue, P.O. Box 740395, Atlanta GA 30374-0395, if you file the 990-N then File a copy of the receipt received from the IRS for the e-Postcard.

If your lodge pays you or any individual more than \$600 per year for services then you are required to file a form 1099 for each such individual and a 1096 transmittal to summaries all the 1099s. If your lodge has set up payroll then W-2s, W3 and 940 annual and quarterly 941 are required.

The costs for late filing can be quite severe, please take due notice and govern yourselves accordingly.

The appropriate code section in the Masonic code is 7-113

7-113. Form 990 to Grand Lodge by June 30.—Each Subordinate Lodge, by and through its Worshipful Master, shall send a copy of any and all required Federal Tax Returns (including, without limitation, Forms 990, 990-N, 1099s, W-3s, etc.) to the Office of the Grand Secretary within ten (10) days of the time that the same is required to be filed for each year hereafter.

Also required is Sales Tax for the state of Georgia for special events, such as Dunk Tank fundraisers at Fairs of Circuses, BBQ fundraisers, etc. are reported on the State of Georgia's "MISCELLANEOUS SALES EVENT" FORM Rev. (04.14.16) you can get this form on line at this address <https://dor.georgia.gov/documents/fs-32-miscellaneous-events> These sales taxes are due to be mailed within 3 days of the event.

Thank you for your attention.

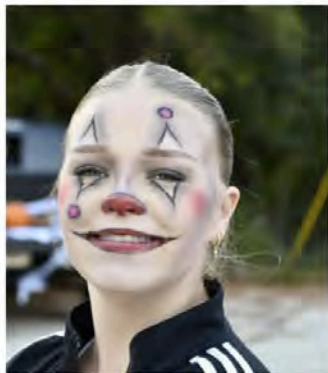
Respectfully and Fraternally,

Lloyd R Bowen, Chairman
Grand Lodge of Georgia F&AM
Tax Committee



Masonic Home Fall 2023

As the leaves change and we prepare for the holidays, we give thanks to the staff, lodges, donors, youth, and all those that made every day a special day. Special thank you to the following districts, groups, and lodges: District 12, Duluth Motorcycle Rally, Eastern Star, Laurens #75, Lavonia #241, Lyons #79, Mabel #255, McIntosh #735, Nelms #323, Rising Star #4, Royston, Stone Mountain #49, 43rd Tri-County, Jerry Turner Crab & Fishing Tournament, Sincerity #430, & Worth #194.



**MASONIC HOME OF GEORGIA ALUMNUS
SPOTLIGHT
MR. JAMES (JIMMY) ASBELL**



Jimmy, Smitty & Don

Saturday, November 8, 1947, 10:30 a.m. I remember it like yesterday, shares James (Jimmy) Asbell. I was seven years old. My father packed me and my two older brothers into his laundry truck and told us we were going to look at a new place. He threw three boxes into the truck we didn't realize at the time were filled with our clothes. My dad was a member of Mabel Lodge in Macon, and he had been granted a referral for us to live at the Masonic Home. Jimmy continues.....When we arrived at the home, my brother Jerry was sent to the senior hall, and Don and I were sent to the junior hall where Mrs. Donahue was the matron. One of the boys explained that it was time to get our allowance. What's an allowance I asked? We went to the bookkeeper's office, and I was given 14 cents, two cents for each of my 7 years of life. This was a windfall for me. No one had ever given me money for anything. That two cents per your age rate stayed in place until I left the home in 1962. That night, Mrs. Donahue told me it was time to get ready for bed. I told her, not me, my daddy is coming to pick us up. She explained that my father was not coming back, and this was going to be my home now. I cried all that night and every night for a week. The Masonic Home of Georgia was my home for the next 15 years. In 1953 my brother Jerry left the home and my younger brother Emmett (Smitty), and my younger sister Diane arrived. My dad came and visited us every Sunday and I eventually forgave my mother for leaving us. Mom and I had a good relationship in my later years.

Once I got used to it, my best memories and the best years of my life were spent at the Masonic Home. I remember crabbing at camp. I remember riding horses, milking the cows, and going to the Cherokee Farms to sell the produce we grew at the home. I remember the old station wagon we used to double date. Only double dates were allowed and we were given \$2 a month to spend on those dates.

In 1962 I graduated from Lanier High School and went on to receive my bachelor's at the University of Georgia and my master's at Central Michigan. For me college was a vehicle to gain a commission in the air force which I did entering as a Second Lieutenant. Don went into the army and Jerry became a marine. Both Don and I did two tours in Vietnam. I served in the 361st Tactical Electronics Warfare group as a navigator flying reconnaissance missions. I loved the air force where I spent the next 20 years, afterwards working in civil service as a weapons systems inventory manager.

When asked if I think the home is important, I almost can't believe the question. Where else would I have gone that would have taken care of me like the Masonic Home and masons had taken care of me? I go back to the original purpose and intent of the home and how important it is to save just one child. The home has saved over 2,000 children just like me who have gone on to raise families, serve their country, contribute to the community, and live fulfilling lives.

WE CALL HIM MR. CHRIS

The year is 1990 and Chris Babcock reports for his first day of work as a house parent. If The Masonic Home of Georgia is the heart of Georgia masonry, Mr. Chris, as he is affectionately known, is the heart of The Masonic Home.

Chris was born in Lebanon, Pennsylvania, and spent his formative years in Huntingdon Valley, a suburb of Philadelphia. Chris made his way to Georgia and graduated from Georgia College with a bachelor's degree in journalism. While in college, Chris was set up on a blind date with a young lady named Carol by a mutual friend, Lee. Both shy, not much talking happened on the first date. As a second date, Chris invited Carol to his fraternity's formal. Yada, yada, yada, Chris and Carol have been married 35 years, have two grown children (Addie & Thomas) and two grandchildren.

Getting back to the story, Lee once again came into the picture as she was a house parent at the Masonic Home and invited Chris and Carol to visit. Chris was working as a Production Manager at WGXA in Macon and was at a crossroads to either advance his career by relocating to a larger market or stay in Macon where Carol had roots. Then Superintendent Wallace Lee and then Director of Home Life, John Snipes, offered Chris a job on the spot. Chris and Carol decided on the drive home this probably wasn't the right move for them but agreed to pray and sleep on it. Without discussing it any further they turned to each other in the morning and said, "Let's do it!" Within two years, Chris was promoted from House Parent to Social Worker and then to Director of Home Life when John Snipes became Superintendent.

Why does Chris think children benefit from living at the Masonic Home? Chris shares that even though they will deny it, children love the structure and discipline of the Masonic Home that may have been lacking in their lives. The bottom line is children living at the Masonic Home feel safe and loved. Chris tells every child that living in the home is a chance for them to focus on themselves and what they want to be. Success to Chris is that every child is happy. They have a chance to enjoy their childhood, and they have a plan after high school whether that is college, military service, technical training, or employment. Chris's hope is they will live independent fulfilled lives.

What is Chris's favorite part of the Masonic Home. Hands down for Chris it is camp. Why is that? One it is just a beautiful place. Two as he has been telling people for years, at camp you will really get to know the children when their guard is down, and your guard is down.

What does Chris think of the masonic lodges and their members? Chris believes The Masonic Home really is the heart of Georgia masonry. Masons are 200% supportive of the children that live here and love them as much as he does. Year after year they plan major events for the children and still ask about children that have left 20 years ago.

Why has he stayed 34 years? Chris is a religious man who believes God put him where he needs to be until he wants him to be somewhere else. I have made a life here, Chris says. Addie and Thomas were born and grew up here. Their closest friends are former residents of the home. I can't tell you how many stray dogs we have raised but at one time we had five. I know I can still have an impact on the children that live here and if I can continue to do that I am fulfilled.



CALLING ALL MASONIC HOME AMBASSADORS

**WE WANT
YOU!**



Brethren,

Fraternal greetings from the Masonic Home of Georgia! Grand Master Ben Polston has reinstated the Masonic Home Ambassador program for 2023/2024! Each lodge is asked to choose their Masonic Home Ambassador no later than December 31st. Ambassadors will report to their respective District Trustee, and in turn to the Chairman of the Masonic Home Board of Trustees. Ambassadors chosen by December 3rd are invited to attend the Masonic Home Appreciation Day on December 3, 2023, 3:00 p.m. in the home's gymnasium. I encourage District Masters to get the word out to their respective lodges to identify their Ambassadors so we can orient them to the home and share our needs for the year. Are you ready to change lives starting with your own? Talk to your lodge leadership now about becoming an Ambassador!

More information and a schedule of events will be provided to the ambassadors at the December 3rd meeting and again in January for Ambassadors chosen later.

Fraternally and Sincerely,

Rodger Daniel
Masonic Home Chairman
Trustee, District 5



SCOTTISH RITE ORIENT
OF GEORGIA

Happy Holidays

THANK YOU, GEORGIA MASONS, FOR ALL YOU DO!

Georgia
RiteCare™
Helping Children Communicate
Scottish Rite Masons of Georgia



\$2.0M awarded since 2007



GEORGIA SCOTTISH RITE
**SCHOLARSHIP
PROGRAMS™**

\$2.4M awarded since 1980

Georgia RiteCare Clinics



The light within makes us love.

Sharing it with others makes us shine.



