

Brad S. Billings
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GRAND SECRETARY'S MONTHLY COMMUNICATION MARCH 2025

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

- Featured Item: Dave & Busters Powercard – 50% goes to Grand Lodge (read below).
- GM Decisions 1, 2, and 3
- The NEW Legacy Builder Award – Form 77b
- Secretary School Waco – April 5, 2025
- Statistics – Candidate Advancement – Zach Haston
- Monthly Law Reading – Form 23 – Stewards Optional?
- Lodge Spotlight – Gray Lodge No. 329, Solidarity Lodge No. 1457, Walter M. Pierson Lodge No. 1339, J.W. Chandler Daylight Lodge No. 1452
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 TIME WITH THE GRAND MASTER
M.W.: **RABORN L READER**
(OPEN TO ALL)

50% OF ALL THE MONEY RAISED!
COMES BACK TO YOUR GRAND LODGE!

DAVE & BUSTER'S

EITHER TAKE YOUR FAMILY OUT FOR A FUN NIGHT OF GAMES & FOOD @ DAVE & BUSTER'S!

OR SPEND IT WITH THE GRAND MASTER RABORN L READER OUT FOR DATES FT. WORTH, DALLAS, SAN ANTONIO & HOUSTON

50% Donated back only when purchases are made by scanning this QR code. Only valid for game play!

SCAN ME

SCAN ME

Feb 22nd 7:00 PM
(FOLLOWING FT. WORTH GM CONFERENCE)
DAVE & BUSTER'S ARLINGTON
425 CURTIS MATHES WAY
ARLINGTON, TX 76018

March 8th 12:00 PM
(FOLLOWING ALAMO OBSERVANCE)
DAVE & BUSTER'S SAN ANTONIO
849 E COMMERCE ST STE 740
SAN ANTONIO, TX 78205

March 15th 2:00 PM
(FOLLOWING DALLAS GM CONFERENCE)
DAVE & BUSTER'S DALLAS
9450 N CENTRAL EXPY
DALLAS, TX 75231

April 26th 7:00 PM
(FOLLOWING HOUSTON GM CONFERENCE)
DAVE & BUSTER'S KATY
7620 KATY FWY
HOUSTON, TX 77024

FEATURED ITEM

Support your Grand Lodge and have some fun with the Dave & Buster's Powercard! 50% that's 5 – 0 Percent of every purchase goes back to the GLoT! Go with your family, plan a Lodge event, or attend one of the planned Grand Master's events at San Antonio, Dallas or Houston. To purchase, please use the link below:

[CLICK HERE TO PURCHASE](#)

PLEASE READ

GRAND MASTER'S DECISIONS

Grand Master Decision Number 1 - 2025

Question:

Is the Grand Master required to give permission for regular, non-quarterly Lodges to cancel a stated meeting because of severe adverse weather conditions, or Acts of God?

Answer:

The frequency of meetings of Lodges is governed by Art. 228 of Grand Lodge law. A Lodge is only required by law to meet at least once in three months. As long as this requirement is met, the Lodge can cancel a stated meeting without permission from the Grand Master.

Raborn L. Reader, Jr.

Grand Master

Grand Master Decision Number 2 – 2025

QUESTION:

A Lodge has requested permission to hold a called meeting to conduct Lodge business because the Lodge will be undergoing repairs on the date of the normal stated meeting. Is this permitted?

ANSWER:

Art. 234 sets forth the business that must be conducted at a stated meeting of the Lodge. To attempt to conduct such business at a called meeting is not permitted.

Regular Lodges are required to only have one stated meeting each quarter. If a stated meeting is required, it is recommended that the Lodge request dispensation to hold the stated meeting at another Lodge location during the time the Lodge building is closed for repairs.

Raborn L. Reader, Jr.

Grand Master

Grand Master Decision Number 3 – 2025

Art. 237. Meetings on Sundays

QUESTION:

Are members of Lodges allowed to perform maintenance on their Lodge buildings on Sundays?

ANSWER:

Yes, with permission of the Worshipful Master. Grand Master's Decision No. 2 1960 stated that it is not permissible for a constituent Lodge to permit construction work on a Lodge building on Sundays. This Decision is overruled.

Many Lodge members volunteer their personal time to perform needed tasks on their Lodge Building, including cleaning, minor repairs, painting, or general maintenance. Over the past 65 years our society has changed with regard to Lodge members' working schedules and many can only perform the above duties on a Sunday. Permitting such maintenance does not appear to violate any of our Masonic oaths or obligations.

Raborn L. Reader, Jr.

