

Brad S. Billings  
GRAND SECRETARY  
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## GRAND SECRETARY'S MONTHLY COMMUNICATION APRIL 2024

**SECRETARIES** and my Brothers All – Welcome to the April edition of the Grand Secretary's Newsletter.

This edition includes the following:

- Last minute orders for the "Lone Star Apron"
- Masonic Minute – Blindfold
- Grand Secretary Office Updates
- Sharing Freemasonry (Part 2) – with guest contributor Brother Fluff
- Monthly Law Reading – Canons of Construction.
- A look at Statewide Retention – Brother Zach Haston
- And more

**PLEASE COMMUNICATE THIS INFORMATION TO YOUR MEMBERS, AS APPROPRIATE.** I recommend you print this communication and bring it to your stated meeting for discussion. This communication is automatically provided electronically to all lodges with the capability to use the Grandview system. Individual Master Masons of The Grand Lodge of Texas can sign up by contacting the Grand Secretary's Office at (254) 753-7395 or [gs@grandsecretaryoftx.org](mailto:gs@grandsecretaryoftx.org), or by registering your membership through [the Member Portal](#).

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### **PAST MASTERS APRON**

#### **LAST CHANCE TO ORDER THE LONE STAR APRON IN TIME FOR INSTALLATION (SEE BELOW)**

Orders received before April 3, 2024, will be deliverable in Late May. The next ordering window will be for late December and the holiday season. To make your purchase, please click on the following link. [Regulation Texas Past Master Apron](#)

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### **MASONIC MINUTE - THE BLINDFOLD**

:Physical blindness in Masonry, as in the language of the scriptures, is symbolic of the deprivation of moral and intellectual light. It is equivalent to the darkness of the ancient mysteries in which the Neophytes were enshrouded for periods varying from a few hours to many days. The Masonic candidate, therefore, represents one immersed in intellectual darkness, groping for the search for that divine light and truth which are the objects of a Mason's labor. Darkness has, in all the systems of initiation, been deemed a symbol of ignorance, and so opposed to light, which is the symbol of knowledge, hence, the rule that the eye should not see until the heart had conceived the true nature of those beauties which constitute the mysteries of the Order.

Reference: *Excerpt taken from Lightfoot's Commentaries (available in the TX Mason APP) Pg 151 (1972 printing)*

## GRAND SECRETARY OFFICE UPDATES

### Out of Office

Brethren, if you called the office last Friday you likely didn't get an answer. That's because I gave the staff Good Friday off. This was the first day off since I took office, and I forgot to communicate that to the membership. For that, I apologize. We are looking for the best way to communicate our days out of office going forward. For now, we will put them here in the newsletter and try to echo it on social media.

Our next out of office will be one week from today on Monday, April 8th, 2024. This is due to the Tourism and Convention Center expecting 100,000 visitors in Waco due to the eclipse. Normal business hours will resume the following day.

### April Fools

Brethren in the spirit of April Fool's Day, the date this is being distributed, I have placed one untrue statement somewhere in the newsletter. Find it and report it on the Texas Freemasons Facebook page with #AprilFoolsGrandSecretary and tag me. There will be a prize for the first Brother who finds it.

### New Staff

Finally, The Grand Secretary's office has seen many changes since the conclusion of our Grand Lodge session including the hiring of two Brothers, Dave McHam and Jeff Frayser. Brother McHam is the Office Lead and is in the office 8:30 – 4 most days. He has earned the moniker "Do it all Dave" because of his aptitude to find solutions and his cheerful conformity to do so. Brother Frayser is helping out part-time and works specifically on dispensations and out-of-state affiliations and travel. Please help me welcome our Brothers!



**Brother Jeff Frayser**



**Brother Dave McHam**

*Brad Billings, Grand Secretary*  
[gs@grandsecretaryoftx.org](mailto:gs@grandsecretaryoftx.org)

## **LIKE, FOLLOW, AND SHARE FREEMASONRY – PART II**

### Brother Fluff's Recommendations for Social Media

Social media is one of the most affordable ways to promote a business or organization to a large group of people. There are promotional tools you can use to select a target audience, but in most cases, making a post or setting up an event is free, and it immediately increases awareness of your lodge within your community. The best part about social media is that every brother can play a part!