Children. Community. Charity.

The Scottish Rite Foundation appreciates
all donations. Donate at:

www.gascottishrite.org

Scottish Rite Foundation of Georgia, Inc.

P.O. Box 7927, Warner Robins, GA 31905 | 478-952-8707

Email: srfsec@gascottishrite.org



Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite
of Freemasonry, Foundation of Georgia
SOUTHERN JURISDICTION UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



GEORGIA SCOTTISH RITE
**SCHOLARSHIP
PROGRAMS™**

Investing in futures one student at a time

**The Foundation Scholarship Season
is just a month away.**

Our Mission

**Our mission is to assist the future leaders of the nation to obtain an education so they may
reinvest and pay it forward in their communities.**

The Scholarship process opens January 1st, 2024 and closes January 31st, 2024. You ask who is eligible? Applicants must have a minimum GPA of 3.0, must be a U.S. Citizen and a resident of Georgia.

Scholarships are awarded to full-time students enrolled in programs at an accredited Georgia school. **You do not have to be a Mason or related to a Mason to apply.** Full-time is a minimum of 12 semester hours or 18 quarter hours, and all hours must be FOR credit. *Applications are evaluated based on:* • Transcript data, • Extracurricular activities, • Community service, • Financial need

To Apply, go to Orient of Georgia's website: www.gascottishrite.org, in the top left corner select "Scholarship Application" or scroll down the Home Page to the "Georgia Scottish Rite Scholarship Programs" section. If you believe you meet the scholarship award requirements, complete the online scholarship application process.

Best Wishes,

Scottish Rite Foundation of Georgia, Inc.

Grand Commandery of Georgia Easter Trip

March 27 – 31, 2024



For more information and to **reserve your spot** with us, please contact:
“Whitey” White
101 Falcon Drive
Blairsville, GA 30512
whiteyinga@av8rstuff.com
478-997-1011

TRAVEL - Charter Bus:

The Charter Bus is equipped with a TV, DVD Player, and a Restroom. Juices, Soft Drinks, Water, and Light Snacks will be provided while on the bus.

TOURS:

All tours are optional, however the tour fees are **NON-REFUNDABLE**.

With the bus being chartered for the group, **INDIVIDUAL** transportation is the responsibility of the traveler if meeting in DC.

Times on the itinerary are **close estimates** and will be adjusted as necessary to accommodate our schedule

To avoid problems with reservation times, it is very **important** to be considerate, expeditious, and courteous with regard to boarding the bus for all departures.

The host hotel of the Grand Encampment is **(expected to be)** the Hilton (Crystal City) in Arlington, Virginia

Reservations for the hotel will be confirmed by Grand Encampment and **included** in the TOUR FEE.

Please note that all facilities are non-smoking.

PRICING Includes Transportation, Lodging, all TOUR fees, and these meals:

- Wed Night Dinner
- Thursday Night Dinner
- Friday Night Dinner
- Saturday Lunch
- Saturday Night Banquet
- Sunday Lunch

PRICE for **TWO** per room: \$2600 (\$1300 per person)

PRICE for **ONE** per room: \$1800 per person

RESERVE your spot now by contacting “WHITEY”

- \$500 Deposit due on **August 1st**
- \$500 Deposit due on **December 1st**
- Remainder due by **Feb 1st, 2024**

NO REFUNDS GIVEN
After December 2nd, 2023

TRIP ITINERARY

Wed, March 27th, 2024

7AM – Depart the Atlanta Masonic Center (AMC)

Noon – Arrive at Concord, NC for CONCORD MILLS Mall Tour
(Lunch on your own)

2PM – Depart for Petersburg, VA Holiday Inn Express.
Group Dinner that evening (included in Package price)

Thurs, March 28th

8AM: Depart hotel
(Breakfast provided by Hotel)

Noon – Arrive
Williamsburg, VA for Tour
(Admission included in
Package price) -
(Lunch is on your own)

3PM – Depart
Williamsburg, VA for DC

7PM – Arrive at Hotel in
Crystal City, VA (or as
determined by the
Grand Encampment

8PM – Depart for Dinner
(included in Package Price)

Fri, March 29th

8AM – Depart Hotel
(breakfast on your own)

9AM – Arrive US Capitol
Building for tour with (either)
Marjorie Green
or Andrew Clyde

11AM – Depart Capitol
Building

Noon – Arrive at the Scottish
Rite Building
(Admission included)
(Lunch on your own)

2PM – Depart
Scottish Rite Building

3PM – Arrive at the Museum of
the Bible
(Admission included)

5PM – Depart the
Museum of the Bible

6PM – Depart Hotel for dinner
(MEAL/Restaurant TBD, but
will be included in Package
price)

Sat, March 30th

8AM – Depart Hotel for
Arlington National Cemetery
(ANC)
(Breakfast on your own)

9AM – Arrive ANC for tour of
cemetery
If tour on your own, there is NO
FEE.

If you wish to have a guided
tour, the fee is \$20 (**not**
included in Package)

(TBD) – Wreath Laying
Ceremony for Grand
Commander + 3 Guests
(TBD) Depart ANC for Lunch
(included in Package price)

(TBD) Depart for George
Washington Masonic Memorial
(GWMM) Building Tour
(Included in Package price)

(TBD) Depart for Hotel and
Grand Encampment Reception
and Banquet (Details TBD, but
included in Package price)

Sun, March 31st

6:30AM – Depart for GWMM
(breakfast on your own)

7:30AM – Sir Knights will
march up
“SHOOTER’s HILL” for Easter
Sunrise Ceremony

Depart GWMM, arrive at hotel,
VERY QUICK change into
traveling clothes, then depart
DC for the AMC (recommend
packing most items on bus
PRIOR to trip to GWMM)

Lunch will be at the “DRIVER
SWAP” location and will be on
your own

Since all pricing is “estimated”
at this time, all efforts will be
made to ensure accuracy as we
get closer to the trip. Any
remaining funds will be donated
to the KTEF.

JOHN ELZIE KIERBOW, JR.

Born: November 17, 1934 – Manchester, Meriwether County, Georgia

Died: September 7, 2023 – Woodbury, Georgia

John was born in Manchester, Georgia, grew up in the Callaway Mill Village there and graduated from Manchester High School in 1950. While growing up, he was very active in the Boy Scouts and attained the rank of Eagle Scout with bronze and silver palms. He was selected to attend the National Boy Scout Jubilee in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. After high school he attended Georgia Southwestern College at Americus, Georgia, a two-year college.



He began working for the CSX Transportation railway system about 1953 which had a railway yard in Manchester and became a Locomotive Engineer. He finally retired after forty-three years of "driving the train" and teaching others to drive it. John was also a skilled craftsman in woodworking and blacksmithing and was a long-time member of the Artist Blacksmith Association of North America.

John came from a masonic family where both his grandfather and father were masons and at age twenty-one, he followed them. He was initiated in Stephens Lodge No. 586 in Manchester, Georgia on August 14, 1956, passed to the Degree of Fellowcraft on February 12, 1957, and raised as a Master Mason on April 6, 1957. His work schedule kept him from being very active in the lodge until he retired, but then he became very active. He affiliated as a dual member with Greenville Lodge No. 321 in Greenville, Georgia on February 10, 1997, serving as Worshipful Master in 2004. He affiliated with Woodbury Lodge No 713 as a dual member on January 15, 2004 and demitted on August 21, 2010. He served as Worshipful Master of Stephens lodge No. 586 in 2008.

He affiliated with James E. Miller Daylight Lodge No. 760 as a dual charter member of that lodge on October 28, 2008, and demitted on December 27, 2010. He later affiliated with Chipley Lodge No. 40 in Pine Mountain, Georgia on October 2, 2012 and Hamilton Lodge No.16 in Hamilton, Georgia on June 20, 2019. He was on the Masonic Education and Leadership Development (M.E.L.D.) Committee for two years. In October 2010, Most Worshipful Grand Master B. Palmer Mills appointed him Worshipful and Reverend Grand Chaplain of Grand Lodge. He received the Grand Lodge Distinguished Service Award from Grand Master Mills in October, 2011. During his year as Grand Chaplain, Brother John was the originator of the phrase "I love you Brother, and there ain't nothing you can do about it". He received his Fifty-year award from Stephens Lodge No. 586 on March 2, 2007.

He joined Hiram Warner Hill Royal Arch Chapter No. 8 in Greenville, Georgia on September 9, 2003, and served as High Priest in 2004. Hiram Warner Hill Chapter No. 8 consolidated with Newnan Chapter No. 34 on October 7, 2008. He joined Fort Benning Council No. 73 and St. Aldemar Commandery No. 3, both in Columbus, Georgia, on November 15, 2003. He served as Illustrious Master of Fort Benning Council No. 73 in 2009. He was not a member of the council or commandery at the time of his death.

He became a member of the Scottish Rite of Freemasonry on July 19, 1980 in the Valley of Columbus, Georgia. He was invested with the Rank and Decoration of Knight Commander of the Court of Honour on November 5, 2005. He served as Preceptor or Commander of the Council of Kadosh in Columbus in 2008.

John was invited to membership in Muscogee Conclave, Red Cross of Constantine and Chattahoochee Valley York Rite College No. 166. He spent sixty-six years in Freemasonry and has earned his rest.

