



Grand Chapter Royal Arch Masons in Virginia  
Grand Council Cryptic Masons in Virginia

# The Keystone

October 2023 Vol. 7 No. 3



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A publication of the Grand Chapter Royal Arch  
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## GRAND HIGH PRIEST/ MOST ILLUSTRIOUS GRAND MASTER'S MESSAGE

### Ho Companions!

It is hard to believe that summer is almost gone, and fall is already upon us! With that being said, the Chapters and Councils in Virginia will be electing and installing their Officers for the 2023-24 year, and Grand Chapter/Grand Council is just around the corner. You should have received the Call to Grand Chapter by now and if not please look on the Grand Chapter/Grand Council website for all the details. We hope you will welcome in your new Officers in your Chapter/Council and that you will also be able to join us for the Grand Convocation in November to get reacquainted with old friends and make some new ones.

I have finished all my Official Visits to the Districts in Virginia, and my Lady Donna and I have thoroughly enjoyed all the visits. We had a lot of socializing with the



Companions and their families, and we all raised several thousands of dollars for Alzheimer's going to both the Masonic Home and the Alzheimer's Association. There are many districts that are continuing to raise funds for Alzheimer's and the Companions of the Districts along with the District Almoners and the Grand Almoner, RE David Strohsahl, are doing a great job in making the Grand Chapter and Grand Council in Virginia noteworthy in helping to defeat Alzheimer's. We thank all the Companions and their family for making this possible!

I still have a few more in state and out of state visits coming up in October. I will be traveling to the Grand Chapter of Ohio for their Grand Convocation, attending the Masonic Family Day at the Masonic Home in Virginia, attending the King Cyrus Grand Chapter Holy Royal Arch

Masons of Virginia PHA Grand Convocation in Richmond, attending the Grand Chapter of Maryland for the Multi-Jurisdictional Festival and the Grand Convocation of the Grand Chapter of Maryland, and the Grand Convocation of the Grand Chapter of West Virginia. My last time representing the Grand Chapter and Grand Council in Virginia will be at the Grand Communication of the Grand Lodge of Virginia. It has been a great honor representing the Capitular and Cryptic Masons in Virginia at all these visits, getting to know new Companions and their Ladies, and especially all the hospitality shown to myself and my Lady Donna on these visits.

We will have several out of state visitors at our own Grand Convocation in November, so I encourage you to greet them and show them some Virginia Hospitality which we are known for so they will be encouraged to return!

I know that we have had several degrees and festivals exalting new Companions. I commend all the Chapters/Councils and Companions involved in increasing our numbers and inviting in the new

Companions into our Chapters/Councils. Please remember to get them involved and be patient with them on learning the ritual to open and close our Chapters/Councils. Be encouraging to them in explaining this ritual and mentor them as much as you can. It will stick with them for the rest of their life, and they will not forget you for the knowledge you pass on to them. I know that is true for me with all the many mentors I have had throughout my Capitular and Cryptic Masonic career, and I am sure the same is true for you. One of my visits to Maryland was the Multi-Jurisdictional Festival on Saturday, October 14, 2023. This was listed on the Grand Chapter/Grand Council Calendar, and I know some of you were there to help with the Most Excellent Master Degree and some will be present with candidates receiving the Royal Arch Degrees. This was the most impressive day as the degrees were performed by great ritualists from several states. Our own RE Randy Johnson, Grand Lecturer, headed up the Most Excellent Master Degree with other well-versed ritualists from Virginia, and they need to be commended for their efforts and giving

up another day where they could be doing something else!

We had one more Educational Program entitled “The Most Excellent Master – The Charge”, which was presented on Saturday, September 23, 2023 from 10:00AM to 11:00AM. RE Ray Bacchus, Grand Provost, has set up all the educational programs and I thank him for all his efforts in continuing to educate all the Companions with the many programs he has arranged. We also want to thank RE Jim Landerkin, RE Huey Allen, RE Buddy Pate and all those Companions responsible for submitting articles and putting The Keystone magazine on our website for all to enjoy.

Continue to be active in your Lodge as this is where we draw our new members from. When possible, and of course with the permission of the Master of the Lodge, present programs on the Royal Arch and Cryptic Council to let the Brethren know that there is more to be learned after they

receive the Master Masons Degree. Also continue to be active in your Chapter/Council to help where needed. Your efforts do not go unnoticed. If you need a program, we have many on the Grand Chapter/Council website. Simply go to the education tab and you will find many, many programs to choose from and most are written by our own Companions!

I plan to write one more article for a November issue of the Keystone, so till then, stay safe and see you soon!

Sincerely and Fraternaly,

Hafford Lee Arritt, Jr.

