

Brad S. Billings  
GRAND SECRETARY  
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## GRAND SECRETARY'S MONTHLY COMMUNICATION JULY 2025

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

- Past Master Products - Apron and Jewel now available
- Grand Secretary's Office – Holiday closure, Annual Communication website
- Grand View – Active Lodge designation
- Statistics – Non-Payment of Dues (NPD) – Zachary Haston
- Monthly Law Reading – Audit Committee
- Lodge Spotlight – Royce City Masonic Lodge – Hand Delivered Invitations
- 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](#).

### PAST MASTER MERCHANDISE

The Lone Star Apron is now available for order. Please note, if you order the apron now, it is scheduled for delivery in DECEMBER. Windows to order occur twice a year and aprons are only delivered twice a year (Installation time and Christmas time).



#### [Lone Star Apron](#)

The Lone Star PM Jewel, set to compliment the Lone Star Apron, is now available with the first jewels set to be delivered in August. We have utilized our economies of scale to drive down the price to an affordable \$149.99 while still receiving a portion of each sale to support your Grand Lodge! A special thank you to Michael Cote' II for this amazing design!

#### [Masonic Past Master's Jewel](#)



# PLEASE READ

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## **GRAND SECRETARY OFFICE UPDATES**

Office Closed July 4<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> - reopening Tuesday, July 8<sup>th</sup>

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## **ANNUAL COMMUNICATION WEBSITE**

We now have a website dedicated to the Grand Annual Communication in January! While it is still in early construction, it already has several hotels with discounted blocks for you to reserve your room. There will be benefits to all Masons who stay in one of the featured hotels during the Annual Communication (more to come)! We will also be adding more hotels as we receive pricing. Please visit the link below:

<https://texasgrandannualcommunication.secureserversites.net/>

## **ACTIVE LODGE DESIGNATION**

To move your active lodge, log on to your portal, and scroll down to the bottom where the lodges are listed. If you want to change your 'Active Lodge', hover over the desired lodge and click the action button. The choice to "make active lodge" will appear. Clicking that makes the change.

We do not care which Lodge you choose as the 'Active Lodge' but please note, this is where the office will send all correspondence, certificates, and awards.

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## **ENDOWMENT CHECKS DISTRIBUTION**

Endowment checks will be distributed around the beginning of August, for those lodges not receiving them by ACH (which we HIGHLY encourage), please make sure your MAILING ADDRESS is updated in Grand View. Additionally, please be sure to check your mail thoroughly as they come in a plain envelope that does not say Grand Lodge on the front.

If you would like to receive your check by ACH, please contact Brother Rex Johnson to set it up at [rjohnson@grandsecretaryoftx.org](mailto:rjohnson@grandsecretaryoftx.org) – Rick Townsend, Grand Treasurer

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## **ENDOWMENT DISTRIBUTION**

The distribution amount per mature unit is currently being calculated by our Grand Treasurer and is expected to be communicated in the August Newsletter. You must wait until this number is released to complete your Form 71.

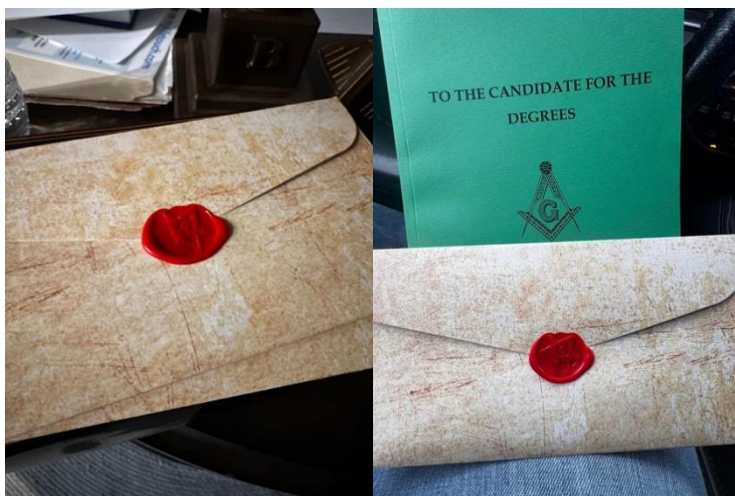
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# READ PORTIONS APPROPRIATE FOR YOUR LODGE

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## LODGE SPOTLIGHT:

### Royse City Masonic Lodge – Honoring Tradition, Creating Legacy



This month, we shine the Lodge Spotlight on Royse City Masonic Lodge, where a simple idea has blossomed into a meaningful tradition that’s inspiring candidates and Masons alike.