Grand Master

GRAND SECRETARY OFFICE UPDATES

AD VALORUM TAX EXEMPTION

The Comptroller's office informed me that it will process the Grand Lodge's exemption renewal as quickly as it is able but that it will take several more weeks to complete. The time range is March 15-30.

As the letters for each lodge are received, they will be uploaded into Grand View and we will use every outlet available to let you know. Once you have your letter from Grand View, the local applications are required to be filed with the local appraisal district chief appraiser, not the county tax assessor-collector. Filing with the wrong office will result in the exemption being denied.

READ PORTIONS APPROPRIATE FOR YOUR LODGE

SECRETARY SYSTEM OF INFORMATION

Secretary School (Hours 9 am – 12 pm)

Saturday, April 5 – Location TBD

LEGACY BUILDER AWARD

With the adoption of Resolution No. 3, each Brother who adds five units to his endowment (\$500) will receive the Grand Lodge of Texas LEGACY BUILDER AWARD. Be a part of the inaugural class of Legacy Builders who will receive their award at the 2026 Grand Lodge Annual Communication. 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>

APRONS

The last two years we have run out of aprons at our Annual Communication which is a great problem to have! Before we spend your money to purchase new aprons, we thought it prudent to ask if any of the constituent Lodges (particularly those who have had mergers) have additional aprons to spare.

If your Lodge has aprons, they are willing to part with, please let me know at GS@GrandSecretaryoftx.org.

MONTHLY LAW READING

With the adoption of Resolution No. 23, the positions of Senior and Junior Stewards have become optional. The updated Form 23 is currently being finalized and will be available shortly. However, the proposal may still be voted on and submitted once the revised form is accessible.

If your Lodge currently utilizes Form 23 or has similar language in its by-laws that does not reference Form 23, these documents must be amended should the Lodge opt to make these positions optional. If the Lodge decides not to implement this change, no amendment to the by-laws is required.

As per the existing version of Form 23, any proposed amendments must be submitted in writing, signed by the proposer, and presented for reading at a Stated Meeting of the Lodge. Discussion and potential amendments may occur during this meeting. At a subsequent Stated Meeting, or a specially called meeting for this purpose, the amendment will be considered and voted upon without further revisions. Once the vote is completed, the secretary must sign and seal the updated Form 23 and submit it to the Grand Secretary's Office for approval.

GRAND SECRETARY'S PHOTO CONTEST

Did you attend Grand Lodge? Did you take pictures? If so, please take a few moments and upload your ten (10) best photos by following the QR code to the right or by going to: [GLT2025_01_January\(GAC - members\) - Memento](#). The April edition of this newsletter will reveal the winner and that Brother will receive a **parking pass** for next year's Annual Communication in Waco!