Grand High Priest

Most Illustrious Grand Master

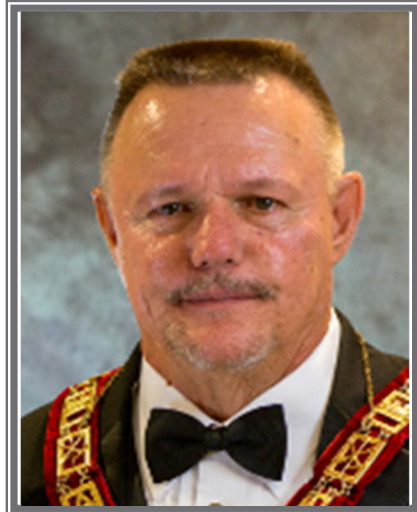
**THE GRAND KING'S MESSAGE**

**Ho Companions!**

Greetings to all and hope this finds everyone well and happy. It is hard to believe that we are at the end of another Capitular/Cryptic Year, time flies when we are having fun, and I hope everyone has made plans to attend the Grand Convocation of the Grand Chapter and Grand Council of Royal Arch and Cryptic Masons of Virginia in Williamsburg.

I would like to congratulate Most Excellent/Most Illustrious Lee Arritt and Lady Donna on having a very successful year. During his numerous travels across the Commonwealth of Virginia and several out of state visits Most Excellent Lee has made a positive impact on Royal Arch and Cryptic Masonry by promoting membership, ritual, the Alzheimer's Association, and the Memory Unit at the Masonic Home.

I am looking forward to the 2024 Capitular Year, and if elected Grand High



Priest/Most Illustrious Grand Master, I hope to continue the work that Most Excellent and Most Illustrious Lee and the other Past Grand High Priests and Most Illustrious Past Grand Masters have started.

Companions, I urge each and every one of you to continue to support your local Chapters/Councils and the Grand Royal Arch Chapter and Grand Cryptic Council by sponsoring new members, perfecting our ritual, and donating to our worthy charities.

Finally, I hope to see everyone at the Grand Conclave to support Most Excellent and Most Illustrious Lee and Lady Donna as he leaves office and to support the incoming Officers.

Sincerely and Fraternally,  
William R. "Bill" Owens  
Grand King

## LEADERSHIP CORRESPONDENCE COURSE COMPLETIONS

The following Companions have recently completed correspondence courses. The Education Chair applauds your efforts and your successful completion.

Companion **James D. Bratton** of D.C. Lynchburg No. 10 successfully completed the Correspondence Course on 8 October 2023. Congratulations!

Companion **Javier Amaya** of Potomac No. 88 successfully completed the correspondence course on 8 October 2023. Congratulations!

Companion **William A. Crosscup V** of Taylor No. 70 successfully completed the Correspondence Course on 8 September 2023. Congratulations!

Companion **Roger L. Elkins** of Barrett No. 76 successfully completed the Correspondence Course on 6 September 2023. Congratulations!

Companion **Ryan Nathaniel Yakstis** of Princess Anne No. 1607 successfully completed the Correspondence Course on 7 August 2023. Congratulations!

Companion **Craig A. Cox** of Marion No. 54 successfully completed the Correspondence Course on 6 April 2022. Congratulations!

## YORK RITE LEADERSHIP

In addition to the quarterly education sessions that the Grand Chapter and Grand Council Committee on Education and Service provides, there is the York Rite Leadership Program that is highly recommended. The York Rite Leadership organization is a Center of Excellence that delivers executive-class leadership training and coaching to all masonic leaders wheresoever dispersed. The current York Rite Leadership Training Program consists of three well-developed courses that are designed to give you the skills to be a better leader of yourself and others.

The three courses are:

- 100 – Personal Effectiveness
- 200 – Group Dynamics
- 400 – Influential Communication

These courses may be attended online (the x01 class) or in person (the x02

class). The course is usually provided in person each year in the Washington, D.C. area in conjunction with the Mid-Atlantic Department Conference (MADC). Any member of the Masonic family may participate. We do ask that the youth be mature. For guidance, a young gentleman or lady who is between 14 and 18 and has a mature outlook, may be admitted. Admission is always at the discretion of the instructor. Please visit <https://yorkriteleadership.org/> to learn more."

Please share this with all members of our Gentle Craft, especially your Companions. We look forward to having you join us!

Sincerely and fraternally yours in friendship and service,

Sincerely and Fraternally,  
Raymon W. Bacchus,  
Grand Provost

## CHAPTER / COUNCIL NEWS

### Multi-Jurisdictional Festival

On October 14, 2023, a Multi-Jurisdictional Royal Arch Festival was held at Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Maryland at Cockeysville, MD. The GRAC-MD was a beautiful setting for the event, and companions from Maryland, Virginia, Delaware, and the District of

Columbia were Exalted. Ten Companions were from Virginia.

The Degrees were conferred in a beautiful manner by Rt. Ex. Randy Johnson and his outstanding team.







