

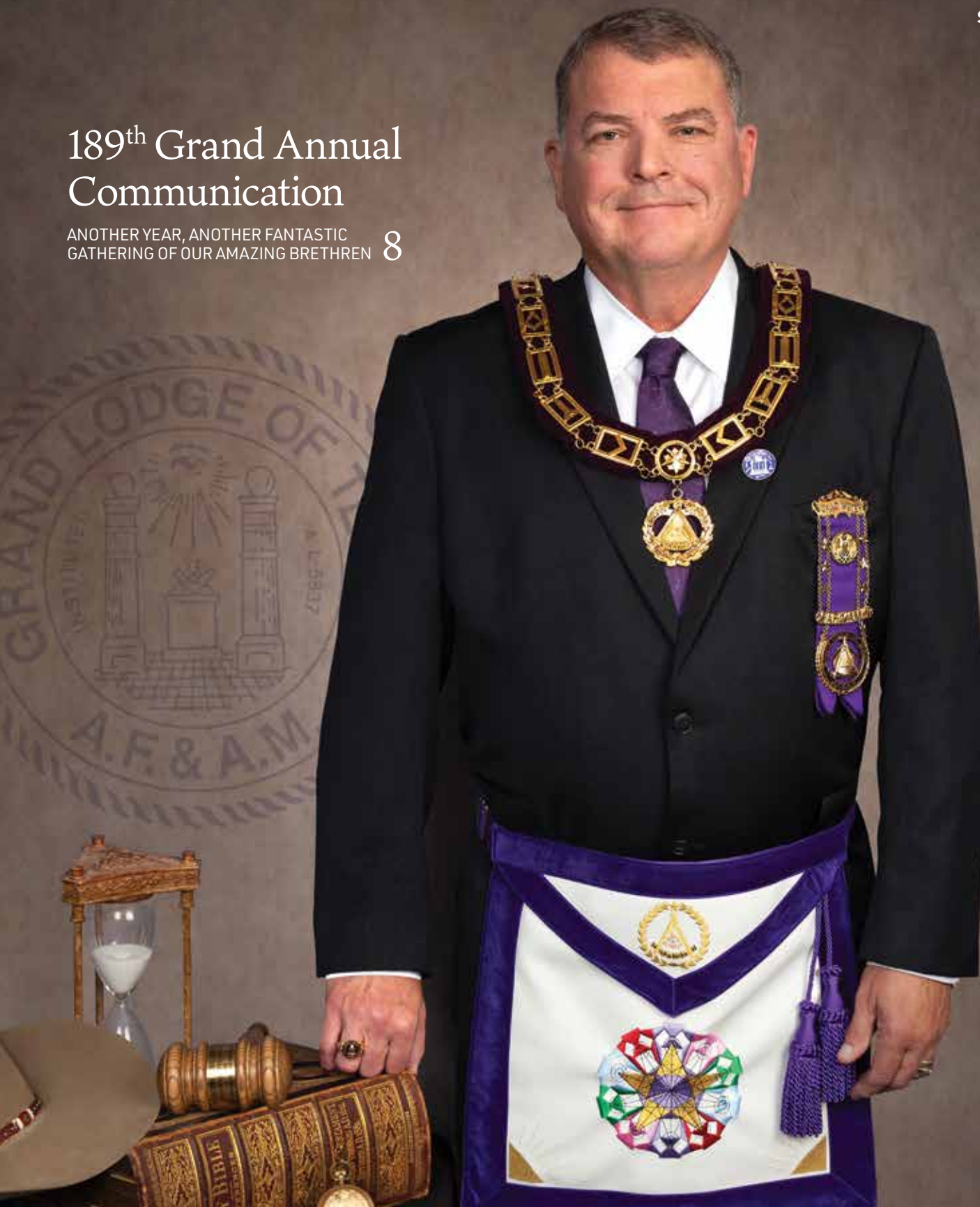
Official Publication of The Grand Lodge of Texas

TEXAS FREEMASON

SPRING 2025

189th Grand Annual Communication

ANOTHER YEAR, ANOTHER FANTASTIC
GATHERING OF OUR AMAZING BRETHREN 8



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SPRING 2025



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Explore the famed city of Petra in this amazing story.

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2025 Grand Master Raborn L. Reader, Jr.

TEXAS FREEMASON

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A WORD FROM THE Grand Master Raborn L. Reader, Jr.



My Brethren All,

During one of my recent commutes, I was listening to one of my favorite radio talk show hosts, and they quoted Susan C. Young as she expressed the following:

“You are the author of your own life story. You have the leading role and get to determine how you interact with your supporting cast and other characters. Without realizing it, you may have allowed the events in your life to write your story for you rather than taking deliberate action to write it in your own voice. What will it take to love your life story to create the happy endings you desire?”

As I thought about this, it made me think and contemplate consequences. As we write our individual story, will those stories be filled with positive impacts by and between those we interacted with? Or will they be riddles with indifference or missed opportunity?

When our life story is judged by future generations, will our story read that we made a positive impact on others and our society by being authentic, empathetic, supportive, and ethical in all our endeavors to our brothers and the Community?

Will it read that we led by example and demonstrated the values and behaviors that we want to see in others, whether it's kindness, righteousness, integrity, or sound moral values? Our actions speak louder than words.

Will it read that we were supportive and offered assistance, whether it's helping a brother, friend, or a neighbor solve a problem? Did we offer a sympathetic ear or just offer some practical advice? Our support can make a world of difference to someone struggling in a season of distress.

Will it read that we shared our knowledge and educated others by sharing our expertise and insights? Did we empower others with knowledge for a positive multi-generational impact?

Will it read that we were compassionate and showed and practiced empathy and understanding towards other's struggles and challenges? Sometimes all someone needs is to feel valued, understood, and validated.

Will it read that we fostered meaningful connections and took God-given time to build genuine relationships with our brothers with genuine interest in their lives?

Will it read that we were a positive influence and a calm demeanor in stressful situations by keeping our passions within due bounds? We should share our excitement and passion for life to inspire others to do the same.

Will it read that we fostered environments that facilitated inclusiveness, and the body and individual felt valued, heard, and as a body we celebrate the individual and the body?

Will it read that we helped build and reinforce confidence of the individual regarding their strengths and unique qualities? Did we present a platform where a man could practice out of his comfort zone and not be concerned with irrational judgment or profiling? Any work, great or small, is progress, and all should be celebrated.

Will it read that we were a consistent presence, and we showed up for our brothers and their families, that we stood beside them in the good times and the bad? Are we going to build trust by keeping our promises; to let our brothers know they can count on us without needing to ask?

Will it read that we stood for integrity and justice by being fair and honest in all our interactions, speaking up when we witness a wrongdoing or unfair treatment? We should develop an understanding of the relationship we have to other men, our institutions, and our God that allows us to develop an internal compass that steers us towards ethical values and sound moral principles, by which we should live.

So, the question before us is, how will we write our story as Masons and a Fraternity?

Sincerely & Fraternally,

Raborn L. Reader, Jr.
Grand Master

INTRODUCTION OF THE Grand Junior Warden



From Humble Beginnings to Masonic Leadership

H. N. "Chip" Green, Jr. was born on December 14, 1960, to Horace Noble and Maxine Green in Dayton, Texas. A seventh-generation Texan and a lifelong resident of Liberty County, he attended first grade at Stephen F. Austin Elementary in Dayton, then moved to Tarkington where he attended, and graduated from Tarkington High School in 1979. Soon after, he began his career at Union Tank Car Co. and, after over thirty years, retired as Area Manager.

