

Brad S. Billings
GRAND SECRETARY
PO BOX 446
WACO, TEXAS 76703



BUS: (254) 753-7395
FAX: (254) 753-2944
gs@grandsecretaryoftx.org

GRAND SECRETARY'S MONTHLY COMMUNICATION MARCH 2026

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 – Submissions for Statements of Availability, Resolutions and Vanguard
- Officer Leadership Training – Committee on Masonic Education
- Product of the Month – Set of four Masonic Caps - \$15
- Education - Beauty to Adorn – Sean Starr
- Statistics – Membership Floor – Zachary Haston
- Monthly Law Reading – Lodge Dues – Jeremy R. Johnson
- Lodge Spotlight – Round Rock 227 – Traveler's Report
- 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](#).

PRODUCT OF THE MONTH



Set of Four Masonic Caps

This month's featured item is a **set of four Masonic caps** for **ONLY \$15**. That's over 80% off the original price!

Whether you are running errands, attending Lodge functions, traveling to a Masonic event, or simply enjoying time with family, these caps allow you to represent the Craft with pride.

Selections are chosen by the staff (no requests). Available while supplies last.

Please note: Caps included in the set may vary from those pictured based on current inventory.

PLEASE READ

Grand Secretary's Office

Brethren – In an effort to streamline the process for submitting Statements of Availability, Resolutions and Lodge Vanguard awards, we have created the following Drop Boxes:

1. Statements of Availability - [2027 Statements of Availability](#)
2. Resolutions of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas - [2027 Resolutions](#)
3. Vanguard Submissions - [Vanguard Submissions](#)

***Please note – all submissions previous to 3/1/26 have been added to these Drop Boxes. However, any submissions after 3/1 MUST go to these Drop Boxes. Any submissions sent by mail, email, social media or other medium will NOT BE ACCEPTED or CONSIDERED. ***

Officer Leadership Training

Lodge elections are approaching quickly. This is the final opportunity for incoming Wardens to complete the required Officer Leadership Training and fulfill Article 276a before taking office.

Ensuring that your officers are properly registered and trained before installation helps set your lodge up for a strong and successful year. Preparation matters, and this training is designed to equip officers with the tools and understanding they need to lead effectively.

The final three opportunities to attend are:

Austin March 13-14

Tyler March 28-29

San Antonio May 8-9

Please encourage your incoming officers to register as soon as possible to secure their spot.

Thank you for helping us make sure our lodges are prepared and positioned for success in the coming year. –
The Committee on Masonic Education

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.

READ PORTIONS APPROPRIATE FOR YOUR LODGE

MONTHLY LAW READING – LODGE DUES

There are a few articles of the Law Book which dictate how we charge and pay dues. While there is no maximum dues, there is a minimum dues which each lodge must charge the members who are liable for dues.

Art. 311 Dues: Fixed by Lodge: Minimum – (1) The amount of annual dues in a Subordinate Lodge shall be fixed by the Lodge as may be determined by a majority of the members present provided that such membership dues shall never be fixed below a minimum of Fifty Dollars per annum. Bylaws in conflict with this provision are void. No Lodge shall have the power to levy assessments, other than regular dues, against its members; nor to raise its dues for a definite period of time; but may raise and lower its dues from time to time as it may deem proper, in like manner as provided in Article 309.

(2) A Lodge, by a majority vote of the members present, may permit the payment of dues and fees by use of a credit or debit card, in addition to accepting cash or check. Additionally, a Lodge, by a majority vote of the members present, may authorize the acceptance of monthly or quarterly payments in advance of a due date. Such payments may be preauthorized ACH transfers or preauthorized charges to a credit or debit card account. A Lodge may charge a fee to recover costs related to the use of credit or debit cards to make payments to the Lodge.