## District No. 15

On October 21, 2023, a Royal Arch and Cryptic Council Festival was held at Richmond Washington No. 3-9, Richmond, Va. Fourteen Brothers were Advanced, Greeted and Exalted. (left picture below). Right picture below depicts cast members, including four from District 15. Two Brothers from District 15 were also candidates:

Shenandoah No. 17, Companion G. Rupert Ravens

Hiram No. 45, Companion Dale Laverne Perry

The Degrees were conferred in a fine manner and the Work was enjoyed by all who attended. It was a long day as the Chapter/Council opened at 9:00 A.M. with a pizza lunch, and closed about 4:00 pm. District No. 15 DDGHP was present at the Festival; RE Companion Jack Moorman, Deputy Grand Treasurer was the Host of the Festival and deserves all the credit for setting it up and his follow-through. RE Jack and his casts did “Good Work”.

Not pictured is RE Pablo Rocha who was the inspiration behind District No.1’s participation in the event.



**Arvonía No. 64**

On Tuesday, August 15, 2023, ME/MI Lee Arritt visited Arvonía No. 64 in their Tabernacle in Dillwyn. A total of fifteen Companions were present for the

convocation where they discussed ways to increase attendance and membership. It was an evening filled with many positive suggestions and a good time was had by all.



Back Row (l to r): Mike Montgomery, Carlos McReddie, Jim Morley, and John Staton

Front Row (l to r): Mark Chapman, Cecil Gillespie (Grand Tiler), Joey Martin (Grand Master of 1st Veil and AA), Larry Lloyd (DDGHP District 18), John Ewers (HP Arvonía #64), ME Lee Arritt (Grand High Priest), Paul Garrett, Ed Pearson, Tony Taylor, Ted Rittenhouse, Troy Isaacson

**Warwick No. 80**

On 6 September, 2023, Warwick No. 80 held elections and appointments for its officers. Please congratulate them accordingly.

Please see photo below.



**GUEST CONTRIBUTOR**

**John B. Kendrick; DDGHP District 11**

## The Tenth Arch

### No Companions!

Reenactment of ritualistic dramas offers insight into the development of our spiritual and moral development. Mircea Eliade explained that rituals prepare the initiate for a spiritual rebirth. By reenacting myth and legend, one experiences a primeval reality and “is seized by the sacred, exalting power of the events recollected or re-enacted.” (1963 *Myth and Reality*. New York: Harper and Row).



I am by no means adept at extracting higher meaning or allegory to our rituals, but it has always struck me as fitting that the unfinished Temple in the Master Mason degree represents our unfinished journey in Masonry and of the unfinished development of

our spiritual and moral edifice. It is through the several degrees in the Royal Arch, culminating in the Royal Arch degree, that the Temple is completed, and we acquire more knowledge in our spiritual development through the rediscovery of the Lost Word in the Sanctum Sanctorum.

As part of our journey to the Sanctum Sanctorum, we ascend through nine arches. There is an obvious parallel to Enoch and his ascension to Heaven through the ten levels of Heaven (2 Enoch, Chapters 1-22). Upon reaching

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the tenth, Enoch is then brought by Michael into the presence of the Lord, who is described as “so very marvelous and supremely awesome and supremely frightening.” Michael strengthens Enoch and asks the Lord to allow Enoch to stay before the throne of God forever. The Lord has Michael “extract Enoch from his earthly clothes,” which seems to be removing his soul, since after he had been anointed with oil, he had become like the glorious ones but without any physical difference.

I propose that there is a tenth arch in the Royal Arch degree system, but this arch is an individual journey for the Royal Arch Mason. This journey entails taking all the moral lessons we have learned through the ritualistic dramas and aiding others in their temporal trek through life, by practicing outside of the Chapter that which is inculcated in it. It can also mean that final arch through which we must pass when our labor on earth is done and we are in the presence of our Lord, when our earthly clothes are shed, just as Enoch when he reached the 10th Heaven. The value in the study of Enoch, as well as our own Royal Arch degrees, lies not just in looking at how the building is constructed, but what it is used for. One

must not be so concerned about the provenance of the legends or scripture that one loses sight of their transforming potential. There is a story told of a man who came across three masons working at chipping chunks of granite from large blocks. The first seemed unhappy at his job, toiling away, and marking the passage of time as the sun moved across the sky. When asked what he was doing, the first mason responded rather curtly, “I’m cutting stones.” A second mason, seemingly more interested in his work, was hammering diligently and when asked what it was that he was doing, answered, “Well, I’m molding this block of rock so that it can be used with others to construct a wall.” A third mason was hammering at his block fervently, taking time to stand back and admire his work. He chipped off small pieces until he was satisfied that it was the best he could do. When he was questioned about his work he stopped, gazed skyward and proudly proclaimed, “I am a mason and I am building a cathedral.” How will you view your journey? Will you view your journey through the tenth arch like the first two masons viewed their work, or do you want to be like the third?