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GRAND SECRETARY'S MONTHLY COMMUNICATION FEBRUARY 2025

SECRETARIES and my Brothers All – Welcome to the February edition of the Grand Secretary's Newsletter. This edition includes the following:

- Featured Item: Lone Star Apron – available for purchase now!
- MASONIC MINUTE – Summary of the Results of Grand Lodge
- The NEW Legacy Builder Award – Form 77b
- Secretary School Beaumont – March 1, 2025
- 2025 Grand Lodge Attendance Statistics
- Monthly Law Reading – Form 23
- Lodge Spotlight – Anahuac Lodge No. 995: Wreaths Across America 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, or by registering your membership through [the Member Portal](#).



FEATURED ITEM

Be in this picture next year! I hope each Past Master will consider purchasing the Lone Star Apron that directly supports your Grand Lodge. Additionally, if your Lodge purchases an apron for the outgoing Master, please consider making this your standard.

<https://www.craftsmansapron.com/products/lone-star-texas-past-master-apron-personalized>

GRAND SECRETARY'S PHOTO CONTEST

Did you attend Grand Lodge? Did you take pictures? If so, please take a few moments and upload your ten (10) best photos by following the QR code to the right or by going to: [GLT2025_01_January\(GAC - members\) - Memento](#). The April edition of this newsletter will reveal the winner and that Brother will receive a **parking pass** for next year's Annual Communication in Waco!



PLEASE READ

GRAND SECRETARY OFFICE UPDATES

AD VALORUM TAX EXEMPTION

The Ad Valorum Tax Exemption is being worked on for 2025. We hope to have something sent out to the Lodge Secretaries by the end of February. Note: It is due to your local tax appraisal office by April 30th, 2025. These are the only details we have currently. Please do not call the office as we don't have any additional information.

SECRETARY SYSTEM OF INFORMATION

Secretary School (Hours 1 – 4 pm)
Saturday, March 1 – Port Neches-Groves Lodge No. 1163
909 Port Neches Ave., Port Neches, TX 77651

WACO HOTEL INFORMATION

If you did NOT fill out one of the forms for hotels at the Annual Communication, please take less than two minutes and complete the following form: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/6W6G6QM>

LEGACY BUILDER AWARD

With the adoption of Resolution No. 3, each Brother who adds five units to his endowment (\$500) will receive the Grand Lodge of Texas LEGACY BUILDER AWARD. Be a part of the inaugural class of Legacy Builders who will receive their award at the 2026 Grand Lodge Annual Communication. This award can be achieved by adding \$500 to your endowment all at once or by adding increments each year until you reach the \$500. Please see your Lodge Secretary and fill out form 77b (linked below). There is no additional form, once you've added five units, the office will print your award and hold it for the Annual Communication. NOTE: this award is not retroactive so only units added after the 2025 Annual Communication are eligible.

<https://tx.grandview.systems/resources/d01a024e-4cff-4786-baaa-a48d16038c2a>

APRONS

The last two years we have run out of aprons at our Annual Communication which is a great problem to have! Before we spend your money to purchase new aprons, we thought it prudent to ask if any of the constituent Lodges (particularly those who have had mergers) have additional aprons to spare.

If your Lodge has aprons they are willing to part with, please let me know at GS@GrandSecretaryoftx.org.

MONTHLY LAW READING

With the adoption of Resolution No. 23, the positions of Senior and Junior Stewards are now added along with those of Marshal, Master of Ceremonies, and Musician, as optional. Form 23 is currently being revised by the By-Laws committee and is anticipated to be released in the March Newsletter. If you have additional questions, please contact RW Dennis Reader at ddreader@comcast.net.

READ PORTIONS APPROPRIATE FOR YOUR LODGE

2025 ANNUAL COMMUNICATION RESULTS

Hold Over Resolution No. 4 – Adopted

This change allows a minimum of Fifty Lodges to call for a special session of Grand Lodge.

Resolution No. 1 – Not Adopted

This Resolution would have capped the profit from Officer Leadership Training at 10%, and any amount exceeding that to be transferred to incentives such as the Vanguard Award Program, or Texas Masonic Charities Foundation.

Resolution No. 2 – Adopted as Written, Amendment was Not Adopted

This Resolution requires the Grand Master to detail the reason for suspending or arresting the Charter of a Lodge.

Resolution No. 3 – Adopted as Amended

This Resolution creates an award to be given to members who contribute an additional \$500 to their existing Lodge Endowment.

