

The Grand Lodge of Free & Accepted Masons of Ohio

ANNUAL ADDRESS
of the
GRAND MASTER

William M. Carter III
GRAND MASTER



Report of the Grand Secretary
Report of the Grand Treasurer
Various Committee Report
and Proposed Legislation

216th ANNUAL COMMUNICATION
Sandusky, Ohio October 24, 2025

GRAND MASTER'S ANNUAL REPORT

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Ohio:

As I reflect upon this Masonic year that we are about to complete, my heart is firmly convinced that my Masonic journey has been far more than a passage through degrees or the holding of titles and offices. For me it has been a decades-long shaping of character, spirit, and purpose. Along the way, there have been reminders time and again that Masonry is not about the destination, but about the steady, deliberate walk upon the path of self-improvement. The working tools of the Craft have left indelible marks upon my heart, teaching me patience where there was once haste, humility where there was once pride, and brotherly love where the world too often fosters division. It is in the quiet lessons of the Lodge, and in the bonds forged with Brethren along this journey, that I discovered not only what it means to be a Mason, but what it means to be a better man.

This sacred journey has also become the cornerstone of my leadership approach. Freemasonry has taught me that true leadership is not measured in authority or command, but in service, empathy, and vision. The Craft has impressed upon me the responsibility of guiding others with integrity, of laboring not for personal acclaim, but for the enduring strength of the edifice we build together. My focus as a leader has been sharpened by the recognition that every Brother has within him a spark of the divine - the Sacred Flame - and that my role is to nurture, encourage, and protect that light. Because of Masonry, my leadership is not simply about achieving goals. It is about inspiring others to walk their own journey with fervency, faith, and zeal.

Grand Lodge Officers

Equally important to my own journey was the privilege of appointing officers who embody those same qualities of leadership, reflection, and devotion to the Craft. I sought Brethren whose hearts seemed guided by service rather than ambition, men who lead not only with skill but with wisdom born of contemplation. In surrounding myself with such officers, I was reminded that leadership is never the voice of one, but the harmony of many working in unison toward a higher purpose regardless of the nature of the work. Their steadfastness, patience, and vision have not only strengthened my hand as Grand Master but have also ensured that the lessons of Masonry are carried forward with dignity and light into the next generation of our leadership.

To our Grand Tyler, RWB Franck Thierry Kakou, I extend gratitude for his vigilance and quiet strength, a constant reminder that the gates of our fraternity are guarded not only with sword but with integrity.

To our Grand Chaplain, RWB Kirk David Miller, I give thanks for his prayers and spiritual guidance, whose words lifted us to higher thoughts and whose presence reminded us of the divine blessing upon all our labors. He is a personal blessing to me.

To our Grand Orator, RWB Jeffrey Michael Sime, I am indebted for your eloquence that stirred hearts and inspired our minds. His is a true voice of wisdom within our fellowship.

To our Grand Marshal, RWB Eric William Muehlenbein, I offer appreciation for his dignity and precision, ensuring that every step of our ceremonies reflected the solemn beauty of Masonry. There is a special bond that forms between a Grand Master and a Grand Marshal, and it is a bond that I intend to uphold for the rest of our natural lives.

To our Senior Grand Deacon, RWB Troy L. Davis, I extend recognition for his faithful labor and his steady hand in the sacred work of our many ceremonies. I also thank him for his generous labor in creating materials for our Craft.

And to our Junior Grand Deacon, RWB Daniel Adam Hall, I give thanks for his zeal and dedication, whose service illuminated the path of others with both humility and joy. His appointment was one that required deep consideration not only for cultural alignment but carried the weight that he may be asked to take more significant roles in the years to come. My “Masonic Son” carries my blessings, my love, and my hopes for the future of the Craft.

It has also been my profound honor to labor beside the elected officers of this Grand Lodge, each of whom has carried the weight of responsibility with wisdom, devotion, and love for the Craft. Their counsel, their steadfastness, and their tireless work have been constant sources of strength to me throughout this journey.

To our Grand Secretary, MWB Keith William Newton, I extend heartfelt gratitude for his diligence and steady hand in preserving our records, guiding our correspondence, invaluable counsel, and ensuring that the work of the Grand Lodge is ever orderly and sound.

To our Grand Treasurer, MWB Steven Eugene Cokonougher, I give thanks for his careful stewardship of our resources, his transparency, and his unshakable integrity in safeguarding the financial health of this Grand Lodge.

To our Junior Grand Warden, RWB Wayne A. Fischer, I offer appreciation for his energy and dedication, whose insights and labors reflect the promise of a bright future for our leadership.

To our Senior Grand Warden, RWB Michael Lee McCandlish, I extend recognition for his thoughtful counsel, his strong and steady presence, and his clear vision of the work that lies ahead.

