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GRAND SECRETARY'S MONTHLY COMMUNICATION APRIL 2025

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

- Featured Item: Lone Star Apron – 11 days left to order for Installation.
- Secretary School Waco – April 5, 2025 at Waco Lodge No. 92
- Statistics – Masonry and Life Expectancy – Zach Haston
- Monthly Law Reading – Members in Arrears and Suspensions
- Lodge Spotlight – Grandview Masonic Lodge No. 266
- and more.....

PLEASE COMMUNICATE THIS INFORMATION TO YOUR MEMBERS, AS APPROPRIATE. I recommend you print this communication and bring it to your stated meeting for discussion. This communication is automatically provided electronically to all lodges with the capability to use the Grandview system. Individual Master Masons of The Grand Lodge of Texas can sign up by contacting the Grand Secretary's Office at (254) 753-7395 or gs@grandsecretaryoftx.org, or by registering your membership through [the Member Portal](#).



FEATURED ITEM

The Lone Star Apron is available for two “windows” during the year. The first of those two window closes in 11 days on 4/12/25. If you would like to purchase this apron for the outgoing Worshipful Master of your Lodge, this is the last opportunity. The next “window” will allow for delivery just before Christmas.

Thank you for your continued support of the Grand Lodge of Texas through the purchase of this apron.

It can ONLY be found here:

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

PLEASE READ

GRAND SECRETARY OFFICE UPDATES

AD VALORUM TAX EXEMPTION

Ad Valorum Tax Exemption letters are IN!!! Over the next few days, they will be loaded into Grand View under the File Vault in the “Other” folder. It will be styled as: Lodge name, number, PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION LETTER.pdf

This letter must be printed out and delivered by each Lodge to their Appraisal District by 4/30/2025.
When you have delivered the letter it is recommended that you get a receipt and upload it to your Grand View in the “other” folder next to your exemption letter. This exemption is good for the next five years.

READ PORTIONS APPROPRIATE FOR YOUR LODGE

SECRETARY SYSTEM OF INFORMATION

Secretary School (Hours 9 am – 12 pm)

Saturday, April 5 – Waco Lodge No. 92

4324 Cobbs Dr, Waco, TX 76710

MONTHLY LAW READING

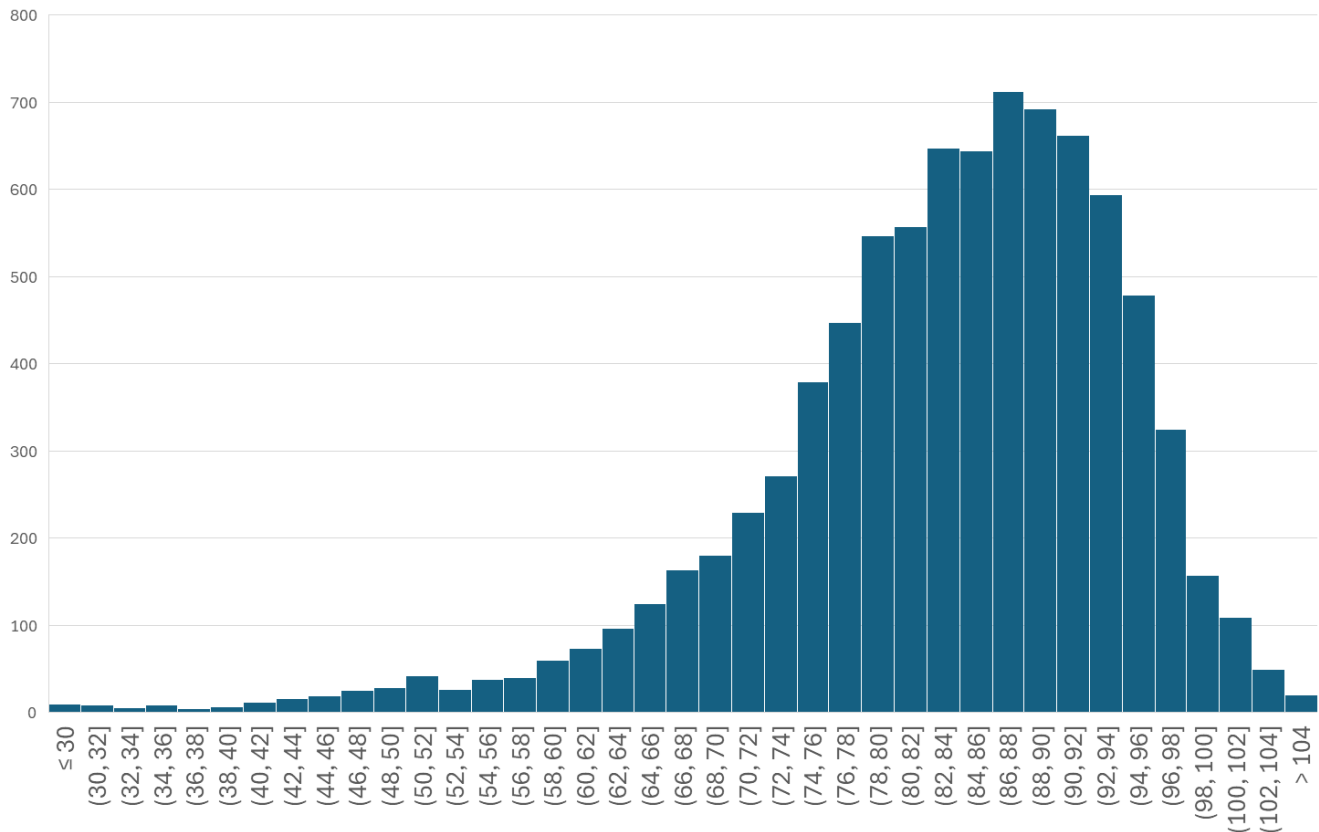
As the Masonic year comes to a close, Secretaries and Treasurers are often faced with the challenge of managing members who have fallen behind on dues payments. This time of year can be particularly stressful, but it serves as an important reminder for all members: dues for the upcoming year are due by December 31.