At the heart of this initiative is Brother Brad D. Hauf, whose goal is clear: make the Masonic journey unforgettable from the very first step. Brother Hauf, a regular contributor on the Masonic Improvement YouTube podcast with Brothers Justin Jones and Dennis Yates, was inspired to enhance the degree experience after hearing fellow Brother Jason Reichenberg describe using wax seals in candidate letters.

#### Hand-Delivered Invitations with a Personal Touch

What started as an idea soon became a heartfelt project. After a candidate is elected to receive the Entered Apprentice Degree, Brother Hauf creates a formal invitation—printed on special parchment paper, sealed with wax, and personally delivered. The letter specifies the exact time the candidate must arrive: "neither before nor after."

When the candidate arrives, they find the Lodge already at labor. Without interaction, they are ushered into the anteroom and prepared by the Master of Ceremonies and the Senior Deacon, who reads directly from the Monitor. The atmosphere is steeped in mystery and reverence.

“The reactions I’m getting are that they’re very nervous about the mystery of it all,” says Brother Hauf, “but at the same time, they feel very special to be included in what we’re doing.” – Mike Mistry P.M.

## NON-PAYMENT OF DUES

Over recent decades, we have lost the most Masons each year to deaths, the 2<sup>nd</sup> most to suspensions for non-payment of dues (NPD), and the 3<sup>rd</sup> most to Failure to Advance (FTA) from EA to MM. Those are by far the main ways that we lose members. Demits would be a more proper way for MMs to quit, but as there's no real penalty for going NPD instead of demitting, only 3% of our members pay that last year of dues and go out square. Even fewer are suspended for un-masonic conduct, are expelled, or transfer out to State. In practice, ghosting us and being suspended for NPD accounts for nearly 95% of the non-death losses of raised Masons from the Fraternity.

In the big picture, Statewide, over the past 5 decades, we've averaged initiations corresponding to about 2.1% of our membership each year, but we're now losing nearly half of those FTA, yielding over the past 2 decades an average of raising about 1.1% of our membership each year. Unfortunately, 1.1% raised voluntarily in is being countered by 2.1% NPD voluntarily out, for Statewide totals anyway.

Statewide numbers though do not tell the whole picture. Our better half of lodges, numbers-wise, raise and retain more. 342 lodges (48% of the lodges that can do degrees) have initiated more men than they've lost to NPD since COVID, and 216 lodges (30%) have raised more than they've lost to NPD since COVID. Read that again, and take it to heart. That 30% of lodges accounted for less than 11% of our total NPDs, and if you look just at that 30% of lodges instead of the Statewide totals, our numbers look great. Take that into account when thinking of changes and Resolutions. Just as you shouldn't break Masonry because of the ones not doing it, you shouldn't change the pipeline for the ones not using it. It's the 345 lodges (47%) that did not initiate anyone in the last Masonic year, 202 lodges (28%) that haven't done any EA degrees in the last 2 years, and 115 lodges (16%) that have not raised anyone at all since the COVID pause that turn the Statewide totals negative. The top 30% have raised more than twice (2.3x) as many men as they've lost to NPD over the past 5 years, and that is quite positive!

Looking overall again, I said above that our average has been about 2.1% going NPD each year over the past couple of decades; however, it has generally been trending down since the post-National Treasure peak, and following 2022, NPD suspensions were at the lowest in decades at 1.5%. That jumped up to 2.3% following 2023 but has since come back some to 2.0%.