And to our Deputy Grand Master, RWB Shawn Alan Johnson, I give special thanks for his loyalty, his partnership in leadership, and his readiness to assume the mantle of Grand Master with both strength and humility. He has been my longest and strongest support.

These elected officers, together with the appointed, form the living pillars of this Grand Lodge. They have been both my companions and my counselors, and I am confident that under their watchful care, the Craft in Ohio will continue to prosper and shine forth in LEGENDARY light and unity.

I would be remiss if I did not also pause to honor the many elected and appointed officers with whom I have traveled along this eight-year journey. Together we have shared countless miles on the road, late nights of labor, and moments of both triumph and challenge. These Brethren, through their fellowship and example, have shaped me as much as any ritual or lesson of the Craft. Their wisdom steadied me when the path was uncertain, their humor lightened the burdens of the day, and their friendship reminded me that leadership is never a solitary endeavor. I will always treasure the bonds we forged along the way, and I give thanks to the Great Architect for having placed such remarkable men in my company throughout this journey.

District Advisors

We acknowledge the indispensable role of our District Advisors across all twenty-five Districts of this Grand Jurisdiction. These devoted Brethren serve as both counselors and steady guides, ensuring that the vision of the Grand Lodge is faithfully carried into the life of each Lodge. Their wisdom has been a constant resource, their counsel a trusted compass, and their quiet labors a foundation upon which much of our success rests. I am deeply grateful for the time, care, and heart they invest in supporting our District Deputies and Lodges, because it is in their guidance that the Craft may find both stability and inspiration. Their work, often unseen by many, is truly one of the great strengths of Ohio Masonry.

Richard A. Dickerscheid	Adam B. Michael
Rob Brower	Michael I. Dodds (retired)
Bradley A. Horsley	Charles A. Hall
Bruce M. Shinabery	Jeffrey K. Kaple
Robert R. Rettig	T. Steve Williams
Tim Redick	Jeffrey M. Gallaher
Joe Shilling	Larry S. Cullison
Gregory A. Smith	Michael A. Roepke
David L. Waggoner	Dave Hopkins
Keith J. Manbeck	Daniel P. Mossop
Mark P. Allred	Jeffrey L. Miller
Steven E. Wallis	James L. Cardelein
Dennis R. Kessler	G. Michael Hasman

District Deputy Grand Masters

I must also extend my profound gratitude to the District Deputies, each of whom was carefully interviewed and thoughtfully appointed to represent me within his District. These Brethren are the true ambassadors of the Grand Lodge, carrying light, guidance, and encouragement into every Lodge they visit. Their work requires not only knowledge of the Code and ritual, but also patience, compassion, and the ability to lead with both firmness and love. I chose each of them not simply for their proficiency, but for their character and the steady example they set for their Brethren. Their countless hours of travel, counsel, and service have been a blessing to this Grand Jurisdiction, and I could not have asked for finer men to stand as my representatives across Ohio.

Bobby Stickrod	Jerel R. Fish	Brian G. King
Kenneth Simmons	John W. Tate, Jr.	Charles Clint Veach
Tony Dsuban	Todd M. Williams	Henry Earl Grogro
Alfred Butler	John W. Dixon	Ronald G. Horne
C. Gregory Bush	Tyler M. Perry	Stanley E. Kopp Sr.
Jamie L. Kilburn	Chris Mohler	Jason Kidd
Bob Zimmerman	Jay Ferguson	Russell G. Myers Jr.
Steve Henkle	Chris S. Greise	Marc A. Osborne
Martin L. Lawrence	L. Keith Fields	Brian F. Iselin
Jim Parsons	Mike Saum	Jason Maiher
Gary Luce	R. Ed Brown	Timothy S. Cline
Ron Mulkey	Scott P. Zwiezinski	Mitchell L. Slotwinski
Rex Knight	Dennis L. Claxton	Brian J. Breyer
Tyler Sheeley	Craig T. Franklin	Jason Gorney
Paul W. Clark	Lester J. Prados	Shawn A. Smith
Dale L. Sullenberger	Dennis W. Robertson	James R. Hall
W. Pat Comer	K. Hoyt Boston	Frank Daugherty
Joel Swords	J. Mike Sowers	Bret Hoover
David A. Johnson	Jeff Bosson	Jerry L. Palfy
Jeff Starr	Kevin Guiler	

District Education Officers

I also wish to recognize the invaluable service of our District Education Officers, whose dedication to Masonic learning has enriched the work of every District. These Brethren labor tirelessly to ensure that the cultural and strategic lessons of the Craft are not only preserved but also presented in ways that inspire and instruct. Through their guidance, candidates are brought deeper into the light of our teachings, and Brethren of every station are reminded that Masonry is, at its heart, a lifelong pursuit of knowledge and self-improvement. Their efforts have strengthened the foundation of our Lodges and given renewed energy to the intellectual and spiritual growth of our Fraternity. For their devotion to education and to the Craft, I offer my sincere gratitude.