In accordance with Articles 319 and 319a of the Law Book, please note the following provisions regarding dues payments: Article 319 – Lodge dues are due and payable one year in advance on January 1st of each year (unless otherwise exempt) and if not paid on or before that date a member shall be in arrears for his dues. Any member in arrears shall be considered to be not in good standing and shall not be entitled to participate in any Masonic function predicated on membership. On or before thirty days before the last stated meeting of the Lodge held before June 24th of each year, it shall be the duty of the Secretary to notify each member, in writing, who may be in arrears for any dues, and if such member fails to pay such dues on or before June 23rd of such year, he shall stand automatically suspended for non- payment of dues without action by the Lodge, and such suspension shall be recorded in the minutes at the first subsequent stated meeting of the Lodge. Article 319a – The Worshipful Master, as soon as practicable after the first of January, each year, will cause the name of each member of the Lodge who may be in arrears for his dues, to be assigned to a committee of three members of the Lodge, whose title shall be Committee on Members in Arrears. The Worshipful Master may appoint as many three member committees as he may deem necessary. The committees shall each be provided with appropriate information regarding the Brother in arrears. Each of the committee thus assigned, will collectively or individually, make every reasonable effort to contact the Brother in arrears, and encourage him to pay his dues. The committee will then report its findings to the Lodge, and in the event the Brother does not pay his dues, recommend that the Brother’s dues be remitted, that he be suspended, or that he be encouraged to Demit. The Worshipful Master may assign one, or more than one, member in arrears to each committee as he may deem appropriate.

MASONRY AND LIFE EXPECTANCY

Masons live longer. I don't think that statement is going to come as a surprise to many of you, but I did think it was worth quantifying and contemplating a bit. I'll start off by quantifying. Figure 1 shows the age at death for Texas Master Masons over the past 4 years (8529 known deaths that we have known birthdates for). The average age at their death was 82.8 years old.

Figure 1. Age Deceased (last 4 years of Texas Master Mason deaths)
Average = 82.8, Median = 84.6



Regarding the “longer” part of that initial statement, Table 1 compares life expectancies of Texas Masons with those of the general male population. Data are from National Vital Statistics Reports using 2021 data (the most recent they have right now) and from our 2021 to date data in Grandview. *Note – Texas Masonic law excludes anyone who died before age 18 which skews the Age 0 data point here, but the rest don't have that issue.

Table 1. Life Expectancy

Age	Texas men	US men	Texas Master Masons
0	72.7	73.5	82.8*
18	55.4	56.3	64.8
30	44.5	45.4	52.9
40	35.6	36.6	43.1
50	27.1	28.2	33.6
60	19.4	20.5	24.3
65	16.1	17	19.9
70	13	14.4	15.8
80	7.5	7.9	9.1
90	3.7	3.9	4.4

As you can see in Table 1, at all point in life, Texas Master Masons live longer than the Texas male population. We have a large percentage of our men who join Masonry in their 30s and 40s, and those guys live several years longer than the general population. I can add to that that, racially, US American Indian men have a shorter life expectancy than Black males who have a shorter life expectancy than White males who have a shorter life expectancy than Hispanic males who have a shorter life expectancy than Asian males, but all those have a shorter life expectancy than Texas Master Masons. Race alone cannot explain the difference.