Here are some other ways lodges can grow their presence online:

1. Set up a team or committee to handle your social media administration. This way, if anything unexpected happens to one person, the lodge's online presence continues smoothly, and the secret passwords won't be lost forever.
2. Keep your lodge's social media profiles public so your community can easily find and learn about you.
3. Engage with your local community online by supporting and interacting with local businesses, charities, and other organizations. When you show support, you receive support.
4. Show what Freemasonry is really about – not just pictures of brethren gathered around the east, but the fun and authentic brotherhood that comes with it. Whether it be a golf outing, a cleanup day, or brothers acting goofy, all content is good content in the name of brotherly love.
5. Respond quickly to messages, comments, and other types of engagement. People expect fast replies these days. Instant gratification is very real.
6. Remain vigilant and cautious with who you interact with online. Not everyone might have the best intentions. Meet them on zoom, in public coffee shops, and properly vet them before inviting them into the lodge.
7. Respect everyone's privacy, especially if they have jobs or personal reasons for keeping their Masonic membership low-key.
8. Keep your content fresh. If your last post was years ago, people might think you're not active, and not even bother reaching out.

*Zakary Wyatt JW*

*Mackenzie Lodge No. 1327*

*Brother Fluff is a social media savant with 90,000 followers on TikTok, including 1.4 million views and 500,000 people tuning in monthly, as well as 45,000 followers on Facebook.*

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## **MONTHLY LAW READING**

Masons are always asking how to know what an article means. Grand Law has Canons (only one "n") of Construction that tell you how to interpret an article. These are found before the articles but after the constitution on page 60 of the current law book.

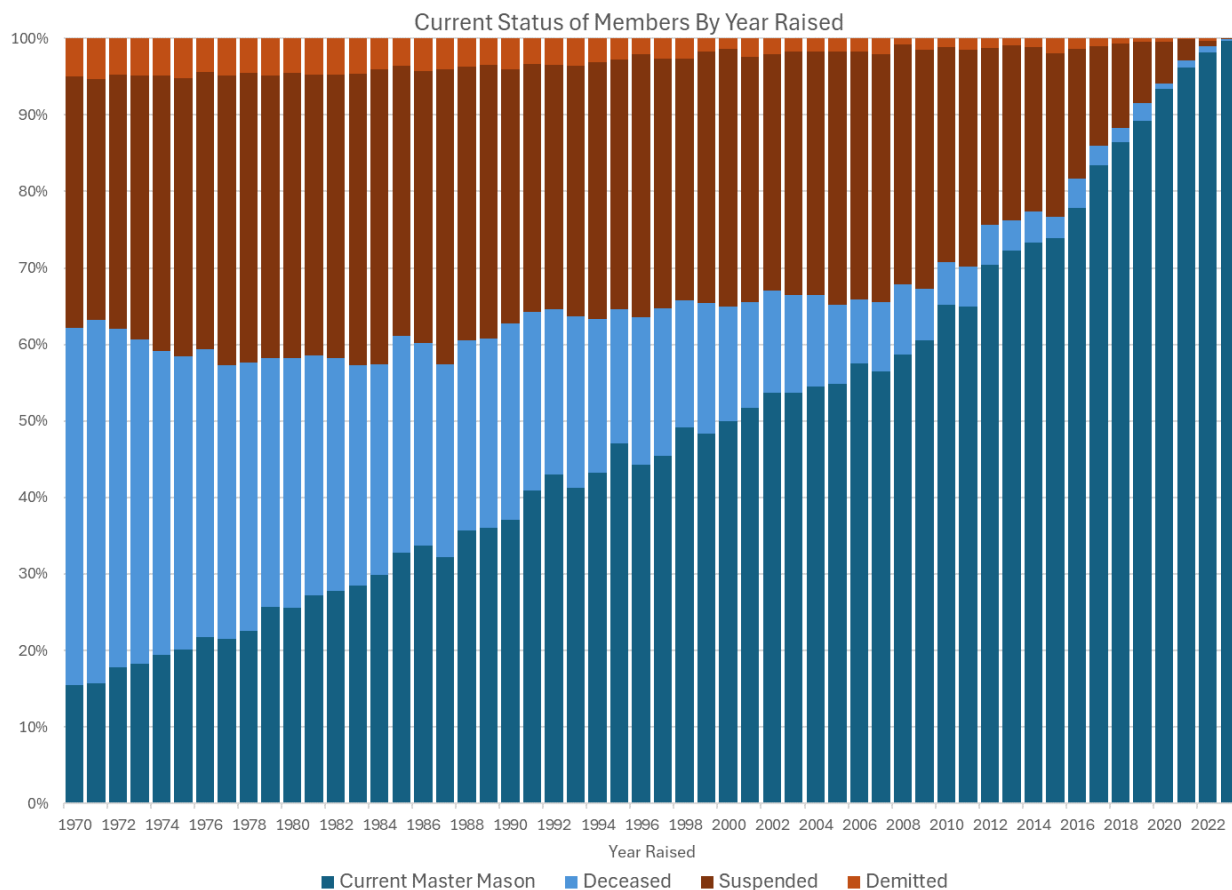
There are nine Canons that guide interpreting the law. For example, "The Constitution of this Grand Lodge is paramount, and all Statutes, or General Laws, and all resolutions, rules, regulations, edicts, and decisions, promulgated or approved by the Grand Lodge inconsistent with any of its provisions, or in conflict therewith, are null and void." In other words, read the Constitution first. They also provide that "Words should be given their general dictionary meaning except when used in a technical or some Masonic sense" and "Wherever possible a construction should be given a Statute, resolution, rule, regulation, edict or decision that will not render it unreasonable, meaningless or purposeless." In other words, consult the dictionary and try to make the law valid. So, the next time you try to read the law, start with the Canons of Construction.