Alex Steidle Cameron Shandersky Josh Dayton Brandon H. Estep Taylor Kleineick Shannon Ballard John R. Stiltner Rick Bush Dennis L. Richardson Craig A. Szczublewski James White Jeffrey Neal Sam Johnson Eddie Moore Bruce Porter David Stamper Chris Blakeman Jesse B. Crawford Jason R. Klint Steve Roth	Rod Miller Rodney V. Fowler Scott A. Harder John Epple Danny L. Will Dale Graves Kolton P. Halla Brad Love Michael Heath Nicholas A. Bolyard Josh Reams Joseph Carpenter Nathan P. Samsa Jeff Ingersoll Cody D. Noon Michael L. Denbow Eric Lee Austin J. Meredith Randy Handschumacher Steven C. Miller	Chip Udischas Tyler Vanvelzor Christopher D. Weber Mic Becerra Tom Stortz Richard Amlung Steven D. Prentiss Brock A. Ryan Brad J. Smith James C. Cain Shawn S. Franks Daniel J. McClure Anello R. Liberati Brian P. Fitzgerald Rich Purks Michael Seruch Luke Whittenberger Clinton Kingston William W. Saylor
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Receptions

Throughout this journey, my Lady Zoe and I were deeply blessed to attend each of the Grand Master Receptions held across our twenty-five Districts, with several made even more special by the joint efforts of two Districts working in harmony. At every gathering we were welcomed with warmth, treated with the utmost hospitality, and embraced as family by Brethren and their ladies alike. These receptions were not merely formal events; they were vibrant celebrations of the fellowship and unity that give our Craft its true strength. Each evening reminded us that Masonry extends far beyond the tiled walls of our Lodges, into the hearts and homes of its members.

The generous gifts we received along the way will forever serve as treasured keepsakes of this remarkable year, but even more lasting are the friendships forged in every corner of the state. To break bread, share stories, and rejoice together in our common purpose has been one of the greatest joys of our service. Zoe and I will carry those memories with us always, grateful not only for the kindness shown to us, but for the reminder that wherever we travel, among Masons we are always at home. My deepest hope is that the comments I shared at every reception - each presentation unique - were evidence of my gratitude and served as inspiration to all who were present.

Date (2025)	District(s)	Location	City
Jan 10	13	Somerset Community Church	Somerset
Jan 11	17	Belpre Masonic Lodge	Belpre
Jan 19	FLA	Artichoke and Company	Bonita Springs, FL
Jan 20	FLA	Peridia Golf and Country Club	Bradenton, FL
Jan 21	FLA	SeaBreeze Pool and Recreation	The Villages, FL
Feb 1	12	Holzer Leadership & Innovation	Gallipolis
Feb 7	7	McClain High School	Greenfield
Feb 22	4 / 10	Findlay Elks Hall	Findlay
Mar 1	8	Roberts Centre	Wilmington
Mar 8	14	Pinnacle Golf Club	Grove City
Mar 14	3	Romer's Catering	Piqua
Mar 15	2	Dayton Masonic Center	Dayton
Mar 21	18	The Generations Complex	Woodsfield
Mar 22	19	Granville Inn	Granville
Mar 28	5	Birchwood Meadow	Swanton
Mar 29	11	Hilton Garden Inn Toledo	Perrysburg
Apr 4	23	Francis Family Restaurant	Cambridge
Apr 5	24	Dutch Haus Inn	Columbiana
Apr 25	20	Ashland University	Ashland
Apr 26	21	Canton Masonic Temple	Canton
May 9	16	Bronson-Norwalk Conservation	Norwalk
May 16	25	Andres Banquet Center	Ashtabula
May 17	22	Holiday Inn	Independence
May 31	1 / 6	Holiday Inn Eastgate	Cincinnati
Jun 13	15	All Occasions Event Center	Waldo
Jun 14	9	Courtyard Springfield	Springfield

Local Luminary Award

This year also marked the introduction of the Local Luminary Award, a new recognition created to honor the unsung heroes who shape the minds and character of future generations: our educators. At each Grand Master's Reception, it was my privilege to present this award to an outstanding educator or educational administrator, chosen for their dedication, passion, and impact upon their students and community. In shining a light on these remarkable individuals, we as Masons reaffirmed our commitment to knowledge, growth, and the building of a brighter tomorrow.

The Local Luminary Award quickly became one of the most meaningful moments of every reception. To witness the gratitude of those we recognized who give so much of themselves was truly humbling. These educators remind us that the lessons we teach within our Lodges must also find expression in the world around us through service, mentorship, and the shaping of lives. By honoring them, we honored the very spirit of Masonry, and my hope is that this year's focus will continue to highlight the vital role of education in strengthening both our communities and our Fraternity.

