



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

The Keystone

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GRAND HIGH PRIEST/ MOST ILLUSTRIOUS GRAND MASTER'S MESSAGE

Ho Companions!

My Fellow Companions. I want to Thank You for electing me as your Grand High Priest for the year 2023 but most importantly Thank God for this opportunity and also my wife, Donna, and family for their support as I begin this journey. Others to thank would be the late MW and ME James M. Scearce, Jr. for nominating me as Grand Master of the First Veil. I wish he was still with us as I begin this new chapter in my life. He is sorely missed by the Grand Chapter Royal Arch Masons in Virginia and all Companions.



Since our Grand Convocation in November 2022, my wife and I have visited the Grand Chapter Royal Arch Masons of Pennsylvania. We were well received as we represented our Grand Chapter. Their meetings were held for the first time since the outbreak of Covid in the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. This is a very beautiful and magnificent Masonic Buildings and is not that far from Virginia. If you are ever in

Philadelphia, it would be worth your time to visit this historic site for a free tour given by the Masonic Brethren who serve as volunteers.

I also attended a Royal Arch Festival at D. C. Shanks Royal Arch Chapter in Salem, Virginia on Saturday, December 3, 2022, where fourteen Brethren were exalted to the degree of Royal Arch Mason. These Companions represented several Royal Arch Chapters in the surrounding area. We need more exaltations either in festival style or performed in the Chapter with three candidates to increase our membership.

Another special event I attended was the seventy-year Royal Arch Award given to Companion William P. Hall of Alleghany Royal Arch Chapter No. 24 in Clifton Forge, VA. It was a great honor to present Companion Hall this award for such a Royal Arch Milestone that few receive. His family was present for this presentation along with a host of Royal

Arch Companions from Alleghany Royal Arch Chapter and other Chapters to support Companion Hall. This was a very special evening celebrated by all.

On Monday, February 20, 2023, I attended the Parade and Cornerstone Rededication Event of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial in Alexandria. I participated in the parade which began at 1:00 PM. All Royal Arch Masons that would like to join me, please go to the George Washington Masonic National Memorial website and register. If you plan on attending as a Royal Arch Mason, be sure to wear your Red Coat and bring your apron and jewel of your office provided we are allowed to wear them. This event may not be duplicated again for another one hundred years.

There are still some Chapters that are struggling to open each month. I encourage all Companions to attend their Stated Convocations and other activities that may arise. I know that the Covid Virus is still among us so if you are not feeling well, please stay at home instead of exposing maybe yourself to others or perhaps the virus being exposed to you. Use common sense and hopefully this will all be behind us soon.

If your Chapter has any special events or recognitions, please submit them to the Keystone so all Companions can see the accomplishments in Royal Arch Masonry and be sure to regularly visit the Grand Chapter Royal Arch Masons website so you can keep up to date on everything. There is a lot of information on this website so be sure to explore it.

As my wife and I begin my Official Visits to the different parts of our great Commonwealth, I want to thank all, both Companions and their spouses and families, for putting together the arrangements for all of us to gather together for food and fellowship. I have scheduled all my visits in late winter and early spring to not interfere with your late spring and summer family gatherings and vacations. Again, we look forward to traveling throughout the state and meeting all the Companions and your families.

Sincerely and Fraternaly,
ME Hafford Lee Arritt, Jr.
Grand High Priest

INTRODUCING THE GRAND MASTER OF THE FIRST VEIL

No Companions!

Joey Shawn Martin was born in the summer of 1973 to Joanne Loftis Martin and Jack Smiley Martin. He was the 5th of 5 boys brought into the world on that 7th day of July in Salem, VA Joey lost his dad before he was a year old. Early in his childhood he met with his now stepdad who was at one time a Mason himself. He spent his early years in western KY. He moved back to Salem when he was 12



to Glenvar High School where he graduated in 1991. After graduating he worked his way up through management at the now defunct Rally's hamburgers where he left with the title training coordinator. Joey then went on to spend time at the Salem Civic Center starting out as part time and worked his way

up to supervisor.