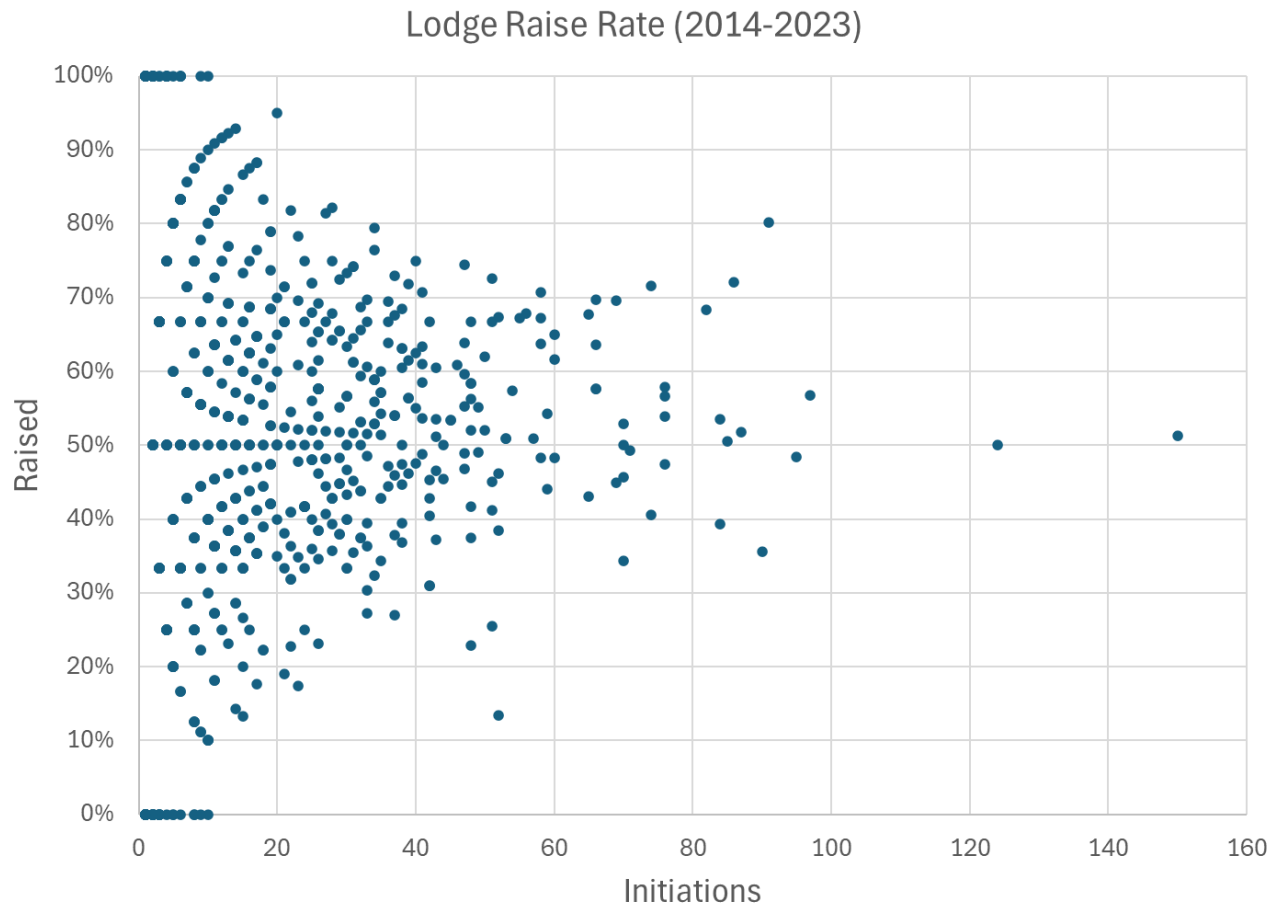
MONTHLY QUOTE

Well Done is Better Than Well Said – Bro. Benjamin Franklin

CANDIDATE ADVANCEMENT

Where are we losing them? That's a big question for our elected leaders. I tend to divide that question into three parts, each of which needs to be addressed very differently: lost prospects, candidate failures to advance, and Master Masons being suspended for non-payment of dues or stepping away endowed. Ranking those, we ghost more interested men than we lose Master Masons to suspensions for non-payment of dues each year, and both of those losses are more than EA losses; however, it's the last one I'd like to address in this article. The other two are completely different discussions.

Over the 10 years 2014-2023, we lost 7,237 initiates Statewide. Wouldn't it be nice to have 7k more Masons on our rolls? These are men that were sold on it all enough to petition a lodge, pay the fee, and receive their EA degree, but then they failed to advance. There is enormous variability between lodges on this. Each point on the graph below is a different lodge (I excluded last year's initiates to give them time to get raised). One lodge raised just 7 out of their last 52 EAs (13%). Another raised 73 or their last 91 (80%). That's quite a difference between lodges.



The raise rate for lodges does not appear to correlate with the number of degrees they're doing per year, the lodge size, or average officer age (data not shown because it, well, doesn't correlate). It also doesn't correlate with candidate age. Even if you look only at the lodges who are struggling to raise their EAs, candidate age doesn't appear to matter to them either. That lodge's raise percentage is the same for candidates in their 20s, 30s, 40s, or 50s (say 35% or whatever theirs is across the board for any age).

Important things happen while learning the EA proficiency. Candidates forge a connection with their instructor/mentor, trust is built on both sides, and a thousand questions get discussed. As the WM says in the opening charge, "The ways of Virtue are beautiful. Knowledge is attained by degrees. Wisdom dwells with contemplation. There we must seek her." In many ways, it's as EAs that the candidates are captured into the Blue Lodge.

Recognizing the large losses going from EA to MM, some States shortcut the process. Clearly you can up your percentage getting to MM with one-day classes or easier proficiency requirements, but in the cases of this that I've seen, such gimmicks don't work in the long run. They're trading retention percentages for advancement percentages. Sure more of them get to MM, but they don't last as well. They recognize that, of course, and try to capture them better after being raised, but that often doesn't have the same one-on-one trust relationship that forms a solid foundation for a long-term relationship. The EA is all about setting a good foundation. Shortcut that and you'll have repair work later. Of course, Appendant Bodies will set out to fill that hole as well, sometimes with success, but the Blue Lodge is supposed to be the foundation for all the rest, and we don't want them to miss that.

