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GRAND SECRETARY'S MONTHLY COMMUNICATION OCTOBER 2025

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

- Grand Secretary's Office – Annual Communication Hotels, Secretary Schools and more...
- Product of the Month: Grand Lodge Grab Bags
- Statistics – Esoteric Certificate Holders – Zachary Haston
- Monthly Law Reading – State Meeting - When We Can Conduct Business
- Lodge Spotlight – Angleton Lodge No. 829 – A Lodge on the Move
- 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](#).

GRAND LODGE GRAB BAGS



The Grand Lodge has prepared **1,000 Grab Bags** that will be available for purchase at:

- **Masonic Family Day** – October 11, 2025, in Arlington
- **Annual Communication** – January 15–17, 2026, in Waco

Each bag is only **\$40** but contains **Past Grand Master merchandise originally valued at \$120–\$150**. These Grab Bags are designed with two goals in mind:

- To **raise \$40,000** for the Grand Lodge of Texas
- To put quality merchandise into the hands of Brothers who will proudly wear and use it

Each Grab Bag will include one of the following versions:

- 5 Coins, 5 Pins, s Knife Set, Buckle, Tie, Mouse Pad and Coozie
- 5 Coins, 5 Pins, 2 Buckles, a Tie, Mouse Pad and Coozie

PLEASE READ

GRAND ANNUAL COMMUNICATION

Brethren - We have been informed that the **2026 Grand Lodge Session** falls on the same weekend as **Baylor's Family Weekend**, which will greatly reduce the availability of hotel rooms in the Waco area.

To ensure accommodations, we strongly encourage you to **make your reservations as soon as possible** and to book **within the city of Waco** (please avoid Hewitt, Bellmead, etc.).

We have secured **five hotels offering group rates starting at \$129 per night**. Full details, including hotel links and other pertinent information, can be found here:

 [2026 Grand Annual Communication Information](#)

Additionally, **Brothers staying at any of the TPID hotels (see below) will receive a \$25 wristband for admittance to the 2026 Grand Lodge Gala at Hotel 1928.**

- If you choose to stay at an AirBnB or outside of the TPID hotels, Gala tickets will be available for \$25.
- Additional Gala tickets may also be purchased for \$25.

 [Waco TPID Hotels](#) (Note: all of the hotels on the Annual Communication Site are TPID hotels)

Note: Registration for Grand Lodge will open on November 1st, 2025 in keeping with previous years.

LONE STAR APRON

The **final opportunity of the year** to purchase the **Lone Star Apron** ends **October 12th**.

These aprons will be delivered in December and make the ultimate **birthday or Christmas gift**. This is also your **last chance** to own this apron and be part of the **ever-growing Past Masters' picture on the steps of the Grand Lodge in January**.

Remember, a portion of each sale goes directly to support **YOUR** Grand Lodge. To order, click the link below:

[Texas Regulation Past Master's Apron - Silver – The Craftsman's Apron](#)



2026 SECRETARY SCHOOLS (SAVE THE DATE)

Dallas: Saturday October 18th James A Smith Lodge No. 395 at 2:00 P.M.

Houston: Saturday November 15th Gray Masonic Lodge No. 329 at 9:00 A.M.

Registration for all three Schools can be found here: [Grand Lodge Masonic Membership Manager 2.0](#)

Calling All Digital Creators, Meme Makers, Videographers, Artists & Writers:

Masonry Wants YOU! We are excited to announce the **Golden Ticket Contest**, where Masons like you can showcase your creativity and submit digital content to be used by Grand Lodges across the country! Not only will your work help inspire the next generation of Masons to join our fraternity, but you'll also have the chance to win the **GRAND PRIZE: The Golden Ticket Tour**, planned for **August 2026!**

How to Participate:

- Create your best Masonic-themed digital content
- Submit your work through the contest website
- Inspire, compete, and possibly win the experience of a lifetime!



For full contest details and submission guidelines, please visit: <https://www.masonicgoldenticket.com/>

Join the movement. Share your talent. Help shape the future of Freemasonry!