*Chris Livingston, Chairman, Masonic Jurisprudence Committee*

## A LOOK AT STATEWIDE RETENTION

Brethren, this week we're going to take a brief look at overall Statewide retention. Figure 1 shows the current status of Texas Master Masons by their year raised. The number raised per year has been decreasing over time; therefore, Figures 1 and 2 are done on a percentage basis for those raised in that year.

As seen in Figure 1, the majority of losses for those raised over the last 15 or 17 years have been from suspensions for non-payment of dues. We still have Brothers being suspended for non-payment of dues who have been with the Fraternity for a great long time, but they represent a small percentage loss of their year's class. When you get to timeframes of more than 17 years ago, suspensions become relatively small and the majority of membership losses start to come from Brothers passing into the Celestial Lodge above.



*Figure 1. Current status of members by year raised.*

How many leave is one question. When they left is another. Figure 2 shows the Statewide rate of decline of each year's class of Master Masons. This includes losses from all sources: suspensions, demits, moves out-of-State, expulsions, deaths, etc. Interestingly, you'll notice that the lines spanning over five decades are very similar. We do, however, see a small trend of higher losses in the early years more recently. 10 years after being raised, for example, we still had nearly 80% of those initiated in 1970 and 1975, but it's now down to 70% remaining as members at their 10yr mark. Still, by the time you get to their 20 or 25yr mark, the lines approach each other again and the rate of decline looks pretty similar (as you would expect since by then our losses are mostly due to Brothers passing into the Celestial Lodge above). **People that are going to leave do leave a little earlier than they used to, but the percentage that stay and become life-long Masons seems unchanged over the decades.**

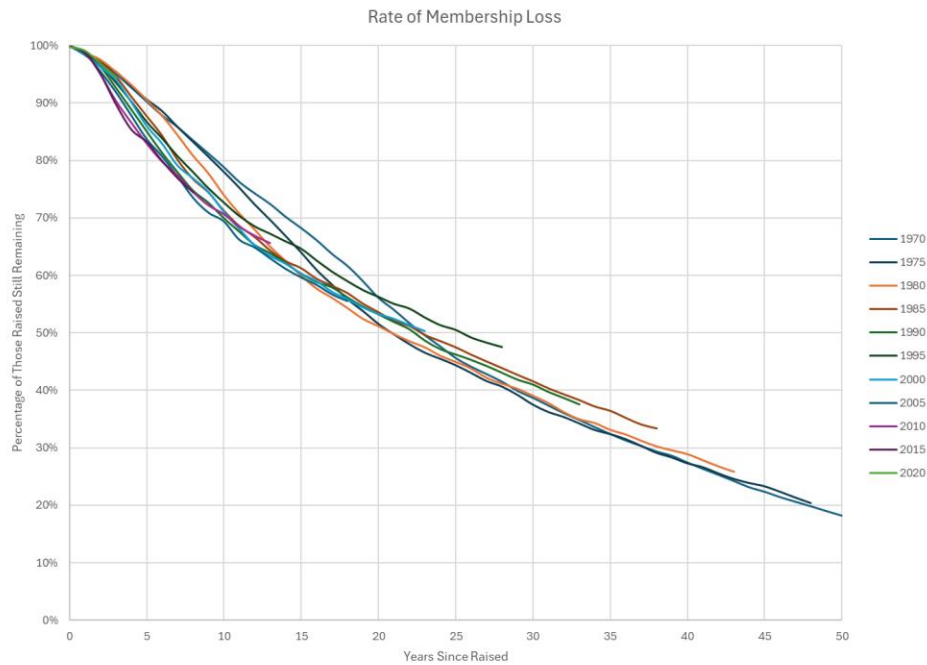


Figure 2. Rate of membership loss by year raised from all sources (suspensions, deaths, etc.).

