



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

The Keystone

September 2018



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Companions and friends:

Our Grand Convocation is coming soon, and Right Excellent Byron Goodwin will be installed as our new Grand High Priest. We are really looking forward to the Grand Chapter's year under Byron's good leadership. During 2019, we plan to make many of his official visits. As I will serve another two-year term as Grand Governor, I will continue to see many of you in my York Rite College visits.

Lady Debbie and I are filled with many good memories of this year. We enjoyed a fantastic year of visits all around this lovely state we call home. The hospitality and graciousness of our hosts is greatly appreciated. Not to mention the very crafty and meaningful gifts we received. There is a lot of artistic talent among our companions. In our out-of-State visits, we made new friends and enjoyed their hospitality also. Thank you to each organization who received us in their annual meetings. We met so many good people who work hard to support some great philanthropies. Each time we visited a youth group we were excited for our country's future. These young adults are confident, intelligent, and compassionate with such civic responsibilities in their character. Please continue to support our youth groups.

This is the last year of our contract for Grand Chapter at Fort McGruder. During the convocation, membership will vote on accommodations for next year. Be sure and attend the breakfast being prepared for you on Friday and Saturday. All Grand Officers will have breakfast with Lady Debbie

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and I on Friday morning. Saturday morning will be the Grand High Priest's breakfast for all officers and dignitaries. This is a great time to meet our out-of-state and international guests. The Grand King breakfast on Saturday is for all incoming DDGHPs and High Priests. A free Continental breakfast will be available for all other guests.

Sincerely and fraternally,

Joe G. Broce, Grand High Priest

The Grand Almoner's Message

Companions of Royal Arch Masonry in Virginia, it is truly a pleasure to report to you for this quarter. As our Alzheimer's Walks are beginning to go into full swing, we have made significant advances in our donations! Today, I would like to inform you that we have received over \$31,000 in donations to



The Alzheimer's Associations, our Walks to Find a Cure, and to the MAHOVA Memory Unit. You all are doing some really fine work in the quarries!

Many of the Chapters and Districts have done well in thinking of new ways to raise funds to find a cure for Alzheimer's. In Districts 18 and 2, they had their own walks to find a cure, and have raised \$7,878 and \$6,475, respectively. Some Districts have had Table Chapters and some have even had Public Service Announcements played on their local radio stations! Other Districts have not only exceeded their goals, but have expanded their

goals! District 15 started this year with a goal of \$2,500 and they are currently at \$5,177! Other Districts are doing great as well!

During the time between now and our Annual Convocation, I would like to challenge each and every one of you to either create a team to find a cure for Alzheimer's, or join a team. Pick a goal that is right for you. Then, talk with your neighbors, friends, relatives, and coworkers and ask them to join your team! There are walks on the Alzheimer's web page for Virginia and Washington DC. Many of the scheduled walks do not have a Masonic team registered. The walks for your local area are: Blacksburg, Charlottesville, Danville, Fredericksburg, Harrisonburg, Lynchburg, Manassas, Urbanna, Newport News, Onancock, Reston, Richmond, Roanoke, South Boston, Staunton, Suffolk, Virginia Beach, Williamsburg, Winchester, and Washington DC. There are Royal Arch teams that you can join for the following walks: Charlottesville, Fredericksburg, Manassas, Reston, Richmond and Virginia Beach. I would like to suggest that if you don't see a Royal Arch Mason's walk near your area, create one and talk with your neighbors, friends, relatives, and coworkers and ask them to be part of your team. You will be surprised and amazed how quickly how other people would want to help you accomplish the goal that you have set out. If you are physically unable to walk, ask your kids or grandkids to create a team for you! You can do this!

I was fortunate (if that is the right word) to see the devastation, first hand, that this disease can cause, not just to the individual with the disease, but to the family. Then this disease hit home for me. I truly believe that

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God prepared me for what was to come by seeing the effects that this disease can have on others before my mom was diagnosed with it. This disease not only ruins the minds of those afflicted, but I have also seen where it can tear families apart. This disease will bear a financial burden on the family that would be extremely stressful. Currently, the memory unit in Tulsa, Oklahoma, that my mom is in, costs over \$6,000 per month. My mom's house will need to be sold and the proceeds will need to pay for her care. My sister Lynette is bearing the brunt of this burden.