He is survived by his wife Kitha, whom he married in 1954, three sons, Johnny, Jerry and Scott, six grandchildren and nine great grandchildren. He was a devoted member of Jones Chapel Church in Woodbury, Georgia where he lived and belonged since the middle 1950s. and he will be buried at the church cemetery. All three sons followed their father and joined Stephens Lodge No. 586 in Manchester.

Joe E. Turner

Lessons I Learned from My Father About Freemasonry



COMMENTARY

By Worshipful Brother L. O. Cox, Jr.
Panthersville Masonic Lodge #543

I have read the articles on “Laudable Pursuit” by WB Hennecken and “Perspective” by WB Davis and want to provide some additional perspective to reinforce the points brought out by WB Hennecken.

I was just approaching my teen years when my father became a Mason. He was the first mason in our family. He became a changed man and all for the better. It also changed my life for the better because my father was for once a happy man. A. C. Garrett Masonic Lodge #1216 AF&AM in Dallas, Texas had a good library, and I got to read a lot of books about masonry and stories about masons, especially the Civil War stories.

I learned that masonry takes a good man and leading him to the altar encourages him by the Bible on it, to be a better man and citizen. It certainly did that for my father. I saw it in effect.

I learned from Dad that a man should not be able to reach in his pocket and pay for his entrance into masonry like it was a trip to the movies. As best as I can determine, my father, an air conditioning, heating/refrigeration mechanic, earned about \$5,000 a year and the fees for his entrance to Masonry was \$25 per degree. That fee was a lot of money in the middle 40s. He had to save over time to avoid impacting his family obligations.

I learned masons were to take an active part in what was going on in the schools. He went to school meetings. He also voted.

I learned that when someone in the community had a misfortune, the lodge members took up a collection and gave it to them along with whatever other assistance was needed. Widows were looked after.

I watched my father come in on lodge nights and bathe, scrubbing the embedded grease from his hands with Lava soap, then put on his one suit and fedora and head for lodge. He came home talking about how much fun the degree work was and how the degree team traveled to Oklahoma City one time. It was great. He was respected.

I still remember one night after I turned 14, he came home and asked me if I knew what masonry did for a man. I told him. He said that was right and his lodge sponsored an organization that tried to do the same for young men. Would I be interested? I said yes, but I had one question. Was I going to have to ask for a petition or was he just going to give me one? He grinned and reached into his coat pocket and pulled out a petition for DeMolay.

In DeMolay, I got to know a bunch of masons through our DeMolay Chapter working with them to erect a new lodge building. They were all great role models for me. When I graduated from high school, one of them introduced me to a great job opportunity that helped finance a year in college. The Knights Templar gave me a scholarship loan my senior year that helped make it a memorable year.

Now why is any of this important enough to read? Because in the 40s and 50s, masonry and appendant bodies spread like wildfire with that era being our largest membership growth. With the dues and fees at that level and the large number of members, there was lots of money in the till and no need to increase them after the buildings were erected. It was at that time in our history, I believe masonry and appendant bodies made the mistakes that brings us to our present condition.

Interestingly, our fraternity could not have continued to grow at the rate it had been. There was one town in the North that almost everyone was a member of one of our fraternities. Membership in our fraternity was a step up in society, respectability, and a model of civic responsibility crossing church boundaries. But the 60s brought about a major cultural change: Formal and formality changed to casual and totally informal. Plus a mistrust of all institutions. TV and the Viet Nam war nationalized the public's culture so both civic and fraternal organizations were no longer desirable in high density cities. In any event, the membership began its decline and has continued to this day.

The mistake? Instead of maintaining our high standards of entrance and raising the cost of membership with the inflation, we began to hunt for new members and were afraid to raise the dues and fees since it would scare off potential members and increase the loss of present members. Consider the \$25 fee in 1945 through 1962 and the \$5,000 salary of a blue-collar worker against current values. That same blue-collar worker makes over \$60,000 now. That is over 10 times higher and suggests an entrance fee of \$250 per degree for present times.

would not be inappropriate. And we now have old buildings, costly to repair, and few members to pay the operating costs.

We forgot what my father knew so long ago. Masonry can now be obtained with little more than the cost of a movie and dinner. We do not have the respect of the leaders of our communities anymore because our members are not involved with what is important to the community and have no influence in matters of public concern, especially the schools. Too many lodges hold fund raisers to pay the bills, not contribute to charity. That to me is asking for charity from the community. We are an embarrassment and burden on the community when we do that.

Opening and closing the lodge is not a reason to attend a meeting, nor does it attract new members. Men in those times like George Washington were

known in the community and looked to with respect because they were an active part of it. General McArthur used masonry as the model for rebuilding Japan. Masonry lost a golden opportunity to take the lead in the Pandemic. We did nothing. Unless the local lodges can be helped back to what is important in masonry, we will continue to lose members and lodges.

When I took a course in psychology at Georgia Tech, I learned my father was right about what was important in masonry. The higher the standards and cost to get into an organization, the more people will want to join, but only if it does something in the community to gain respect. Two questions that need to be answered are: How do we transition to the new (old) concepts of what makes a mason respected in our communities, and do we have any leaders who know what needs to be done and courageous and capable enough to lead with confidence in these uncertain times. I don't want to consider a third question: Will we continue what we are doing to no avail?

I think a meeting is needed, dedicated solely to looking at the principles that made us an enduring model of importance in the community, and deciding on a very difficult path to the future if we are to have one. I think it truly would be a laudable pursuit. Just so you understand, I believe masonry is desperately needed as the model standing once more for the same principles that our Founding Fathers fought and died for. Masonic men and principles made this country great in the development of the schools and churches and the form of government. Our country and the world today needs masonry and good masons who will help bring our country back to the world power it once was.

Follow Me

By Worshipful Brother Ross Laver
Flint Hill Lodge No. 371



COMMENTARY

Perhaps the most important phrase in any of the Three degrees is uttered by the Junior Steward at the end of each. In fact, it is the only thing the Junior Steward says during the degrees. Curiously, it is the Junior Steward who is at the end of the line as the candidate is perambulated around the Lodge. Yet, he utters the words, “FOLLOW ME” and then takes the lead, leading the candidates back to the preparation room.

Are those words, follow me, a simple direction from the person leading the procession? Or is it the beginning of a path through Freemasonry. Perhaps it is an invitation to participate and learn and someday join the line of officers and eventually lead the lodge from the seat in the East.

Does the phrase “follow me” have religious significance? Consider the phrase from Psalm 23. “Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.”

In this case, the phrase might be interpreted to mean “pursue me” or “drive me”. And so we find the phrase, Goodness and Mercy will “drive me” along that level of time to that undiscovered country from whose bourn no traveler returns.

Brothers of the Christian faith may relate to Mathew 4:19 “And he saith unto them, follow me, and I will make you fishers of men”. This phrase says that by following, you will become a leader.

The followers of Islam will find the phrase in the Quran 3:31. “Say O Prophet: If you love God, Follow Me, God will love you and forgive you for your sins...” Following will lead to a good life.

Assuming that the words of the Junior Steward are an invitation to join him on the journey of Freemasonry the question might be “what is the significance of a successive line of officers in a Lodge”? The answer might be one word, “Education.”

Each office has a job description and a list of responsibilities.
Each office is a level of education as is the case with the three degrees.

Regardless of the reason we join Freemasonry, “education” is an unavoidable result.

If you are the Junior Steward at the end of the procession, think carefully about the words you will say to the candidates at the end of the conferral of the degree. The words are significant and important. Take a deep breath and say loudly those very important words, “FOLLOW ME”!



The Traitor Returns to Georgia

As the world finally returns to normal after a global pandemic, the Valley of Atlanta is proud to announce the reemergence of the long-standing play, "The Traitor". Originally brought to Georgia by Illustrious Brother Bill Marsh 33° in 1981, the play has been depicted an impressive fifty-three times until Covid forced it, as most public events, to a halt. After a long and devoted tenure as Director, Illustrious Brother Marsh has stepped down, retaining his Director Emeritus status, paving the way for the next generation's cast and direction. We are both grateful for his service and dedicated to maintaining the tradition of excellence which he instilled.

Always performed in full revolutionary costume, The Traitor tells the tale of the Masonic trial of Benedict Arnold, America's most famous turncoat, who betrayed West Point to the British at the height of the Revolutionary War. Arnold takes his place among such notable Brethren as George Washington, the Marquis de Lafayette, Nathaniel Greene, Alexander Hamilton, and a host of other Revolutionary War heroes in a Lodge in Richmond, Virginia. Complete with notable speeches, daring action, and true homage to the patriotism that all Masons should exhibit, The Traitor is an excellent opportunity to turn back time and witness the exemplary brotherhood of the men who helped shape our nation.

The Valley of Atlanta is honored to produce the next generation of this play and we are currently filling our cast and support positions. With some time dedicated to perfect the play during our rehearsals this summer, we expect to be able to take the performance on the road by November of 2023. If you are interested in joining the cast and crew, either as an actor or member of the supporting cast, please contact WB Rusty Newport via the information below.

If you would like to book your place on our performance calendar at your Lodge's family night, fundraiser, Valley meeting, or other Masonic public event, please contact us to schedule a performance through the end of 2024. The cast and crew wish to express our most heartfelt thanks for all of the support of this project and look forward to performing the play in your area soon.

