

**Grand Chapter Royal Arch Masons in Virginia**

# **District Education Officer Manual**



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## A. **Duties of the District Education Officer**

1. Your most important single duty is to promote the use of the Brochures available from Grand Chapter.

Unfortunately, many of our Companions are not very knowledgeable about our degrees. Many do not even know how many degrees we confer in Chapter. This is unfortunate because the degree work will sell itself to Master Masons. When they discover that Royal Arch is not “something else,” but more detailed information about the first three degrees, they become curious. When you can actually tell them something about the degrees, and how closely they relate to the Fellowcraft Degree, and especially to the second section of the Master Mason Degree, they become interested. But this means that active Royal Arch Masons must become completely familiar with the work we perform in order to speak intelligently to Master Masons. How can we invite someone to join an organization that we know little or nothing about? When we only speak about good food, good programs and fellowship, they only tend to think about another night out and the expense of another dues card. A solution to our declining membership can only be accomplished through education. As DEO this is a huge burden of expectation placed upon your shoulders. But by diligent work, as described in this manual, you can make a big difference. The expectations may be high, but the rewards for all of us are priceless.

The tools listed below can be ordered with a simple email request sent to the Grand Secretary [gsecgrac@comcast.net](mailto:gsecgrac@comcast.net). He will mail them along with an invoice for the brochures and postage. They are quite inexpensive and very effective. Encourage the High Priests and Chapter Secretaries to keep supplies on hand. This is our greatest hope for growth in the future. This is your #1 job.

- a. **Recruiting Brochures** – strongly encourage Chapters to order a reasonable supply and to put them to use
  1. With permission of Worshipful Masters, place them in visible locations in the various Lodges
  2. Each Companion who regularly attends Chapter meetings should be provided several copies to carry with him
  3. It is a good idea to place a petition inside the Recruiting Brochures
- b. **Degree Booklets** – these are available for \$3 from Grand Chapter and include a fairly detailed summary of each of the degrees
  1. These are NOT intended for those who have not taken the degrees
  2. Each Companion who regularly attends Chapter meetings should be provided with a copy and be encouraged to become familiar with the contents
  3. Newly exalted Companions who have taken their degrees in a festival should be immediately provided with a copy
- c. **Degree Brochures** – strongly encourage Chapters to order a reasonable supply and to put them to use. When degrees are done individually in Chapter, candidates should be provided the appropriate brochure when the degree is taken

2. Visit each Chapter in your District at least once each quarter.  
These visits become your opportunity to encourage the use of the various educational brochures and to observe how well the Chapters are implementing this program.
3. Encourage Chapters to appoint Education Officers to present programs in Chapter.  
Although you may be called upon to present an educational program for the Chapter, encourage the appointment of a Chapter Education Officer and urge him to present a short (5 minutes or less) educational tidbit at each Chapter meeting.
4. Provide educational programs for Chapter meetings when requested.  
If your presentation is “proper to be written,” please forward a copy to the Grand Provost so that it can be added to a collection of materials we will post on the Grand Chapter website for others to use. If you need a topic, check the Grand Chapter website or contact the Grand Provost for assistance.
5. Provide resources for others who are called upon to present programs.  
Refer them to the Grand Chapter website for material available there and links to other resources. When you find an interesting resource, please inform the Grand Provost so that it can be added to our website.
6. Organize and conduct District educational events.  
This is especially a good opportunity to help somewhat new or inexperienced Royal Arch Masons increase their knowledge about our degrees. There are many other topics in which Royal Arch Masons may have an interest. Inviting a speaker from another part of the Commonwealth or the country, can help increase the interest in such an event. Coupling it with a dinner, lunch, or breakfast can further increase interest. Poll your Chapters during your visits to gather ideas for topics and speakers. You may want to consider sponsoring a Table Chapter.
7. Reach out to the WM of Blue Lodges and offer programs about York Rite.  
Properly done, a presentation about the Royal Arch Degrees given as a program for a Blue Lodge can create interest among the Master Masons. Keep in mind that the most important thing to stress is that Royal Arch is not something “different” than the Blue Lodge degrees, but that it is more “detail” about those degrees. Our six Royal Arch Degrees are an extension of their knowledge about the first three degrees, and can be one of the best steps toward “more light in Masonry.” Program material is available on the Grand Chapter website.
8. Conduct Officer Training sessions for your Chapters using Program for Progress.  
You can download the Program for Progress from the Grand Chapter website. Ideally, the Grand Council of each Chapter (HP, King and Scribe) should attend. Hard copies should be printed for those in attendance. Working on this together can be helpful. Hosting a breakfast prior or a lunch after your event can increase attendance. You may be able to recruit a Chapter to host such an event. Also encourage your Grand Councils to make use of the Correspondence Course which deals with our Methodical Digest, similar to the Blue Lodge program.
9. File reports per instructions by March 1, June 1, and September 1.

## B. **Ideas for Educational Events and Projects**

Just a few Educational events will broadcast the message in your District that Royal Arch is the place to go if you want to become a knowledgeable and well-informed Mason. This can be a valuable tool in your educational arsenal.