There are at least a few things that can help explain this. The first point that must be conceded is the correlation between income and life expectancy. Higher income yields more comfortable living conditions and better healthcare. Additionally, those with higher incomes tend to have a healthier lifestyle, and their rates of diabetes, heart disease, liver disease, and indeed most causes of death, are lower than those with lower incomes. Scarface aside, there just aren't as many rich drunkards and druggies. Looking just at the income portion of this, a 2016 Harvard study found that US males making more than \$130,000 per year have similar life expectancies to Texas Masons, and those making \$200k, \$400k or more per year actually have a higher life expectancy than Texas Master Masons. The life expectancy of US males making more than \$500k per year is 87.3yrs old, notable higher than our average. So what portion of our increased life expectancy can be attributed to income? Well, I do not know as I don't have data on our members' incomes to answer that question, but if our average is say \$100k, that would account for at least a year of greater life expectancy compared to the US average male. I cannot fully quantify how much our members' incomes affect their life expectancy, but at least some portion of the increased lifespan is likely attributed to selecting those with higher incomes. Additionally, even if your income isn't high, hanging around men who live a better lifestyle tends to make you live a better lifestyle, and Masonry is all about making good men better.

The next influence I'd like to point out is that numerous studies have found that membership in any in-person group (church groups, bowling/golf/etc teams, civic groups, and, yes, Masonry) after retirement age increases your life expectancy. For example, "If a person belonged to two groups before retirement, and kept these up over the following six years, their risk of death was 2%, rising to 5% if they gave up membership of one, and to 12% if they gave up membership of both." (Membership of social/community groups after retirement linked to longer life, Science News). I do not have data to compare the life expectancy increase from membership in Masonry compared to other organizations, but it's worth noting that the social aspect is important.

Similarly, retired married men's death rates are half those of widowed men's death rates (National Institute for Health data). At age 60, a US non-Hispanic White male has a life expectancy of 20.2 years compared to 9.5 years for a widowed husband. That is an enormous difference, and one which I believe our Fraternity helps to alleviate some. Again, I don't have the data on how many and which of our members have lost their wives to confirm this hypothesis, but, again, it's worth noting that the social aspects matter to life expectancy.

So, back to my opening statement: Masons live longer. The average Texas male has a life expectancy of 73yrs old. Our members live, on average, to 83. That's a decade longer, and even if you exclude the younger deats and look at people in their 30s and 40s, we still live several years longer. The reason is probably a combination of a number of things: yes, income, but also companionship, mental and social engagement. Netflix has a show on right now called "Join or Die," which is mostly about social capital and the need for social organizations in our democracy, but it also points out that joining just one organization makes you less likely to die next year. It may be a combination of many factors from social benefits to better personal lifestyles to Divine guidance, but together the data shows that Texas Masons, at any given age, are less likely to die next year compared to the general public. - **Zachary Haston**

LODGE SPOTLIGHT:

Grandview Masonic Lodge #266

Lodge Spotlight: Grandview Masonic Lodge #266's Window Sign Initiative

This month, we highlight the creative ingenuity of Grandview Masonic Lodge No. 266, which has found a unique way to utilize their lodge windows while fostering community engagement and raising funds. Have you noticed the charming messages displayed in their lodge windows lately?

Grandview Lodge has introduced a heartwarming program where individuals can display messages such as Happy Birthday, Anniversaries, Good Luck wishes, or other kind sentiments in the lodge windows. These messages are showcased on customizable chalkboards, creating a personal touch that brightens the day for both passersby and recipients of the messages.



For a small donation of your choice, you can decorate one of these chalkboards yourself, or the lodge can assist you. To participate, simply reach out to Worshipful Master Clint Wallace directly or message the lodge through their Facebook page. Please note, only positive and non-political messages are allowed—spreading joy and kindness is the goal!

This initiative not only strengthens connections between the lodge and the local community but also helps support the lodge's activities. Kudos to Grandview Masonic Lodge #266 for their creativity and dedication to spreading positivity while building bridges with their neighbors. Let's support this wonderful idea and continue to innovate in ways that embody the spirit of Masonry! – Mike Mistry P.M.