Figure 3 shows one year’s class as an example: the class of Master Masons raised in 1990. To zoom in on losses, this time we’re looking only at members who are not endowed. Obviously, endowed Masons will not be lost due to non-payment of dues. While we are still losing some Masons each year from the annual dues-payers of 1990 Master Masons, that final, largest column of still-current Master Masons from 33 years ago will mostly continue until they are lost to the Celestial Lodge above. Referring back to Figure 1, you can see this pattern extends over decades of classes: most of the losses are in their first decade or two, but after that, they’re mostly “lifers.”

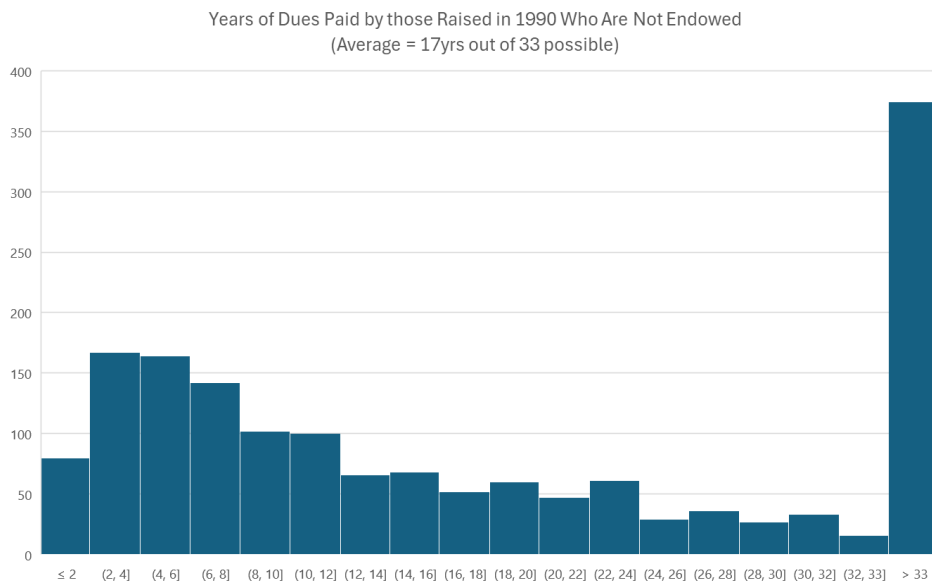


Figure 3. Years of Service for those raised in 1990 who are not endowed.

I find it refreshing to see that, even if those that leave are leaving slightly earlier than they used to, and even if our numbers being raised are steadily decreasing, that **our percentage who leave is basically unchanged over the decades**. That has to do with appeal and says something about the ancient, unchanging nature of our Craft. A lot has changed around us, but those exposed to the Mysteries are still captured as they ever were.

**TEXAS FREEMASON MAGAZINE**

The most recent edition of the magazine: <https://grandlodgeoftexas.org/texas-freemason-magazine>.

The Texas Freemason Magazine is published four times a year and is available in PDF format on the Grand Lodge website under the “MEDIA/MAGAZINE” tab. In addition to the digital format, The Winter and Spring issues are printed and mailed before and following the Grand Annual Communication. If you are not receiving the magazine in the mail, it is likely your address is not correct in the Grand Lodge database. You can correct this by visiting the Grand Lodge website and logging into the member portal where you can edit your profile as needed.

**OFFICERS LEADERSHIP TRAININGS**

Registration is now open for the 2023 Officer Leadership Trainings. All members wishing to attend can register through their member portal or by clicking [here](#). The dates and locations are as follows:

<b><u>Location</u></b>	<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>Register by</u></b>	<b><u>Link</u></b>
Houston.....	Apr 05 - Apr 06 .....	03/30/2024 .....	<a href="#">Houston</a>
San Antonio.....	Apr 19 - Apr 20 .....	04/13/2024 .....	<a href="#">San Antonio</a>
Tyler .....	May 31 – June 1 .....	05/25/2024 .....	<a href="#">Tyler</a>
Lubbock.....	Aug 23 - Aug 24.....	08/17/2024 .....	<a href="#">Lubbock</a>

**VANGUARD AWARD APPLICATION**

The 2023 – 2024 Vanguard Application is available on the Member Portal for all Master Masons to view. You can find it by [clicking here](#). Please remember to follow the instructions before submitting. Lodges that are applying for the Vanguard Award must have their application submitted to their District Deputy Grand Master no later than 8/31/2024. District Deputy Grand Masters must have the application submitted to the Grand Secretary’s Office no later than 9/15/2024.