Figure 1 shows the age of those who just went suspended for non-payment of dues. Age isn't as

important an issue here as years in Masonry. The average of Figure 2 (this year's NPDs) is paying 18 years of dues before going suspended NPD; however, the peak of this chart is losing people raised 6 years ago. We lose a lot of people in the 5-15 yr range, but it tends to flatten off past that and just be to life changes.

Figure 1. 2025 NPD Age

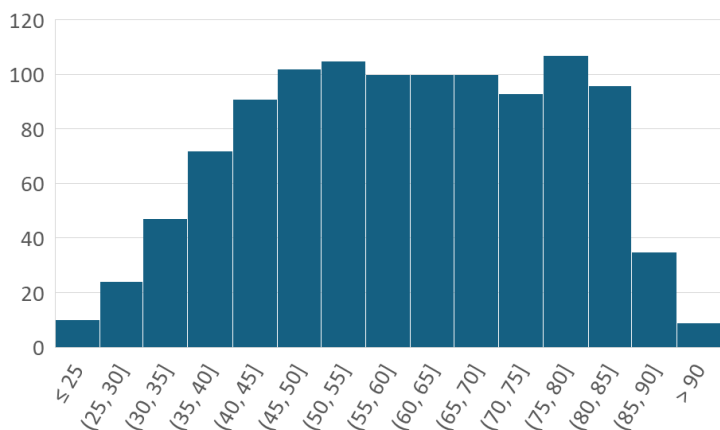
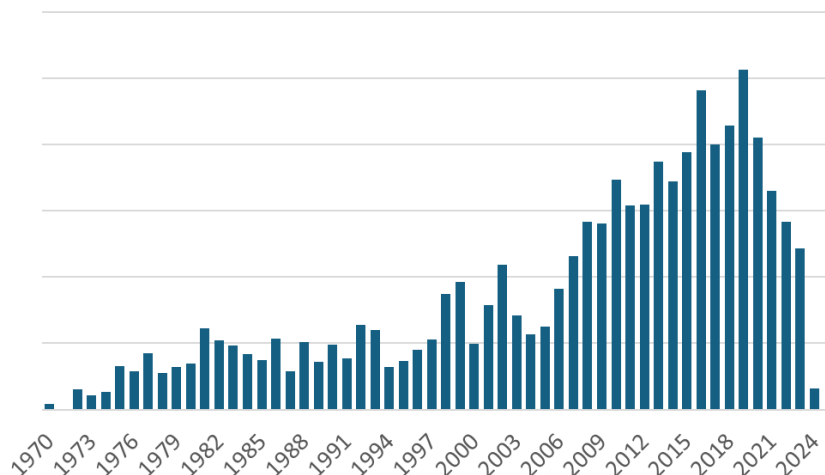


Figure 2. Percentage of Those Raised in Each Year  
Suspended in 2025 for Non-Payment of Dues



As typical, less than 2% of those just suspended were lodge officers last year when the 2025 dues were due, and it should also be noted that only 10% had been officers in any of the last 4 years. The other 90% of the NPD suspensions had not filled any office anytime recently.

Finally, a note about dues increases. 70 lodges increased their dues last year, from \$5 to \$250 increases. Those that did, on average, lost 3 members more to NPD than their 3yr average. Increases of less than \$25 showed an average of 2.3 more people lost to NPD (not necessarily just due to the dues increase of course as who would quit over \$25). Increases from \$25 to \$100 averaged 4 more people lost, and increases of more than \$100 in dues averaged 2.7 more people lost. These are averages, and there is some variability between lodges. A few lodges lost more notably more which should tell you that you need to make a dues increase make sense to your members and get their buy-in. Still, overall, the average lodge losing a few people, but only a few, after a dues increase is something I've reported in years past, so this year was pretty much in line with historical norms on this topic.

Overall, it's no surprise that most of those who go suspended for non-payment of dues haven't been active in a while, and it's good to see the Statewide NPDs come back down some from the post-2023 spike and that people aren't quitting lodges in large numbers following reasonable dues increases. But most pleasing to me is to see that the top 30% of our lodges have raised more than twice as many men since COVID than they've lost to non-death reasons. There's a bright future there! – Zachary Haston, PM

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### **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.