Art. 312. Fees and Dues Paid Only in Money. Lodges shall receive nothing but money in payment of fees and dues, nor can fees, or any part thereof, be remitted but must be paid before the degree is conferred; provided, that when a Lodge is indebted to a Brother, such indebtedness may be liquidated by allowing the Brother's dues to be credited with such indebtedness or necessary part thereof.

Art. 314. May Remit or Exempt From Payment. A Lodge may exempt any member from the payment of current dues, may remit the dues of a member in arrears, or may remit or compromise the amount of dues owing by a Brother suspended for non-payment thereof, but is not thereby exempt from the payment of any part of its dues on such member or suspended Brother to the Grand Lodge. (Revised 1995)

NOTE: The current dues of the Lodge are primarily for the payment of current operating and fixed expenses and charges. While this Article gives to the Lodge a wide discretion in dealing with its members regarding dues for current and previous years, it does not authorize the Lodge to limit, curtail, diminish, allocate or appropriate any portion of its future dues for any other purpose, whether by agreement, resolution, by-law, pledge, or any other means. Any dues paid in advance for any future period must be held by the Lodge and applied to the receipts of the current year or years for which they are paid.

– Jeremy R. Johnson, PM

BEAUTY TO ADORN



We are taught that the three principal supports of the Lodge are Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty, because it is necessary that there should be wisdom to contrive, strength to support, and beauty to adorn all great and important undertakings.

As members of our Lodges, we have the opportunity to enhance the experience of new candidates, our gathered Brethren, and even visiting members of the public by adorning our Lodge buildings with beauty. While our work as Masons is typically of an interior nature, our Craft also occupies space in the material world. Our ancient Brethren were builders of beautiful

stone edifices for the glory of God, and Hiram Abiff was selected to lead the intricate designs adorning King Solomon's Temple.

Our Lodge rooms represent that great Temple, and we know from Scripture that the Sanctum Sanctorum is the part of the Temple where God's Spirit appeared. What place could be more befitting to adorn with beauty than the environment of the Lodge—the space where we all gather, pray, and invoke the aid of Deity to improve ourselves in Masonry?

For over 35 years, I have committed my working life to traditional craftsmanship and artistry. In recent years, I have applied those skills to Masonry through projects in my local Lodge in Bremond, initiatives for Brothers, and efforts on behalf of the Grand Lodge of Texas.

I would like to take this opportunity to encourage all of us to give greater attention to this aspect of the Craft and to explore ways we can enhance the experience in our Lodges through the beautification of the physical spaces we inhabit. Reflect on your own initiations and consider how that experience might have been elevated if your first visual exposure to Masonry had been heightened by a beautiful Lodge room. I went through my degrees in Stanfield Lodge No. 217 in Denton in 2018 and still vividly recall seeing the magnificent stained-glass artwork in the East for the first time. I am currently working with local Lodges and the Grand Lodge to make improvements and restore more artistry to the Craft in Texas, and I encourage you to do the same wherever possible.

We were all drawn to Masonry for different reasons, yet every Brother shares in the pride of what we aspire to become: better men, guided by timeless principles. As caretakers of this ancient tradition—one that has steadfastly championed individual freedom, moral integrity, and the pursuit of higher ideals—we bear a responsibility not only to preserve it but to present it in its fullest light.

Let us remember that Wisdom contrives our noble designs, Strength sustains them through every trial, and Beauty adorns them so that they inspire awe and reverence. In beautifying our Lodge rooms, we do more than enhance aesthetics; we honor the third great pillar, creating spaces that reflect the grandeur of Solomon's Temple and draw candidates and members toward the profound truths we hold dear. A beautifully appointed

Lodge does not merely impress the eye—it elevates the soul, deepens the initiatic experience, and leaves an indelible impression of Masonry’s enduring excellence.