B. Rusty Newport

(770) 833-7297

RNewport33@gmail.com



Bryan Lodge #303 Richmond Hill Ga. Hits the Links



Recently the members, family and friends of Bryan Lodge #303 hit the links at Henderson Golf Club for a round of golf, fellowship, fun and laughs.

Divided into teams of two the Worshipful Master, Drew Pierce, kicked off the match on the first tee. Lining up his shot with great care and precision he promptly hammered his shot onto the adjacent 6th fairway setting the tone for the rest of the players to follow. Next up guest player Shawn Crawford sent a beautiful shot straight down the middle of the fairway. That, however, would prove to be one of the better shots of the day.

Brother Gerard Leo, accompanied by his lovely wife Melissa opened a newly purchased bag of golf balls to begin his round and followed Worshipful Brother Drew onto the 6th fairway with his shot.

Within half an hour the rest of the players followed the lead group with Worshipful Brother Steve McKain and guest player Roy Weaver bringing up the rear.

As the match progressed throughout the course the competition grew stiff. Brother Kevin Hodges tried to take an early lead but fell victim to the front nines more challenging holes.

Brother Greg Spell decided to send his shots into the more shaded

wooded areas of the fairways. Saying, "It's so much cooler in the woods." His playing partner and son Joseph put not only his driving skills but his game to the test while playing alongside his father.

Ahead of them Brother Gerard with his wife Melissa began to take stock of their golf ball inventory. Starting out with 24 golf balls Brother Gerard informed Melissa, "We have plenty." He then proceeded to remove his bent 5 iron from the bag, (bent from a previous match) and with a smooth swing sent yet another ball deep into a swamp. Smiling as only a loving wife can, Melissa said, "Geez, you guys stink," which brought both laughter and agreement from the players.

Making the turn to the back nine Worshipful Brother Steve and his playing partner Roy were tied. Stopping at the clubhouse the two went in to grab a hot dog. Roy, commenting on how tasty the dogs were for the next two holes, gave Worshipful Brother Steve a distraction he needed and decided that his moment had come to mount a charge and take the lead while Roy savored his tasty hot dog.

While this was going on The Worshipful Master and his cousin Shawn were exploring the dark reaches of the course in search of their golf balls. Shawn commenting, "Hey, Greg is right. It is cooler in the woods."

Meanwhile Brother Kevin was trying to pull his game together. Pulling his fairway wood out of the bag with a grip so worn it could use a haircut he fired off a shot, landing right on the green for a chance to make birdie. But he, like so many players of the most humbling of games, three putted for a double bogey.

As Brother Greg and his son were cooling off in the woods Worshipful Brother Steve mounted his charge to take the lead. Teeing up on the 14th tee box, adjusting his stance and taking careful aim he slammed his drive straight down the fairway where it took an unexpected left turn hit the water hazard, skipped across the water like a flat rock and went straight into a twelve inch drain pipe with a resounding crack, never to be seen again. "Hole in one!" came a yell from behind.

Up ahead Brother Gerard had run out of golf balls. Coming to his aid, The Worshipful Master gave Brother Gerard enough to finish the game.

As the match slowly came to an end the weary players made their way to the clubhouse. Tired, hot and sweaty everyone had a broad smile on their faces that would stay there for the remainder of the day. A great time was had by all and plans were made for the next outing. Hearing the words of Melissa Gerard, "Geez, you guys stink." brought more smiles, laughter and bonding as all the players realized there are more important things in life than a score card. Fellowship.

Carter Hill Lodge Raises Two Master Masons



Carter Hill Lodge would like to congratulate their two new Master Masons Joe Landreau and Shane Jones.

Flowery Branch Takes the Children to the Lake



The Children at the Masonic Home Spent the day at the Lake Lanier Islands Water Park. The event marked the 9th annual visit hosted by Flowery Branch Lodge No. 212.

Cochran Lodge Hosts "Hammer Time"



Once the build is finished, the brothers present a display and demonstration to show the kids about a related topic, such as different kinds of hammers or bird houses. At the end of the event, we take a group photo with the kids, which is then posted on our Lodge's social media page.

This program provides the following excellent benefits –The kids learn how to build things with their hands and figure out problems with their parents. They also receive tools that they've learned how to use and can keep for many years. The parents get to coach their kids and spend valuable time with them in a productive setting. Cochran Lodge benefits from exposure in the community while helping others.

Hammer Time is a new program this year at Cochran Lodge #217. For this program, kids are invited to attend build-it events every two months on scheduled Saturday mornings.

For each event, the kids must register, pay a minimal participation fee (\$10), and bring a parent who participates with their child in the event. At each event, the kids receive their kit, along with a tool needed to complete the build, both of which they get to keep. Working in our Lodge dining room, so far the kids have built the following:

In February, they built wooden toolboxes, and each received a hammer. By building toolboxes first, the kids have a place to

keep the tools they collect. In April, they built bird houses, and each received a reversible screwdriver. In June, they built step stools, and each received a wood rasp. In August, they will be building hat racks for wall mount and will receive a tape measure.

At each event, after kicking off with a safety talk, the Hammer Time leader shows the kids how to assemble their kits. While the kids and their parents work to build the kit, brothers of the Lodge assist with assembly issues as required.

Cornelia Masonic Lodge #92 Presents Scholarships



Cornelia Masonic Lodge #92 F&AM honored the three recipients of the David

Hobson Memorial Scholarship. Each high school graduate will receive \$1000.00 to be used for tuition and or books while attending the college that they have chosen. The recipients are Katelyn Mills who will be attending the University of North Georgia pursuing a degree in Veterinary Medicine. Katelyn's parents are Steven Mills and Becky Thomason; Emma Sheridan who will be attending North Georgia Technical College to complete the needed core courses to further her pursuit of a degree in Physical Therapy. Emma's parents are Michael Edwards and Chris Edwards; Joanna Kimbrel who will be attending Lanier Technical College in a pursuit of a degree as a Radiology Technician. Joanna's parents are Jenny Blalock and Robert Kimbrell. Pictured with the recipients is Worshipful Brother Clarence Lewallen, Master of Cornelia Lodge #92 F&AM.

Brother Bradley Sullens Becomes MELD Director for 9C



Worshipful Brother Wil Moore, MELD State Director, presented Brother Bradley Sullens certificates of completion of courses in Masonic Education Leadership Development (MELD). WB Moore officially announced that Brother Sullens will be the MELD Director for District 9C. Brother Sullens will receive his apron in 2024 after his term as Worshipful Master of Lula Masonic Lodge # 352 F&AM is complete. Brother Sullens is also Senior Warden of Cornelia Lodge #92 F&AM.

**Masonic History Was Made at
Generous Warren Masonic
Lodge #20**



On August 5th 2023, history was made in Monroe, Georgia. Generous Warren Masonic Lodge #20 celebrated 200 years of Masonic Service to their community with the help of Rite Worshipful Grand Master Michael Alan Kessler accompanied by other Grand Lodge Officers with the rededicating of the Lodge and the installation of a new cornerstone. In attendance to witness the event that was opened to the public were friends and family along with other Masonic dignitaries from neighboring districts including J. W. McCannon, Jr. DDGM-Leader and B.L. Johnson-District Master from the 8th Masonic District; Joe McIlvanie-DDGM from the 9th Masonic District and many other distinguished guests.

After the luncheon Worshipful Master Eric R. Hegwood directed the ceremony to be opened with a prayer by Lodge Senior Decon, Clint R. Sledge. The Pledge of Allegiance to our flag followed by a brief history of Generous Warren Lodge and a short talk on the purpose of the cornerstone by WM Hegwood was made before turning the ceremony over to the Grand Lodge Cornerstone Committee.

The Grand Lodge Officers went right to work. Under the direction of the Grand Master the other Grand Officers insured that the

new cornerstone was square, plumb, and level and upon their report were then instructed to consecrate the cornerstone with oil, wine, and corn, to symbolize prosperity, health, and peace. These are considered a Freemason's "wages" or "wages of nourishment". Upon completion the Grand Master then struck the granite with his gavel to ceremoniously "set" the stone.

An interesting comment by Rite Worshipful Grand Master Kessler was that the cups used to consecrate the stone were donated by PGM George M. Napier (1911-1912) who was also the Worshipful Master of Generous Warren Lodge (1893-1901). PGM Napier was also the Attorney General for the State of Georgia (1921-1932).

The ceremony then concluded with the Rite Worshipful Grand Master giving public Grand Honors which are reserved for such events. It was truly an honor to have such a wonderful turnout to witness this historic Masonic event surrounded by such esteemed bother Masons, both in white aprons and the purple and gold of the Grand Lodge Officers.

After the Cornerstone Ceremony, a time capsule that was placed behind the old broken marble plaque was opened by Rite Worshipful Grand Master Kessler with the assistance of Worshipful Master Eric Hegwood, which contained certain "papers" concerning the Lodge and the Roberta Order of the Eastern Star & Royal Arch Chapters that used the Lodge hall at the time.

**Worth Lodge Celebrates
Quarterly Birthdays for the
Children's Home**



Brother Chris Booth, JW of Worth Lodge #194 and the 2nd District Children's Home Ambassador started a program years ago where we visit the home quarterly and celebrate the birthdays of the children and staff that fall in that quarter.

