



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

# The Keystone

**January 2019**



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My Companions and friends:

I hope everyone had a grateful and Happy Thanksgiving, as well as a Blessed and Merry Christmas. I trust that you will have a safe, prosperous, and Happy New Year in 2019! As we embark on a New Year, let's briefly look back at the wonderful 2018 Grand Chapter and 211th Grand Annual Convocation. We had a successful Committee on Work meeting, were fortunate to have several distinguished guests from various parts of the country and world, had an exciting and enjoyable Grand High Priest Banquet on Friday night, had several outstanding conferrals of various degrees, and a successful final session with election of officers...for all of which I'm fraternally and graciously thankful. All activities during Grand Chapter exhibited how well the Companions across the Commonwealth work together for the good of our Fraternity in general and our Royal Arch in particular. An increase in registered attendance was noted over last year! So, a big "Thank You" goes out to each of you! If you see R.E. Kyle W. Strickland and R.E. Joel T. Bundy, please welcome and congratulate them for their dedication to our Grand Chapter, as they are our new GMV2 and GMV1, respectively.

Also, to top it all off, it was a memorable and very humbling experience to be installed as the 177th Grand High Priest of the GCRAM in VA. Again, I want to thank God for such a blessing and the Companions for their confidence. After the installation, a Hospitality Suite was available, and many companions and ladies enjoyed an array of scrumptious and bountiful "vittles". Many thanks to all who made it all possible! I SERIOUSLY APPRECIATED ALL OF IT!!

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Already travels have extended near and far, even outside of the Commonwealth. The various visits include: Virginia's Miss Jobs Daughter's Pageant, The Grand Holy Royal Arch Chapter of Pennsylvania, Christmas Observance at MAHOVA, Wreath Laying at President George Washington's Mt. Vernon, and my Official Visit to District 15. That Official Visit was a great meeting with good food, gracious gifts of donations to the Alzheimer's Association, and outstanding fellowship prior to, during, and after the meeting. Thank you to all who were able to attend. Also, thank you for all the hard work to make it "excellent" and memorable! At Mt. Nebo RAC No. 20's Stated Convocation on December 10, six new Companions were Exalted to the Most Sublime Degree of Royal Arch Mason. Thanks to all in attendance and especially those assisting with the degree! Several Golden Peanut Lapel Pins were presented to first-time attendees.

Wow, 2019 is starting off to be just as exciting as the end of 2018! There will be a Royal Arch Degree at Petersburg Union No. 7 on January 2. Additionally, there are five scheduled Official Visits (Districts 1, 10, 12, 14, and 18) in January, as well as the GHP Homecoming at Mt. Nebo No. 20 (Suffolk Lodge No. 30) on January 5 from 2 PM to 5 PM. Come out and join us for any and all the scheduled activities. Companions, we (Lady Karen and I) look forward to being with each of you during the upcoming visits and appreciate all the hard work of those associated with those visits. Hope to see each of you soon!

May God Continue to Richly Bless Us All,  
*Floyd Byron Goodwin, Grand High Priest*

## The Grand Almoner's Message



Companions all: The new Capitular year has begun, and some Districts are already holding fundraising campaigns in support of the Alzheimer's Association, Project Lifesaver, and the MAHOVA memory unit. Thank you sincerely for the trust you have vested in me as our Grand Almoner. I am very excited to be working with you and for you in the quarry of Royal Arch community philanthropy. I am currently busy networking with our representatives at the Alzheimer's Association and at the Masonic Home of Virginia to share ideas and strategies that will ultimately make supporting these worthy causes easier for each of us.

My first step as our new Grand Almoner is to establish the correct connections and networking links to each of our District Almoners. From there, I plan set up a database for each District that will link them to the Alzheimer's Association events that are focused in their home areas. I am here to help, aid, and assist each of you. Together we can set goals, make good things happen in our communities, and hopefully help fund an end to dreadful diseases of the brain. I welcome any ideas or questions you might have centered around our charities. If I do not know the answer, I will find someone who does and get back to you promptly.

Support from organizations such as the Royal Arch Masons in Virginia is very critical to financial capability of our charities. I have

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updated the philanthropy segment of the GRAC Website and am consolidating a program to share with your Chapters when I come by to visit with you. More information and resources about the Alzheimer's Association can be found at <https://act.org>. They are truly committed to progressing new treatments, accelerating prevention, standardizing screening, and ultimately to finding a cure for Alzheimer's Disease.