Resolution No. 4 – Adopted

This Resolution strikes the phrase “Expiration date to which dues are paid by dues paying Master Masons shall be filled in by the Grand Secretary when the dues cards are prepared,” to make it easier to have permanent dues cards.

Resolution No. 5 – Adopted

A resolution relating to clarifying the process of how the Grand Secretary or Grand Treasurer may be removed from office and replaced.

Resolution No. 6 – Adopted

This Resolution adds the Report of the TMCF to reports that would be printed and available on Day One of the Grand Lodge Session and includes the presentation of that report to the Order of Business on Day One.

Resolution No. 7 – Adopted as Amended

This Resolution requires the Grand Treasurer to provide regular and more detailed financial reports.

Resolution No. 8 – Adopted

This Resolution gives the Grand Master the ability to extend the deadline for election and installation of Lodge officers in the event of a crisis.

Resolution No. 9 – Not Adopted

This Resolution would have deferred the procedures for a Masonic Disciplinary process from those of Title V in cases where any vagueness, doubt, or obvious disagreement arises in any provision, or between various provisions, to the Texas Civil Practice and Remedies Code and/or the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure, as applicable.

Resolution No. 10 – Not Adopted

This Resolution would have required that any Mason accused of a Masonic Disciplinary Violation to be tried in the Lodge wherein he holds membership regardless of where the alleged Masonic Disciplinary Violation occurred and would hold true for EAs and FCs.

Resolution No. 11 – Adopted

This Resolution requires that quilt in a Masonic Disciplinary Procedure be proved “beyond a reasonable doubt.”

Resolution No. 12 – Withdrawn

This Resolution would have extended the deadline for Statements of Availability up to and including November 15th. It would also limit the Nominations from the floor to the following circumstances: For any office that has no candidates, due to vacancy, death, or withdrawal.

Resolution No. 13 – Adopted

This resolution allows a “Mason laboring under Masonic disciplinary action” to be elected, appointed, and installed in an office, but would still prohibit him from receiving a Demit, a certificate of withdrawal or a certificate of good standing.

Resolution No. 14 – Adopted

This Resolution removes the requirement that the Grand Secretary’s signature be on the back of the dues card to make it easier to be a permanent card.

Resolution No. 15 – Adopted

This Resolution allows for the Regulation White Apron to be made from synthetic lambskin, silk, satin, or cotton, as well as the original real lambskin and have the option for rounded corners. It would also allow for the “All Seeing Eye (aka Eye of Providence)” or any of the symbols of Freemasonry appropriate to be displayed upon the bib or body of the apron.

Resolution No. 16 – Not Adopted

This Resolution would have allowed for the minutes of the Lodge to be made available for historical research with appropriate circumstances and permissions.

Resolution No. 17 – Adopted as Amended

This Resolution gives Lodges the option to, once again, include prescribed traditional Masonic Music within the degrees.

Resolution No. 18 – Withdrawn

This Resolution would have changed the current automatic expulsion as the result of a felony charge where further proceedings are deferred without entering an adjudication of guilt and places the defendant on probation, to allowing for the accused’s Home Lodge the option to suspend until successful completion of the probationary period and then reinstate.

Resolution No. 19 – Not Adopted

This Resolution would have allowed Lodge’s to receive upon request of the Grand Secretary’s Office a comprehensive report of the Lodge Endowment Membership Fund (EMF – Already Available).

Resolution No. 20 – Adopted

This Resolution requires that a Masonic Disciplinary Procedure be held within a year of the alleged offense, or a date mutually agreed upon.

Resolution No. 21 – Not Adopted, Amendment Not Adopted

This Resolution would have prevented a member from making themselves available to be elected to a Grand Lodge office in the subsequent year of an unsuccessful attempt to be elected.

Resolution No. 22 – Withdrawn as Moot

This Resolution would allow upon successful consolidation Bremond Lodge No. 350 and Pierce Lodge No. 144 to maintain the Pierce No. 144 and the Bremond name.

Resolution No. 23 – Adopted

This Resolution eliminates the requirement to have Senior and Junior Stewards as Lodge officers.

Resolution No. 24 – Tabled Until the Next Grand Annual Communication

This Resolution further defines the process by which a Grand Master may be suspended from office and his status once suspended.

Resolution No. 25 – Adopted

This Resolution allows for “New Business” specifically Resolutions to be dealt with on the First day of the Grand Lodge Session.