This past quarter they celebrated six children's and six staff members' birthdays. The Lodge has found that it is a good way to boost morale in new and older Masons. These events allow members and their families to interact and get to know these young outstanding citizens. Brother Booth recommends that if your Lodge needs a fresh boost of motivation that you visit the Children's Home. Worth Lodge returned to The Children's Home on November 11th for their 4th Quarter Birthday Party.

**Third District Holds School of
Instruction**



The Third Masonic District recently held a school of instruction which was well attended and hosted by Millwood Lodge #198. The School of Instruction was led by Worshipful Brother Steven Ballard and a select team.

Woodman of the World Present Lodge with Flags



Woodmen of the World presented Sincerity Lodge #430 with new United States and Georgia Presentation flags for display in the Lodge.

Yaarab Hosts State Master Councilor and Grand Worthy Advisor



On Saturday, August 19th, the DeMolay Unit of Yaarab Shrine had the honor of hosting the 2023 State Master Councilor/Grand Worthy Advisor Reception, a joint event between the Associated DeMolay Chapters of Georgia and the Georgia Grand Assembly of the International Order of the Rainbow for Girls.

Held in the main ballroom of Yaarab Shrine Center, this formal affair encouraged active youth and supporters of all ages to join Grand Worthy Advisor Natalie Fowler and State Master Councilor Raistlin Blanchard in celebrating the reception of Georgia Rainbow and Georgia DeMolay's newly installed officers. Themed as a "Gold Gala", the goldtone-on-monochrome décor chosen by the active youth served to create a charming setting for the event.

Attendees were encouraged to take commemorative photos against a provided thematic backdrop.

After warm greetings and welcoming remarks from both the State Master Councilor and Grand Worthy Advisor, attendees were treated to a delicious meal of gyros, during which members of the sibling organizations intermingled and enjoyed wholesome fellowship. The evening culminated in a delightful social dance, which the active youth enjoyed wholeheartedly.

The Nobles of the DeMolay Unit extend our congratulations to the officers of both organizations, and a special thanks to all of the hard-working supporters of our active youth who helped make this event a success.

Chamblee-Sardis Donates to CHOA



The brothers of Chamblee-Sardis Masonic Lodge donated money to purchase a wagon for use at the Scottish Rite Children's Hospital. The wagons are designed to be a treat and offer a fun ride for pediatric patients at the facility. Pictured here (L-R) are Roger Leggett, who makes the wagons; WB Tom McCrary of Chamblee-Sardis #444; and state Sen. Mike Duggan. Brother Leggett has made almost 1,400 wagons.

Chamblee-Sardis Hosts First Responders



Hugely successful inaugural First Responders Dinner at Chamblee-Sardis Masonic Lodge on June 24. DeKalb County fire personnel, along with officers from Brookhaven and Chamblee, enjoyed barbecue and all the trimmings.

Walnut Grove Hosts Community Award



Walnut Grove 703 hosted their first Community Builder Award. Forty-Two people, from the local community were present to congratulate the first recipient Cindy Little who is the director of the FISH which stands for "Faith And Serving Humanity."

Seven Hills DL and Oostanaula Host First Responders



Oostanaula #113 and Seven Hills DL #751 hosted a breakfast to celebrate the First Responders of Rome & Floyd County. Meals were served at the Lodge and delivered to those who were unable to come and eat.

John W. Akin Lodge Hosts Community Event



In the southwestern part of Bartow County is the city of Taylorsville, a small town with a mayor, city council, a Post Office and a Masonic Lodge. While small, it is a close-knit community where everyone knows everybody. It is in this small-town atmosphere that a masonic lodge plays an important part in the town. Chartered in 1908, John W. Akin Lodge has been an important part of rural Bartow County for 115 years and has provided good men to serve this community and that legacy continues today. The lodge now meets in the old Farmer Supply Building downtown and it has become the center of community activity for many years.

On August 12th the lodge held a free breakfast to thank the community for all their support for their many fundraisers, the mayor, Mitchell Bagley and city councilman Eddie Newman, whom is a member of the lodge, were in attendance. The Brethren started cooking about 6 am and served pancakes and sausage free to the public from 8 until 11 am, with a steady stream of residents who enjoyed the food and the fellowship, the beauty of a small town is they knew everyone that came in.

The following weekend the city hosted a Car Show with 70 classic automobiles. The lodge sold hot dogs, raising \$700 that they donated to the city of Taylorsville for their Christmas fund to provide

Christmas gifts to about 100 needy children in the area.

Halloween is a very special event; the whole downtown is closed

off for a city activity. The lodge fires up their BBQ pit so children can roast hot dogs over the fire, they give away about 600 hot dogs and 500 bags of popcorn plus candy making for a safe and memorable night for all involved.

Every year before the Super Bowl they spend a couple of days cooking Brunswick stew. They presale all the stew and sell about 130 gallons that is picked up at the lodge within hours of cooking and putting it in gallon jugs. Another big fund raiser is the ½ BBQ chicken dinner sale every year, in which they will sell on average 450 dinners.

The fund raisers supply the funds for all the giveaways they do plus they give at least one perpetual membership away every year to a deserving Brother.

In a small town the Masons can't support the fund raisers they do every year, it is the citizens who buy the stew and the BBQ and any other events they hold. The Lodge is a big part of the community, and the community is a big supporter of the lodge. This is a classic example of what our Grand Master wants us to do with-in our communities, to be the example of Masonry for all to see.

Well done John W. Akin Lodge.

A Small Lodge Doing Big Things

considered, and they thought they would try a golf tournament. Slowly the golf tournament grew, local businesses wanted to help and made donations to support the tournament. The due diligence

You do not have to be a big lodge to make a difference in the community in which you live. A great example is Beulah Lodge No. 698 in the rural un-incorporated community

of Beulah with the mailing address of Rockmart, you can find it with GPS but you don't just happen upon the lodge. The lodge building is an old schoolhouse that sits off the road among the trees, it has a wonderful ambience and the feeling of old-time Masonry. But what makes Beulah special is the dedicated and hardworking Masons that call Beulah home.

On Tuesday night August 8th they held their annual family night and a presentation night for the local schools in their area. Principles and school administrators were the guest of honor as Beulah Lodge presented checks to four schools totaling \$16,000 for their backpack programs. This year's recipients are from Dallas Elementary, Ragsdale Elementary, Poole Elementary and Scoggins Middle School. The lodge put on quiet a feast and the dining room was full of families and Masons and Teachers all enjoying the generosity of the good Brothers of Beulah Lodge.

This all started more than ten years ago when Brother Jacob Griffith brought before the lodge the needy children of the several schools that when they left school on Friday many got very little to eat until returning to school on Monday. Several of the local schools participate in the backpack program which gives needy children a bag of food to take home so that they will have something to eat over the weekend. The lodge wanted to help, so they past the hat for the first couple of years and donated what little money they raised. But they wanted to do more, many ideas were

and hard work have paid off and this year the lodge was able to split \$16,000 between the four schools. Amazing!

Beulah Lodge No. 698 is a perfect example of what our Grand Master wants our lodges to be in their communities. In the charge at closing there is a line that exhorts us to take the principles of Freemasonry out of our lodge and into the world, “ these generous principles are to extend further: Every human being has a claim upon your kind offices. Do good unto all.”



Yonah Lodge Hosts Past Master's Night



Yonah Lodge recently hosted a Past Master's night and boasted over twenty Past Masters in attendance.

Yonah Lodge Names Master Mason of the Year



Yonah Lodge's Secretary, Worshipful Brother Gary Dorman received his award for Mason of the year for Yonah Lodge #382.

Richard T. Turner Celebrates Brother



Richard T Turner Lodge No. 116 hosted a 100th Birthday Celebration for James Allen Flanders, born 8/10/1923. Brother Flanders is a Past Master of our Lodge, raised in 1955, and was Master of the Lodge in 1965. He is a 68 year Mason, the eldest Past Master in our Lodge. Bro. Flanders raised our Past Grand Master Bro Eli Stafford.

Sincerity No. 430 Makes Presentations to New Master Masons



WM Bruce Stanford, Sincerity Lodge #430, presents certificates and Bibles to four new Master Masons Gage Colin Sharp, WM Bruce Stanford, Willis Kane Butler, Justin Taylor Godwin, Walter Lee Dorough Jr.

District 4A Hosts PGM Kessler

The Grand Master of Masons in Georgia, MWB Michael Kessler, made an official visit to District

4A. The visit was held at Midland Lodge #144. The evening started with a delicious meal served by the Brethren of Midland Lodge #144. Afterwards, Brethren, ladies, and guests proceeded to the Lodge Room. The Grand Master was received and given public grand honors. Since this was a visit to District 4A, the Worshipful Masters of the six Lodges in the sub-district filled the chairs. WB Roger Buterbaugh, DDGM, 4A, introduced each Worshipful Master, who informed the Grand Master what their Lodge has done this year and what their plans are for the rest of the year. The Grand Master presented 50-year aprons and certificates to WB Phil Harris of Rose Hill Lodge #484 and WB Joseph Powell II of Fort Benning Lodge #579, assisted by the DDGM. The Brethren and guests then had the opportunity to ask the Grand Master any question they wished. Some of the questions were quite challenging but the Grand Master answered them all with aplomb. Everyone enjoyed his remarks. District 4A is honored to have welcomed the Grand Master to Columbus.