READ PORTIONS APPROPRIATE FOR YOUR LODGE

LODGE SPOTLIGHT:

ANGLETON LODGE #829 – A LODGE ON THE MOVE

Under the leadership of Worshipful Master Rudy Serrano and his dedicated line of officers, Angleton Lodge #829 has embarked on a bold new path of revitalization, accountability, and growth. The boards displayed in the lodge reflect a renewed energy and focus, showcasing a series of initiatives designed not only to inspire members but also to provide measurable goals that can track progress and success.

A System for Success

What makes Angleton's approach so unique is the way they have tied vision with measurement. Initiatives such as **"Operation Three B – Bring Brothers Back"** and **"Operation Triple M – More Master Mason, Make**

This systematic approach transforms good intentions into actionable results. By documenting attendance, visitations, events, and membership growth in real time, the brethren have created a culture of accountability. Progress is no longer left to assumption—it can now be seen, discussed, and celebrated at every meeting.

Angleton Lodge has even branded its broader vision under the acronym **MALGA (Make Angleton Lodge Great Again)**, rallying the brethren behind a unifying call to action. Combined with spiritual inspiration—such as the Scripture focus on Isaiah 41:10—this balance of faith, fellowship, and planning places the lodge on firm ground to achieve its goals.

In alignment with all of the above, Angleton Lodge has also embraced **Operation Diamond—“Do It All & Make Our Numbers Double”**—further reinforcing their commitment to membership growth and engagement. From blood drives benefiting MD Anderson to regular lodge visitations across the district, the lodge is proving that its efforts extend far beyond its own four walls.

What Angleton Lodge #829 has accomplished is more than a local effort—it is a model. By putting systems in place to measure their efforts, they have made success more attainable. They have given their members clear pathways to contribute, simple benchmarks to aim for, and the motivation of seeing real progress month by month.— **Mike Mistry, P.M.**