Brethren, we share a great opportunity. Whether through modest improvements in your own Lodge or collaborative efforts with artists within the Brotherhood, let us restore artistry and splendor to our Craft. In doing so, we ensure that future generations will enter our doors not just as visitors or candidates, but as men forever touched by the beauty that adorns the path to self-improvement. – Sean Starr

Membership Floor

Someone used a term with me the other day that shocked me and prompted an instant rebuttal. I was taken aback not because it’s not what your first thought would be, but because I haven’t thought that in a while because I know the numbers underlying it and know it’s just not true. That term is “Death Curve.”

It is true that Texas Masonry, like that in the rest of the country, has been on a 3% decay curve for decades now. That, however, is an overall average which includes lodges that are, right now, mostly fellowship lodges and bring in few to no new members. The simple facts are that 122 (17%) of our lodges have a higher membership today than they did 3 years ago including deaths and everything (Figure 1), and 280 (39%) lodges (Figure 2) would have a higher membership if deaths had only been 2%/yr (a steady state number). If, or shall I say “once,” the 61% fade away, the 39% remaining provide a floor upon which our Statewide membership will start to increase each year, if they continue as they have been. From a numbers standpoint, we will not go to zero simply because we do have lodges that are growing.

Figure 1. 3yr Membership Change by Lodge

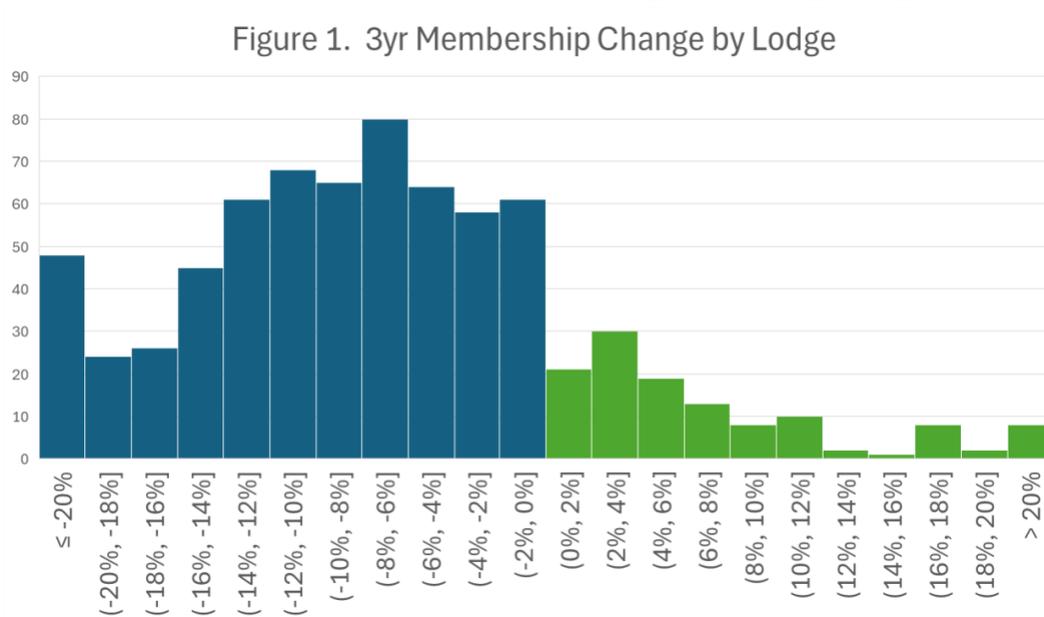
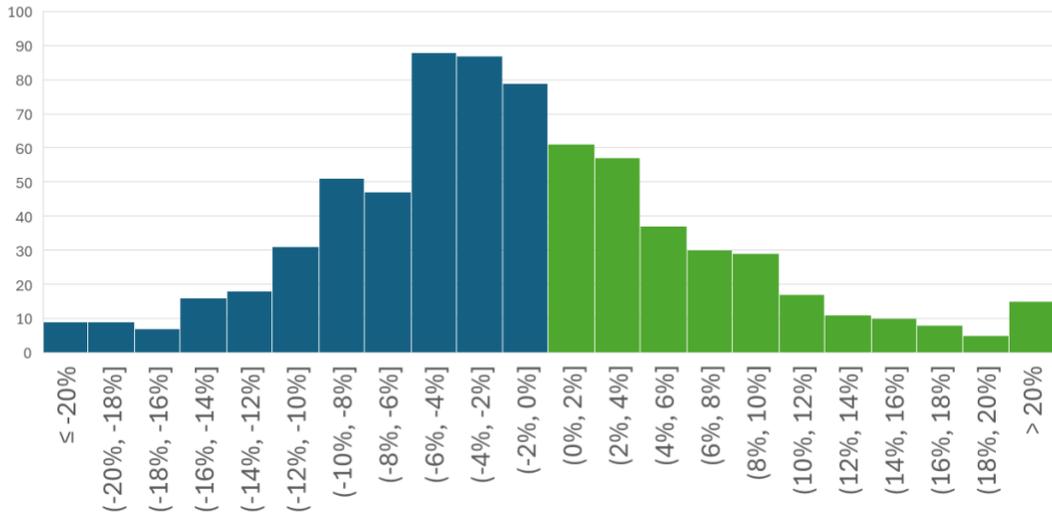