2025 Election Results:

Grand Master – Raborn L. Reader, Jr.

Deputy Grand Master – Jim R. Rumsey

Grand Senior Warden – Justin B. Duty

Grand Junior Warden – H.N. “Chip” Green

Grand Treasurer – Rick Townsend

Grand Secretary – Bradley S. Billings

Committee on Work – Cody M. Cockroft

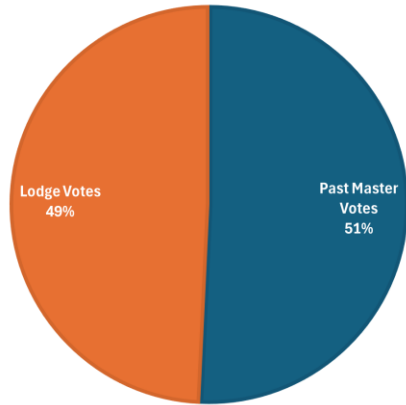
Masonic Home and School – Gregory M. Wright

Grand Lodge Library & Museum of Texas – Corey Harris

2025 GRAND ANNUAL COMMUNICATION ATTENDANCE

This year's Grand Annual Communication was again well attended. Last year we had the most votes present since 2017 and the most total attendees since well before that. This year, 2675 individuals registered, and the final credentials report on Saturday had 1675 Past Masters present and 542 lodges represented creating a near even split between Lodge votes and Past Master votes (Figure 1). These are 6% fewer votes and 11% fewer total attendees than last year, but it was still the most since pre-COVID with the exception of last year.

Figure 1. 2025 Final Vote Distribution (3301 Total Votes)



Figures 2 and 3 show the attendee age distribution and the attendee years of Masonic service for this year's Grand Annual Communication. Overall, Figures 1, 2, and 3 are similar to what we've been seeing in recent years: a good fraction are older Past Masters balanced by a good portion are younger guys going through the lines. Figure 4 shows a similar result: the majority attending currently hold an office, but many have gone through the lines and are active in other ways.