Lavonia Lodge Makes Presentation to the Children's Home



Lavonia Lodge No. 241, F&AM, held a special Open Meeting and

Masonic Home Fundraiser on the evening of Tuesday, September 26, 2023.

The event featured a steak dinner, same night raffle, and silent auction. At the end of the evening, the Masonic Home Ambassador for Lavonia Lodge No. 241, F&AM, Bro. W. Ed Perkins, presented a check to Masonic Home Executive Director Jeff Cohen with a check for \$2,325 that was raised at that evening's event.

They hope to see other Lodges sponsor events like these and help support our children at the Masonic Home of Georgia.

Valley of Columbus Celebrates Centennial



The Valley of Columbus, Scottish Rite celebrated its 100th anniversary on September 23, 2023. Though chartered on October 16, 1923, the Valley celebrated its Centennial three weeks early to accommodate the schedules of the VIP's in attendance.

The morning started off with the Centennial Celebration and re-dedication of the Columbus Scottish Rite Center. Mayor Skip Henderson, Mayor of Columbus, read a proclamation declaring September 23, 2023 the "Valley of Columbus Centennial Day". This was followed by the reading of a proclamation from the Georgia House of Representatives commemorating the Valley on its anniversary. Next, two special guests gave remarks.

Illustrious Brother James Cole, 33°, Sovereign Grand Commander of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, Southern Jurisdiction presented remarks on behalf of the Supreme Council. Next Illustrious Brother Ted Collins, 33°, Sovereign Grand Inspector General in Georgia and Past Grand Master of Masons in Georgia, presented remarks on behalf of all Georgia Scottish Rite Masons. MWB Michael Kessler, Grand Master of Masons in Georgia, and several Grand Officers dedicated the Centennial Monument in front of the Scottish Rite Center with oil, corn, and wine. After the Grand Master's remarks, the ceremony ended and everyone retired into the dining room for lunch.

Saturday evening the Valley of Columbus hosted a Masquerade Ball, fashioned after the masquerade balls of the Roaring 20's. Dress was tux and formal wear, and everyone had a mask. After dinner everyone enjoyed an evening of dancing and fellowship. A good time was had by all.

Alpine Lodge Awards Masonic Scouting Honor



The Grand Lodge of Georgia F&AM Eagle Scout Award was presented by DDGM Hollis Siffles, Jr. to Eagle Scout Aiden Rivera at Alpine Lodge #211. The event was attended by many Lodge members, Scout leaders and personnel, friends and family. A meal was served by the Lodge.

Worthy Brother Gets Surprise Visit from Grand Master



At a regular meeting of Riverdale Lodge #709 Grand Master of Masons in Georgia Most Worshipful Bro Michael Kessler and his entourage of Grand Lodge officers paid an unannounced visit to our Lodge. The purpose of this visit was to present a replacement of a "Medal of Meritorious Service" to WB Carlton Ethridge for his dedication to the Masonic Home, which was originally issued to him in 2006, and was lost in a fire when his house burned down several months ago. It was a heart warming gesture and the Lodge appreciated it.

Accompanying the Grand Master was the Grand Secretary, Van S "Mac" McGee, Grand Treasurer, Paul Herschel Carter, and Grand Marshall, Jeffery Lee Smith. We thank them for their efforts to support the Grand Master and Georgia Masonry.

Coweta Lodge Awards Masonic Scouting Honor



The Award was presented by DDGM Russ Sanders

VETERANS CORNER

By Worshipful Brother Rick Conn

Brothers, Your Veterans Corner is back to serve you in any way that we can. I will be posting information about how your Grand Lodge Veterans Committee or the Veterans Administration can help you in your needs.

The Department of Veterans Affairs launched a groundbreaking national advertising campaign to encourage Veterans to sign up for the VA health care and benefits you have earned.

The new \$5+ million campaign, “What You Earned,” focuses on educating Veterans and their families about some of the most tangible, cost-saving benefits of using VA – including:

- 1] Low-cost or no-cost health care,
- 2] Debt-free education,
- 3] \$0 down payments on home loans,
- 4] no-cost memorial services and burials, and much more.

The campaign uses actual cost comparisons to demonstrate Veterans’ savings with VA vs. without VA, with the goal of encouraging Veterans who are not enrolled in VA health care or receiving VA benefits to apply for the first time.

This first-of-its-kind campaign – which will run across television, print, radio, digital media, billboards, public transit, and social media – is the next phase of VA’s aggressive efforts to bring new Veterans to VA. While last year’s campaign resulted in record numbers of Veterans applying for VA benefits, many of our nation’s heroes are still not connected with VA. The new campaign aims to reach these Veterans by providing clear, compelling reasons for them to sign up for what you have earned.

“All too often, Veterans don’t know about the full scope of the health care and benefits they’ve earned through their service to our nation,” said VA Secretary Denis McDonough. “The goal of this campaign is to change that. We want to show Veterans and their families – in the most

tangible terms possible – how VA can help them afford to stay healthy, go to school, get a job, buy a home, and more.”

“Our goal is to bring as many Veterans as possible to VA, because study after study shows that Veterans who use VA do better,” said Deputy Secretary Tanya Bradsher. “But we need to give Veterans a clear and compelling reason to sign up, and that’s what this campaign is all about: showing Veterans that they can save thousands of dollars by using their earned VA health care, home loans, GI Bill benefits, memorial services, and more.”

This new advertising campaign is a part of the largest outreach effort in VA history, which VA launched after President Biden signed the PACT Act into law as a part of his Unity Agenda for the nation. Thus far, the effort has resulted in an all-time record number of Veteran benefits applications in 2023; a 25% increase in health care enrollments year-over-year; an 80% awareness among Veterans of the PACT Act; and more. Key aspects of the effort to date include:

- Media coverage: During fiscal year 2023, VA generated 395,000+ news articles and 137,000+ broadcast pieces – a 21% increase year-over-year – with the goal of informing Veterans about the care and benefits they’ve earned.
- Events: VA has hosted more than 2,500 PACT Act-related events for Veterans across all 50 states, Washington DC, Puerto Rico, and Guam.
- Advertising: VA has executed a MarCom award-winning PACT Act advertising campaign across streaming, print, radio, podcasts, signage, sports sponsorships, digital advertising, and more. The \$10+ million campaign has led millions of visitors to VA.gov/PACT and generated \$13 million in donated media through public service announcements.

- Direct Veteran outreach: VA has sent hundreds of millions of PACT Act-related emails and letters to Veterans to encourage them to apply. In September, VA also executed its first-ever text marketing campaign to encourage eligible Veterans to enroll in health care before the [September 30 PACT Act deadline](#), resulting in a 179% increase in year-to-date health care enrollments for that specific cohort of Veterans.
- Collaborations: VA has worked with the White House, Congress, Veterans Service Organizations, influencers ([Jon Stewart](#)), sports teams ([Tampa Bay Rays](#)), and major corporations (CVS and USAA) to spread the word about the PACT Act.
- VA.gov/PACT: Within one hour of the Senate passage of the PACT Act, VA launched [VA.gov/PACT](#) – a one-stop-shop for Veterans and survivors to learn about and apply for PACT Act-related care and benefits. Since then, the website has garnered more than 22 million page views.
- Print, digital, and video resources: VA has developed a library of [videos, flyers, and information](#) – in more than 10 languages – to help Veterans understand what this new law means for them.

In addition to focusing on Veterans who are newly eligible for VA care and benefits under the PACT Act, the campaign is also designed to reach historically under-served Veterans – including women Veterans, Black Veterans, Hispanic Veterans, younger Veterans, and Veterans living in rural areas. The campaign will feature [ads in both English and Spanish](#).

Moving forward, VA will continue to aggressively reach out to Veterans to encourage them to come to VA. VA encourages all Veterans, family members, caregivers, and survivors to [learn more about VA](#) and apply for their world-class [health care](#) and [earned benefits](#) today. I encourage all who have not filed to start the process now. Those that do not know if they are eligible need to file to find out if they qualify for benefits under this new

program. Brothers, remember what I always say, “Veterans are not looking for a hand out, but they sure could use a HAND UP.”

Brothers, please do not forget that the VA has announced that family members of Veterans exposed to contaminated drinking water at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune from Aug. 1, 1953 to Dec. 31, 1987 are now eligible for reimbursement of health care costs associated with Parkinson’s disease under the [Camp Lejeune Family Member Program](#).

These family members are also [eligible for health care reimbursement](#) for esophageal cancer, lung cancer, breast cancer, bladder cancer, kidney cancer, leukemia, multiple myeloma, renal toxicity, miscarriage, hepatic steatosis, female infertility, myelodysplastic syndromes, scleroderma, neurobehavioral effects, and non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma.

“Veterans and their families deserve no-cost health care for the conditions they developed due to the contaminated water at Camp Lejeune,” said VA’s Under Secretary for Health Dr. Shereef Elnahal, M.D. “We’re proud to add Parkinson’s to the list of conditions that are covered for Veteran family members, and we implore anyone who may be living with this disease — or any of the other conditions covered by VA’s [Camp Lejeune Family Member Program](#) – to apply for assistance today.”