On February 5, 1982, he married the love of his life, Sonda Dannette Groce, from Cleveland and they have enjoyed 43 years of adventure and travel together. They reside in Cleveland, Texas, and have two adult children, Brandon, and Tiffany. Besides Masonry and family, Chip enjoys hunting, fishing, gardening, and traveling.

Masonic Journey

He was initiated, passed, and raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason in Tarkington Prairie Lodge No. 498 in 2008. He rose through the chairs, serving as Master in 2012-13, and has been Treasurer from 2017 to the present. He was honored to receive the Golden Trowel Award from Tarkington Prairie No. 498 in 2018. He holds plural memberships in Bedias Lodge No. 651 (currently Junior Warden), Tranquility Lodge No. 2000 (currently Senior Warden), Washington

Lodge No. 18 (currently Junior Deacon), Humble Lodge No. 979, and Texas Lodge of Research No. 1999.

Service to the Grand Lodge

His service to the Grand Lodge began in 2015 with an appointment by Grand Master Michael L. Wiggins as District Deputy Grand Master of Masonic District No. 27. He served as District Education Officer in 2018, was appointed by Grand Master Paul D. Underwood as District Deputy Grand Master at Large in 2020, was appointed to the Public Education Committee in 2020 currently Chairman and was Grand Pursuivant in 2021. He is a member of North Houston Chapter RAM No. 472, North Houston RSM No. 387, Melrose Commandery No. 109, Houston Valley Scottish Rite, Noble at Arabia Shrine in Houston, member of Cleveland Order of Eastern star No. 465, and New Caney Order of Eastern Star No. 1093

Community Involvement

Chip has served as a director of the Texas Masonic Charities Foundation from 2019-2025, the Liberty County Tax Appraisal Review Board (9 years), Area IX representative of the Texas FFA Alumni (3 years), Director and Vice President of Trinity Valley Exposition 2009-2018, Board member and President Cleveland Livestock Show and Dairy Day 1995-2006 and Scholarship Committees for several community organizations. He is a sponsor of Ducks Unlimited, Trinity Valley Exposition, and the Cleveland Senior Citizens. Youth auction buyer of both Cleveland Livestock Show and Trinity Valley Exposition. He is a member of the Sam Houston Hall of Fame, Dime a Day, and a Ruby Patron of the Masonic Grand Lodge Library and Museum of Texas.

Grand Junior Warden Message

Brethren, it is with great Honor I address you as your Grand Junior Warden. The Brotherly love and support I have received

throughout the state and at our Grand Communication is something I will cherish for the rest of my life. I want to thank the Masons of Texas for the hospitality and warm welcomes I have received, as I have traveled this Great state. As I sat in Lodges where I knew no one and witnessed masonry at work, I had the privilege of meeting many Brothers and walked away with a whole list of Brothers I could call friends. I also got to see many Lodge traditions that excited my mind, it's these things you will experience if you get out and travel.

As a Trustee of the Grand Lodge, I and the other Trustees have committed to working together in Peace and Harmony for the betterment of you, the Masons of Texas, although we may not always agree, we will agree to disagree, in a Gentlemanly manner, and do what's best for the whole.

Finally, Brethren, I want to hear your ideas and thoughts, and I want to know what your priorities are for Our Grand Lodge. I will continue visiting Lodges, as I have a Life Goal to sit a Stated Meeting in every Lodge in Texas, and with over half completed, of the current 740, Good Lord willing I will accomplish my goal. My hope is that you support your Lodge(s), Community, the Charity of your choice, and Your Grand Lodge, get involved in all. In every endeavor, exemplify dedication, leadership, and community spirit. Make a lifelong commitment to service, both in Masonry and your community, which stands as a testament to your character and legacy. In closing, I offer this quote from one of my mentors when I started my Masonic journey, "You'll only get out of Masonry, what you put into it."

Sincerely and Fraternally,

H. N. "Chip" Green, Jr.
Grand Junior Warden

A WORD FROM THE Deputy Grand Master



Brethren,

I am overwrought with joy and gratitude for the continued trust and support of the Masons of Texas. I have traversed the vast landscape of this place we call Texas, shaken many hands, and looked into countless eyes and said that peace and harmony must prevail. Accompanying that handshake was a promise that I would do my part to bring

peace and harmony back to our gentle fraternity, and somberly asked that you do the same. Brethren, I am proud to say, that because of you, peace and harmony prevails.

What a difference a year can make. Lodges are taking care of business and making Masons, brotherly love and affection are being spread across the state, social media is back to arguing about which lodge has the best food or the most unique artifact or heirloom, and our Grand Annual Communication was smooth, orderly, drama free, and fun. We proved that we could disagree with each other on policy and politics, and yet not be disagreeable with one another as Masons.

Our work is not done. We must continue to strive toward that harmonious destiny our ritual foretells. What makes you a Mason? Of course, you know the answer, but does the answer resonate with you? Do your

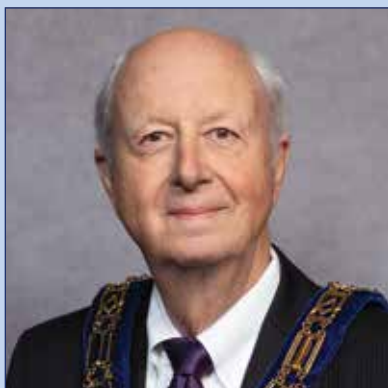
actions each and every day support the tenets which bind us to each other? Think of the lessons of the sword, intertwine those with the working tools of the various degrees and emblems upon the Master's carpet. The allegories of Freemasonry are not merely stories or words spoken in a lodge room, but a road map that each should use to plot his course.

Brethren, it is with an excited, yet humbled, heart that I embark upon this leg of the journey. I ask that you continue the journey with me. I look forward to seeing many of you throughout the year at various events and activities. As many of you already know, there is no telling when I might walk into your lodge building and sit down for dinner.

Sincerely & Fraternaly,

Jim Rumsey
Deputy Grand Master

A WORD FROM THE Grand Treasurer



Brethren,

Thank you for allowing me to continue in the role of Grand Treasurer during 2025. I have enjoyed my duties in the Grand Lodge of Texas very much and I think we have made significant progress in several areas.

Last fall we issued a new accounting manual to the five individuals who are involved in the aspects of accounting for various Grand Lodge activities and

financial status. This documentation will help ensure the integrity and correctness of our accounting reports and records now and in the future. We are currently updating this manual to be more complete and accurate.

GLOT is in good financial shape. Net worth was approximately \$24 million at year end. Also, when your lodge gives financial assistance to a distressed Brother, I encourage you to seek additional funds from the Grand Lodge Assistance Fund through your DDGM. The Finance Committee is very punctual in responding to lodge requests.

The 2025 budget was approved in Waco last month and I want to thank Ronnie Wise, who is chairman of the Finance Committee, for his tireless efforts to seek everyone's input about their plans for this year.

Investment returns for 2024 were great, exceeding 9% for the three funds belonging to Grand Lodge and the \$32 million Endowed Membership Fund which belongs to the lodges. They were invested in a variety of mutual funds to achieve a broadly diversified portfolio of 60% equities and 40% fixed income. We achieved substantial savings in investment fees and our total investments should

be easier to monitor and follow in the future. I want to thank David Ashley, chairman of the Investment Committee, for his efforts last year. I believe we are well positioned for the long term, which is the real investment goal for our money.

Chris Galloway, assisted by Sam Gibbins, Chris Choat and me, gave three Zoom meetings for lodge treasurers last year. The participation was good, and a lot of valuable information was shared, and questions were answered. I hope we can continue these sessions.