**UPCOMING TRUSTEES MEETINGS**

The Grand Master may call additional meetings of the Trustees as needed. The scheduled meetings:

- Friday, April 5, 2024, at 10 AM in the Grand Master’s Office
- Friday, October 11, 2024, at 10 AM at the Texas Masonic Retirement Center in Arlington
- Wednesday, January 15, 2025, at 2 PM in the Grand Master’s Office

Zoom links will be sent out for those who want to join virtually. We are limited in the number of Zoom participants, however, all interested Master Mason are encouraged to join.

Per the Grand Master, ALL interested Master Masons are invited to attend the Trustees meeting this Friday. If you chose to join us virtually – the link is below. We are limited by number of attendees, however, we have never yet met capacity. I simply wanted to let everyone know that preference will be given to committee men should we hit the limit.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83672137224?pwd=lyGfQoOdF2znXMYtymJfb1y0vZoChf.1>

Meeting ID: 836 7213 7224

Passcode: 588781

## IRS FORM 990

All subordinate Lodges of the Grand Lodge of Texas must file either IRS Form 990, 990 EZ, or 990-N with the U.S. Internal Revenue Service in a timely manner.

It is the responsibility of the Worshipful Master to ensure that a completed IRS Form 990, 990-N, or 990 EZ, or such other form as may be hereafter defined by the IRS, in order to preserve the tax-exempt status of Lodges. The form must be filed every year on or before the 15th day of the 5th month after the close of the tax year. For example, if a Lodge tax year ends in June, its Form 990, 990-N, or 990-EZ is due by November 15 of that tax year.

It is also the responsibility of the Worshipful Master to provide the Grand Secretary's office with a copy of the Form 990, 990-N, or 990-EZ that is filed with the IRS, on or before November 15 of the tax year, and the Grand Lodge Finance Committee is directed to monitor the completion of the Forms required herein. **Please be aware that the Grand Secretary's office no longer has the ability to file 990s on your Lodge's behalf.**

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## WIDOWS & ORPHANS COMMITTEE

The Grand Lodge Committee on Widows and Orphans is requesting that all members of Texas Freemasonry get registered, and then update your spousal, and other family information on your Grand Lodge website, via the Grandview member portal. This is an important tool to assist Grand Lodge in identifying widows and potential orphans within our family in Masonry. Please reach out to Bro. Daniel Cloud (Chairman) or Bro. Jon K. Wych (Vice Chairman) with any questions or concerns.

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## GRAND LODGE STORE APRIL'S FEATURED ITEM

If you ever wanted to start your Grand Lodge coin collection, now is the time! While supplies last, we are offering a collection "Starter Pack" in Bronze and Enamel options. The Bronze option includes 17 coins (at 70% off the original price) for only \$25 plus shipping. The enamel pack includes 13 coins (at 60% the original price) for only \$50 plus shipping.



\*Note: collections do not include 2007, 2009, or 2010 in enamel, they also don't include 2006 & 2008 in both.

<https://masonic-grand-lodge-of-texas.myshopify.com/collections/past-grand-masters/products/grand-mastes-challenge-coin-collection-starter-pack>

<https://masonic-grand-lodge-of-texas.myshopify.com/>

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## LAWBOOK AND GRAND LODGE PROCEEDINGS

The top five elected officers now have access to the 2023 Grand Lodge Law Book. You can access the book by logging into the member portal and clicking on the resources tab. *Proceedings of the M.: W.: Grand Lodge of Texas* from 2019 – 2021 can also be found in the Resources tab and are accessible by all members. Previous years' proceedings can be accessed through TX Mason App.