In case you did not know, the Alzheimer's Association is a 75%/25% charity. When you give your money to them, 75% goes to helping either to find a cure or to care for a patient. When you send your checks to Grand Chapter, those checks then go to the Alzheimer's research center in Chicago. When you join a local team, the money that you give splits between research and helping caregivers, and it stays local to that area. We need you to help find a cure!

Paul Lockhart, Grand Almoner of Virginia

Correspondence Course Update

On July 7, Excellent Ray Bacchus and District 17 held a Royal Arch Course class at Potomac No. 88. All attendees enjoyed some delightful fellowship, debate, and education. Completing the course were the following: Fred Kellner, George Chapman, and Scott Lambert, Potomac No. 88. On August 12, Excellent Jim Landerkin held another Course class where the following passed: Michael Bible, Mt. Vernon No. 14; Ralph Woodrow, Andrew Vellenea, Jose Moreno, Phillip Rhodes, Arlington No. 35; John Pearson,

Chester Damian, Annandale No. 77. Herbert Turner of Petersburg Union No. 7 also completed the course recently. This makes 43 completions this year!

Princess Anne No. 1607 Scholarship

On July 17, Princess Anne Chapter No. 1607 presented Mr. Malcolm Settle with a \$1000 college scholarship. He is a long-standing patient of Greenville Shriner's hospital and has made great progress through the years. He has a very moving story of wanting to be a physician, and the Chapter will be part of that journey. Right Excellent Danny Diego originated this scholarship when he was High Priest, and Right Excellent Cliff Atkinson has driven Mr. Settle often from Khedive Shrine. Pictured below from left to right are High Priest Joel Bundy, Cliff Atkinson, Malcolm Settle, mom Ruby Settle, and Danny Diego,



Recent Veterans' Awards

William C. Boyce, Norfolk United No. 1, 60 years; James C. Thomson Jr., Mt. Horeb No. 11, 50 years; Milton H. Adair Jr., O'Keeffe No. 26, 50 years; Emmett W. Fitzgerald, Westmoreland No. 41, 60 years; Joseph D. Rose, Barrett No. 76, 50 years.

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Upcoming Calendar

September 22, Coastal Virginia Alzheimer's Walk, Virginia Beach

September 23, Northern Virginia Alzheimer's Walk, Reston Town Center

September 29, New River Valley Alzheimer's Walk, Blacksburg

October 6, Middle Peninsula/Northern Neck Alzheimer's Walk, Urbanna; Lynchburg Alzheimer's Walk, Lynchburg

October 13, Eastern Shore Alzheimer's Walk, Onancock; Harrisonburg Alzheimer's Walk, Harrisonburg; National Capitol Alzheimer's Walk, National Mall; Fredericksburg Alzheimer's Walk, Fredericksburg

October 20, Peninsula Alzheimer's Walk, Newport News; Virginia Tri-Counties Alzheimer's Walk, Manassas; Charlottesville Alzheimer's Walk, Charlottesville

October 27, Northern Shenandoah Alzheimer's Walk, Winchester; Roanoke Alzheimer's Walk, Roanoke

November 3, Richmond Alzheimer's Walk, Glen Allen

November 14-17, Grand Convocation, Fort Magruder Inn, Williamsburg

Companions Receive High York Rite College Honors

The General Assembly of The York Rite Sovereign College of North America was held in Chicago on August 1-4, attended by Grand Governor Joe Broce, Deputy Grand Governor Fred Dixon, Grand Commander Joel Ratliff, and Grand Captain of the Host Ray Steele. Receiving the Order of the Purple Cross were the following Companions: Henry Sharber, John Bullach Jr., Daniel Surface, Peter Spring, Randall Reed, and Dennis Haas. The Order of the Purple Cross is the highest honor given to a York Rite member. This honor recognizes members who have distinguished themselves in their service to humanity and the York Rite. Wives also receive a purple cross of their own to recognize their support. Pictured below is the Spencer Award presentation to Hampton Roads No. 95, which is given to only one York Rite College each year to recognize excellent activities, membership, and community support. "Good work, square work, just such work as is needed", Grand Governor Joe Broce said. "Boys, it just don't get any better than this."