Please be punctual this summer in filing your annual report and making your lodge payment. Also be on the lookout for the annual distribution check to your lodge in August which comes in a plain envelope.

Your six trustees come from different backgrounds and experiences, but I believe we will work as a team this year to provide guidance and oversight for the Grand Lodge of Texas and for the Masons of Texas.

Sincerely & Fraternaly

Rick Townsend
Grand Treasurer

A WORD FROM THE Grand Secretary



Brethren,

I first want to begin by expressing my gratitude to the members of the Grand West for once again electing me as your Grand Secretary. I also want to thank the Great Architect of the Universe, whose counsel I sought before deciding to run for this role.

It has been a busy start to the Grand Lodge year, with many of you attending the Annual Communication and the festivities that surround it. It is always a great time, and I encourage all Master Masons to plan on attending next year. I have attended Grand Lodge every year since I was raised in 2007, and it somehow continues to be more fun each year.

Grand Lodge Projects

What I enjoy most about serving as your Grand Secretary is the diversity of the work I get to do. One day this past week, I had a phone call regarding an upgrade

to our Masonic license plate, followed by another call about our fundraising project with Dave & Buster's, and then a planning call for the Conference of Grand Masters of North America—and that was all just within a couple of hours! Most exciting of all is that most of these projects are initiated by Masons like you, who have great ideas and share them with me. Several of these initiatives have gone on to generate thousands, even tens of thousands, of dollars for our Grand Lodge! If you have an idea you would like to discuss with me, please email me at GS@GrandSecretaryofTX.org.

Ad Valorem Tax Exemption

The paperwork for the Ad Valorem Tax Exemption was submitted to the State Comptroller's Office on 11 February 2025. According to our records, it is not due until 30 April 2025. This may be contradictory to what the Central Appraisal Districts are telling you; however, the State supersedes local districts.

Once we receive the paperwork back from the State, it will be uploaded into Grand View. It will be the responsibility of your Lodge to ensure that the local appraisal district receives it.

Legacy Builder Award

With the adoption of Resolution No. 3, each Brother who contributes five additional units to his endowment (\$500) will receive the Grand Lodge of Texas **Legacy Builder Award**. Be part of the

inaugural class of Legacy Builders, who will receive their awards at the 2026 Grand Lodge Annual Communication.

This award can be earned by adding \$500 to your endowment all at once or by adding increments each year until you reach the \$500 threshold. Please see your Lodge Secretary and complete Form 77b on Grand View. There is no additional form required—once you have added five units, the office will print your award and hold it for presentation at the Annual Communication. **Note:** This award is not retroactive; so only units added after the 2025 Annual Communication will be eligible.

Now, imagine if we had 1,000 members sign up... That would bring an additional inflow of **half a million dollars** into the Lodge's Endowment Fund, and generate approximately \$25,000 each year to go back to Texas Lodges (assuming a 5% return). Please support **your** Lodge through this new Grand Lodge award.

Fraternally,

Brad S. Billings, PGM
Grand Secretary



2025 Grand Lodge Officers



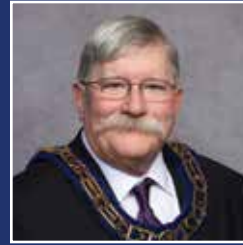
Most Worshipful
Raborn L. Reader, Jr.
Grand Master



Right Worshipful
Jim Rumsey
Deputy Grand Master



Right Worshipful
Justin B. Duty
Grand Senior Warden



Right Worshipful
H. N. "Chip" Green, Jr.
Grand Junior Warden



Right Worshipful
Richard C. Townsend
Grand Treasurer



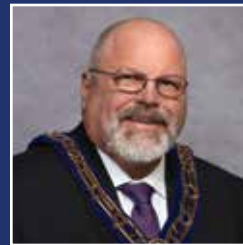
Right Worshipful
Brad Billings
Grand Secretary



Right Worshipful
Chris Lyons
Grand Chaplain



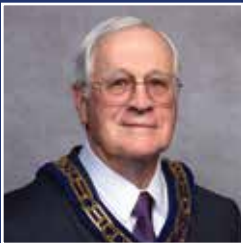
Right Worshipful
Kevin Binder
Grand Orator



Right Worshipful
Dennis Reader
Grand Marshal



Right Worshipful
Scott Mills
Grand Senior Deacon



Worshipful
Gerald Dawson
Grand Junior Deacon



Worshipful
Joe Bennett
Grand Senior Steward



Worshipful
Scott Mikos
Grand Junior Steward



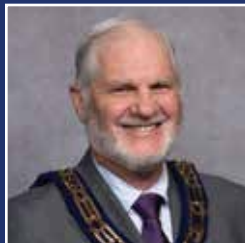
Worshipful
John Quaas
Grand Pursuivant



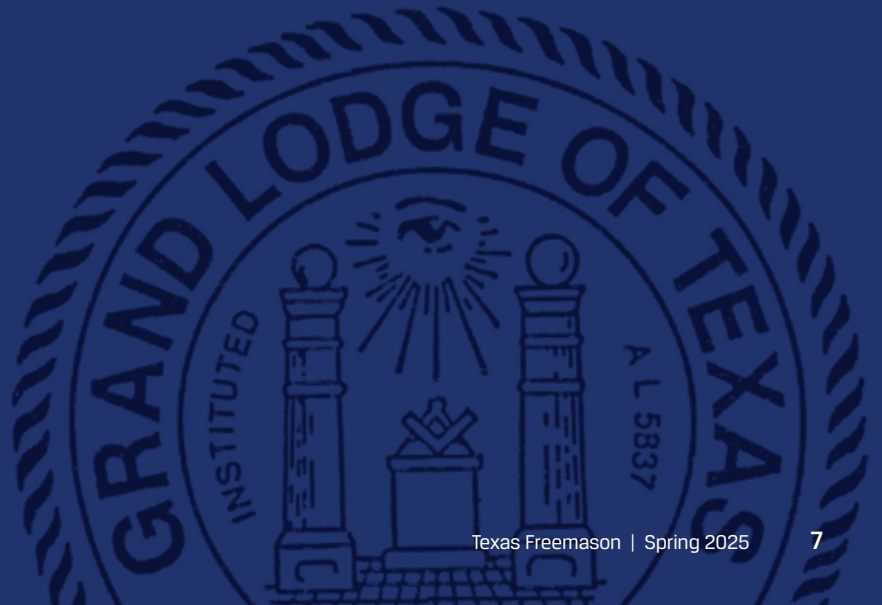
Worshipful
Keith McCoy
Grand Musician



Worshipful
Charles Broussard
Grand Photographer



Worshipful
Stephen Blackman
Grand Tiler



The 189th Grand Annual Communication

By Dean Bryant, Staff Writer

Another Grand Lodge year comes to an end, and the Masons of Texas traveled in great numbers to attend the Grand Lodge of Texas 189th Grand Annual Communication in Waco. It was a typical January, with the weather in the mid-50's to mid-60's, which made for pleasant traveling.

For most, the Grand Annual Communication starts on a Thursday; however, there is a lot of activity in the days leading up to the opening sessions to ensure that everything is in place, and ready to roll. Ensuring proper functioning of sound systems, visual aids, registration, and overall setup is essential to providing all Brethren with a stress-free experience.

The Internet Committee and sound technicians are making final adjustments to enhance the experience for all attendees.



The Registration team working tirelessly, with approximately 3,500 packs, filled, labeled and ready to hand out to the attendees.



Thursday morning is an exciting time for the incoming District Deputy Grand Masters as they receive their final briefing, collect their apron cases, ties, badges, other goodies, and final instructions.