# The Grand Lodge of Texas - Cornerstone Leveling Ceremonies 2024

Kevin T. Binder  
 State Cornerstone Coordinator  
 832-489-7778  
 kevinbinder30@gmail.com



Effective 4/1/2024

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Lodge</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Grand Lodge Representative</i>
Saturday 4/6/2024	<b>Postponed</b> <b>Will be rescheduled</b>	James A. Smith 395 12823 Demetra Farmers Branch, TX	New Event Center	TBD
Saturday 4/6/2024	Coffee & Donuts @ 8:30 AM Open Brooklyn Lodge @ 9:00 Open Grand Lodge Representation @ 9:15 Cornerstone Ceremony @ 10:30	Brooklyn 386 103 E Hwy 80 & 740 Forney, TX 75126	Themer Elementary School	Wendell P. Miller Past Grand Master
Wednesday 4/10/2024	<b>Cancelled</b>	Princeton 1436 116 S. 4th St Princeton, TX 75407	Princeton Fire Station No. 2	Ken C. Curry Past Grand Master
Saturday 4/20/2024	Coffee & Donuts @ 8:30 AM Open Brooklyn Lodge @ 9:00 Open Grand Lodge Representation @ 9:15 Cornerstone Ceremony @ 10:30	Brooklyn 386 103 E Hwy 80 & 740 Rd Forney, TX 75126	Warren Middle School	Wendell P. Miller Past Grand Master
Saturday 5/4/2024	Coffee & Donuts @ 8:30 AM Open Brooklyn Lodge @ 9:00 Open Grand Lodge Representation @ 9:15 Cornerstone Ceremony @ 10:30	Brooklyn 386 103 E Hwy 80 & 740 Rd Forney, TX 75126	Ed Wilson Elementary School	Wendell P. Miller Past Grand Master
Tuesday 5/16/2024	Coffee & Donuts @ 7:30 AM Open Pine Forest @ 8:00 Open Grand Lodge Representation @ 8:15 Cornerstone Ceremony @ 9:30	Pine Forest 1420 590 Sawmill Rd Vidor, TX 77662	Middle School 2500 TX-12 Vidor, TX 77662	Tommy F. Chapman Grand Master
Monday 5/20/2024	Gunsight Lodge will Open at some point before lunch Refreshments or lunch @ noon Open a Representation of Grand Lodge @ 1:00 Cornerstone Ceremony @ 2:00	Gunsight Lodge 2128 Church St Galveston, TX 77550	Shriners Children's Texas Parent Housing Building 815 Market St. Galveston, TX 77550	Jim Rumsey Grand Senior Warden
Wednesday 5/29/2024	Refreshments @ 4:30 PM Open C.A. Fortner @ 5:30 Open Grand Lodge Representation @ 5:45 Cornerstone Ceremony @ 6:30	C.A. Fortner 1304 716 Sheldon Road Channelview, TX 77530	DeZavala Elementary School	Tommy F. Chapman Grand Master
Saturday 6/8/2024	Refreshments @ Noon Open Greenville @ 1:00 Open Representation @ 1:20 Cornerstone Ceremony @ 2:00	Greenville 335 2615 Stonewall Greenville, TX 75401	New Lodge Building	Jim Rumsey Grand Senior Warden



**COMMITTEE ON WORK SCHEDULE**

**Date**                      **Lodge**                      **No**                      **City**                      **District**                      **Forum**                      **Exam**  
**Chuck Forsyth - Chairman**  
**(432) 528-5197, [cforsyth@swbell.net](mailto:cforsyth@swbell.net)**

Fri, 5 Apr 2024 ..... Grand Lodge ..... 0 ..... Waco ..... 0 ..... 8:30 AM ..... CoW  
Sat, 6 Apr 2024..... Stephenville ..... 267 ..... Stephenville ..... 67 ..... 9:00 AM ... following  
Sat, 20 Apr 2024 ..... H.A. McFarland ..... 1338 ..... Odessa ..... 82 ..... 9:00 AM ... following

**Steve Pepper - Secretary**  
**(940) 256-0028, [srpepper54@gmail.com](mailto:srpepper54@gmail.com)**

Fri, 5 Apr 2024 ..... Grand Lodge ..... 0 ..... Waco ..... 0 ..... 8:30 AM ..... CoW  
Sat, 6 Apr 2024 ..... Bowie ..... 578 ..... Bowie ..... 86 ..... 9:00 AM ..... 1:00 PM

**Kenneth Young**  
**(281) 433-2360, [kyoung.cow@icloud.com](mailto:kyoung.cow@icloud.com)**

Fri, 5 Apr 2024 ..... Grand Lodge ..... 0 ..... Waco ..... 0 ..... 8:30 AM ..... CoW  
Sat, 13 Apr 2024 ..... Beaumont ..... 286 ..... Beaumont ..... 26-A ..... 9:00 AM ..... following  
Sat, 20 Apr 2024 .....Anson Jones ..... 1416 ..... Friendswood ..... 31-A ..... 9:00 AM ..... following