Figure 2. 3yr Lodge Membership Change with Deaths Adjusted to 2%/yr



If you map out the growing lodges, they are nicely spread across the State with only a couple of areas of concern, which I won't call out here. I'll also add that ZERO of the 122 raw growing lodges, and only one of the 280 growing-if-death-adjusted lodges have had consolidations over the last 3 few years. In no case is today's consolidated membership greater than the sum of their individual memberships were 3 years ago. That is because when lodges consolidate, we unfortunately tend to lose a number of the dues-payers from the lodge moving over. We must make a serious attempt to bring them in, not just on the books. Now that being said, in the short-term we definitely lose members with consolidations, but there is hope that in the longer term the hopefully-increased number of members playing a role, the added expertise in the surviving lodge, and the improved finances will yield a better foundation upon which to build. They may not be on the 3yr chart, but maybe the 10yr.

Now, I don't want to minimize the challenges over the next couple of decades in dealing with continued overall membership declines. A dozen lodges a year are consolidating right now, and I see that continuing for quite a while, increasing before they slow. The Civil Law and Real Estate committees are going to be busy helping with the selling of literally hundreds of buildings; however, it won't be all of them. Most lodges that are not growing are within a short distance to lodges which are doing great, although they are not always merging with the lodges doing things completely differently than have been (meaning growing).

Ultimately, we can increase our floor by increasing the number of lodges doing things like the successful lodges (traveling and communication will help here), but please note that, according to the numbers, it's not a "death curve." There is a floor. People are energetic about going to lodge across this State, and lodges, across this State, are doing great things. Worry not. There is gold in gold ore, and Michelangelo could see David in that huge chunk of marble. He just had to look past the rough and superfluous parts, and it stands today, centuries later, as something people travel to see. – Zachary Haston

Lodge Spotlight: Round Rock Lodge No. 227 – Traveler’s Reports

Round Rock Lodge No. 227 has cultivated a unique tradition that continues to enrich the Masonic experience for its members—the **Traveler’s Reports**. Launched on August 15, 2017, this initiative began when then-upcoming Worshipful Master **PM Tom McGuire** sought to bring greater engagement and educational value to Stated Meetings. Recognizing that Freemasons proudly call themselves “Traveling Men,” he introduced a dedicated agenda item inviting brothers to share where their Masonic journey had taken them in the previous month.

What started as a simple idea quickly blossomed into a defining part of the lodge’s culture. Before this, travel updates were occasionally mentioned during Announcements. By giving the topic its own place in the meeting, brethren felt encouraged to contribute more openly—and more often.