Figure 2. 2025 Attendee Age Distribution

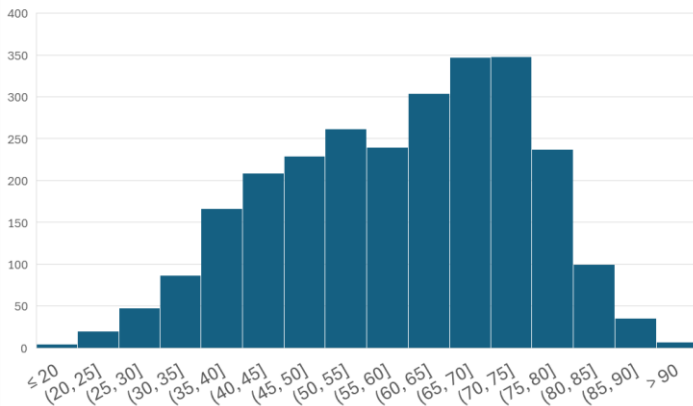


Figure 3. Attendee Years of Masonic Service

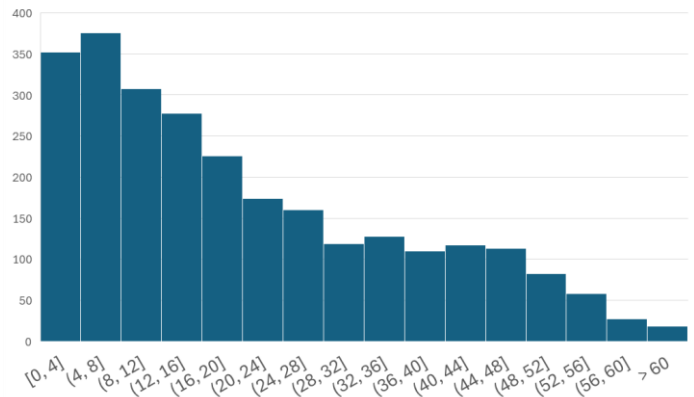


Figure 4. Highest Office of those Attending

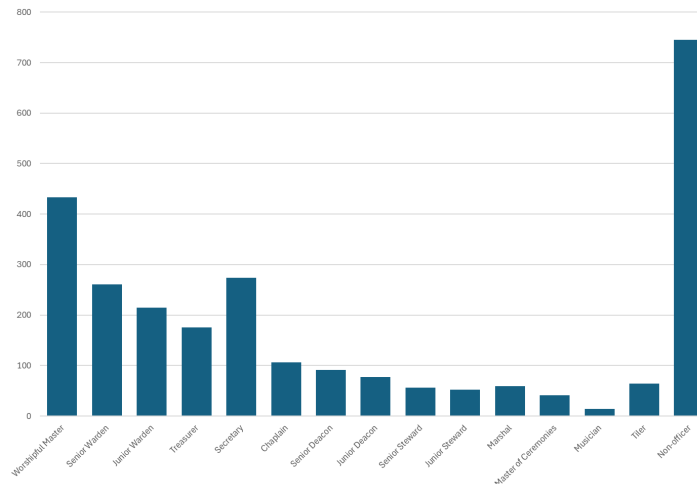


Figure 5 shows a map of the votes from this year's Grand Annual Communication. This map is fairly similar to the map of our overall membership, which is good as far as representation at Grand Lodge.

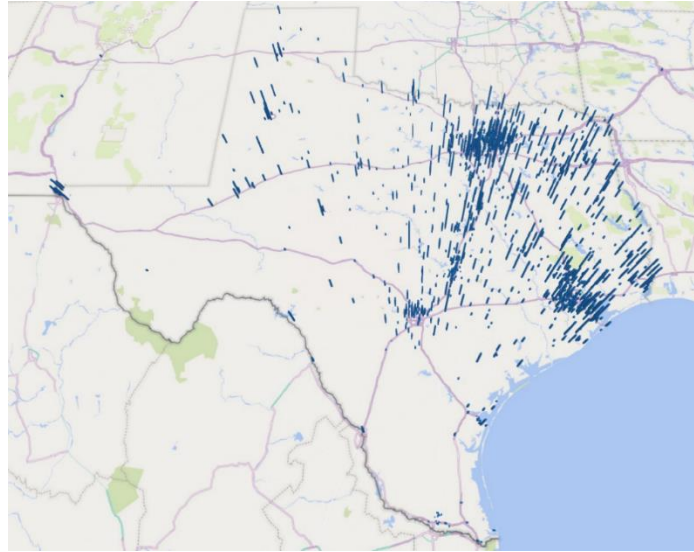
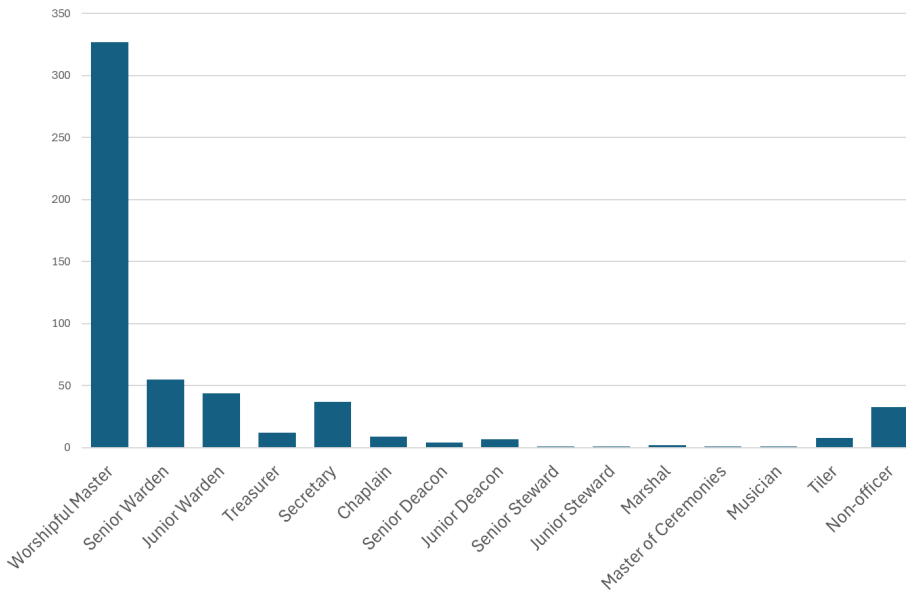


Figure 5. Map of the votes at this year's Grand Annual Communication.

Figure 6. Holder of the Lodge Electronic Voting Device (aka the "Lodge clicker")



Regarding lodge votes, for the 542 lodges that were represented, Figure 6 shows who cast the vote. As you would expect, most of the time it was WM, but we also had 99 Wardens holding lodge clickers and 116 proxies casting votes for the lodge.