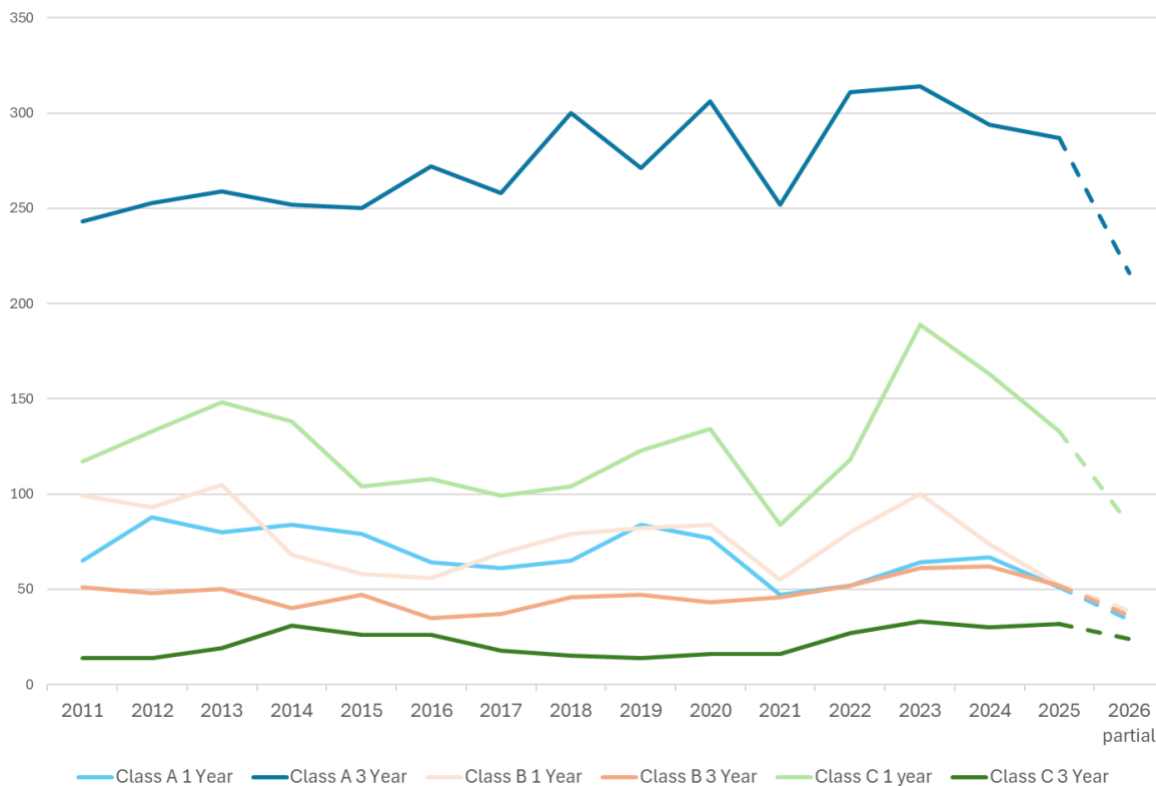
ESOTERIC CERTIFICATE HOLDERS

Many of my charts are just interesting bits of data presented for a better understanding of what is going on. Some of them relay a concern and suggest a call to action. This month is going to be the latter.

In September 2024 I wrote about how well-distributed our esoteric certificate holders were. 5 out of every 6 lodges have a certificate holder in them, which is far better than I would have predicted, but each lodge only has a median of 2 certificate holders. That makes each certificate holder incredibly valuable to the Fraternity. They teach the new guys coming up the line, even if just by gentle correction and help when they get stuck, and they help make sure new Masons learn the work. In short, they maintain the ritual consistency in our Fraternity, something which binds us and puts us at home wherever we go. At the moment, we have 528 Class A certificate holders, and 731 lodges. Each one of those guys we lose is going to hurt the lodge they were in.

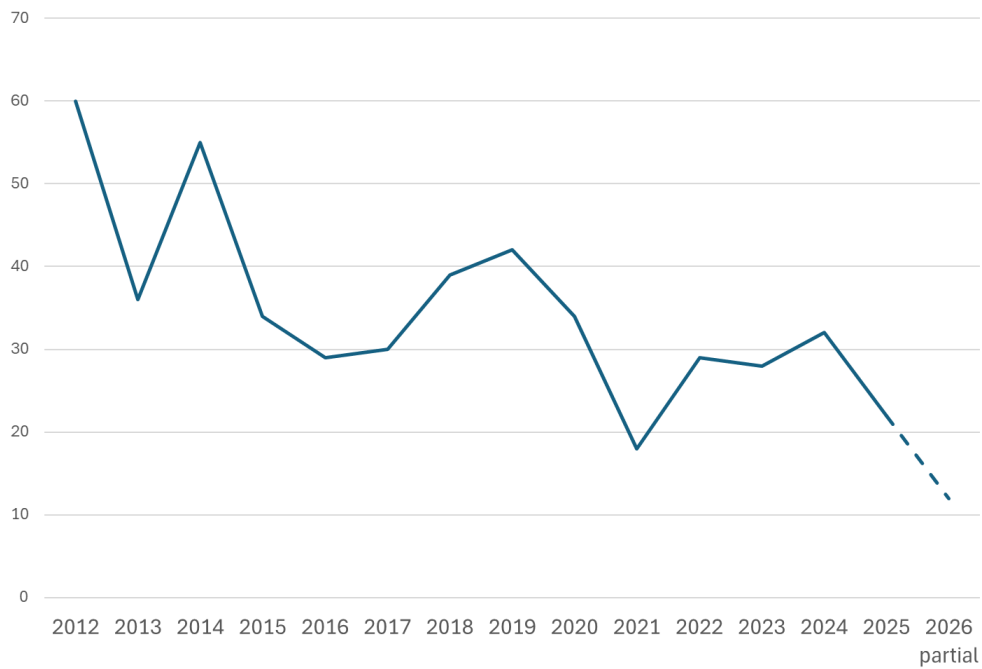
Figure 1 shows the number of new exams passed per year. Please note that the last point is incomplete as people are still taking exams this year to hold a certificate next year. Also note that 3yr certificates don't have to be tested for each year, although some do, and our total number of current 3yr certificate holders is double the number of exams taken each year because of this. You'll notice that the number of exams being taken is fairly consistent over a 15yr period. Class C 1yr certificates did jump following the new forum requirements, but it has come back down to historical levels since then. The rest are little changed from year to year.