Remember that there is no set script on how you decide to raise funds. I have heard plans for everything from visits from Santa Claus to golf outings. It's perfectly acceptable, and frankly encouraged, to get creative and to involve people outside your Chapter. You can also include area businesses in your community. There is no better way to attract good men to our fraternity than to have them observe us working together in public for the good of our communities! The sky is the limit. Our collective goal is to raise \$100,000 in donations in 2019. Let's continue to work relentlessly until we can share a world without this disease. Wishing each of you the merriest of Christmases and a joyous New Year! Holiness to the Lord,

*Jason Curtis "Jake" Trenary, Grand Almoner*

## Meet the New Veilsmen



We are indeed fortunate to have filled our open Grand Veil positions with two outstanding Royal Arch Masons. Our new Grand Master of the Second Veil is Right Excellent Kyle William Strickland. He was raised in Lake

Drummond Lodge No. 178 in 2003, served as Worshipful Master in 2009, where he was recognized as one of the Outstanding Worshipful Masters by the Grand Master, and is currently Secretary. He joined Cradock Chapter No 72 in 2007, served as High Priest in 2009-2010, and has been Secretary since 2011. In Grand Chapter, he served as District Deputy Grand High Priest in 2013, Grand Chaplain in 2014, and as the first Grand Provost in 2015 and 2016. He also belongs to the Knight Templars, the Shrine, and five honorary York Rite bodies.



Our new Grand Master of the First Veil is Dr. Joel Thomas Bundy. He joined South Norfolk Lodge No. 339 in July 2010, served as Worshipful Master in 2015-2016, and is the Chairman of the Masonic Home Ambassadors Committee and currently Master of Virginia Lodge No. 1777. He joined Princess Anne Chapter No. 1607 in 2013, served as its High Priest in 2018 as well as High Priest of Virginia Research Chapter No. 1753, and has been a member of the Education Committee since 2016. A prolific Masonic speaker and writer, he also belongs to Norfolk United Chapter No. 1, six other Lodges, nine honorary York Rite bodies, and is very active in Scottish Rite, Knights Templar, and the Shrine. A native of Florida, he was commissioned into the Navy in 1984 and served until 1997. As a medical doctor, he is the Chief Quality and Safety Officer for Sentara Healthcare in Norfolk. He and his wife Susan live in Virginia Beach.

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## Correspondence Course/Veteran Award Update

Congratulations go to Excellent James Burton, High Priest of Mann Page No. 89, who recently completed the Correspondence Course, as well as to Companion John M. Garrett of E. H. Gill No. 50, who became a 50-year Royal Arch veteran on September 12.

## District 15 Supports United Methodist Men of South Berkeley County, WV

On Saturday, December 22, the Christmas Spirit was in full swing as six members of District 15 supported the United Methodist Men of South Berkeley County, West Virginia, in their annual "Feeding Families" Christmas charity program. The District raised and donated a total of \$475 that went toward purchasing groceries to provide breakfast, lunch, and dinner for 75 families in need. The group also assisted in the packaging of meals and loading them in vehicles. The project supported the South Berkeley community by providing \$1,300 of food for families in need. Present were Right Excellent Jake Trenary, Excellent Kevin Walek, and Companions Joshua Payne, John Powell, Charlie Harmon, and Mark Lentz.



**District 15 members and helpers are all smiles while assisting the needy**

## Adding Pizzazz to Chapter Meetings, by Excellent Edward Tooma

Now don't get the word pizzazz confused with pizza, although both words can be attractive in their own right. My own definition of pizzazz is to add some sparkle to those (sometimes) dull meetings that cause many on the sidelines to nod the meeting away. We certainly don't want that to happen. For starters, set up a program roster and do a little assigning to Companions to come up with ideas to make the meeting nights come alive. You'd be surprised at what a good program can do, if you put some effort into it. I've said this before, programs do not have to be Lodge- or Chapter-related or have anything to do with Masonry or its appendant bodies. But, if you can research something that is related to our Ancient Order that would open some eyes, why not go for it?

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When I prepare a program, I use various sources. One that I like a lot is Reader's Digest. This little booklet has some amazing stories that can be used for an informative and entertaining talk. Your nearby library also has shelves of material for your research, and if you have access to a computer, you literally have the world in your hands to do wonders. When you choose a topic from any given article and put it together in your own form to make the presentation fit your style of delivery, always remember to credit the source.

Another good avenue to explore is your local newspaper. I recently read an article about tire safety and found it to be very informative. The article covered purchasing tires, proper rotation, checking tire pressure, tire tread, balancing, and alignment. Now this is something that applies to each and every one of us. Needless to say, I packaged all the information into a 10-minute talk and titled it: "Our Life Depends On The Rubber That Meets The Road." This life saving talk was well-received.