Each morning, the foyer is full of Masons shaking hands, enjoying fellowship, and sharing stories before getting to work in the auditorium. It's so good to have this annual opportunity to gather together.



First Session: Thursday Afternoon

On Thursday afternoon, January 16th, the Brethren entered the auditorium, sat back, and relaxed as W.⚔ Michael Coté Jr., Grand Musician, and R.⚔ W.⚔ Michael Coté, Sr., District Deputy Grand Master at Large provided music for our enjoyment. A perfect start to a wonderful afternoon.





The Pre-formal Opening Ceremony was conducted by R. W. Thomas F. Griffin, Past Grand Master of Texas Masons, and followed by a prayer from R. W. Daniel M. Bowden, Grand Chaplain.



Impressive Honor Guard Entrance by the Grand Commandery of Texas - The support from several Texas Sir Knights in the Honor Guard was well appreciated. All Sir Knights looked sharp with their immaculate uniforms, shining swords, and unmistakable Chapeaus as they assisted with the dignitary introductions. The introductions commenced with the Grand Lodge Officers, District Deputy Grand Masters, Elected Committees and Board members, Past Grand Masters, all with their wives were introduced. The Sir Knights then formed an arch of steel as M. W. Tommy F. Chapman, Grand Master and his Lady Kathy were presented to those assembled.



With M. W. Tommy F. Chapman, Grand Master, presiding in the Grand East, assisted by R. W. Billy A. Rhea, Grand Marshal, W. Raul J. Scully, Grand Senior Deacon, and W. Ricky D. Cox, the Grand Tiler, commenced the reception of distinguished guests, followed by the presentation of the Colors by the National Sojourners.

Pledges of Allegiance to the United State Flag and that of Texas were led by R. W. Jim Rumsey, and R. W. Justin Duty, Grand Senior, and Junior Wardens, respectively.



As the afternoon commenced, we all enjoyed the several "Roll Calls and Welcomes" with responses from the dignitaries and appendant bodies in attendance.

Second Session: Friday Morning

At 9:00 a.m., the Grand Gavel dropped in the Grand East for the Opening of the One Hundred and Eighty-Ninth Grand Annual

Communication of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Texas, with M. W. Tommy F. Chapman, Grand Master presiding. The first session focused on the reading of the various Committee reports, commencing with the report of Committee on Credentials by Brother Mark D. Dieckman, Chairman. Several reports were read, and valuable information was shared with the Brothers in attendance, and then, we were called from Labor, time to stretch our legs and get some refreshment.

Third Session: Friday Afternoon

There was work to be done so, with refreshment completed, we returned to the Auditorium and commenced with the third session. We had an opportunity to sit back, relax and enjoy the music delivered by W. Michael Coté Jr., Grand Musician, and R. W. Michael Coté, Sr., District Deputy Grand Master at Large, this being followed by R. W. T. Chance Chapman, Grand Orator as he delivered a wonderful Oration.



R. W. T. Chance Chapman, Grand Orator

Time flies when we enjoy ourselves and we soon arrive at 2:00p.m., the time to call Grand Lodge back to Labor. As with all sessions, we start by requesting the aid of Deity. R. W. Daniel Bowden, Grand Chaplain led us in prayer before we commenced with our work. There were more reports throughout the afternoon that gave an understanding of the many Committees that work tirelessly to support our Grand Lodge, and the Masons of Texas.



R. W. Daniel Bowden, Grand Chaplain leading us in Prayer

Fourth Session: Saturday Morning

Starting promptly on Saturday morning, we proceeded with Grand Lodge being called to labor, followed by the conclusion of the outstanding business. It seemed like time flew by and we were at 10:00a.m., the time for the election of the Grand Lodge Officers. The election was completed and witnessed by a near full auditorium - there were few spare seats to be found.

The elections resulted in R. W. Raborn L. Reader, Jr. being elected as Grand Master elect. R. W. Jim Rumsey as Deputy Grand Master elect, R. W. Justin B. Duty as Grand Senior Warden elect.

Then the time came for the election of the Grand Junior Warden for the ensuing Masonic year. We had three very worthy Brothers making themselves available for the Office of Grand Junior Warden, these being Brothers H. N. "Chip" Green, Jr., Robert M. Park, and Keith Reynolds. The election saw Brother H. N. "Chip" Green, Jr. elected to the Office of Grand Junior Warden. I am sure we all wish him the best as he prepares himself to lead our fraternity in the future, Thank you Brother Green. A big thank you should also go to Brothers Park and Reynolds for making themselves available for the Grand South, and being wonderful examples of what candidates should be.

Appreciation for continued dedication and commitment to our Grand Lodge goes to R. W. Brad Billings, P.G.M., Grand Secretary, and R. W. Richard Townsend, Grand Treasurer, for making themselves available to support our Grand Lodges and Brethren across the State for another year. Finally, congratulations to all the newly elected and appointed Grand Lodge Officers, we wish you all the very best for the ensuing Masonic Year.

Fifth Session: Saturday Afternoon

The fifth and final session on Saturday saw the installation of the newly elected and appointed Grand Lodge Officers. The installation team worked very well together and made this event special for the incoming Grand Officers and the Masons in attendance.

Master of Ceremonies

R. W. Thomas F. Griffin, Past Grand Master

Installing Officer

R. W. Michael L. Wiggins, Past Grand Master

Installing Marshal

R. W. Donny Broughton, Past Grand Master

Installing Chaplain

R. W. Wendell P. Miller, Past Grand Master



Grand Officer Installation Team - Thank you R. W. Sirs for your continued support and dedication to our Grand Lodge and Brethren across the State.

R. W. Michael L. Wiggins, Past Grand Master and R. W. Donny Broughton, Past Grand Master worked together as the installing Officer and Marshal, respectively. A great team, Thank you R. W. Wiggins and R. W. Broughton for a job well done.

The installation of the Grand Lodge Officers was followed by the several presentations to M. W. Raborn L. Reader, Jr., Grand Master. After the remarks by our Grand Master, Grand Lodge was called to Labor. The One Hundred and Eighty Ninth Grand Annual Communication of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Texas was then closed by M. W. Raborn L. Reader, Jr., Grand Master.

Congratulations to Grand Master Raborn L. Reader, Jr. on becoming the 2025 Grand Master of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Texas. I am confident that our fraternity is in good hands with his leadership and the support of our Grand Lodge teams.



Installation of M. W. Raborn L. Reader, Jr., Thank you Sir for your service to the Masons of Texas



Also, congratulations and thank you to R. W. Tommy F. Chapman and his Lady Kathy for another successful year.



2025 Summary of Proposed Resolutions

H

HOLD OVER RESOLUTION NO 4.

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

Adopted

1

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.

Not Adopted

7

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

Adopted as Amended

2

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

Adopted

8

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.

Adopted

3

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

Adopted as Amended

9

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.

Not Adopted

4

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.

Adopted

10

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.

Not Adopted

5

This Resolution clarifies the process of how the Grand Secretary or Grand Treasurer may be removed from office and replaced.

Adopted

11

This Resolution requires that guilt in a Masonic Disciplinary Procedure be proved "beyond a reasonable doubt."

Adopted

6

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.

Adopted

12

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.

Withdrawn

2025 Election Results

Grand Master

Raborn L. Reader, Jr.