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## **MONTHLY LAW READING – AUDIT COMMITTEE**

As we move into July and our newly installed Worshipful Masters take to the East, one of the first duties that devolves upon them is to appoint an audit committee to examine the books from the previous masonic year. This needs to be done as soon as possible so that the committee can get to work and return their report to the Lodge. Their report, Minimum Audit Form No. 71, needs to be sent to the Grand Secretary's office no later than September 15<sup>th</sup>.

These requirements are laid out in Art. 284 Duty to Require Audits: "It shall be the duty of the Worshipful Master as soon after the 24th of June each year as convenient to appoint a committee of three qualified members, a certified public accountant, or a public accountant, whose duty it shall be to audit books and accounts of the Treasurer and Secretary and make prompt report thereof in writing to the Lodge, said report shall be read to the Lodge in open stated communication and be recorded in full in the minutes. The auditors' report shall fully show the total amounts of receipts and disbursements during the past year and any balance remaining on hand. It shall be the duty of the Treasurer and Secretary to make all their books and records available to the Committee or accountant appointed to audit same. A properly completed and signed copy of the Minimum Audit Form No. 71 shall be delivered to the Grand Secretary no later than September 15th each year. If the Lodge by resolution or by its bylaws requires a bond for any officer of the Lodge authorized to handle the funds of the Lodge, it shall be the duty of the Worshipful Master to have all officers of the Lodge authorized to handle the Lodge funds covered by such bond." – **Jeremy R. Johnson, P.M.**

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## **MONTHLY QUOTE**

*"If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader."* – **Simon Sinek**

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## **TX MASON APP**

The TX Mason app is over **5,000** users! Please join the 5,253 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>

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## **LEGACY BUILDER AWARD**

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>

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## Grand Master's Calendar of Events

Date	Event	Time	Location	Address
Saturday 7/26/2025	150 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Rockdale Lodge #414	TBD	Rockdale Lodge #414	789 N. US Hwy 77 Rockdale, TX 76567

### OFFICER LEADERSHIP TRAINING

#### **Mark Your Calendars: 2025 Corpus Christi Officer Leadership Training!**

Join us for an unforgettable weekend of leadership, learning, and brotherhood in Corpus Christi!

#### **Saturday, September 20, 2025**

11:00 AM – Lunch

12:00 PM – 6:00 PM – Officer Leadership Training (OLT)

6:00 PM – Dinner

8:00 PM – Special Event: Master Mason Degree aboard the historic USS Lexington

#### **Sunday, September 21, 2025**

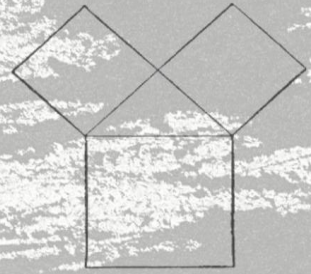
8:00 AM – Breakfast

9:00 AM – 12:00 PM – Officer Leadership Training (OLT)

Don't miss this incredible opportunity to sharpen your leadership skills, enjoy great fellowship, and experience a once-in-a-lifetime degree on the "Blue Ghost" of the gulf!