Along the way he had the privilege of having a daughter Marissa Joanne Martin and a son Justin Michael Martin. Marissa currently works for Vistar Eye Care as a scribe and Justin works for Carillion Hospital. When Joey left the Civic Center he entered the fire suppression industry employed by the now departed Greer's Supply Company doing everything from recharging fire extinguishers to designing and installing fire suppression systems ranging from server rooms to mining equipment. Joey was head hunted by the Redford Army Ammunition Plant to perform similar duties he had at Greer's Supply.

RE JOEY ENJOYS SERVING IN ANY CAPACITY THAT CAN BENEFIT THE CRAFT IF IN NO OTHER WAY THAN TO IMPROVE HIMSELF BECAUSE HE FIRMLY BELIEVES IN PROVERBS 27: 17 "IRON SHARPENS IRON... AND MAN SHARPENS MAN".

years old where he spent some time at Andrew Lewis middle school and then on

Along the way Freemasonry found him through his nephew Dan Fields. Joey has been in Masonry for close to ten years. He volunteered as junior steward and worked his way up to Worshipful Master where his theme was "Strong Family, Stronger Lodge" where his thoughts were not only a strong home family but a strong Masonic family where he entertained all the appendant bodies. The one that caught his attention was the Royal Arch and the York Rite even though he does serve in the Shriners as a director's staff member. Joey entered DC Shanks through the urging of one of his mentors Right Excellent Dan Kidd. He quickly volunteered to serve as Grand Master of the 1st veil and worked his way up to High Priest where he pursued the theme "rebuilding the arch".

With the ramifications of Covid, he served 2 years as High Priest and was able to add a few companions who now serve in a progressive line for the chapter. In the last few years, he was invited to

join the Alpha Star Council AMD which was right up his alley. Joey enjoys to research of the origins of Masonry and the origins of the Chapter and the esoteric meanings of what the first 3 Grand Masters messages are and what they still are trying to convey. Rarely do you catch Right Excellent Companion Joey without a Masonic Book or a Masonic podcast on. He enjoys serving in any capacity that can benefit the craft if in no other way than to improve himself because he firmly believes in Proverbs 27:17 "iron sharpens iron and man sharpens man".

Joey serves the craft now as the district instructor of work for District 22A. He has served the craft with fervency and zeal, but the craft has helped him as well. Through a Masonic brother he was introduced to his fiancé Aimee. They are getting married in the near future. They are looking to buy a house in the very near future and look forward to spending the rest of three years in marital bliss.

CHAPTER LEADERSHIP COURSE COMPLETIONS

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

Companion **Matthew B. Reed** of Norfolk United No. 1 successfully completed the Correspondence Course on 8 March 2023. Congratulations!

Companion **Joey S. Martin** of D.C. Shanks No. 31 successfully completed the Correspondence Course on 28 September 2022. Congratulations!

Companion **Christopher T. Stevens** of D.C. Shanks No. 31 successfully completed the correspondence course as of 4 October 2022. Congratulations!

Companion **Brian P. Van de Meulebroecke** of Fauquier No. 25 successfully completed the Correspondence Course on 18 October 2022 . Congratulations!

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND SERVICE - EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS

The Grand Chapter and Grand Council Committee on Education and Service is continuing to provide opportunities for our collective improvement and enlightenment, through educational presentations. “Grand Chapter and Grand Council of Virginia Committee on Education and Service - Educational Sessions” the fourth Saturday of March, June and September from 10:00am to 11:00 am EDT!