Deputy Grand Master

Jim Rumsey

Grand Senior Warden

Justin B. Duty

Grand Junior Warden

H. N. "Chip" Green, Jr.

Grand Treasurer

Richard C. Townsend

13

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.
Adopted

14

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.
Adopted

15

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.
Adopted

16

This Resolution would have allowed for the minutes of the Lodge to be made available for historical research with appropriate circumstances and permissions.
Not Adopted

17

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

18

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 placing the defendant on probation, to allowing the accused's Home Lodge the option to suspend until successful completion of the probationary period and then reinstate.
Withdrawn

19

This Resolution would have allowed Lodges to receive upon request of the Grand Secretary's Office a comprehensive report of the Lodge Endowment Membership Fund (EMF – Already Available).
Not Adopted

20

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

21

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.
Not Adopted as Amended

22

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.
Moot – Name Change Does Not Require Vote

23

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

24

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

25

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

Grand Secretary
Bradley S. Billings

Committee on Work
Cody M. Cockroft

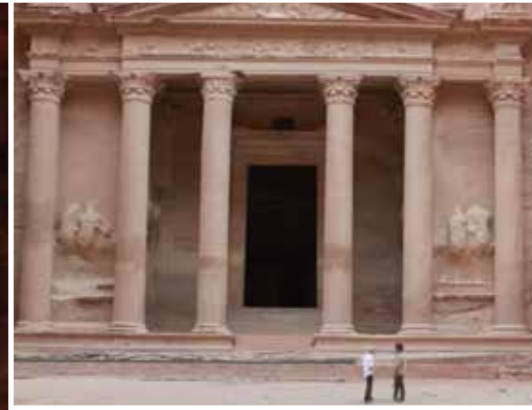
Home and School Board
Gregory M. Wright

Library and Museum Board
Corey M. Harris

For more detail go to:
<https://grandlodgeof-texas.org/2025-ac>

A TEXAS MASON AT PETRA, JORDAN

By Pete Normand, Contributing Writer



Archaeological sites throughout the Middle East are good places to look if you want to find Texas Mason Pearce Paul Creasman, PhD. A member of St. Alban's Lodge No. 1455 at College Station, Dr. Creasman is the Executive Director of the American Research Center at Amman, Jordan. After completing his doctorate at Texas A&M University, Creasman spent over a decade on the faculty at the University of Arizona, before accepting his current assignment in Jordan.

In October 2024, Dr. Creasman took center stage in the season premiere of the Discovery Channel's *Expedition Unknown*. The two-part episode featured an historic discovery

in a tomb hidden beneath the iconic Treasury building at Petra, Jordan. This magnificent structure is now world famous for the part it played in the movie *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*.

2,000 years ago, the enigmatic Nabataean Kingdom carved an entire city by hand into the walls of a desert canyon, with "The Treasury" at its center. A joint Jordanian/American project led by Brother Dr. Creasman, was given exceedingly rare permission to conduct a remote sensing scan and dig beneath the Treasury. Joined by Josh Gates, explorer and television presenter, the team made a stunning discovery: a hidden chamber filled with at





least a dozen Nabataean burials located directly beneath the Treasury.

In the first episode of the new season of *Expedition Unknown*, titled “Hunt for Petra’s Lost Tombs” (S14, E1), burial tombs are discovered beneath the entrance to the Treasury. In the second episode, “Petra’s Secrets Revealed” (S14, E2), Creasman and Gates excavate and enter the newly discovered tombs, finding a dozen burials, the first to be found at Petra.

Since nearly all the tombs at Petra have been found empty, this is perhaps the most significant tomb ever found at Petra, and a

discovery of historic proportions. The breakthrough could not only reveal the secrets of the Treasury, it could also offer an extraordinary glimpse into the lives of the early Nabataeans who built Petra.

Dr. Creasman added, “There is so much that we have yet to learn about the Treasury. When was this remarkable structure built, and why? Little did we know that this dig might completely change what we know about the Treasury and help solve the mysteries of the Nabataean people. With the support of the Jordanian government, this excavation is bringing us closer than ever to answers.”





At Capparelli's And Satisfaction In The Work

By James C. "Chris" Williams IV, Staff Writer



It's the same every month. He calls and says he's starving and wants to know where I am taking him and somehow finds a way to make me pay. Well it was about time for that to stop. Not the eatingjust the paying. He claims that good material is not free and since I meet with him every month and write his words that I ought to be happy to buy his lunch....and I am.... some of the time. The way he eats, a man could go bankrupt pretty quick. Actually it's only once a month and it's not that bad but it's the principal of the thing. There was a new Italian restaurant named Capparelli Bros. we hadn't been to yet that I wanted to try. I told him I would meet him there and hurried to get there before him. It's not a very big place and I wanted to make sure we sat in the very back corner so when he got the crazies.....as he usually does.....that we would not be a spectacle. I was glad to see as I walked in that the table in the back was open. Tara the owner met me inside the door and told me I could sit anywhere I wanted. I told her thanks and that I was going to the back table and that I hoped they cooked enough food today. Out of the corner of my eye I saw the puzzled look on her face as I passed.... and I chuckled under my breath knowing she wouldn't be puzzled long. Our server was a nice young lady who brought a couple of iced teas and some delicious bread, olive oil and Italian spices while I was waiting for John, who was taking longer than I thought he would. I was starting to get a little worried when the door flew open, and he rushed in. Every person in the place turned to see what the commotion was and for a split second I thought about sliding down in my chair and hiding. Instead I waved and he saw me and headed back to the table with all eyes on him. When he slid into his seat he had a sheepish look on his face and said, "I got lost. My darned navigation took me to the livestock feed store down the road and I thought you were trying to be funny sending me there. So I went in looking for you to spoil the joke." "I wasn't

there John," I said. "I know that now," He said sarcastically. "I am about to die of hunger, so we need to eat now."

It was Tara who took our orders. She looked at me first and I ordered the Lasagna and a small Caesar Salad. She smiled her approval of my choice and turned to John. He began to order and at first it all seemed normal. He ordered the eggplant parmigiana and an Italian salad. Once again she smiled and reached for the menus. After taking mine she reached for John's who refused to give it up. He just looked at her confused face and began to order more. By the time he was done, Tara had filled one page on her pad and most of the next. He added an appetizer called tomato bread, a bowl of spaghetti and meatballs, a plate of lasagna, and two medium pizzas. When he finished and handed her the menu she smiled at me and said, "Now I understand." I informed him that we were "Going Dutch" today and I was buying my lunch, and he was buying his. He smiled and nodded like he understood.

It wasn't long before we had our food and with all he had ordered there was not enough room on our table, so Tara left the serving tray on its stand next to the table with several of his dishes still on it. I could see other diners staring as a full plate replaced a just emptied plate on the tray. We managed to get through the meal without incident except for the two older guys who came up and shook his hand and told him they had never seen anyone eat that much at one sitting. I told them to stick around while he had dessert, and they had a good laugh as they left. I wasn't laughing though. He had dessert of course and finally I asked him if he had anything he wanted to share for this month's newsletter.

Visit <https://grandlodgeoftexas.org/texas-freemason-magazine> for the rest of the story.

A Look Back

For the Student of Things Egyptian

By R. C. Blackmer – The Builder Magazine, January 1925 Volume XI, No. I

FIRST STEPS IN EGYPTIAN, by Sir E. A. Wallis Budge. AMENISM, ATENISM AND EGYPTIAN MONOTHEISM WITH HIEROGLYPHIC TEXTS OF HYMNS OF AMEN AND ATEN, an English Translation, by Sir E. A. Wallis Budge. Both books may be purchased through the National Masonic Research Society, the former at \$3.85, the latter at \$5.