**Cody Stewart**  
**(903) 348-1150, [CodyStewartCOW@gmail.com](mailto:CodyStewartCOW@gmail.com)**

Fri, 5 Apr 2024 ..... Grand Lodge ..... 0 ..... Waco ..... 0 ..... 8:30 AM ..... CoW  
Sat, 6 Apr 2024 ..... Commerce ..... 439 ..... Commerce ..... 8 ..... 8:00 AM ... following  
Sat, 13 Apr 2024 ..... East Fork ..... 650 ..... Wylie ..... 9-B ..... 8:00 AM... following  
Sat, 20 Apr 2024 .....Thomas B. Hunter ..... 511 ..... Grand Prairie ..... 14-G ..... 8:00 AM ... following  
Sat, 27 Apr 2024 ..... Hillsboro ..... 196 ..... Hillsboro ..... 62 ..... 8:00 AM ... following

**John L. W. Peters**  
**(830) 609-8093, [txcommitteonwork@proton.me](mailto:txcommitteonwork@proton.me)**

Fri, 5 Apr 2024 ..... Grand Lodge ..... 0 ..... Waco ..... 0 ..... 8:30 AM ..... CoW  
Sat, 13 Apr 2024..... Corpus Christi ..... 189 ..... Corpus Christi ..... 37-A ..... 9:00 AM ..... 1:00 PM  
Sat, 20 Apr 2024 ..... University ..... 1190 ..... Austin ..... 50 ..... 9:00 AM ..... 1:00 PM  
Sat, 27 Apr 2024 ..... Highland Hills ..... 1373 ..... San Antonio ..... 39-C ..... 9:00 AM ..... NA



PO Box 2156, Waco, Tx 76703

254-300-1375

April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024

To the Worshipful Masters and Secretaries of the MW GLoT Lodges:

The 2024 Texas Masonic Charities Foundation grant cycle has ended as of March 31<sup>st</sup>. All the Scholarships, Community Grants, and Teacher Honorariums have been scheduled through our payment system – Melio. The Secretaries according to Grandview, should have or will be receiving instructions from Melio regarding distribution of funds. Depending on the process type you chose (ACH or Check), it may take 10-14 business days to complete. If you made application by the March 31<sup>st</sup> deadline and have not received your Melio notification by April 5th, please contact Ronnie Wise, Board Treasurer ([Ronnie.wise@txmcf.org](mailto:Ronnie.wise@txmcf.org)) or Richard Daniel, Board Secretary ([Richard.daniel@txmcf.org](mailto:Richard.daniel@txmcf.org)).

As Masons of Texas, you should be proud of what you do for our students and our society in Texas. Through your collective efforts at the local level, combined with your annual donations, and proceeds from our investments; we are pleased to announce the following results for 2024:

	Lodges	Lodge Contributions	Foundation Match	Total
Scholarships	542	\$1,345,643	\$519,750	\$1,865,393
Community Grants	135	\$89,387	\$33,300	\$122,687
Teacher Honorariums	89	\$32,000	\$21,500	\$53,500
Total		\$1,467,030	\$574,550	\$2,041,580

Your continued support through your local fundraising activities, Grand Lodge per Capita dues, and your generous annual donations are what make these programs successful. [Make another Gift Now](#)

On behalf of the entire Board, thank you for your efforts and we look forward to our next cycle.

Cody Cockroft, President	Jerry Bob Daniel, Director
Craig Enderli, Vice President	Sam Gibbins, Director
Richard Daniel, Secretary	Chip Green, Director
Ronnie Wise, Treasurer	Jay Hollowell, Director

## **GRAND SECRETARY OFFICE STAFF DIRECTORY**

### **Hours of Operation:**

8:30 AM to 4:00 PM, Monday – Friday

**Phone:** 254-753-7395

**Fax:** 254-753-2944

### **Physical Address:**

715 Columbus Ave  
Waco, TX 76701

### **Mailing Address:**

PO Box 446  
Waco, TX 76703

### **Brad S. Billings - Grand Secretary**

[gs@grandsecretaryoftx.org](mailto:gs@grandsecretaryoftx.org)

**Legal Advice** – Please DO NOT call our office asking questions on Masonic Jurisprudence.

That is a question for your DDGM.

The Internet Committee is partnering with the Grand Secretary's office to offer technical support in the following areas:

- Access to the Grandview Member Portal or password reset
- DDGM, DCO, & DEO access to District-wide tools
- TX Mason APP - including registering or downloading

To seek help with the preceding, send an email to [internet@grandlodgeoftexas.org](mailto:internet@grandlodgeoftexas.org) and please leave a mobile number and your ID so they can reach you.