Secretaries can easily take a look at what happened with their last 30 or more initiates. If your lodge is on the lower side of this chart, take a look at this part of the process. Imagine having 30+ more guys at your meetings. Lodges that are successful at keeping their initiates usually have a few dedicated members who truly care about those individuals. Sometimes that's a Brother assigned to that candidate. Other lodges are successful with group sessions. However your lodge does it, do it in love. It'll pay dividends.
- Zachary Haston

LODGE SPOTLIGHT:

Inter-Bowling Tournament of Houston Area Lodges

The Houston Masonic community recently came together for a spirited and fun-filled Inter-Bowling Tournament featuring five lodges from our area. This event was a wonderful opportunity for fellowship, friendly competition, and creating lasting memories—not only for the brothers but for our families as well.

A special shout-out goes to Worshipful Master June Tala of Albert J. DeLange Lodge No. 1403, whose leadership and hard work brought this event to life. His dedication ensured a smoothly organized and enjoyable day for everyone involved.

We also extend our gratitude to the other Worshipful Masters who played key roles in supporting this fantastic gathering:

WM Vigil Roxas of Gray Lodge No. 329

WM Nestor Celera Duremdes Jr. of Solidarity Lodge No. 1457

WM Stephen Aganan of Walter M. Pierson Lodge No. 1339

Maynard Fernando, representing J.W. Chandler Daylight Lodge No. 1452

The tournament showcased the true spirit of Masonry—building bonds, fostering camaraderie, and bringing our families closer together. Here's to many more opportunities to celebrate the joy of being part of this great fraternity!



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.

TX MASON APP

The TX Mason app is over **5,000** users! Please join the 5,126 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>

THE TEXAS MASONIC CHARITIES FOUNDATION

<https://givebutter.com/2024GrandMasterAppeal>

Phone: 254-300-1375 - PO Box 2156, Waco, TX 76703, USA - www.txmcf.org

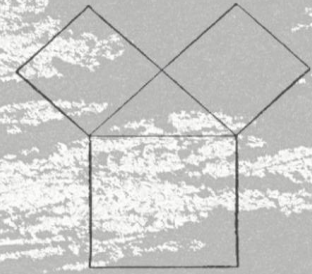
The 2025 Matching Grant Cycle from the Texas Masonic Charities Foundation is well underway but entering its' final month (closes March 31st). Don't miss this important opportunity to request matching funds for scholarships, community grants, and/or teacher honorariums.

See <http://www.txmcf.org> for more details.





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, 15 March 2025	Phoenix	275	Weatherford	65	9:00 AM	Following
Sat, 5 Apr 2025	Stephenville	267	Stephenville	67	9:00 AM	Following
Sat, 26 Apr 2025	Mineral Wells	611	Mineral Wells	113	9:00 AM	Following
Steve Pepper						
Sat, 8 Mar 2025	Quanah	689	Quanah	90	8:00 AM	Following
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, 1 Mar 2025	Lewisville	201	Lewisville	84	8:00 AM	Following
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
John Peters						
Sat, 15 Mar 2025	Gatesville	197	Gatesville	69	9:00 AM	Following
Sat, 22 Mar 2025	Fredericksburg	794	Fredericksburg	51	9:00 AM	Following
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 3/28/2025	Coffee & Donuts or breakfast at 9:00am Open Rising Star Ranger Lodge at 10:00am Open Grand Lodge at 10:15am Cornerstone Ceremony at 11:00am	Rising Star Ranger #429 210 FM 480 Center Point, TX 78010	New Culinary School	H. Bart Henderson Past Deputy Grand Master
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
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
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

Join the Texas Cornerstone State coordinator Kevin Binder's Facebook Group
<https://www.facebook.com/share/CiHNBBy12zSaqwVhh/?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

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715 Columbus Ave
Waco, TX 76701

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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

Jeremy Johnson

jrjohnson0821@gmail.com

Lodge Secretary Training

Bruce Mercer

bruce@grandsecretaryoftx.org

Out-of-State Correspondence

Justin Hancock

justinh@grandsecretaryoftx.org

Honesty & Integrity Awards
Lamar Medals
Forms and Lodge Supply Orders
Grand Lodge Service Awards

Denise Gilmore

denise@grandsecretaryoftx.org

Lodge Officer Maintenance
Esoteric Record Maintenance
Form 71 Collection
IRS Form 990's Collection
Golden Trowel Awards
Community Builder Awards
Proxies for Grand Lodge

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.