THERE have recently come to notice two books bearing the above titles. Sir Wallis Budge is keeper of the Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities in the British Museum and has spent a great deal of his own time and money in trying to keep people interested in those old kings and pyramid builders who have for so many thousand years rested in the rocky tombs situated along the banks of the Nile. The First Steps in Egyptian gives us a very helpful account of the manner in which the ancient inscriptions were read and translated. The author gives us the ancient texts of nearly all the most important inscriptions and furnishes us with so much information regarding phonetics that almost any fair student of languages should be able to pronounce the words and separate the phonetic elements of the hieroglyphic word from the signs which were simply ideographic. We do not say that a few hours' or a few days' study would enable the average student to read and translate Egyptian texts, but we do say that the average student could in that time acquire much that is worthwhile towards attaining that end.

It is scarcely a century ago that travelers thought the cuneiform inscriptions on the garments of the carved statues of Darius were simply trimming and ornaments. It took some time before scholars could determine that the inscription was writing at all. For ages, the most learned men could not translate the first letter or sound of Egyptian. We now know that the Egyptian alphabet does not differ materially from the Hebrew so far as the sounds go, though there are many different figures employed for the same sound under different circumstances and meanings. We also find that the Egyptian has the same habit of dropping out vowel sounds that the Hebrew had. The direction in which the inscriptions should be read, Sir Wallis makes clear. We are also forcibly struck with the fact of how little the Egyptian texts differ during the forty centuries of their history. An Englishman or American of today cannot read without a dictionary and grammar the English of King Alfred of blessed memory, but we see no reason

why it would have been especially difficult for Cleopatra to read the hieroglyphic inscriptions of Queen Hattisue or Rameses, any more than the hieroglyphic writings of her own day. It may be quite possible that their spoken tongue changed from age to age, but their writing underwent very little alteration through the five or six thousand years of its prevalence.

Regarding the Book of Tutankhamen, we must hold the impression that it was published before the tomb was thoroughly investigated and its inscriptions read. Most of the contents of the book are devoted to the inscriptions belonging to the age of Tutankhamen's father-in-law, Akhtenaten, who is known as the heretic king, because he withdrew his patronage from the priesthood and temples of Thebes and the worship of AMEN-RA and set up a city and worship of his own. Many writers have claimed that his reformation was a change from polytheism to monotheism. Sir Wallis' investigations fail to bear out any such claim. He says

that when an ancient Egyptian invoked any particular deity in prayer, he was sure to address that deity as the one and only God in the universe, self-creating and self-existing, and that when Akhtenaten addressed particularly the solar disk, he addressed it as the one Only God, though he might the same day address Osiris and Horns in the same way. It would seem that most of these names of deity used by the Egyptians referred to the sun under one or more aspects as regards time of year or situation in the heavens and, of course, they would address the sun as being the One and Only Living Deity. This practically destroys the theory of monotheism other than the theory of Solar Monotheism, which had existed for

many centuries, and was a sensible and intelligent conception of Deity; that the sun is the source of life and light upon the earth is easy to see, and we have only to suppose the sun to be the dwelling place of Jehovah, to make it also the Divine Wisdom, the Divine Word, the Divine Power, or strength. We understand that all generations of solar worshipers in Egypt believed so far in monotheism and when they picture the Solar God as in the mural decorations of the tomb of Akhtenaten, showing every ray of light extending from the solar disk to the food on the king's table with a human hand attached to it, the Deity becomes personal enough to be addressed in prayer and praise. We have been much instructed and edified by these books. They are not specially adapted for children of any age; for students who have grown up they will be found helpful.



Michael Prejean – Worshipful Master Jacques DeMolay Lodge No. 1390

By jim Hoffpauir, Staff Writer

Life jackets on Brethren. Climb aboard and grab a rail. Duck under the mast and scoot to the other side when we “*come about*.” You are welcome aboard, although this adventure is being taken for, and by, two young boys along with their best-of-all dads - the honorable Brother Michael Prejean. Though we may lose all the “*landlubbers*” aboard, I know “*yee ole salts are coming about*” in rapid order.

Who is said Michael Prejean? What are his credentials as a Texas Freemason? Mike was raised as a Master Mason at Corpus Christi Lodge No. 189 on May 18, 2011. He joined the Valley of Houston Scottish Rite in September 2011 – two weeks after moving to Houston. He became Co-Reunion Director of the Valley in 2014 and member of the Grand Lodge of Texas Masonic Jurisprudence Committee on January 20, 2024. He served as Venerable Master of The Lodge of Perfection at the Houston Valley in 2024 and is the sitting Worshipful Master of Jacques DeMolay Lodge No. 1390 in Houston.

No, it is not pronounced *Prejean*! For those of you who have never wandered out of these Western Parishes – the last name is pronounced *Prey – Zhaan*! Meaning *Jean’s Meadow*. More on the Texas inferiority complex later.

Now to our journey. Seattle - The J/24 World Championships that took place over seven days beginning on September 28th and ending October 5th this past fall. The “*Worlds*” was hosted by The Corinthian Yacht Club of Seattle on Shilshole Bay in Puget Sound. Not the easiest of waters, though nowhere near as volatile as Drake’s Passage, Near Bodo in Norway, or the Bay of Fundy off Canada. Puget Sound has tides ranging from 10.11 to 13.48 feet with currents of as much as ten knots. Compared to the Bay of Fundy’s 53-plus foot tides ... it is a mere street puddle.

Boats from the United States, Canada, Japan, Puerto Rico, Australia, Ireland, Italy, Argentina, Greece, Germany, and Great Britain participated in the event. A total of fifty-six hulls (boats for ye landlubbers) competed in nine races with one “*throw-out*” totaling each boat’s final score.

Sailing on Hull NO 814, under Sail PUR 814 known as Jibarito – Puerto Rican moniker equating “*Hillbilly*” without negative connotation – Prejean and company competed in the Corinthian Division meaning ‘No Pro Sailors on Board.’ Team members: Javier Almodovar (skipper), Carlos L Marrero (trim), Florence Rodriguez (foredeck), Franciso Velez Burgos (mast man), and Prejean (tactician). Jorge Martin-de-Nicolas replaced

A One-design Class, meaning all hulls were identical – competition was based on sailors’ abilities only.

Marrero on the fourth day. A One-design Class, meaning all hulls were identical – competition was based on sailors’ abilities only. Oddly enough, Burgos is the only member living in Puerto Rico.

One minor point any *ole Salt* competitor can relate to is MAX CREW WEIGHT. Specifically, in this case 882 pounds. Of course, this team was 15 lbs. overweight. Four, including Brother Mike, stepped off the scales and dashed to a friend’s sauna. After 30–45-minute sessions, no eating or drinking all day, Prejean managed to scuddle 5.5 lbs. At the second weigh-in, the team made the weight limit.

Now, about those conditions on Puget Sound. Let us “*go below*” and navigate them and how our dear Brother’s responsibility in guiding the crew to a 45th position in the final standings coordinate.

Board skiff at 8 a.m. sharp, on water by 10 a.m., and generally back to dock by 1600 hours (4 p.m.) Yes, as we have learned, Puget Sound is a challenge. Okay Mike ... what is your excuse? Currents and extreme tides, dealing with full range (in many cases 180-degree differentials) of tide and current, interactions of wind and tide with shoreline and bottom contours crucial in opportunities to gain advantage. (HO HUM ... go on.)

Well, it seems our Brother and tactician was responsible for analyzing wind conditions, competitor positions, and race terrain to make strategic decisions as to course, maneuvers, and momentary sail setting decisions. He was, indeed, the acting ‘brain’ of the crew: providing guidance to the skipper, gathering information from various sources, and communicating said strategy through the skipper to the crew to optimize the boat’s position and course throughout the race. WHY DO I THINK THIS GIVES BOTH SKIPPER AND TACTICIAN AN OUT FOR THAT FINAL POSITION IN THE RACE? JUST SAYIN’



Now, about that Texas inferiority complex. Of those fifty-six hulls competing, our great state of Texas was represented by four vessels. Yes, four Texas “tubs” qualified for World competition finals! Although, considering global topography, the boys from Swallow Water were at somewhat of a disadvantage.