Date	Speaker	Program
25 March 2023 10:00 to 11:00 am EDT	Companion Mark A. Wright, Grand Captain of the Host, Grand Chapter of DC	“The Evolution of the American Musical Degree”
24 June 2023 10:00 to 11:00 am EDT	Companion Joseph H. Martinez, PHP, Masonic District Education Officer	"Symbolism of the High Priest Garments"
23 September 2023 10:00 to 11:00 am EDT	Companion Timothy A. Dahlman, HP, Chivalric District Education Officer	"The Most Excellent Master – The Charge"

Zoom meeting invitation for ALL sessions.

Topic: Grand Chapter and Grand Council of Virginia Committee on Education and Service – Educational Sessions

Time: 25 March, 24 June and 23 September 2023 at 10:00 AM EDT (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85841652609?pwd=Nmt1RGFxaEpHMGVtdm83TkdORDF3QT09>

Meeting ID: 858 4165 2609; **Passcode:** 992126

One tap mobile

+13017158592,,85841652609# US (Washington DC); +13126266799,,85841652609# US (Chicago)

Please share this with all Companions. We look forward to having you join us!

Sincerely and fraternally yours in friendship and service,

Raymon W. Bacchus, Grand Provost

CHAPTER / COUNCIL NEWS

12th Capitular District.

The Grand High Priest, Most Excellent Hafford Lee Arritt, Jr., visited District 12 Tuesday, February 21, 2023. An

excellent time was enjoyed by all participants.

Right Excellent Robert E. Lucas DDGHP District 12.



Capitular District 1, 14, 15, 17, 20, and 21.

The Grand High Priest, ME Lee Arritt, went to the MOHAVA Board Meeting in Richmond today, February 15, 2023, and presented the funds collected thus far from the Official Visits for the Memory Unit. The Grand High Priest presented the funds to RW Terry Hilton, RW Dr. Samuel Jones and MW Donald Strehle. The total amount donated for the Memory Unit by Districts 17, 1, 20, 21, 15, and 14 was \$2,233.00. The total amount donated by the same Districts for the Alzheimer's Association was \$748.00 and those funds will be forwarded to the Grand Almoner and be credited to the proper Districts making the donations.

These donations were the result of Companions and Chapters donating in

one of the two jars brought with the Grand High Priest on his Official Visit. Once more funds are collected, he will make another presentation to the Masonic Home and have it published in the Keystone. All the Companions involved in this donation to both funds should be very proud of themselves. The Grand Master, Grand Officers of the Grand Lodge of Virginia, Board of Governors and the Masonic Home of Virginia representatives were very much appreciative of this donation.

I know there will be additional fundraisers as the year progresses and the funds for both will increase.

Thank You Companions. The credit goes to you!



Waynesboro Union #2.

Most Excellent Russel G. Snodgrass and Right Excellent Stephen L. Young transport donations to a local Toys for Tots drop off location on behalf of the Companions of Waynesboro Union No. 2.

Waynesboro Union No. 2 supported Toys for Tots with a fundraiser breakfast that raised over \$235. Partnering with Lee Lodge No. 209, they also collected three dozen toys. The donations will directly support the local Toys for Tots program!



DC Shanks Chapter #31.

Our Companions celebrated a successful Festival at D.C. Shanks Chapter December 3, 2022, in Salem.

Twelve new Companions were initiated into the Royal Arch ranks! A hearty congratulations to the new Companions, as well as to those conducting the rituals.



18th Capitular District.

October 2022. A great time was enjoyed by all the Companions.

The Past RE High Priest concluded a successful official Visit to District 18 in



Waynesboro Union #2.

Waynesboro Union No. 2 supported Project Lifesaver with a fundraiser breakfast that raised over \$706. The donations will directly support Project Lifesaver programs at Staunton Police Department and Augusta County Sheriff Office, and will also benefit Project Lifesaver, International.

On behalf of the Companions of Waynesboro Union No. 2, Excellent George Vest, High Priest, and Mt. Excellent Russel Snodgrass presented a check to SGT. E. L. Shifflett at Staunton Police Department offices on September 26.



Waynesboro Union #2.