1. Chapter events can be transformed into District events. Before you make a visit to a Chapter, determine if the High Priest would like a program presented. When you know you will be presenting a program, get the word out to the other Chapters and invite their Companions to attend and enjoy the program. If a guest speaker is presenting a program, be sure to get the word out to other Chapters. If one or more of your Chapters is having difficulty gathering enough Companions to open the Chapter, presenting a program and inviting Companions from other Chapters could help solve their problem.
2. A symposium featuring several knowledgeable speakers can excite interest and attendance. Having a meal in conjunction with the event can help increase interest and attendance. Topics relating to our degrees include ancient architecture, biblical and parochial history, geometry (especially sacred geometry), Masonic music and artwork to name a few. In most cases you could invite Master Masons to attend, thereby increasing their curiosity and interest in Royal Arch.
3. A Table Chapter is a wonderful opportunity to not only have a fun time, but to educate and recruit. The Grand Chapter website has a script, originally borrowed from New York, which you can customize to your own purposes. The mechanics are far more elaborate (and fun) than the usual Table Lodge. There are many more toasts and the opportunity for those in attendance to offer additional toasts. The curiosity alone will attract attendees. Any Master Mason can attend, making it a great recruiting tool as well. Line up your best speaker to present a program. Invite your Grand High Priest and Grand Officers to attend. Get the word out to the Blue Lodge Masons letting them know that they are welcome to attend. You can even involve your District Almoner to give a short program about our Alzheimers Charity and make it a District wide event. Each Chapter can receive credit toward the Claiborne Wilson Award by having a charitable event. Profits could be donated to the Alzheimers Association, giving another good reason to attend.
4. The “Educational Minute” is a short talk (less than 5 minutes) expounding upon a single narrow topic or object relating to our degrees. Some short topics are available on the Grand Chapter website to assist you and Chapter Education Officers when called upon. They also make a great opportunity to “expound upon the law” which is one of the High Priest’s duties recited in our opening ritual. Other sources are the Short Talk Bulletins published by the Masonic Service Association. Exercise your own brain and write some for yourself – then share them with the Grand Provost so they can be posted on the Grand Chapter website. Research Lodges can also be a source in addition to a plain old “Google search.”

## C. Program Resources

1. The Grand Chapter Website
2. Books
  - a. The John Dove Royal Arch Textbook (great Virginia Royal Arch history)
  - b. Coil's Masonic Encyclopedia
  - c. Mackey's Masonic Encyclopedia
  - d. The Degrees Booklet published by the Grand Chapter
  - e. "Cryptic Masonry" by Jackson H Chase
  - f. "Short Talks on Masonry" by Joseph Fort Newton
  - g. "Let Your Work Become Your Mark" Short Talks by Stewart Wilson Miner, Past Grand Master of Virginia and Past Grand High Priest Virginia
  - h. Free Masonic books online (not downloadable, read on your browser)-  
[http://www.freemasons-freemasonry.com/masonic\\_books\\_online.html](http://www.freemasons-freemasonry.com/masonic_books_online.html)
  - i. Free old Masonic books online (downloadable) -  
[http://www.halifax81.com/Old\\_Masonic\\_Books\\_on\\_PDF.php](http://www.halifax81.com/Old_Masonic_Books_on_PDF.php)
3. The Masonic Service Association  
Downloads are available at <http://www.msana.com/downloads/>
4. The Masonic Dictionary online - <http://masonicdictionary.com/>  
with sections on History, Symbolism, Philosophy, Masonic Biographies and Masonic papers
5. Transactions of A. Douglas Smith, Jr. Lodge of Research #1949  
<http://adsmithlor1949.org/Transactions/index.html>  
A large collection of papers presented to the Research Lodge since 1982

**D. Reporting**

We are collecting basic information about the educational activities of the Chapters, primarily to determine if they are improving, static, or backsliding. These reports are just as important for you to keep as they are to share with the Grand Chapter. These reports will give you direction as to which Chapters may need your attention the most. Share them with your District Deputy Grand High Priest as this information will be helpful to him as well. Email or send hard copies to the Grand High Priest, Grand King, Grand Secretary, and Grand Provost. Reports are due on March 1, June 1, and September 1 for the preceding quarter. A copy of the report is on the following page. You may append additional pages to give details on exceptionally successful events or to detail particular problems or challenges. Details and your opinions are highly appreciated. You may have to use an additional page if your District has more than 5 Chapters.

# District Education Officer Quarterly Report

District # \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_ Report for Quarter prior to:  March 1  June 1  Sept. 1

DEO Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

Did you conduct a "Program for Progress" Training Session in your District this quarter?  Yes  No

Chapter # \_\_\_\_\_ Dates visited during quarter: \_\_\_\_\_

Does the Chapter have a supply of the Degree Brochures?  Yes  No Are they using them?  Yes  No

Does the Chapter have a supply of the Recruiting Brochures?  Yes  No Are they using them?  Yes  No

Did the Chapter have any Educational Programs this quarter?  Yes  No

Did the Chapter present a York Rite Program in a Blue Lodge?  Yes  No

Chapter # \_\_\_\_\_ Dates visited during quarter: \_\_\_\_\_

Does the Chapter have a supply of the Degree Brochures?  Yes  No Are they using them?  Yes  No

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Did the Chapter have any Educational Programs this quarter?  Yes  No

Did the Chapter present a York Rite Program in a Blue Lodge?  Yes  No

Chapter # \_\_\_\_\_ Dates visited during quarter: \_\_\_\_\_

Does the Chapter have a supply of the Degree Brochures?  Yes  No Are they using them?  Yes  No

Does the Chapter have a supply of the Recruiting Brochures?  Yes  No Are they using them?  Yes  No

Did the Chapter have any Educational Programs this quarter?  Yes  No

Did the Chapter present a York Rite Program in a Blue Lodge?  Yes  No

Chapter # \_\_\_\_\_ Dates visited during quarter: \_\_\_\_\_

Does the Chapter have a supply of the Degree Brochures?  Yes  No Are they using them?  Yes  No

Does the Chapter have a supply of the Recruiting Brochures?  Yes  No Are they using them?  Yes  No

Did the Chapter have any Educational Programs this quarter?  Yes  No

Did the Chapter present a York Rite Program in a Blue Lodge?  Yes  No