Figure 1. Esoteric Certificates per year



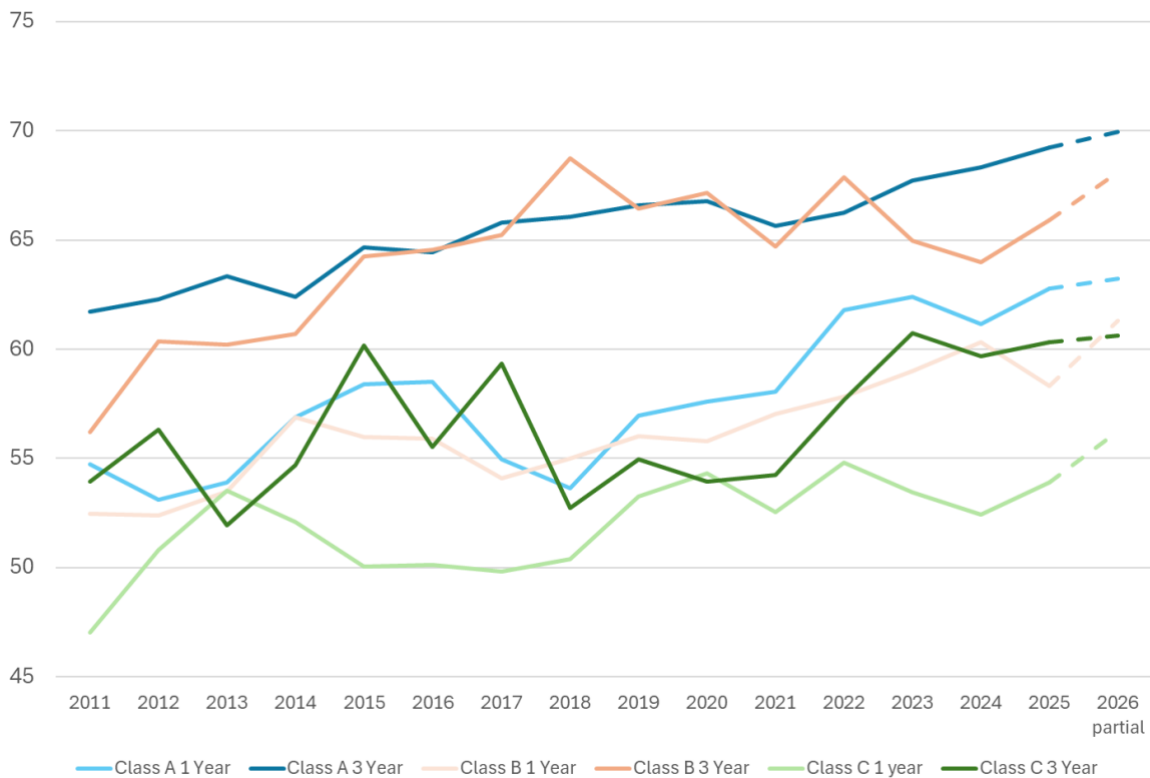
The problem is that they are the same guys. Figure 2 shows the number of new Class A certificate holders each year. We might have a few hundred Class A exams each year, but we're now down to less than 30 (less than 10%) being a first-time Class A exams being passed.