Nevertheless, the Boys from Texas had a fine time at this event. Hanging out, roustabouting, keeping their combined weight in line drinking Long Necks and eating Tacos throughout, our boys stood

out among the Aussies, Limeys, Greeks, and Argentines. Why, one boat alone was the awe of all aboard.

It seems one Texas crew brought along a flag. Not just a flag; a TEXAS FLAG! Aw sure, it was car-dealership sized and waved proudly when unfurled in two races; but just imagine how it would have looked as a mainsail hugging the waterline in a 20-knot breeze! Well, during all the steep competing on the course, several busied crews forgot their tacticians’ pleas and took

photos to show to all the folks back home. NOW, THAT'S A WIN IN ANYONE'S BOOK! TEXAS NUMBER 1!

Back to shore! Ole Salt, be sure you have taken your Tylenol or Advil before reaching dock. We move on. (Not a landlubber in sight will EVER understand that insight.)

Hello boys – or young gentlemen it has been my pleasure to meet, greet, share time upstairs during Valley of Houston Scottish Rite Reunions, and come to know and admire! To be more specific, young Mist'ers Makai and Brenden.

Here are a few remembrances from ole dad scribbled as best I can!

"It was all great. But the highlight to me was driving home with the boys," says ever-glowing papa Mike. "Visiting the beach, hiking through those redwoods, Yosemite, watching the sun set over the Grand Canyon, and paying our respect at the grave of Billy the Kid in Fort Sumner with them by my side filled my heart." I both know and believe him when he says that about you gentlemen. Why are you reading this in a Masonic magazine? Well, I suspect for Mike – and I know for me – we would like nothing more than you to have joined and become proud members of our ranks in the coming years.

Our journey begins to Seattle with Lady Kate, who should have known what she was in for when she met this *Salt* during her early teens – oddly enough at the docks of Corpus – is the hero of our story. Patiently through the years she has tolerated those many voyages. After landing gears touched down in Seattle, Lady Kate "mustered" the boys for adventures within the city and many surrounding nature paths. Oh true, she put up with crew members invading her rental each evening while they 'debriefed the day's results' and prepared for coming voyages. They also viewed opponents YouTube videos for opportunities to counter their efforts or discover something our "tactician" may have missed during the day's course. Enough for her pain!

When the event was over Kate boarded a plane home. SHOCK ... she had awaiting tasks there as well. Mike, Makai, and Brendan rented a car and headed home.

The trip was, in this case, rather well plotted by our hero. Okay, maybe we can give him a little "slack tide" for that 45th place finish. Five days in all, our trio made it a true family adventure for the books.

First off, our tactician-turned-captain for this voyage, headed south into Oregon and "stirred" west along the south bank of the Columbia River to Astoria. They made a "port of call" for pictures and scampering about at the house where the movie "Goonies" was filmed. A stop at Cannon Beach and more camera action at Haystack Rock soon followed.



Day two was spent reminiscing with an "ole shipmate" on the beach near Waldport. Our young travelers made the best of it, ignoring the "scuttlebutt" and running along the beach picking up shells, stones, and a few bruises on the bottom of their shoeless feet. Carefully resoled the following day, Makai, Brendan, and the skipper hit the trail in Redwood National & State parks across the California state line. This turned into a full day of hiking and adventure with not a salt flat in sight.

They spent Day 4 meandering the Avenue of the Giants and the Humboldt Redwoods State Park along HWY 101, taking full advantage of the many parking locals to stretch their legs among the tall trees. Throw Yosemite into that mix and you have enough log for the ole fire. Next up, the mighty Grand Canyon. Scurrying along the North Rim and kicking back to watch the sun disappear in the west. Then back to the car and twenty hours to meet Lady Kate who was busy helping put on a music festival in Kerrville. I TOLD YOU SHE WAS A VERY PATIENT SOUL!

More about Brother Prejean. Mike graduated from the Texas Maritime Academy in 2000. He worked globally on Jones Act Tankers for eleven years. While there, he earned difficult to achieve United States Coast Guard Unlimited Master Mariner License. Wanting to be more with family, he started law school in Houston in the fall of 2011, all the while working at inspections of ships and terminals across the state of Texas. Achieving his law degree, Mike has worked for a maritime law firm in Houston since 2015. Currently, he is also kept busy as an active Boy Scouts of America Committee Chair of a local Cub Scout pack.

His relevant sailing history including being "brought aboard" his first sailboat at age two. He began racing "dinghies" at six and teaching sailing skills at age 14. He began teaching racing skills to others at 16, and racing J/24's competitively since the late 1980s – when he was only twelve. Only those who knew him as a small boy can attest to when he first developed that kind disposition and friendly character on display 24 hours of the day – whether "on the bridge," in the court room, or in the presence of his fellow man.

(I have known Mike via a Texas Masonic webpage since before he came to Houston. Met him in person at a Valley of Houston Scottish Rite Stated Meeting, and drove him back to his apartment in September of 2011. Since, we have formed a bond going beyond our Freemasonic relationship. He is my friend and ... B R O T H E R.)



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Dueling Brothers: the peculiar relationship of Andrew Jackson and Thomas Hart Benton

Part Three by Nathan Giesenschlag, Staff Writer

When Andrew Jackson received the news that the Red Stick faction of the Creek Indian Nation had attacked and slaughtered the inhabitants of Ft. Mims, the Tennessee general laid closer to death than to life. But this was nothing new. Throughout his adult life Andrew Jackson suffered pain daily. He endured two bullets in his body, one of which caused coughing spells and hemorrhages regularly until he died. Frequently, he suffered relapses from malaria and dysentery. To treat this, he resorted to generous cocktails of lead and mercury potions. Jackson could do nothing about contracting malaria and dysentery, but he was to blame for the bullets which caused his pain.