York Rite College honorees celebrate

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Orange Chapter No. 47 50-Year Veteran Presentation

Before the stated meeting of Orange Royal Arch Chapter #47 on August 7, a dinner honored Right Excellent Companion John Miller, who was exalted in this Chapter in July 1968. He was escorted by Right Excellents Robert Clore and Larry Lloyd for the 50-year presentation of his Certificate, Pin, and honorary membership card by Most Excellent Russell Snodgrass. Companion Miller then shared some fond memories about his fifty years in the Royal Arch. One of his favorites was being at the Chapter meeting when President Eisenhower came through Orange on the train, which blew the whistle long and hard. Virginia Royal Arch is far better off because Companion Miller traveled those rough and rugged paths. He also served as Chapter Secretary for several years.



Companion Miller (middle back row, dark red shirt) with family and friends

Washington #9 Festival

On August 25, Washington #9 exalted four new Companions, as shown below. As usual, the degree work was performed in outstanding fashion. All District 4 Chapters participated.



Royal Arch Degree Attendees, Washington #9

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Millican School Report

A very good Royal Arch School was held for the third straight year at Taylor Lodge No. 23 in Salem on August 26-28. About 25 Companions enjoyed the excellent ritual and fellowship.



The Committee on Work and Grand Chapter Officers at the Sunday session

Grand King Announces Nominee for Grand Line

How often do you ever see 47 Companions at a regular stated meeting? It happened on August 13 at Mt. Nebo No. 20 in Suffolk, where Grand King Byron Goodwin announced his choice of Right Excellent Kyle Strickland for the Grand Line. The announcement happened in a most dramatic fashion, and visitors came from across the state to see history being made. While there, they enjoyed a fine meal and received a golden peanut pin to commemorate the occasion. Right Excellent Strickland is a Past High Priest of Cradock No. 72 and a Past Grand Provost. The below picture shows the smiling crowd.



Attendees at Mt. Nebo No. 20 on August 13

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Hurry Up and Wait”, by Excellent Edward Tooma

If you were ever in the service - you well know the meaning of hurry up and wait. That's exactly what is happening to our brothers who have petitioned to become a Royal Arch Mason. They're hurrying up to get their petition in, and then having to wait. Many, or should I say a lot, of Chapters are minimally staffed and therefore unable to confer the required degrees. And let's face it, my fellow companions, knowledge and delivery of the Ritual isn't exactly easy. And taking shortcuts with the Ritual to rush someone through the necessary degrees is a no-no. Degrees are stories and lessons to be remembered always, just like those of the Craft Lodge.

Young folks today do not have the time to be hanging on and waiting. When you have someone interested in becoming a Royal Arch Mason, it is your duty to give that brother an estimated date as to when he can expect to receive his degrees. All too often a brother is elected to receive his degrees and only manages to get as far as the Mark Master and then he's put on hold. Often, too long. Many of you will disagree with my philosophy - but I believe when a person takes the time to petition for membership, he should receive all of his degrees shortly after being elected, versus linger on and wonder if he'll ever finish. Companions, we've all witnessed this and it is sad.

Now, to get around this altogether, there is another and far better way to expedite the process of membership. Yes, it will take planning, but the end result will be satisfaction for all concerned. I believe having a "Degree Festival" twice yearly throughout the Commonwealth is the only way to eliminate long waiting periods between degrees. Quarterly would be even better. Festivals allow groups of brothers to be exalted in a one-day Convocation. And knowing the schedule of these Festivals makes it easier to inform the candidate when he can expect to be exalted. Personally, I think this is the only way to go if we are to increase membership versus a one-at-a-time hit-and-miss attempt at the local level.

Receiving degrees at the local Chapters is absolutely wonderful, provided we have the time and resources. This is not always the case. Mainly due to manpower and/or Ritual proficiency. I have attended Festivals, and to be candid - the floor work is unbelievable and so impressive. The degree teams that conduct these events are to be commended for their Ritual expertise. We owe degree work like this to each and every brother who is desirous of taking "The Best First Step to More Light". By doing this it would rid the "hurry up and wait" process and avoid any shortcuts in rushing a candidate through the Capitular and Cryptic Degrees of our Order.

Each individual District needs to confer with the Grand Chapter for discussion and implementation of a speedier way to step up membership. If we don't do something, that light at the end of the tunnel will go dark. Make it a point to be heard. The brass at Grand Chapter needs your input. If they don't know the problem how can you expect them to fix it? Food for thought! Go for it!

So Mote it Be!

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The Grand High Priest visited Job Daughters Annual Session and DeMolay Conclave



Every first-time visitor gets a golden peanut pin at Mt. Nebo No. 20 in Suffolk



Grand High Priest Joe has many more **true stories** to tell at Grand Chapter. No bull!