### **Dave McHam**

[dave@grandsecretaryoftx.org](mailto:dave@grandsecretaryoftx.org)

In-State Affiliations  
Specialized Reporting  
GL & Lodge Procedures  
Vanguard Application Collection

### **Cindy Huerta**

[cindy@grandsecretaryoftx.org](mailto:cindy@grandsecretaryoftx.org)

Annual Returns  
Lodge By-law Revisions  
Relief Assistance Request  
Endowed Memberships

### **Jeff Frayser**

[fraternal@grandsecretaryoftx.org](mailto:fraternal@grandsecretaryoftx.org)

Out-of-State Correspondence  
Dispensations

### **Jeremy Johnson**

[jrjohnson0821@gmail.com](mailto:jrjohnson0821@gmail.com)

Lodge Secretary Training

### **Bruce Mercer**

[bruce@grandsecretaryoftx.org](mailto:bruce@grandsecretaryoftx.org)

Out-of-State Correspondence

### **Justin Hancock**

[justinh@grandsecretaryoftx.org](mailto:justinh@grandsecretaryoftx.org)

Honesty & Integrity Awards  
Lamar Medals  
Forms and Lodge Supply Orders  
Grand Lodge Service Awards

### **Denise Gilmore**

[denise@grandsecretaryoftx.org](mailto:denise@grandsecretaryoftx.org)

Lodge Officer Maintenance  
Esoteric Record Maintenance  
Form 71 Collection  
IRS Form 990's Collection  
Golden Trowel Awards  
Community Builder Awards  
Proxies for Grand Lodge

## SECRETARY INSTRUCTIONS

The following information is intended primarily for the Secretary but may be meaningful to many of your members.

### Lodge Suspense System:

Suspense Dates – Lodge Secretaries should create a suspense system (a reminder system) to alert the Lodge that certain documents are due. This list is offered as a “starter kit” for your consideration:

- a. January – The Worshipful Master should appoint a Committee on Members in Arrears (Article 319a).
- b. May 31 – W. B. and Brandon Carrell Award nominations may be submitted to the Grand Lodge Committee on Public Education for evaluation and recommendation to the Grand Lodge Trustees (Article 14b).
- c. Mid-June – Look for the Annual Returns Format from GL. (Downloaded from the Grand View System after June 24th. Notify the GS staff if you need the returns mailed as a printout).
- d. June 23 – Lodge elections must be completed at the last stated meeting prior to midnight of June 23 (Art. 292). Notify us of the new Lodge Officers immediately so they can be printed in the Directory of Constituent Lodges (do not wait for installation). Submission will be available on the Grand View System from May 24 through midnight June 23.
- e. June 23 – Endowed Membership checks must be in the Office of the Grand Secretary by June 23 to start earning interest in order to receive returns by the next year (Art. 318a). Changes to the amount of endowments must be voted on at the same meeting as the Lodge elections, and notification to the Grand Lodge must be before June 24th. Endowed Membership applications received at the Grand Lodge on or after June 24 must be for the amount that the Lodge reported.
- f. July 15 – Statements of Availability due GS Office. (6a).
- g. July 31 – Lodge installations must be performed from June 24 to prior to midnight July 31 (Art. 298).
- h. August 15 – Annual Returns Report due to Grand Lodge (Art. 493).
- i. August 15 – Resolutions due in GS Office (Art. 172).
- j. September 15 – Lodge Minimum Audit Report 71 is due to the GS Office NLT September 15 (Art. 284).
- k. August 31 & September 15 – Vanguard Applications are due to the DDGM NLT September 15 and to the Grand Secretary NLT September 30 (refer to Vanguard Application Instructions).
- l. October 1 – Lodge By-Laws that must be reviewed by the GL Committee on By-Laws due the GS Office NLT October 1 (Art. 219).
- m. Nov 15 – Form 990-N, Electronic Notice (e-Postcard), must be filed with the IRS by Lodges that have gross receipts of \$50,000 or less or do not meet the requirements for filing the IRS 990 or IRS 990EZ. (Lodges must file the appropriate Form 990 no later than the 15th day of the fifth month following the close of the organization’s fiscal year.)
- n. Dec. 28 – Proxy Certificates are due the GS Office NLT December 28 (Art. 4). You should always appoint a Proxy (in case of an emergency) but he would not vote if any of the top three officers were available. Remember, each brother can have no more than four votes. Therefore, a sitting Worshipful Master cannot be a proxy for another Lodge.