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.

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>

MONTHLY QUOTE

GOOD AND EVIL BOTH INCREASE AT COMPOUND INTEREST. THAT IS WHY THE LITTLE DECISIONS YOU AND I MAKE EVERY DAY ARE OF SUCH INFINITE IMPORTANCE. THE SMALLEST GOOD ACT TODAY IS THE CAPTURE OF A STRATEGIC POINT FROM WHICH, A FEW MONTHS LATER, YOU MAY BE ABLE TO GO ON TO VICTORIES YOU NEVER DREAMED OF. - C. S. LEWIS

TX MASON APP

The TX Mason app is over **5,000** users! Please join the 5,158 Brothers using the TX Mason APP! This is separate from the GrandView App & has a searchable (updated) law book and monitor at your fingertips.

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

TEXAS MASONIC RETIREMENT COMMUNITY



Texas Masonic Retirement Community

Of the Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Texas

RARE OPPORTUNITY at Texas Masonic Retirement Community!

Cottage Duplex 2-bedroom + 2 bath now available! NO DEPOSIT! Call 817-275-2893 to schedule your personal tour! Almost never happens - this will go fast! Includes chef-inspired meals in main dining hall, housekeeping, fun activities, Masonic events, full-size kitchen with refrigerator, full-size washer & dryer, plush carpet, ceramic tile, hardwood cabinets, garage, patio. See floor plan and learn more at <https://yourtmrc.org/our.../apartments-duplexes/duplexes/>

'I Got This'

at Angelika Theater Dallas, Texas in the USA Film Festival.

April 27th at 6:30pm - Free Admission

A film about an incredible group of kiddo's in a unique clinic.

Produced by Tony Herring, M.D.

Directed and Edited by Ken Mandel

Original Music Composed & Performed by Tony Herring, M.D.

A SCOTTISH RITE FOR CHILD PRODUCTION

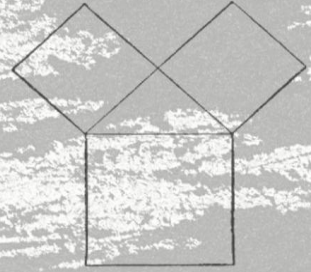


Grand Master's Calendar of Events

Date	Event	Time	Location	Address
Saturday 4/4/2025	Waco Grand Master's Conference	3:00 P.M.	Grand Lodge of Texas	715 Columbus Avenue, Waco, Texas 76701
Monday 4/7/2025	Official Visit to Huffman Lodge #1428	6:00 P.M.	Huffman Lodge #1458	2302 3 rd Street, Huffman, Texas 77336
Monday 4/21/2025	San Jacinto Observance	9:00 A.M.	San Jacinto Battleground State Historic Site	3523 Independence Parkway, La Porte, Texas 77571
Monday 4/21/2025	30 th District MWSA Luncheon	11:30 A.M.	Baytown Shrine Club	110 West Main Street, Baytown, Texas 77520
Friday 4/25/2025	Official Visit to District 107 MWSA	6:00 P.M.	Old River Winfree Community Center	4818 FM 565, Old River-Winfree, Texas 77523
Saturday 4/26/2025	Houston Grand Master's Conference	3:00 P.M.	Arabia Shriners	10510 Harwin Drive, Houston, Texas 77036
Saturday 5/3/2025	Amarillo Grand Master's Conference	8:00 A.M.	Khiva Shrine	305 SE 5 th Street, Amarillo, Texas 79101
Saturday 5/3/2025	Lubbock Grand Master's Conference	2:00 P.M.	Yellowhouse Lodge #841	5015 Gary Avenue, Lubbock Texas 79413
Tuesday 5/6/2025	Official Visit to Silsbee Lodge #927	TBD	Silsbee Lodge #927	390 N 5 th Street, Silsbee, Texas 77656