Waynesboro Union No. 2 supported the Greater Augusta Walk to End Alzheimer's Disease by raising donations with a Walk Team, participating in the Walk and by selling refreshments at the Walk. The Walk was held on September 24 at the Murphy Demming College of Health Sciences in Fishersville. Our Walk Team has raised over \$1200 so far. The highlights of the refreshments offered

were homemade country ham biscuits prepared by Mt. Excellent Russel Snodgrass and plenty of fresh brewed coffee. Thanks to all who participated and donated."

Photo: Rt. Excellent Stephen Young, Roxane Young, Rt. Excellent Ron Sturm, Mt. Excellent Russel Snodgrass. Not pictured - Excellent George Vest, Walk Team member and High Priest of Waynesboro Union No. 2.



Urbana #59.

The 2022 Grand High Priest greeted the Companions as his official visit to Urbana No 59 on 19 September 2022. He and Urbana #59 thank all those in making the night a success.



2nd and 3rd Capitular Districts.

This past 17 September 2022, the 2022 Grand High Priest paid an official visit

Capitular Districts 2 and 4 at Princess Anne Lodge No 25, Virginia Beach Va. A relaxing and enjoyable time was had by all attending.



15th Capitular District.

On 04 February 2023 Companions of District No. 15 hosted the Grand High Priest, MEC Hafford Lee Arritt and Lady Donna for an enjoyable afternoon gathering. Through the generosity of the those in attendance the following breakout of Donations was collected:

Masonic Home Memory Unit: \$570.00

Alzheimer's Fund: \$90.00

The Program of the Evening was presented by Captain Jessica P. Smith of the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department who spoke on the History of Firefighting with several anecdotal stories followed by the DDGHP's comparisons of the Core Values of the Brotherhood of Firefighters (Maybe originating from Brother Benjamin Franklin in 1736) and Capitular Masonry.

1st right: Gathering of the Companions and Guests. **2nd right:** MEC Lee Arritt serving Dessert. **3rd right:** Head Table: Captain Smith, GHP & Lady Donna and Alan Spear DDGHP. **4th right:** Luray Commandery KT No. 19, Em. Sir Knights Dennis Parmerter, and Geoffery Hoyt and Dennis Haas, VEGC.



70 Year Pin Awardee

On, Thursday, December 15, 2022, at Alleghany Royal Arch Chapter No. 24, Companion William P. (Pem) Hall received his 70-year certificate and lapel pin from the Grand High Priest of Royal Arch Masons in Virginia, Most Excellent Hafford Lee Arritt, Jr.

ME Arritt informed Companion Hall that it was a great pleasure and inspiration to honor him as a companion who has reached the lofty height of seventy years in Royal Arch Masonry. ME Arritt said it is another inducement to continue steadfast and immovable in the discharge of our respective duties.

In Masonry we are alluded to obtaining useful knowledge in youth, applying our knowledge in manhood and enjoying many happy reflections in old age.

We hope that your future will continue to be filled with abounding happiness, peace and good health.

The 70-year lapel pin was applied to his jacket by his daughter, Carolyn Tinsley.

Royal Arch Masonry History.

Royal Arch Mason York Rite Masonry
Mark Master, Past Master, Select Master,
Royal master, Most Excellent Master,
Royal Arch Mason

Exalted December 12, 1952,

December 12, 2002, 50 years,

December 12, 2012, 60 years

December 12, 2022, 70 years

Companion Hall brought two special guests today; son-in-law Rick and daughter Carolyn Tinsley of Richmond, VA. Carolyn is retired as a carrier music educator from Henrico County Public School and church Choir Director. Rick retired in 2019 as Music Specialist for Henrico County Public Schools and is currently Choir Director at Skipwith Baptist Church.

Pictured left to right next page:

ME Arritt, Comp. Pem Hall, Carolyn Tinsley, Freda Hall, Pem's wife.