Over the years, the Traveler’s Reports have showcased a remarkable range of Masonic experiences. Early on, **PM Jeremy LeCrone** became a regular contributor, frequently tying his historical military reenactments—held across Texas and throughout the country—to meaningful Masonic connections. **PM Michael Grubbs** brings the lodge along on his two-wheeled adventures, sharing the insights and brotherhood he encounters on the open road. PM McGuire himself has added a new dimension to the reports through his membership in *The Explorers Club*, offering stories that are as educational as they are exotic.

The very first recorded Traveler’s Report set the tone: **PM Marco Sanchez** recounted his visit to Friendly Lodge No. 383 in Jamaica. Since then, Round Rock Lodge brethren have shared travels stretching across the globe—Canada, Mexico, Panama, Dominican Republic, Brazil, England, Scotland, Israel, Japan, and Portugal—along with numerous journeys across Texas and other U.S. jurisdictions. Reports also frequently highlight visits to Grand Lodge, degree work, forums, festive boards, installations, and appendant bodies such as Scottish Rite, York Rite, Shriners, and, more recently, Texas Prince Hall lodges.

Today, the Traveler’s Reports stand as a beloved tradition—one that inspires curiosity, promotes education, and strengthens fraternal bonds. They remind every brother that while Masonry can be fully lived within one’s home lodge, **the greater Masonic world offers an abundance of opportunities for growth, friendship, and enlightenment** to those willing and able to explore it.

Submitted by: Mike Mistry, P.M.,

Special thanks to WM Clint Miller for providing and preserving this information for the benefit of all Texas Masons.



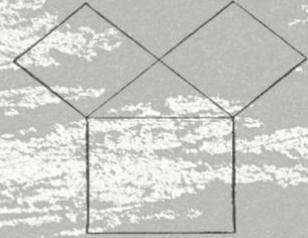
Grand Master's Calendar of Events

In order to provide the most up to date information and prevent duplication, the Grand Master's Calendar can now be found in the Grand Lodge Gazette, emailed weekly by the Grand Lodge Committee on Communications. For full details, please visit the Grand Master's calendar page here:

[GRAND MASTER'S PAGE](#)



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>
Steve Pepper						
Cody Stewart						
Sat, March 21 2026	Lewisville	201	Lewisville	84	8:00 AM	Following
Sat, March 28 2026	Burleson	649	Burleson	63	8:00 AM	Following
Sat, April 11 2026	Commerce	439	Commerce	8	8:00 AM	Following
Sat, April 18 2026	Brooklyn	386	Forney	13	8:00 AM	Following
Sat, April 25 2026	Thomas B. Hunter	1356	Grand Prairie	14-G	8:00 AM	Following
John Peters						
Sat ,14 Mar 2026	Mount Hiram	595	Copperas Cove	69	9:00 AM	1:00 PM
Sat ,28 Mar 2026	Kerrville	697	Kerrville	51	9:00 AM	1:00 PM
Sat, April 11 2026	University	1190	Austin	50	9:00 AM	1:00 PM
Sat, April 18 2026	Eagle Pass	626	Eagle Pass	43	9:00 AM	1:00 PM
Sat, April 25 2026	Guadalupe	109	Seguin	35-B	9:00 AM	1:00 PM
Cody Cockroft						
Fri, Mar 20 2026	Solidarity	1457	Spring	30-A	6:30 PM	N/A
Sat, April 4 2026	Snow River	385	Spurger	121	8:00 AM	After Lunch
Sat, April 11 2026	Montgomery	25	Montgomery	28	8:00 AM	After Lunch
Sat, April 18 2026	Lake Jackson	1317	Lake Jackson	31-C	8:00 AM	After Lunch
Sat, April 25 2026	Sampson	231	Baytown	30-F	8:00 AM	After Lunch
Kevin Moss						
Sat, April 4 2026	Stephenville	267	Stephenville	67	9:00 AM	Following
Sat, April 18 2026	Iredell	405	Iredell	68	9:00 AM	Following
Sat, April 25 2026	Mineral Wells	611	Mineral Wells	113	9:00 AM	Following