Figure 2. First-Time A Certificates



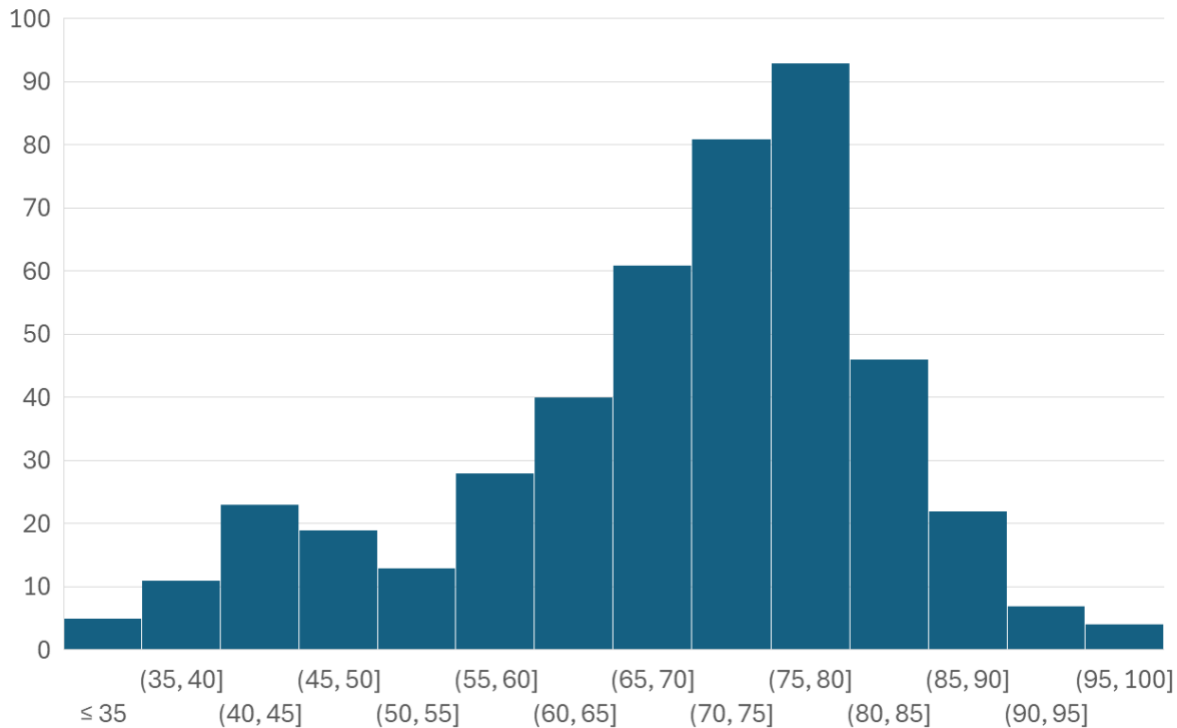
If over 90% of our Class A exams are the same people as always, guess what happens to our certificate holder age? It increases each year. This can be seen in Figure 3. Over the past 15 years, we've gone from an average age of 62 taking an A exam to an average age of 70 sitting for an exam.

Figure 3. Average Age At Issue For Esoteric Certificates



The end result of the same guys taking the exams year after year can be seen in Figure 4. That peak is for the 75 to 80 yr old age bracket. The median age at which Texas Masons lay down their working tools is 86, so this is of great concern. A lot of our A certificate holders are going to start laying down their working tools.

Figure 4. Current Age of 3yr A Certificate Holders



While we can't do much about the march of time, we do have some things working for us. First off, people who sit for an exam simply do not quit Masonry. An amazing statistic is that out of the 9,844 exams represented in Figure 1, only ONE PERSON (a Class C 1yr) has ever quit Masonry after passing an esoteric exam. That's a 99.9+% retention rate! No one who has passed a Class B or Class A exam over the past 15 years has demitted or been suspended for non-payment of dues. These are our lifers. Secondly, the progressive line in the subordinate lodges continues to yield new, and relatively young, Class C certificate holders. Getting a C certificate only requires opening and closing plus the questions and answers. Becoming a Master Mason and going through the line teaches you both the things you need for a C certificate.

So, the call to action: Figure 4 is real, and to maintain ritual proficiency in this State, we need to double the number of C certificate holders that make it to A, as well as the number that test at all. Our District Instructors and other Class A certificate holders are absolutely awesome, but they won't live forever. Half our A certificate holders are aged 72+! Those aged 75+, especially, need to latch on to a young ritualist, encourage him, nurture him, and bring him along to A. We need to replace ourselves, ritual proficiency-wise. If we don't, 5 out of every 6 lodges having a certificate holder will become 4 out of every 6 just several years from now, and then 3 out of every 6 (only half) in a little over a decade. That's a big deal and a big change from where we are now, leading to great decay in our Fraternity, but there is still time...if we start now.

Now clearly there are a lot of people who know the work who don't have a certificate. Let's encourage them to get a certificate. I can tell you that it's easy to drift over time, just a word here or a phrase there, that sounds right and makes perfect sense. If you're the go-to guy in your lodge, conferring and lecturing, everyone is going to assume you're right, or that it was just a little mis-speak, which we all do. Testing and listening to other A testers refines your words and keeps everything on track. If you're the guy conferring, lecturing, or playing any part, I encourage you to go to a Forum and Exam. They're not going to fail you for a word, just correct it. Do it for your Brethren. Right now our quality is high. Let's keep it that way. – Zachary Haston, PM

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.