District	Recipient
1	Jon Sheehan
2	David Jones
3	Jeffrey Bertke
4	Teresa Birt
5	Laura Jane Foor
6	Beth Hauke
7	Ali Vesey
8	Christel Wissman
9	Joshua Murray
10	Timothy Larrimore
11	Constantine Chrysochoos
12	Julie Randolph
13	Richard Norris
14	Blythe Wood
15	Steven C. Lowe
16	Melinda Newell
17	Rebecca Martin
18	Donald R. Ullmann
19	Angi Tripp
20	Dwight McElfresh
21	Katherine M. Lovell
22	Christopher Gary Burdick
23	Terry E. Snively
24	Frank Rose
25	D. Douglas Dolan

Veteran and First Responder Recognition

Our Fraternity has long held a sacred duty to honor those who serve, and it remains essential that we continue to recognize the sacrifices of our veterans and first responders. These men and women, through their courage and dedication, safeguard the freedoms and safety that allow our Lodges to labor in peace. Among the most meaningful tokens of our respect is the veteran's pin, created by Most Worshipful Brother Eric R. Schau, which has become a cherished emblem of gratitude across our jurisdiction. Each time this pin is presented, it is more than a symbol. It is a heartfelt acknowledgment that their service is remembered, valued, and forever woven into the fabric of our Craft.

Excellence in Youth Awards

At each Grand Master's Reception this year, I was privileged to present the Excellence in Youth Award, a recognition created to honor the bright young men and women in our communities and our Youth Organizations who exemplify dedication, achievement, and character. These awards served not only to celebrate their accomplishments, but also to encourage them to continue striving for excellence in all that they do. By shining a light on their hard work and success, we as Masons reinforced the timeless lesson that effort, discipline, and integrity are always worthy of acknowledgment and reward. In doing so, we also reminded ourselves of our responsibility to nurture and support the next generation as they step into roles of leadership and service.

The greatest inspiration I have taken from presenting these awards is the renewed sense of hope they instilled. To look into the eyes of these exceptional young people and hear their stories is to see the future taking shape before us - one built on courage, compassion, and a determination to make the world better than they found it. In truth, we as Masons may often find ourselves learning as much from their example as they may from ours. Their energy, their vision, and their excellence are guiding lights for us all, and I will always treasure the opportunity to have recognized them on behalf of our Craft.

District	Recipient(s)
1	Maxwell Supe, Molly Audretch
2	Claire Tippens, Emma Jackson, Wyatt Aikman
3	Adelynn Rich, Carter S. Wooddell
4	Karlene Niekamp, Benjamin Reinhard
5	Avery Wyatt Perez, Faith Marie Feehan
6	Patrick Ladd, Ruth Hornsby
7	Brandon Warren Eichenlaub, Regan Montgomery
8	Autumn Overby, Ryan Hackett
9	Santino Carnevale, Renna Kelly
10	Claire Stokes, Dakota Shellenberger, Sarah Rider
11	Joshua Squire, Zoe Christian
12	Matthew Lee Taylor II, Ryeleigh Yvonne-Lee Crossen
13	Wyatt Porter, Kyleigh Mae Crooks

14	Claire Bradbury, Jonathan Nelson
15	Noah Foertmeyer
16	Aaron Lortz, Ella Marie Andrews
17	Micah Merrill, Trinity Cade
18	Mason Landefeld, Mylee Hoover
19	Aidan Woolery, Faith Udischas
20	Alexander Davis, Eric T. Vail
21	Caitlyn Sproul
22	Brandon Wilson, Gabrielle Hare, Madison Kita
23	Jenna Grudier, Jonathan Dubiel
24	Bella Ann Roush, Robert Mitchell Roach
25	Abigail Walker, Michael Swartz, Marian Stephenson

Masonic Service Awards

One of the great joys of this year was the opportunity to present numerous Masonic Service Awards, recognizing Brethren whose many decades of devotion to the Craft have left a lasting mark on their Lodges, their communities, and this Grand Jurisdiction. Each pin and certificate was more than a token - it was a testament to a lifetime of faithfulness, perseverance, and love for Freemasonry. To honor these men, who have labored so long and so well, was to witness the living history of our Fraternity standing before us, reminding us that the strength of Masonry is measured not only in years, but in the steadfastness of its builders.

Among these moving presentations, perhaps none was more inspirational than the conferral of an 80-year service award upon Brother Don Muncy, who, at just shy of his 102nd birthday, demonstrated a mind and wit as sharp as ever. His presence, his stories, and his enduring devotion lifted every heart in attendance, leaving us all with a vision of what it means to truly live a Masonic life. Though Brother Muncy passed to the Celestial Lodge Above less than seven months later, his memory endures as a giant among Masons. He truly served as an exemplar of faith, perseverance, and joy in the journey. His legacy will continue to inspire future generations who, like him, seek to wear the white apron with honor all the days of their lives.