# 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>
<b>Cody Cockroft</b>						
Sat, 7 Jun 2025	Montgomery	25	Montgomery	28	8:00 AM	Following
Sat, 14 Jun 2025	League City	1053	League City	31-A	8:00 AM	Following
Sat, 19 Jul 2025	St. John's	5	West Columbia	31-C	8:00 AM	Following
Sat, 2 Aug 2025	DeWitt Clinton	29	Jasper	25-B	8:00 AM	Following
Sat, 16 Aug 2025	Grapeland	473	Grapeland	23	8:00 AM	Following
<b>Chuck Forsyth</b>						
<b>Steve Pepper</b>						
Fri, 5 Sep 2025	Pampa	966	Pampa	98	6:30 PM	Exam Only
Sat, 6 Sep 2025	Pampa	966	Pampa	98	9:00 AM	Forum Only
Sat, 4 Oct 2025	Mackenzie	1327	Lubbock	93	8:00 AM	Following
Sat, 15 Nov 2025	Palo Duro	1239	Amarillo	99	8:00 AM	Following
<b>Cody Stewart</b>						
Sat, 16 Aug 2025	Cooke-Peavy	1162	Fort Worth	64-B	8:00 AM	Following
Sat, 23 Aug 2025	Dallas	760	Dallas	14-A	8:00 AM	Following
Sat, 30 Aug 2025	Pine Tree	1396	Longview	10-A	8:00 AM	Following
<b>John Peters</b>						
Sat, 9 Aug 2025	Onion Creek	220	Austin	50	9:00 AM	Following
Sat, 16 Aug 2025	Davy Crockett	1225	San Antonio	39-B	9:00 AM	Exam Only
Sat, 23 Aug 2025	Llano Grande	1173	Weslaco	40-B	9:00 AM	Following

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



# The Grand Lodge of Texas Cornerstone Leveling Ceremonies 2025

**For Information Contact:**

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



<i><b>Date</b></i>	<i><b>Time</b></i>	<i><b>Lodge</b></i>	<i><b>Location</b></i>	<i><b>Grand Lodge Representative</b></i>
Tuesday 7/8/2025	Coffee & donuts at 8:00am Open Palestine Lodge at 9:00am Open Grand Lodge at 9:15am Cornerstone Ceremony #1 at 10:00am Cornerstone Ceremony #2 at 10:30am	Palestine #31 401 W. Debard Palestine, TX 75801	Westwood ISD Administration Building & new School	H.N. "Chip" Green, Jr. Grand Jr. Warden
Wednesday 7/23/2025	Lunch or Refreshments at Noon Open Olive Branch Lodge at 1:00pm Open Grand Lodge at 1:15pm Cornerstone Ceremony at 2:30pm Meet & Greet at 3:00	Olive Branch #792 201 Grindstone Rd. Brock, TX 76087	New School	TBD
Saturday 7/26/2025	Coffee & donuts at 7:00am Open Trenton Lodge at 8:00am Open Grand Lodge at 8:15am Cornerstone Ceremony at 9:00am	Trenton #761 112 Hamilton Trenton, TX 75490	Leonard Elementary School	G. Clay Smith Past Grand Master
Wednesday 7/30/2025	Breakfast or coffee & donuts at 8:00am Open Tarkington Prairie Lodge at 9:00am Open Grand Lodge at 9:15am Cornerstone ceremony at 11:00am	Tarkington Prairie #498 1305 Southline St. Cleveland, TX 77327	Peach Creek Elementary School	H.N. "Chip" Green, Jr. Grand Jr. Warden
Saturday 8/2/2025	Coffee & Donuts at 7:45 A.M. Open Decatur Lodge at 8:45 A.M. Open Grand Lodge at 9:00 A.M. Cornerstone Ceremony at 11:00 A.M.	Decatur Lodge #447 202 W. Walnut Decatur, TX 76234	New Police Station	G. Clay Smith Past Grand Master
Wednesday 8/13/2025	Coffee & donuts at 9:00am Open Forrest Lodge at 10:00am Open Grand Lodge at 10:15am Cornerstone Ceremony at 11:00am	Forrest #19 1030 12th St. Huntsville, TX 77340	New City Hall	Raborn L. Reader, Jr. Grand Master

Join the Texas Cornerstone State coordinator Kevin Binder's Facebook Group  
<https://www.facebook.com/share/CiHNBv12zSaqwVhh/?mibextid=K35Xfp>

## **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

### **Zachary Haston**

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

Membership  
Lodge Officer Maintenance  
Esoteric Record Maintenance  
Form 71 Collection  
IRS Form 990's Collection

### **Justin Hancock**

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

Honesty & Integrity Awards  
Lamar Medals  
Forms and Lodge Supply Orders  
Grand Lodge Service Awards  
Golden Trowel Awards  
Community Builder Awards

### **Jeremy Johnson**

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

Lodge Secretary Training & GS Newsletter

## **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.