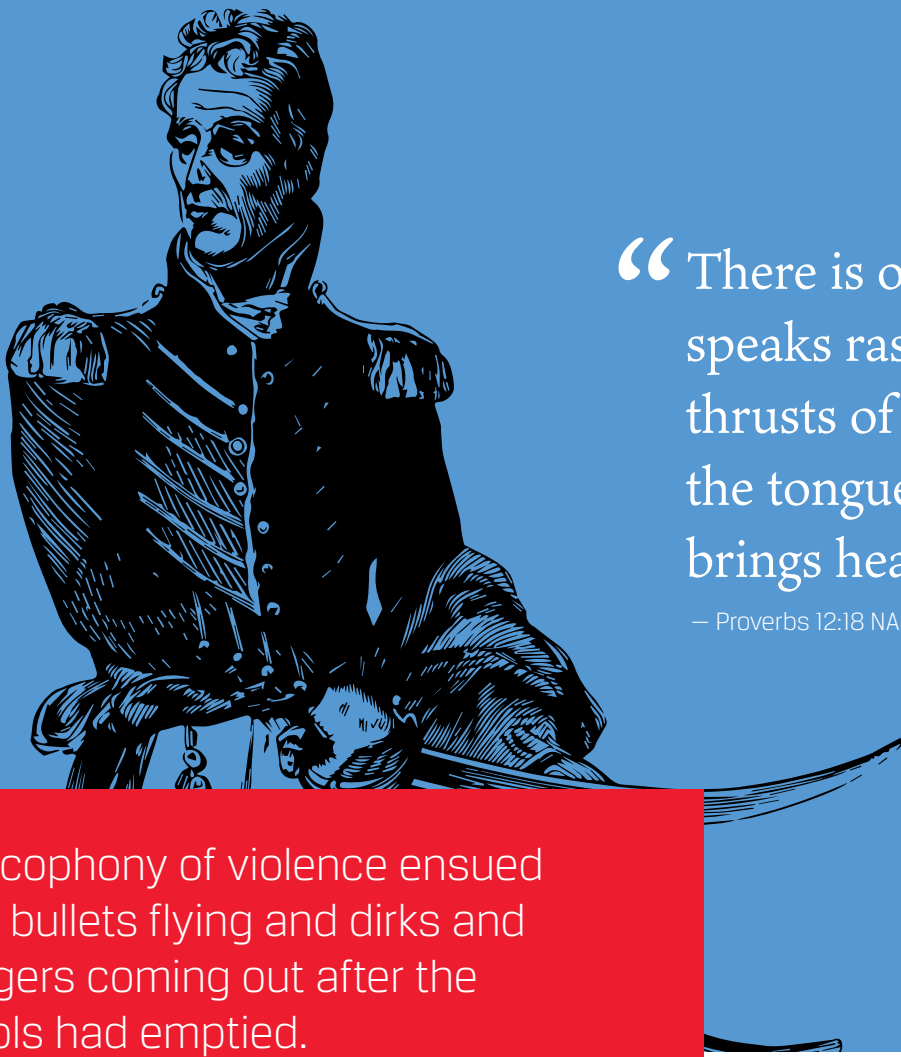
One of the great flaws throughout the life of Andrew Jackson was his temper. Mercurial and ferocious, Jackson participated in multiple duels, some of which turned violent. Contrary to popular imagination, not all duels on the western frontier of Tennessee—or Texas during the Mexican or Republic periods—ended in shootouts. The frontiersmen of the early 19th century, Anglo-Saxons descended from English, Scottish, or Irish stock, guarded their reputations jealously. Often inflamed by the ardent spirits (liquor), that prickliness caused one man to challenge another, which set a complex web of rules and practices into motion. However, as much as honor mattered to southern—and later Texian—gentlemen regarding the *code duello*, class and standing mattered more. A brief Republic of Texas example will suffice. President Sam Houston received numerous invitations to duel and once quipped, “This is number twenty-four. The angry gentleman must wait his turn.” As president and on the top rung of society, Sam Houston was not obliged to answer a challenge. The duels that Andrew Jackson found himself in resulted in grievous wounds which brought him no honor or enhanced stature; rather, they made him look reckless and small.

Thomas Hart Benton came to Nashville in 1809 and quickly established himself as an up-and-coming young man about the community. Here he met Andrew Jackson, and it was likely under Jackson’s patronage that Benton joined St. Tammany Lodge No. 1—Jackson’s mother lodge. A physical specimen with a flair for dramatic, sarcastic, bombastic, and cutting speech, Benton collected enemies like a child collects baseball cards. Years later in the U.S. Congress, John Quincy Adams snorted that Benton was “the doughty knight of the stuffed cravat.”

At first, Andrew Jackson and Thomas Hart Benton got along well. Jackson was general of the Tennessee militia and Benton was his loyal subordinate. They traveled with the army to Natchez and when the army returned to Nashville, Jackson trusted Benton enough to send him to Washington on business with the War Department. When Benton returned, he learned that his brother Jesse entangled himself in a duel with William Carroll over honor and class in which Andrew Jackson stood as Carroll’s second. Jackson had no business taking sides. However, all too often Jackson’s passions overruled his judgment.

Jesse Benton was hot headed. Thomas Hart backed his brother and they both talked around Nashville about Jackson’s misconduct and lack of character. That was unwise. Another Texan and Freemason, Sam Rayburn, once wisely commented, “You don’t have to explain something you didn’t say.” The Bentons should have kept their mouths shut, but they did not, and they impugned Andrew Jackson’s integrity. Outside of insulting Rachel Jackson, few things could call down Jackson’s wrath faster than questioning his integrity. Jackson threatened to horsewhip Thomas Hart Benton; Jackson never made idle threats. Years later during the nullification crisis while Jackson was president and Benton a senator from Missouri, President Jackson threatened to hang the first nullifier he could get his hands on. Asked about the threat, Benton replied, “When Jackson begins to talk about hangings, they can begin to look for the ropes.”

On September 4th, 1813, Andrew Jackson and his good friend and fellow officer John Coffee walked down the main street of Nashville. Standing in the doorway of the City Hotel were Thomas Hart and Jesse Benton. Jackson saw them, walked on to the Post Office, picked up the mail and started back. The Bentons were still in the doorway. Jackson stopped, faced Thomas Hart, and cried, “now you d---d rascal, I am going to punish you. Defend yourself!” Jackson jerked his horsewhip and ran at Thomas Hart. Benton fumbled for a pistol; Jackson produced his own and in the melee, Jesse Benton shot Andrew Jackson in the left shoulder. The bullet clipped an artery and cracked the bone. Down went Jackson in a pool of blood gravely wounded. A cacophony of violence ensued with bullets flying and dirks and daggers coming out after the pistols had emptied. Jackson’s companions defended the wounded general, but Thomas Hart Benton escaped serious injury when he stumbled backwards down a short flight of stairs. Jesse suffered lacerations.



“There is one who speaks rashly like the thrusts of a sword, But the tongue of the wise brings healing.”

— Proverbs 12:18 NASB(95)

A cacophony of violence ensued with bullets flying and dirks and daggers coming out after the pistols had emptied.

As you might expect, Nashville was in an uproar over the violent and dramatic events between their militia general and one of his lieutenant colonels. Friends carried Jackson across the street, and he soaked through two mattresses before they could get his bleeding stopped with poultices and rags. Every Nashville doctor of any account was present in Jackson's sick room, and they all suggested that to prevent infection, the damaged left arm needed amputation. (There was no understanding of germ theory (1880s) or anti-biotics (1940s) in 1813.) Jackson said, “I’ll keep my arm,” as he passed out from loss of blood; the doctors did not dare cross him; and he kept his arm.

Thomas Hart and Jesse Benton hung around Nashville long enough to realize that they were marked men, then quickly left town after the shootout. Jesse never forgave Andrew Jackson and hated him until the day he died.

Thomas Hart's life turned out far differently. Benton moved on to Missouri after the War of 1812, and established himself as a prosperous lawyer, newspaper editor, duelist, and politician. When Missouri was admitted as a state in 1820, she needed two senators, one of which was Thomas Hart Benton. In 1823, Andrew Jackson gained election to the U.S. Senate, and many

Washingtonians cast nervous glances at these men. Would they resume feuding? They would not. They became friends and allies. In the 1840s, Benton played a major role in the Texas annexation question.

As president, Andrew Jackson carried Jesse's bullet in his arm. In 1832, President Jackson submitted to an operation that removed it, and promptly sent it to Senator Thomas Hart Benton with the note that the bullet was his and he could have it back. Benton returned the bullet to the president. Thinking Jackson had the bullet for twenty years, Benton was corrected that it was only nineteen. He wrote in reply, “Oh, well, in consideration of the extra care he has taken of it—keeping it constantly about his person and so on—I’ll waive the odd year.”

Later in life, when people would ask him if he shot Jackson, he would reply, “General Jackson was a very great man. I shot him, sir!” or “Yes, I had a fight with Jackson. A fellow was hardly in the fashion who didn’t.”

TEXAS FREEMASON

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