Jurisdictional Travel and Interactions

Travel has always been an important part of the Grand Master's year, but I was determined from the outset that my foremost focus must remain on Ohio: the Brethren, Lodges, and Districts that form the heart of this great jurisdiction. Wherever I went within our state, I sought to bring educational and inspirational presentations that would not only inform but also uplift. It was my goal that each Lodge I visited would feel renewed in its purpose, encouraged in its labors, and assured of the Grand Lodge's support in every good endeavor. These journeys across Ohio reaffirmed that the true strength of Freemasonry lies in the unity and vitality of our local Lodges. This is something that I have long believed.

Beyond our state borders, I was honored to represent Ohio at the North American Conference of Grand Masters, held in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, from February 14–19. This gathering of Grand Masters and leaders from across the continent and beyond provided a unique opportunity to exchange ideas, discuss shared challenges, and celebrate the bonds of fraternity that unite us across jurisdictional lines. The conversations were rich, the perspectives were enlightening, and the fellowship was a reminder that Masonry is a global brotherhood, strengthened by the diversity of its voices.

Later in the year, from July 18–20, I was pleased to attend the Northeast Conference of Grand Masters in Raleigh, North Carolina. Here, too, the spirit of vigorous collaboration and mutual respect was evident at every turn. The conversations shared with other Grand Masters left me encouraged concerning the broader future of Freemasonry - we truly stand at a powerful and pivotal moment in the history of our Craft. There was fervent agreement that education and a more profound engagement were the keys to our future success and relevance.

To sit with leaders of neighboring jurisdictions, to share what we in Ohio are doing, and to learn from the innovations and traditions of others was both humbling and inspiring. These conferences underscored the value of building meaningful relationships that extend beyond our borders, and I returned home each time with renewed ideas and a strengthened resolve to continue leading our jurisdiction with vision and brotherly love. It is my strong belief that these two conferences are the best balance of meaningful travel and interaction, while exercising strong fiduciary responsibility, with outside jurisdictions.

Ohio Masonic Organizations

Appendant Masonic bodies and youth organizations play a vital role in the larger family of Freemasonry. They provide opportunities for members to expand their knowledge, deepen their fellowship, and engage in service in ways that enrich both the individual and the Craft. For adults, appendant bodies such as the Scottish Rite, York Rite, Eastern Star, and Shriners allow Masons and Ladies to explore additional teachings and practices that broaden their understanding of our ancient mysteries. For youth, organizations like DeMolay, Job's Daughters, and Rainbow for Girls instill values of leadership, service, and character, helping to prepare the next generation of civic-minded leaders. Together, these groups complement the Blue Lodge by reinforcing Masonic principles and ensuring that the spirit of Freemasonry thrives across all ages and stages of life.

I offer a special thanks to the adult leaders of our youth organizations. Without your dedication and commitment, our young leaders may never be recognized or nurtured in the light of the Masonic family!

Date	Organization	Function
Nov 2 '24	Warren DeMolay	Installation of officers
Nov 15	Grand Council R&SM	Reception for MIM Jim Sutherin
Dec 13	Zenobia Shrine	New Master's Night
Jan 4	AASR Valley of Dayton	Worshipful Masters' Recognition Night
Jan 25	AASR Valley of Canton	Six Valley Degree Day
Mar 2	AASR Valley of Firelands	Rite On Celebration & Recognition
Mar 23	Aladdin Shrine	Masons Day at Aladdin Shrine Circus
Apr 7	Aladdin Shrine	Masonic Night
Apr 13	AASR Valley of Cleveland	Feast of the Paschal Lamb
May 3	AASR Valley of Cleveland	Reunion
Jun 4	Aladdin Shrine	14 th District Prospect Night
Jun 7	Ohio Scottish Rite	Ohio Council of Deliberation
Jun 21	Ohio Widows Sons	Grand Master's Ride
Jun 23	Ohio Scottish Rite	OCD Golf Fundraiser
Jun 27	Order of Rainbow for Girls	Grand Assembly
Jun 28	AASR Prince Hall	Ohio Council of Deliberation
Jul 12	Ohio Allied Masonic Degrees	AMD Ingathering
Jul 25	Ohio Order of DeMolay	Conclave and Masonic Recognition
Jul 27	AASR Valley of Dayton	Centennial Cornerstone Campaign
Aug 23-26	AASR NMJ	Supreme Council
Sep 20	AASR NMJ	Sovereign Grand Commander Tour
Sep 26	Order of Eastern Star	Ohio Grand Chapter
Sep 27	AASR Valley of Steubenville	Capping Ceremony
Oct 4	AASR Valley of Steubenville	Reunion
Oct 6	Grand Council R&SM	Grand Council
Oct 10	Order of knights Templar	Grand Commandery