Veterans who served at Camp Lejeune are also eligible for no-cost Parkinson’s health care and other VA benefits. Recent studies have also shown that the risk of Parkinson’s disease is [70% higher](#) for Veterans stationed at Camp Lejeune.

Thanks to the [PACT Act](#), the biggest expansion of Veteran health care and benefits in generations, [Veterans and their families can also now file lawsuits](#) for harm caused by exposure to contaminated water at Camp Lejeune. To apply for health care reimbursement under the Camp Lejeune Family Member Program, visit [the program website](#). To apply for Veteran benefits related to Camp Lejeune, visit [VA.gov/Camp Lejeune](#).

50 Year Awards



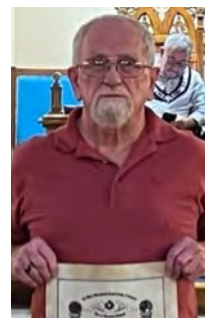
Henry G. Kelly
Seminole #83



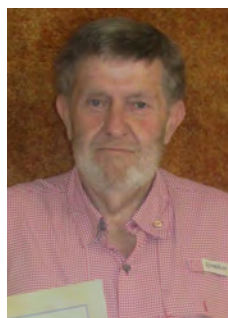
Henry G. Kelly
Doerun #151



Bill Lewis
Mountain Park #791



Robert F. Woodard
Lindale #455



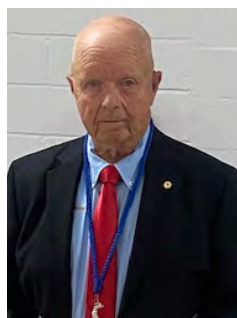
William C. Fender
Cassia #224



Warren Holder
Fraternal #97



Donald Edwards
Fraternal #97



Bobby Coleman
Daylight #756



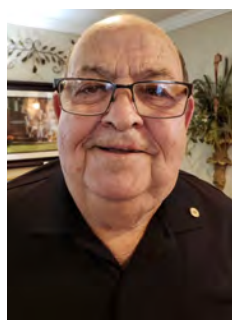
James T. Bell
Nancy Hart #690



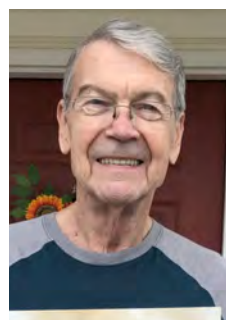
Jack S. Born Jr.
Harmony #405



Allen Hart
W. A. Davis DL #753



Merlin W. Wright
Etowah #222



Jerry R. Clark
Sugar Valley #733



Gerald W. Rice
Fayetteville #711



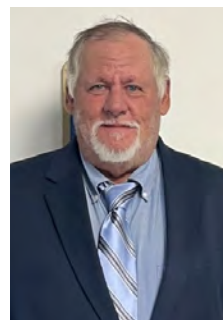
William A. Strickland
Ocean #214



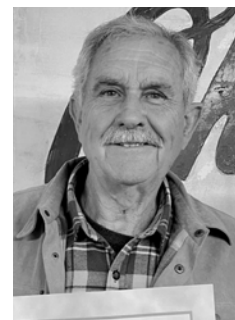
Thomas F. Chadwick
Ocean #214



David A. Tillman
Springfield #440



Gilbert M. Zeigler
Springfield #440



John F. Nix
Chestatee #102



Frank M. Garrett
Chestatee #102



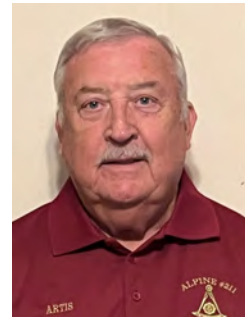
Robert L. Willis
Chestatee #102



Wayne R. Hubbard
Chestatee #102



Billy W. Pledger
Alpine #211



Melvin A. Pledger, Sr.
Alpine #211



Forrest Johnson
Sweet Gum #542



James Cearley
Sweet Gum #542



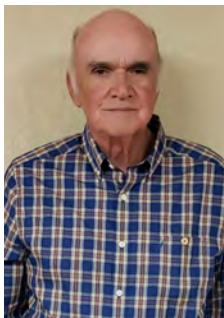
Charles Flowers
Sweet Gum #542



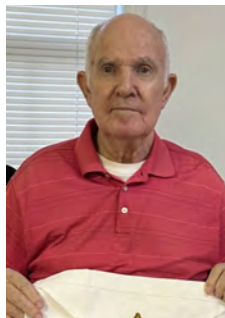
Phil B. Stamps
Buck Creek #639



Thomas J. Moore
Clarkesville #325



Ralph J. Cates
Loftin #688



Robert A. Escoe
Fergus #135



Charles D. Myers
Fergus #135



James A. Thomas
Fergus #135



Ed Lord
Benevolent #3



Lamar Chambers
Benevolent #3



Lewis Collier
Amity #731



Leo Baker
Amity #731



James Paul
Floyd Springs #167



Robert G. Edmundson
Coweta #60

60 Year Awards



Samuel L. Jones
Fayetteville #711



John H. Watson
Ducktown #572



Walter R. Register
Cassia #224



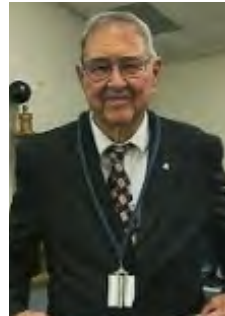
Warren L. Tatum
Etowah #222



Calvin Shields
Sweet Gum #542



John P. Thornburg
Panthersville #543



Luther O. Cox, Jr.
Panthersville #543



Robert W Davis
Benevolent #3
65 Years



Bobby C. Padgett
Ducktown #572
65 Years



John Minnich
W. A. Davis DL #753
65 Years

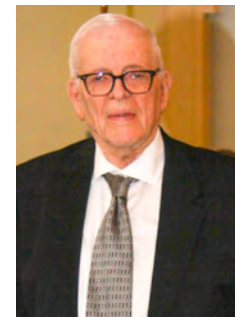


Thomas T. Banks
Coweta #60
65 Years

70 Year Awards



Calvin E. Lewis
Richmond #412



Charles Shainker
Fulton #216



Donald L. Levison, Sr
Fulton #216



Billy M. Hargrove
Benevolent #3
75 Years



**Congratulations to
Worshipful Brother
Leon Blair on his
80 Year Service
Award. Worshipful
Brother Blair is 103
Years Young and
served as
Worshipful Master
of Thomasville
Lodge No. 369 in
1968.**

In Memoriam

Members Reported
Deceased August 2 to
December 1, 2023

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|----|-------------------------------|-----|--------------------------------|-----|
| Hill, Glen Quay | 1 | Couey, Bobby Clyde | 75 | Proctor, Steve Allen | 139 |
| Mathis, Robert Eugene | 1 | Black, Joe Maurice | 76 | Chitwood, Dennis Earl | 141 |
| Hobbs, Jerry Willis | 4 | Cobb Jr., Charles Kenche | 77 | Pritchett Sr., Claude Elbert | 144 |
| Autry, Michael Douglas | 6 | Hutcheson, James Daniel | 78 | Dunson, David Lee | 148 |
| Steele, Johnny Hugh | 6 | Aaron, William MacK | 81 | Poole, Randy Lee | 148 |
| Phillips, Robert Calvin | 12 | Bramblett, Michael Herbert | 81 | Horne, Henry Preston | 151 |
| Lowery Sr., Aaron Talmadge | 13 | Currie, William Thomas | 81 | Mayro, Alvin Harold | 153 |
| Perry, Dennis Lynn | 13 | Olszowka, Martin Stanely | 82 | Cantrell Jr., Thomas Adolph | 165 |
| Connelly Jr., James Charlie | 15 | Stone, Jeffery Scott | 85 | Hilliard Jr., Maurice Heath | 165 |
| Robison, John Truman | 20 | Johnson, Richard Alan | 87 | Shirley, Marion Eugene | 165 |
| Jones, Bobby | 23 | Campbell, Billy Bradley | 88 | Klingenfus, Emil John | 166 |
| Kidd, Roy Jephtha | 25 | Futral Jr., Walter Clifford | 90 | Miller, Daniel Gail | 167 |
| Prince, Timothy Robert | 25 | Caldwell, Gregory Owen | 97 | White, MacOn Moore | 167 |
| Swords, Bivins Lavernne | 25 | Forsyth, Horace Daniel | 97 | Holcomb, Wallace Eugene | 168 |
| Story Sr., Sammie Clonts | 26 | Bynum, Houston Fred | 100 | Ellis, Will Russell | 173 |
| Burgess, George Clayton | 27 | Dunn, Jonathan Edward | 100 | Tatum, Rickey Lane | 179 |
| Clark, Andrew Robert | 30 | Shepard, Sylvester Herbert | 101 | McMichen Jr., Lealon Jewell | 182 |
| Roth, Ronald Martin | 30 | Lynn Jr., Lawrence Edward | 102 | Murajda, James Lewis | 184 |
| Arnold, Thomas Spencer | 33 | Chandler Sr., Phillip Barry | 103 | Blackstock, William Dozier | 188 |
| Dawkins, Robert Henry | 35 | Sherrod, Raymond Lloyd | 104 | Deaton, James Emory | 191 |
| Hawkins, Harry Elbert | 35 | Hunter, John Edwin | 109 | Jordon, Clyde Rollin | 194 |
| Carmichael, Lemual Hugh | 37 | Rowell Jr., Richard Henry | 109 | Keen, Harry Lee | 194 |
| Anderson, Ralph Dean | 38 | Bender IV, Alfred Jasper | 110 | Summer Jr., John Edwin | 194 |
| Gibson, Roy Lee | 38 | Collins Jr., Julius Edward | 110 | Nelson, Ronnie Lee | 195 |
| Kates, Carroll James | 44 | Bozeman Jr., James Reese | 111 | Phillips, James Washington | 202 |
| Perrigo, Terrance Ronald | 44 | Galloni, Richard John | 112 | Whitfield, Boyd Thomas | 202 |
| Perry, Thomas Huggins | 46 | Edgar, Spencer Glass | 113 | McClure, George William | 205 |
| Hall, Jerry Drennon | 52 | White Jr., Joseph Fitzpatrick | 114 | Jones Sr., Jesse Robert | 214 |
| Burke, Johnny MacK | 53 | Shoemaker, Ronnie Eugene | 116 | McNeill, Arlie Maxton | 214 |
| Coker, Thomas Mitchell | 55 | Powell, Frank MacK | 126 | Miller, William S. | 214 |
| Corbett, Cecil Edgar | 58 | Faulkner, Leslie Horace | 127 | Steinmann, Fred James | 214 |
| Moye, Frank Clark | 58 | Griner Jr., Charles Lynwood | 128 | Sherman, Leonard Sidney | 216 |
| Garrett, Joseph Squire | 60 | Wood, James Wilson | 128 | English, Millard Lamar | 217 |
| Powers, William Joseph | 60 | Briscoe, George William | 135 | Teagle, John Edward | 217 |
| Whisenant, Michael Earnest | 64 | Pierce, John Raymond | 135 | Murajda, James Lewis | 184 |
| Durrough, Kenneth Clyde | 69 | Shelnutt, David Alan | 135 | Thompson, Joseph William Lloyd | 220 |
| Herring, Donald Brook | 70 | Walden Jr., Jerry Alvin | 135 | Goswick, Therrell Miller | 221 |
| Canaday, David Lee | 74 | Ethridge Sr., Joseph Doyle | 139 | Hopper, James Bailey | 221 |