Unfortunately, similar to last year, 195 of our lodges (26%) were not represented, even though every WM at their installation promises regular attendance at the Communications of Grand Lodge. 47% of those that didn't show up this year also didn't show up last year, and while you might think that these could just be dead lodges, 67%

of the lodges that didn't show this year have been performing degrees over the past year. They also are not all located at great distances as 72% of them are located within 200 miles of Waco.

Overall, this year's Grand Annual Communication was well-attended and decently represented the Masons of Texas. We again ran out of aprons. Maybe we can get that Grand Secretary of ours to buy some new ones...with long strings.

- Zachary Haston

LODGE SPOTLIGHT:

Anahuac Lodge No. 995 - Wreaths Across America

In April 2024, the Grand Lodge Trustees approved Wreaths Across America as a program for Lodges to participate in. This initiative offers a meaningful way to honor our veterans and showcase Masonry in a positive light to our communities. We're proud to share that Anahuac Lodge No. 995 was the first Lodge to sponsor this program and host a wreath-laying ceremony at a local cemetery. The results were as follows:

392 wreaths sponsored, ensuring every veteran in the cemetery was honored.

250 people attended; an incredible turnout given the town's population of 1,950.

Dispensation was granted by PGM Tommy Chapman to wear aprons during the ceremony, increasing the Lodge's visibility while denoting the Fraternity's respect for veterans. These efforts were featured on the front page of the Baytown Star, Anahuac Progress, and East Chambers Times. The impact of this initiative extended beyond the ceremony itself. Because of the positive visibility, the Lodge received three visitors and is expecting at least one petition. Additionally, as \$5 per wreath goes back to the sponsoring organization, our lodge raised \$2,400! If your Lodge would like to participate in Wreaths Across America Day - Saturday, December 13, 2025, NOW is the time to start planning! Here are some key steps to ensure your success:

1. Choose a cemetery and coordinate with its board to determine the number of veterans interred.
2. Allocate sponsors for all veterans' wreaths at the cemetery.
3. Place orders before the wreath order cut-off date: December 2, 2025.

This program is an incredible way to honor our nation's heroes, strengthen bonds within the community, and increase the visibility of your Lodge. If you are interested in getting started, reach out to WM Randall Decker whose contact information is below. Let's work together to ensure that every veteran is honored and remembered at the next Wreaths Across America Day.

<https://www.wreathscrossamerica.org/>

MONTHLY QUOTE

In the journey of life, the friends who become brothers are the most precious companions. - Unknown

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.

TX MASON APP

The TX Mason app is nearing **5,000** users! Please join the 4,894 Brothers using the TX Mason APP! This is separate from the GrandView App & has a searchable (updated) law book and monitor at your fingertips.

<https://grandlodgeoftexas.app/launch.html>

TEXAS MASONIC RETIREMENT COMMUNITY

Live the Good Life at Texas Masonic Retirement Community

Enjoy breakfast, lunch, and dinner with friends!

Play dominos, cards, or other games with the gang!

Join the bunch to watch the Cowboys, Rangers, or your favorite team!

You deserve a good life with like-minded friends at Texas Masonic Retirement Community.

NO DEPOSIT! Choose from our luxury high-rise apartments, convenient efficiency units, or cottage duplexes. Enjoy all meals with friends, weekly housekeeping, onsite security, and lots of activities. [Watch a video tour](#) or schedule a personal tour by contacting us at 817-275-2893 or

Info@YourTMRC.org. We look forward to hearing from you!

THE TEXAS MASONIC CHARITIES FOUNDATION

<https://givebutter.com/2024GrandMasterAppeal>

Phone: 254-300-1375 - PO Box 2156, Waco, TX 76703, USA - www.txmcf.org

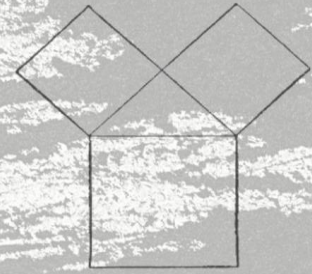
The 2025 Matching Grants Cycle will open January 1st, 2025. In preparation for accepting grants from you and the Foundation submitting payments to your lodge, we need your help.