Anniversary of General Lafayette's Visit

The year 2025 marked observances for the 200th anniversary of General Marquis de Lafayette's visits to Cincinnati (May 19), Gallipolis (May 22), and Marietta (May 23) in southern Ohio. These historic events are moments of profound importance to Freemasonry, recalling not only his legacy as a hero of liberty, but also his strong ties to our Craft. Lafayette embodied the virtues of courage, brotherhood, and service - values that remain at the heart of Freemasonry today. His journey through America, and the honors he received from Masons and citizens alike, remind us that the bonds of fraternity and the pursuit of freedom transcend nations and centuries. By observing this anniversary, we paid tribute to his role in shaping a free society while also reaffirming our own commitment to live as builders of unity and truth.

I wish to extend my particular gratitude to the Brethren in Gallipolis, Ohio, for inviting me to a large celebratory gathering of local citizens. The generous gifts you presented to memorialize the event, and the opportunity to address the many assembled alongside Ohio Governor Mike DeWine during this historic observance, were truly moving. Your eager participation, warmth, and fraternal spirit made the event truly memorable, and your dedication to honoring both our Masonic and civic heritage serves as an inspiration. It is through such thoughtful gatherings and sincere expressions of brotherhood that we keep the Sacred Flame of Freemasonry burning brightly. Finally, thank you to the Brethren in all three of these beautiful cities, for all you do to ensure that our Craft continues to live up to its legendary calling.

Grand Master's Weekend

At the time of the writing of this report, the Grand Master's Weekend has not yet taken place. However, it is exciting to note that there are currently 326 registered to attend, with 93 new Master Mason candidates and 114 new Scottish Rite candidates. The weekend promises to be a tremendous cultural success and will be reported following the event in the final Grand Master's report.

First Lady's Charitable Endeavor

This year, the First Lady's Charitable Endeavor was dedicated to the Ohio Masonic Communities Foundation, a cause that lies at the very heart of who we are as Freemasons. While we extend our charity far into the world, it is essential that we also remember to care for our own Brothers and Ladies, whose needs are often quiet yet profound. The Ohio Masonic Communities Foundation does extraordinary work in this regard, providing comfort, assistance, and dignity to those who have given so much of their lives in service to the Craft. By supporting this foundation, we demonstrate in the most tangible way that the ties of brotherhood do not end at the Lodge room door, but extend through every season of life.

I am deeply grateful for the generous financial support of the Brethren, Lodges, and Districts who embraced this endeavor with open hearts. At the time of writing this report, a total of more than \$52,000 had been raised to further the mission of the Foundation. These are funds that will directly support our Brethren and Ladies when they need it most. This achievement is not only a testament to the spirit of charity that defines Ohio Freemasonry, but also a lasting legacy of love and care that will bless lives for years to come. May we take pride in this collective labor, knowing that in lifting up our own, we honor the very essence of Masonic charity.

Honors Received

I am profoundly humbled by the many honors presented to me throughout my journey as a Grand Lodge officer, each of which I accepted not as recognition of myself alone, but as a tribute to the labors of the countless Brethren who walk this path beside me. These honors will remain among the most cherished memories of my Masonic life. They are constant reminders of the love, trust, and respect of my Brothers. For these expressions of esteem, I offer my deepest gratitude, and I will carry them always with humility and with pride in our great Fraternity.

Honorary Memberships:

Elyria #787	Stoning #503
John W. Barkley #621	Fostoria #288
Paramuthia #25	Rockton #316
John W. Durst #716	Science #50
Perseverence #329	Steubenville #45
Phoenix #123	AASR Valley of Toledo
Ashland #151	Brothers Keeper Chapter, Widows Sons

Named Events:

Date	Organization	Event
Oct 26 ‘24	AASR Valley of Cleveland	Reunion - named
Aug 16	Ohio DeMolay	Grand Master’s Class - named
Oct 4	AASR Valley of Steubenville	Reunion - named

Dedications and Reconsecrations

Dedication and Reconsecration ceremonies hold profound Masonic and spiritual significance, reminding us that every Lodge building is more than stone and timber - they are sacred spaces set apart for the labors of the Craft. In these solemn rituals, we call upon the blessings of the Great Architect of the Universe, rededicating ourselves to the principles of faith, hope, and charity that are the true cornerstones of Masonry. Each ceremony is both a renewal and a charge: a renewal of the sacred purpose for which our Lodges stand, and a charge to every Brother to live in such a way that his own life may also be seen as a temple, worthy of divine approval. In the spirit of these sacred observances and celebrations we are reminded that Masonry is not only preserved in the walls we consecrate, but in the hearts we dedicate to its service.