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| Mangrum Jr., Charles Lee | 221 |
| Cargill III, James Donald | 222 |
| Hendricks Sr., Carl Lafayette | 231 |
| Jung Sr., Charles Edward | 231 |
| Hallock, George Bainton | 235 |
| Estes, Shane Matthew | 244 |
| Grace III, Charles Bartow | 246 |
| Elder, Marion Lester | 251 |
| McKinney, Eugene Baxter | 251 |
| Palmer, Floyd Melvin | 251 |
| Carr Sr., Alan Dwight | 255 |
| Williford, Terrell | 257 |
| Rader, Earl Lincoln | 260 |
| Gattis, James David | 262 |
| Mills, David Lee | 270 |
| Martin, Ray Lewis | 271 |
| Marsh, Richard Howard | 274 |
| Ross Jr., Thurman Cecil | 279 |
| McDaniel, Clifford Larry | 283 |
| Bryan, Clarence Sibley | 288 |
| Henson, David Pengry | 288 |
| Huiet III, Ben Tillman | 288 |
| Yaeger, Larry David | 291 |
| Boone, James Clinton | 292 |
| Buice, James David | 292 |
| Gies, James Kenneth | 294 |
| Murray, Robert Thomas | 294 |
| Rice, Jack Eugene | 294 |
| Huey, Steve Douglas | 296 |
| Hughes, David William | 296 |
| Fisher, Arley Charles | 299 |
| Owens, Charles Joe | 301 |
| Cowart, Daniel Hamilton | 302 |
| Kent, William Edward | 304 |
| Tyre Sr., Henry Fred | 305 |
| French, James Monroe | 306 |
| Davis, Howard Franklin | 309 |
| Eaton, William Gerald | 323 |
| Stephens, William Roy | 323 |
| Nichols, Grady Lee | 325 |
| McDaniel, John Jerry | 326 |
| Williams, Daniel Aubrey | 326 |
| Burnette, Phillip Almond | 333 |

| | |
|------------------------------|-----|
| Lynch, James Franklin | 334 |
| Quintana, Larry Anthony | 334 |
| Ragland, Harold Dean | 338 |
| Holland, Jimmy Dwayne | 340 |
| Yancey, Steven Tanner | 349 |
| Thompson, Kenny Duane | 352 |
| Thomas, William Lamar | 364 |
| Bowman Sr., Robert Franklin | 371 |
| Woodson, Ronald Eugene | 376 |
| Partin, Charles Albert | 382 |
| Jernigan, Allen Mack | 386 |
| Cavagnaro Sr., David Timothy | 391 |
| Berry, Charles Marlin | 393 |
| Williams, Gene Maurice | 393 |
| Rowan, Jack Donald | 397 |
| Epps, J. W. | 404 |
| Gay Jr., Charles Allen | 412 |
| Holt, Allen Hopper | 412 |
| Malcom Jr., Jackson Edward | 428 |
| Seckinger, Earl Eugene | 428 |
| Etheridge, Donnis Randall | 433 |
| Pruitt Sr., John Wesley | 434 |
| La Roche Sr., William Calvin | 452 |
| Horne, James Herbert | 454 |
| McGrew, Herbert Lee | 454 |
| Milam, Robert Eugene | 455 |
| Nunn, John Flournoy | 467 |
| Collis, Charles Dean | 483 |
| Kirby, Gerald Eugene | 509 |
| Rayburn, James Charles | 513 |
| Prater, Randall Clarence | 519 |
| Sorkin, Lawrence James | 523 |
| Maddox, Joseph Eric | 534 |
| Stone, Brandon Andrew | 534 |
| Nelson, Thomas Daniel | 537 |
| Flowers, Heath Authur | 542 |
| Butler, James Lee | 544 |
| Dixon Sr., Dennis Wade | 544 |
| Edwards, David Eugene | 572 |
| Lynn Sr., Herbert Martin | 572 |
| Hatfield, Doyle Ray | 586 |
| Kierbow Jr., John Elzie | 586 |
| Ingram, Billy Joe | 590 |

| | |
|------------------------------|------|
| Johnston, James Keith | 590 |
| Long, William Earl | 590 |
| Berry, Chris Allen | 591 |
| Cotton Jr., Charles Layfette | 591 |
| Fairecloth, James Kenneth | 591 |
| Mouchet, John Vandiver | 595 |
| Temples, Ronnie Joe | 595 |
| Cooper, Judson Henderson | 622 |
| Trapp, Michael Garland | 622 |
| Fuller, Wilmer Carlos | 639 |
| Hambrick, Jack Daniel | 652 |
| Mathis, Roy Brooks | 663 |
| Crow, Gary Otis | 664 |
| Brown, Thomas Linder | 690 |
| Burden Sr., Thomas William | 690 |
| Donald, Gary Lamar | 690 |
| McClain, Donald Dwight | 690 |
| Vaughn, James Donald | 690 |
| Cosby, Arthur Carroll | 691 |
| Patton, Riley Lawrence | 691 |
| Richardson, Lawrence Owen | 691 |
| Shaw, Edmond Howell | 691 |
| Kennemore, Marion Wayne | 694 |
| Jordan Jr., Durward Lee | 703 |
| Allen, Alvin Wayne | 709 |
| McMonigle, Dee Everett | 709 |
| Vernon, Christopher Lee | 709 |
| Usry Jr., Harry Elmore | 710 |
| Chandler, Thomas Buford | 711 |
| Bush, Jessie Norman | 716 |
| Copeland, Vernon Avery | 717 |
| Outland, Charles Roscoe | 717 |
| Childress, Vernon William | 718 |
| Harris Jr., William Garland | 718 |
| Byers, Charles Phillip | 720 |
| Thomas Jr., John Broadus | 720 |
| Atkinson, Christopher Harold | 722 |
| Morris Sr., Thomas William | 729 |
| Stotts, Dennis Martin | 729 |
| Williamson, Pullen Rux | 729 |
| Galate Jr., Charles Veto | 5000 |

The Grand Lodge of Georgia
Free and Accepted Masons
Masonic Messenger
811 Mulberry Street
Macon, Georgia 31201-6779

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The Masonic Home of Georgia relies on the generosity of our supporters. Together, we improve communities by providing a foundation for the positive development of youth in Georgia.

The Triple 24 Campaign supports the day-to-day operations of the home and the Children there. Make a commitment to donate today at GLofGA.org. Click on “Philanthropy” in the header for more information!

The “Grand Lodge of Georgia” Store is now online at

<https://av8rstuff.com/GLofGAindex.html>

While many items are from the “Kids Store” (we’re working in partnership with them), we are also going to be offering many new and unique items for our many Masons in Georgia to show their pride, leading their friends and neighbors to inquire as to what a Freemason is and what we’re all about. We are excited about the new outlet we Georgia Masons have to obtain the items we want.

You can also find the link on the Grand Lodge of Georgia website or can contact “Whitey” White (478-997-1011) or Ivy Smith (478-731-6050)