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, 12 Apr 2025	Lumberton	1430	Lumberton	26-C	8:00 AM	Following
Sat, 19 Apr 2025	Serenity	1462	Hitchcock	31-B	8:00 AM	Following
Sat, 3 May 2025	Liberty	48	Liberty	107	8:00 AM	Following
Sat, 10 May 2025	Tarkington Prairie	498	Cleveland	27	8:00 AM	Following
Sat, 17 May 2025	Milam	2	Nacogdoches	20	8:00 AM	Following
Chuck Forsyth						
Sat, 5 Apr 2025	Stephenville	267	Stephenville	67	9:00 AM	Following
Steve Pepper						
Sat, 5 Apr 2025	Bowie	578	Bowie	86	9:00 AM	Following
Sat, 17 May 2025	WF Faith	1158	Wichita Falls	88	9:00 AM	Following
Cody Stewart						
Sat, 5 April 2025	Thomas B. Hunter	1358	Grand Prairie	14-G	8:00 AM	Following
Sat, 12 April 2025	Commerce	439	Commerce	8	8:00 AM	Following
Sat, 26 Apr 2025	Brooklyn	386	Forney	13	8:00 AM	Following
Sat, 10 May 2025	Athens	165	Athens	17	8:00 AM	Following
Sat, 17 May 2025	Travis	117	Sherman	4-A	8:00 AM	Following
John Peters						
Sat, 12 Apr 2025	University	1190	Austin	50	9:00 AM	Following
Sat, Apr 26 2025	Guadalupe	109	Seguin	35-B	9:00 AM	Following

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

The Grand Lodge of Texas Cornerstone Leveling Ceremonies 2024



For Information Contact:

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

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Lodge</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Grand Lodge Representative</i>
Friday 4/4/2025	Coffee & Donuts or breakfast at 8:00am Open Kerrville Lodge at 9:00am Open Grand Lodge at 9:15am Cornerstone Ceremony at 10:00am	Kerrville #697 119 Methodist Encampment Rd Kerrville, TX 78028	Public Service Administration Building	Paul D. Underwood Past Grand Master
Friday 4/4/2025	Coffee & Donuts or breakfast at 8:00am Open Haltom City Riverside Lodge at 9:00am Open Grand Lodge at 9:15am Cornerstone Ceremony at 10:00am	Haltom City Riverside #1331 4403 Broadway Haltom City, TX 76117	New City Hall	H. Bart Henderson Past Deputy Grand Master
Wednesday 4/23/2025	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 Police Station	H.N. "Chip" Green, Jr. Grand Jr. Warden
Thursday 4/24/2025	Coffee & donuts at 9:00am Open St. Johns Lodge at 10:00am Open Grand Lodge at 10:15am Cornerstone Ceremony at 11:00am	St. John's #5 313 W. Jackson St West Columbia, TX 77486	New School	Raborn L. Reader, Jr. Grand Master
Tuesday 4/29/2025	Lunch or Refreshments at Noon Open Tomball Lodge at 1:00pm Open Grand Lodge at 1:15pm Cornerstone Ceremony at 2:00pm	Tomball #1096 600 Kane St. Tomball, TX 77375	Emergency Service Center #8	Raborn L. Reader, Jr. Grand Master
Thursday 5/8/2025	Open Sam R. Hamilton Lodge at 10:30am Light Lunch at 11:00 Open Grand Lodge at Noon Cornerstone Ceremony at 1:00	Sam R. Hamilton #1031 110 1/2 Center St. Grand Prairie, TX 75050	Grand Prairie Fire Station 11	Wendell P. Miller Past Grand Master
Saturday 6/14/2025	Coffee & donuts at 8:00am Open East Fork Lodge at 9:00am Open Grand Lodge at 9:15am Cornerstone Ceremony at 10:00am	East Fork #650 508 Parker Rd. Wylie, TX 75098	Kreymer Elementary School	Wendell P. Miller Past Grand Master

Join the Texas Cornerstone State coordinator Kevin Binder's Facebook Group
<https://www.facebook.com/share/CiHNBv12zSaqwVhh/?mibextid=K35XfP>

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

GRAND SECRETARY OFFICE STAFF DIRECTORY

Hours of Operation:

8:30 AM to 4:00 PM, Monday – Friday

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

Legal Advice – Please DO NOT call our office asking questions on Masonic Jurisprudence.

That is a question for your DDGM.

The Internet Committee is partnering with the Grand Secretary's office to offer technical support in the following areas:

- Access to the Grandview Member Portal or password reset
- DDGM, DCO, & DEO access to District-wide tools
- TX Mason APP - including registering or downloading

To seek help with the preceding, send an email to internet@grandlodgeoftexas.org and please leave a mobile number and your ID so they can reach you.

Dave McHam

dave@grandsecretaryoftx.org

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

Cindy Huerta

cindy@grandsecretaryoftx.org

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

Jeff Frayser

fraternal@grandsecretaryoftx.org

Out-of-State Correspondence
Dispensations

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

Zach Haston

zhaston@grandsecretaryoftx.org

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

Jeremy Johnson

irjohnson0821@gmail.com

Lodge Secretary Training

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.