Date	Event
Jan 11	Corning #584 125-year reconsecration
Feb 1	Patriot #496 150-year reconsecration
Feb 1	South Point #497 150-year reconsecration
Feb 8	Lawrence #198 175-year reconsecration
Feb 8	Bainbridge #196 175-year reconsecration
Mar 15	Blanchester #191 175-year reconsecration
Mar 15	Heber #501 150-year reconsecration
Mar 22	Olive #210 new Lodge dedication
Mar 22	Monroe #189 175-year reconsecration
Mar 22	Irville #184 175-year reconsecration
Mar 29	Oak Harbor #495 150-year reconsecration
Apr 5	Augusta #504 150-year reconsecration
Apr 5	Homeworth #499 150-year reconsecration
Apr 5	Perry #185 175-year reconsecration
Apr 12	Guernsey #66 175-year reconsecration
Apr 12	Quaker City #500 150-year reconsecration
Apr 26	Star #187 175-year reconsecration
May 10	Stonington #503 150-year reconsecration
May 10	Golden Gate #245 100-year Lodge rededication
May 31	Cincinnati-Lafayette #483 150-year reconsecration
May 31	Snow #193 175-year reconsecration
Jun 14	Fielding #192 175-year reconsecration
Jun 14	New Carlisle #100 175-year reconsecration

Dispensations, Charters, and Consolidations

During the course of this Masonic year, numerous dispensations were filed, reviewed, and approved, with full records maintained on file in the Grand Secretary's office. While no new charters were issued, the record of Lodge consolidations is likewise preserved with the Grand Secretary, ensuring that the administrative and historical record of our Fraternity remains accurate and complete for future reference.

Lodge consolidations, though sometimes viewed with hesitation, must be embraced as opportunities for unity and renewed strength. When Brethren come together, joining resources, traditions, and labors, they have tremendous opportunity to form a more vibrant Lodge capable of achieving greater works than either could accomplish alone. Such unions are not the end of Masonry in a place, rather they are the rebirth of Masonry with new energy, purpose, and vitality. In this light, every consolidation should be seen as a positive step toward ensuring the strong and enduring future of our Fraternity.

Grand Lodge Long Range Plan

This year marked an important rededication to the Grand Lodge Long Range Plan, a commitment to ensure that our vision for the future is both clear and actionable. In pursuing this, we undertook a thoughtful re-definition and evaluation of our Committees, recognizing that the strength of our Fraternity depends upon the clarity of its leadership and the alignment of its resources. Each Committee was asked to examine its role with fresh eyes, to refine its purpose, and to ensure that its work contributes directly to the broader mission of Ohio Freemasonry.

To that end we developed and recorded the Mission, Vision, and Deliverables of every Committee, creating a framework that both defines expectations and empowers leaders to succeed. This process not only brought sharper focus to our organizational efforts but also created accountability and alignment across the Craft. At the heart of it all lies one unifying aim: that every Committee, in its unique way, must work toward delivering an inspiring Masonic experience to every Brother. This is accomplished by strengthening the bonds of fraternity and ensuring that each Mason finds meaning, light, and joy in his journey as Ohio continues to be a leader and a beacon in the worldwide Masonic community.

Table lodges, Installations, and Educational Presentations

During my tenure as Grand Master, I was blessed to attend and even preside over several Table Lodges, Installation Ceremonies, and Educational Presentations. Each experience deepened my appreciation for the enduring importance of these ceremonies and events. In every District and Lodge where they were held, I witnessed Brethren come together with joy, reverence, and fellowship, setting aside the cares of the world to share in the timeless traditions and teachings of our Craft. The harmony of voices lifted in toasts at Table Lodges, the laughter and congratulations echoing among Brothers after

Installations, and the heartfelt reflections shared throughout these educational events all reminded me that Masonry's greatest strength lies in its ability to unite men in friendship and deep purpose. These memories will remain among the highlights of my journey, and I will always treasure the spirit of brotherhood that shone so brightly in every event I attended.

Date	Lodge or Body	Event
Oct 23 '24	22 nd District	DDGM Installation - Iselin
Oct 24	Excelsior #11, PHA	Educational Presentation
Nov 3	22 nd District	DEO Installation - Smith
Nov 5	Paramuthia #25	Installation of Officers – Installing Officer
Nov 12	16 th District	DEO Installation - Ingersoll
Nov 15	Aerospace #800	Installation of Officers – Installing Officer
Nov 16	22 nd District	Past Master Convocation - WM
Nov 16	Genoa #433	Installation of Officers – Installing Officer
Nov 22	Oberlin #380	Installation of Officers
Nov 23	Western Reserve #507	Installation of Officers – Installing Officer
Nov 23	Elyria #787	Installation of Officers – Installing Officer
Nov 25	Star #187	Installation of Officers – Installing Officer
Nov 26	Western Reserve MasCom	Educational Presentation
Nov 26	Steubenville #45	Installation of Officers – Installing Officer
Nov 30	North Bend #346	Installation of Officers – Installing Officer
Dec 4	Forest City #388	Brotherhood Night – Speaker
Dec 6	Harrisville #137	Installation of Officers – Installing Officer
Dec 7	Ashland #151	Installation of Officers – Installing Officer
Dec 7	Canton #60	Installation of Officers – Installing Officer
Dec 8	Ohio Lodge of Research	Video Podcast Recording
Dec 9	Perseverance #329	Installation of Officers – Installing Officer