MONTHLY LAW READING – STATED MEETINGS

Arts. 234 and 235 set out what business must only be conducted at a Stated Meeting and what business is permitted to be conducted at a Called Meeting

Art. 234. Stated Meetings: BUSINESS REQUIRED AT.

The following matters shall be attended to only at Stated Meetings: Receiving and balloting upon petitions for degrees, advancement and affiliation; receiving and voting on applications for Demits, certificates of good standing; removal of Lodge to another location; receiving charges and complaints of Masonic disciplinary violations; election of Officers, surrender of charters; presentation of proposed by-laws and all amendments thereof (except as authorized in Subdivision 4 of Art. 216); reinstatement of membership and restoration of Masonic rights; granting of life memberships; consolidation of Lodges; and approval of accounts and other fiscal transactions, unless dispensation to the contrary is granted; and all other matters required elsewhere in these Laws to be transacted at Stated Meetings. When, at a Stated Meeting, a Lodge has been closed, it cannot be reopened as a Stated Meeting, although no one may have left the room. (Revised 2007)

ART. 235. CALLED MEETINGS: BUSINESS PERMITTED

Called Meetings may be ordered by the Master of the Lodge, or by the Senior Warden in his absence, or by the Junior Warden in the absence of both, at any time not prohibited by law for any one or more of the following purposes: to receive the Grand Master or his Representative or other distinguished Mason; to confer degrees on candidates previously elected; to examine and vote on the proficiency of candidates; to install officers; to conduct funerals, to receive and vote on adoption of by-laws under Subdivision 4 of Art. 216; to adopt by-laws and amendments thereto when duly called for that purpose after reasonable notice given; to transact any other business not required by law to be acted on at a Stated Meeting. The Secretary may be ordered to issue summons for such meetings when the circumstances are deemed such as to warrant it; such summons must be in writing and under the seal of the Lodge.

– Jeremy R. Johnson, P.M.

TX MASON APP

The TX Mason app is over **5,000** users! Please join the 5,410 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>



Grand Master's Calendar of Events

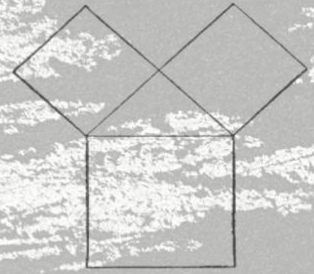
Date	Event	Time	Location	Address
Thursday 10/2/2025	Official Visit to Tarkington Prairie No. 496	6:00 P.M.	Tarkington Prairie #496	1209 Southline Street Cleveland, TX 77327
Friday 10/3/2025	Octoberfest In Honor of the Grand Master	5:30 P.M.	Scottish Rite Theater	207 W 18 th St, Austin, TX 78701
Saturday 10/4/2025	Come and Take It Historical Observance	8:30 A.M.	Gonzales Lodge #30	519 ½ St. Joseph, Gonzales, TX 78629
Saturday 10/4/2025	100 th Anniversary Celebration of Davy Crockett No. 1225	6:30 P.M.	San Antonio Shrine	901 N. Loop 1604 W, San Antonio, TX 78232
Tuesday 10/7/2025	Official Visit to Oakwood No. 1444	6:30 P.M.	Oakwood Lodge #1444	8314 TX-242, Conroe, TX 77385
Saturday 10/11/2025	Family Day at the Texas Masonic Retirement Community	10:00 A.M.	Texas Masonic Retirement Community	1501 W. Division St, Arlington, TX 76012
Saturday 10/11/2025	Official Visit to Chambers Creek No. 499	6:00 P.M.	Chambers Creek #499	209 N. Dallas St Ennis, TX 75119
Thursday 10/16/2025	Official Visit to Woodland No. 1157	6:00 P.M.	Woodland #1157	8337 Sweetwater Ln Houston, TX 77037
Tuesday 10/21/2025	Official Visit to Montgomery No. 25	6:30 P.M.	Montgomery #25	160 Eva St Montgomery, TX 77356
Saturday 10/25/2025	150 th Anniversary Celebration of Lee No. 435	TBD	TBD	TBD
Wednesday 10/29/2025	Official Visit to Texas City No. 1118	6:30 P.M.	Texas City #1118	702 14 th St N Texas City, TX 77590