1. Any appointed member of your lodge can apply for grants from the Foundation for your lodge. Only 1 grant per category will be accepted (1 Scholarship, 1 Community Grant, and 1 Teacher Honorarium - Total of 3).
2. Once approved, payments will be sent via email to the secretaries of record only according to Grandview. The original requester, if different than the secretary, will not receive these instructions. Please ensure your secretary's email addresses and cellular numbers are up to date in Grandview by October 15th to prevent any delays. As of today, there are approximately 40 lodges with missing secretary information.
3. Lastly, there will be improvements in the Google forms application process including confirmation of submission and status. Likewise, additional links will be provided to you for bank routing or mailing instructions via Melio. Bank transfers are processed quicker and cheaper than physical checks via USPS, we hope you will consider that option.

Your prompt attention to accurate information is appreciated. We are hopeful this pre-work will be speed processing of your requests in 2025.



Committee on Work Schedule



<u>Date</u>	<u>Lodge</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>District</u>	<u>Forum</u>	<u>Exam</u>
Cody Cockroft						
Sat, 15 Feb 2025	Magnolia	495	Woodville	121	8:00 AM	Following
Sat, 12 Apr 2025	Lumberton	1430	Lumberton	26-C	8:00 AM	Following
Sat, 19 Apr 2025	Serenity	1462	Hitchcock	31-B	8:00 AM	Following
Sat, 3 May 2025	Liberty	48	Liberty	107	8:00 AM	Following
Chuck Forsyth						
Sat, 15 Mar 2025	Phoenix	275	Weatherford	65	9:00 AM	Following
Steve Pepper						
Sat, 8 Mar 2025	Quanah	689	Quanah	90	8:00 AM	Following
Sat, 5 Apr 2025	Bowie	578	Bowie	86	9:00 AM	Following
Sat, 17 May 2025	WF Faith	1158	Wichita Falls	88	9:00 AM	Following
Cody Stewart						
Sat, 8 Feb 2025	Chambers Creek	499	Ennis	18	8:00 AM	Following
Sat, 15 Feb 2025	Burleson	649	Burleson	63	8:00 AM	Following
Sat, 1 Mar 2025	Lewisville	201	Lewisville	84	8:00 AM	Following
John Peters						
Sat, 8 Feb 2025	Mina	1456	Bastrop	46	9:00 AM	1:00 PM
Sat, 15 Feb 2025	Victoria	40	Victoria	36	9:00 AM	1:00 PM
Sat, 15 Mar 2025	Gatesville	197	Gatesville	69	9:00 AM	1:00 PM
Sat, 22 Mar 2025	Fredericksburg	794	Fredericksburg	51	9:00 AM	1:00 PM
Sat, 12 Apr 2025	University	1190	Austin	50	9:00 AM	1:00 PM

For more information go to: <https://grandlodgeoftexas.org/committee-on-work>

The Grand Lodge of Texas Cornerstone Leveling Ceremonies 2024



For Information Contact:

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

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Lodge</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Grand Lodge Representative</i>
Saturday 2/15/2025	Refreshments at 11:00am Open Humble Lodge at 11:45am Open GL Representation at Noon Cornerstone Ceremony at 1:00	Humble 979 210 Main St. Humble, TX 77338	New Fire Station	H. Bart Henderson Past Deputy Grand Master

Join the Texas Cornerstone State coordinator Kevin Binder's Facebook Group
<https://www.facebook.com/share/CiHNBy12zSaqwVhh/?mibextid=K35XfP>

Checkout the new Grand Lodge Cornerstone page in the
TX Mason APP - <https://grandlodgeoftexas.app/launch.html>

GRAND SECRETARY OFFICE STAFF DIRECTORY

Hours of Operation:

8:30 AM to 4:00 PM, Monday – Friday

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715 Columbus Ave
Waco, TX 76701

Mailing Address:

PO Box 446
Waco, TX 76703

Brad S. Billings - Grand Secretary

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 and please leave a mobile number and your ID so they can reach you.

Dave McHam

dave@grandsecretaryoftx.org

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

Cindy Huerta

cindy@grandsecretaryoftx.org

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

Jeff Frayser

fraternal@grandsecretaryoftx.org

Out-of-State Correspondence
Dispensations

Jeremy Johnson

jrjohnson0821@gmail.com

Lodge Secretary Training

Bruce Mercer

bruce@grandsecretaryoftx.org

Out-of-State Correspondence

Justin Hancock

justinh@grandsecretaryoftx.org

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

Denise Gilmore

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. 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.