It's a good idea to plan ahead on what talks you have coming up so you can pass this information on at each meeting. It gives our Companions something to look forward to. Also put the same information in the Trestleboard, or send out an email notification a few days before each meeting letting everyone know the highlight of the evening. You may want consider inviting the Mayor, Chief of Police, Fire Department Chief, or an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) to give a talk at your meeting. Doing this has a double incentive. You receive firsthand information about your community, and the guest speaker gets to see what Royal Arch Masonry is all about.

There is another excellent source of information you should explore. Go to the Grand Chapter website: <https://virginiaroyalarch.org/>. When you open the page, click on Education on the left side and you will find a variety of talks. On the other side of the coin, if you are extra talented, and can do a magic act, or even a tap dance routine - that'll surely pack the house and keep those eyes and ears on the sidelines wide open. All in all, we really need to make attending Chapter something to look forward to. Adding some pizzazz to the menu and serving it well can do wonders for that monthly night out. And, for refreshments, pizza will be just fine.

My hope is that you enjoy reading these articles, find them helpful, and that implementing them will serve your Chapter well. My fellow Companions, we're all in this together, and if we're going to be "Soaring To New Heights", the theme for this year's Grand High Priest, we need to be a cohesive team. So Mote It Be!

## **Upcoming Calendar**

January 5, 2 pm, Grand High Priest Homecoming, Mt. Nebo Chapter No. 20, Suffolk

January 11, 6 pm, District 10 Official Visit, Marion

January 12, 8 am, District 14 Royal Arch Festival, Lexington

January 12, 6 pm, District 12 Official Visit, Tazewell

January 18, 6 pm, District 14 Official Visit, Lexington

January 19, 6 pm, District 18 Official Visit, Barboursville

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January 26, 6 pm, District 1 Official Visit, Annandale

March 22, 6 pm, District 8 Official Visit, Roanoke

March 23, 6 pm, District 9 Official Visit, Christiansburg



**Attendees at the Grand High Priest's Official Visit to District 15 on December 14**



**Grand High Priest Broce presides and later receives his Past Grand High Priest jewel**

## **Grand Annual Convocation Review, by Excellent Edward Tooma**

Hello everyone, I just got back from the 211th Grand Annual Convocation held in Williamsburg. It was an enjoyable visit and I got to meet so many fellow Companions from all over the Commonwealth and even some from other jurisdictions. At one point, I thought I was attending a high-ranking military affair seeing so many wearing numerous accouterments, and I must say looking sharp as a tack. The Grand Officers were all spiffy looking in their tuxedos. There were various activities taking place - some that I could attend and others that I could not, and I understand that. My initial reasoning for attending was to receive the Thrice Illustrious Masters Degree, which I thoroughly enjoyed. My rating for this degree is "Emotional". In fact, I have enjoyed all of the degrees taken over the past few years at the annual Convocation. Namely, the

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Super Excellent Master Degree, rated "Superior"; the Anointed High Priest Degree, rated "Uplifting"; and that ever popular Old Saratoga Degree, rated "Funtastic".



**Right Excellent Danny Diego and District 2 celebrate winning the Grand Line Bowl**



**Ish Sodi Award: Right Excellent David Bentley and Paul Lockhart**

While attending the 2017-2018 Grand Annual Convocation, I made it a point to be present for the Grand Chapter Final Session where elections took place. This was immediately followed by the Public Installation of all Grand Chapter Officers. The highlight of the evening was the Change-of-Command ceremony. The outgoing Grand High Priest, Most Excellent Joe Broce, gave his farewell speech thanking everyone for their support throughout his year in office, after which he and his wife Debbie were showered with gifts of appreciation and a standing ovation. It was then time for the newly elected Grand High Priest, Most Excellent Floyd Byron Goodwin, to address the audience of Companions, family members, and friends. His opening statement thanked God

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for the many blessings he has received and a special thank you to his family for their help, support, and guidance. His speech had me on the edge of my seat as I listened attentively to his every word. At one point during his acceptance speech, I literally had goosebumps as he disseminated some powerful statements about our fraternity, all being in the affirmative. Again, there was a standing ovation. This is going to be an exciting Capitular year serving and supporting the goals of our Grand High Priest, thereby making Royal Arch Masonry even stronger so we can all be "Soaring To New Heights." Following Most Excellent Goodwin's acceptance speech, a reception was held in the Grand High Priest Hospitality Suite. This was an excellent opportunity to meet personally the newly installed Grand High Priest, the officers from the Grand Chapter, and other visiting officials.



**John Dove Award: Most Excellent Danny Bowman and Right Excellent Byron Goodwin**



**2019 Grand Chapter Officers assemble at the altar**

Am I proud being a Royal Arch Mason? You betcha! And I could easily tell that everyone in attendance felt the same way. If you have never been to a Grand Annual Convocation, I highly recommend that you start right now to make plans for the November 2019 gathering. Lord willing and the creek don't rise - I hope to see you there.