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

The Grand Lodge of Texas Cornerstone Leveling Ceremonies 2026

For Information Contact:

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



Date	Time	Lodge	Location	Grand Lodge Representative
Monday 3/2/2026	Coffee & Donuts at 11:00am Open Solomon Lodge at Noon Open Grand Lodge at 12:15pm Cornerstone Ceremony at 1:00pm	Solomon #484 2707 Donna Dr. Taylor, TX 76574	Hutto Fire Dept. Headquarters & Maintenance Facility	Justin B. Duty Deputy Grand Master
Postponed Friday 3/6/2026	Lunch or refreshments at Noon Open Lee Lodge at 1:00pm Open Grand Lodge at 1:15pm Cornerstone Ceremony at 2:00pm	Lee #435 101 S. Church Prosper, TX 75078	Prosper Fire Station #4	H.N. "Chip" Green, Jr. Grand Sr. Warden
Monday 3/16/2026	Lunch or refreshments at 1:00pm Open Hughes Springs Lodge at 2:00pm Open Grand Lodge at 2:15pm Cornerstone Ceremony at 3:00pm	Hughes Springs #671 918 East First Street Hughes Springs, TX 75656	New School	H.N. "Chip" Green, Jr. Grand Sr. Warden
Wednesday 3/25/2026	Coffee & Donuts at 9:00am Open Bridge City Lodge at 10:00am Open Grand Lodge at 10:15am Cornerstone Ceremony at 11:00am Lunch with School Officials & faculty at the Orangefield Cormier Museum at 11:45am	Bridge City #1345 365 North John St. Bridge City, TX 77611-4128	Orangefield Elementary, Orangefield Jr. High & Orangefield High School	H.N. "Chip" Green, Jr. Grand Sr. Warden
Friday 3/27/2026	Coffee & Donuts at 10:00am Open Anahuac Lodge at 11:00am Open Grand Lodge at 11:15am Cornerstone Ceremony for the at Noon	Anahuac #995 2100 S. Main Anahuac, TX 77514	Chambers County EMS Station	H.N. "Chip" Green, Jr. Grand Sr. Warden
Thursday 4/2/2026	Coffee & Donuts at 9:00am Open Rosenberg Lodge at 10:00am Open Grand Lodge at 10:15am Cornerstone Ceremony at 11:00am	Rosenberg #881 25507 Southwest Frwy. Rosenberg, TX 77471	Rosenberg Fire Station No. 1	H.N. "Chip" Green, Jr. Grand Sr. Warden

<p>Saturday 4/25/2026</p>	<p>Coffee & Donuts at 8:00am Open East Fork Lodge at 9:00am Open Grand Lodge at 9:15am Cornerstone Ceremony at 10:00am</p>	<p>East Fork #650 508 Parker Rd. Wylie, TX 75098</p>	<p>Hampton Intermediate & Parker Jr. High Schools in the Wylie ISD</p>	<p>H.N. "Chip" Green, Jr. Grand Sr. Warden</p>
<p>Saturday 4/25/2026</p>	<p>Lunch or refreshments at 1:00pm Open Greenwood Lodge at 2:00pm Open Grand Lodge at 2:15pm Cornerstone Ceremony at 3:00pm</p>	<p>Greenwood #779 137 Co. Rd 2640, Decatur, TX 76234</p>	<p>Slidell ISD Agricultural Barn building</p>	<p>H.N. "Chip" Green, Jr. Grand Sr. Warden</p>

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

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

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

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

Jeremy Johnson

jjohnson@grandsecretaryoftx.org

Lodge Secretary Training
GS Newsletter

Jimmie Shannon

jshannon@grandsecretaryoftx.org

Masonic Disciplinary Violations

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 or Warden cannot be a proxy for another Lodge.