HEATIN' UP! TEXAS MASONIC BBQ COOKOFF PLUS CLASSIC CAR & MOTORCYCLE SHOW

Think it's hot now? The competition really heats up at the statewide Masonic Barbecue Cookoff and Classic Car & Motorcycle Show on Saturday, Oct. 11, 2025! Held during Family Day, the largest gathering of Texas Masons and their families, winners compete for bragging rights, trophies, and many other awards. Entry forms and rules at <https://yourtmrc.org/family-day/>



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, 18 Oct 2025	Bridge City	1345	Bridge City	25-A	8:00 AM	Following
Sat, 25 Oct 2025	Joaquin	856	Joaquin	15	8:00 AM	Following
Thur, 30 Oct 2025	Huffman	1428	Huffman	30-D	8:00 AM	Following
Sat, 1 Nov 2025	Spring	1174	Spring	30-D	8:00 AM	Following
Chuck Forsyth						
Sat, 25 Oct 2025	Brownwood	279	Brownwood	76	9:00 AM	Following
Sat, 8 Nov 2025	Azle	601	Azle	89	9:00 AM	Following
Steve Pepper						
Sat, 4 Oct 2025	Mackenzie	1327	Lubbock	93	9:00 AM	Following
Sat, 15 Nov 2025	Palo Duro	1239	Amarillo	99	9:00 AM	Following
Cody Stewart						
Sat, 25 Oct 2025	Castillian	141	Canton	12	8:00 AM	Following
Sat, 8 Nov 2025	Metropolitan	1182	Dallas	14-E	8:00 AM	Following
Sat, 15 Nov 2025	Knob Creek	401	Temple	48	8:00 AM	Following
John Peters						
Sat, 4 Oct 2025	Solomon	484	Taylor	47	9:00 AM	Following
Sat, 18 Oct 2025	Hardeman	179	Lulling	35-A	9:00 AM	Following
Sat, 8 Nov 2025	Triune	15	San Antonio	39-C	9:00 AM	Following
Sat, 15 Nov 2025	Rambo	426	Dripping Springs	52	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>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Lodge</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Grand Lodge Representative</i>
Saturday 9/6/2025	Lunch or Refreshments at Noon Open Whitt Lodge at 1:00pm Open Grand Lodge at 1:15pm Cornerstone Ceremony at 2:00pm	Whitt #624 101 Main St. Whitt, TX 76490	New Fire Station	Kenneth C. Curry Past Grand Master
Monday 10/13/2025	Lunch or refreshments at 11:00am Open Elgin Lodge at Noon Open Grand Lodge at 12:15pm Cornerstone Ceremony at 1:00pm	Elgin #328 30 North Ave. C Elgin, TX 78621	New School	H.N. "Chip" Green, Jr. Grand Jr. Warden
Friday 10/17/2025	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
Friday 10/24/2025	Lunch or refreshments at 11:00am Open Deer Park Lodge at Noon Open Grand Lodge at 12:15pm Cornerstone Ceremony #1 at 1:00pm Cornerstone Ceremony #2 at 1:30pm	Deer Park #1362 2809 Center St. Deer Park, TX 77536	Fire Station #1 & Dow Active Complex	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

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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 and you will be directed to your DDGM.

Office Staff - the list below is intended to help you reach the person in the office responsible for what you are requesting. It is, however, recommended that you copy the GS@GrandSecretaryofTX.org email on ALL correspondence.

Dave McHam

dave@grandsecretaryoftx.org

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

Jeff Frayser

fraternal@grandsecretaryoftx.org

Out-of-State Correspondence
Dispensations

Zachary Haston

zhaston@grandsecretaryoftx.org

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

Jimmy Shannon

jshannon@grandsecretaryoftx.org

Masonic Disciplinary Violations

Cindy Huerta

cindy@grandsecretaryoftx.org

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

Justin Hancock

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

jjohnson@grandsecretaryoftx.org

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. August 30 – Vanguard Applications are due to the DDGM electronically no later than August 30 and to the Committee on Masonic Education electronically via cme@grandlodgeoftx.org (refer to Vanguard Application Instructions).
- k. September 15 – Lodge Minimum Audit Report 71 is due to the GS Office NLT September 15 (Art. 284).
- 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.