Dec 9	Science #50	Installation of Officers – Installing Officer
Dec 14	11 th District	Table Lodge - Speaker
Dec 14	Arcanum #295	Installation of Officers – Installing Officer
Dec 16	FMDOA	Dinner/Meeting - Speaker
Dec 18	Dover #489	Installation of Officers – Installing Officer
Dec 21	Triandria #780	Installation of Officers – Installing Officer
Dec 21	Harding-Concordia #345	Installation of Officers – Installing Officer
Jan 4	8 th District	District Education Day
Jan 7	Rockton #316	Educational Presentation
Jan 29	Black River #786	Educational presentation
Feb 4	Rockton #316	Educational Presentation
Feb 24	Gettysburg #477	Lodge Inspection and Speaker
Feb 27	Ashland #151	Table Lodge - Speaker
Mar 11	Hoover #770	Dinner and Oyster Lodge - Master
Mar 19	11 th District	Podcast Recording – Third Degree Podcast
Mar 27	Caliburn #785	Inspection – FC Charge
Apr 16	Cleveland #781	Table Lodge - Speaker
Apr 18	Eureka #52, PHA	Educational Presentation
Apr 21	Niles-McKinley #794	Educational Presentation
Apr 26	Grand Lodge of Ohio	Kitchen Sink Degree
May 6	Rockton #316	Educational Presentation
May 8	Ashland #151	Educational Presentation
May 19	Gibson #301	Awards Night - Presenter
May 22	Morning Dawn #7	LaFayette Landing Anniversary - Speaker
May 24	Goshen #119	Bearded MM Degree – Ritual Role
May 24	Amelia #590	Table Lodge - Speaker
May 27	Vandalia #742	Table Lodge - Speaker
May 28	Black River #786	Educational Presentation
Jun 1	Quarry #382	Table Lodge w/Ladies - Speaker
Jun 25	Oak harbor #495	King Carp Degree

Jun 28	Arcanum #295	Widows Sons Outdoor Raising – Ritual Role
Jul 26	Canton #60	Social Program
Jul 30	LaGrange #399	Educational Presentation
Aug 6	Black River #786	Educational Presentation
Sep 10	Ohio Scottish Rite	Dinner – Six Valley Degree Planning
Sep 29	Mount Akra #680	Educational Presentation
Oct 11	Unity #12	Educational Presentation
Oct 18	Stonecutter #802	Educational Presentation

Rufus Putnam Award

The Rufus Putnam Award, the highest honor bestowed by the Grand Lodge of Ohio, stands as a shining emblem of extraordinary service and devotion to the Craft. Named in tribute to Brother Rufus Putnam, a Revolutionary War hero and pioneering Mason who carried light into the wilderness of Ohio, the award recognizes those rare Brethren whose lives embody the very spirit of Masonic virtue. To receive this distinction is to be acknowledged not only for one's labors in the Lodge, but for a life of integrity, leadership, and brotherly love that uplifts all who walk beside him. The Rufus Putnam Award is more than a recognition, it is a testament to the enduring truth that the highest calling of a Mason is to serve with humility, to inspire by example, and to leave a legacy that strengthens both our Fraternity and the world around us.

The recipient of the Rufus Putnam Award will be joyfully announced at the 2025 Grand Communication.

Grand Master's Medal of Honor

The Grand Master's Medal of Honor is one of the most meaningful recognitions bestowed by the Grand Lodge of Ohio, created to honor those Brethren whose service, dedication, and example have left an indelible mark upon our Fraternity. It is awarded to men who have gone above and beyond in their labors, not seeking recognition but embodying the very essence of leadership, humility, and brotherly love. It was my distinct pleasure to work alongside Most Worshipful Brother Eric R. Schau during the creation of this award, helping to shape a recognition that reflects the noblest qualities of Masonry. The Medal of Honor stands as a lasting tribute to those who inspire us by their deeds and who remind us that the highest honor in Masonry is not found in rank or title, but in a life faithfully lived in service to others.

The recipient of the Grand Master's Medal of Honor will be happily announced at the 2025 Grand Communication.

Grand Master's Award

The inspiration behind this year's Grand Master's Award was to create a recognition that truly reflects the heart and culture of a thriving Lodge: education, degree work, fellowship, outreach, and growth. By requiring participation in the full Masonic Culture series, conferring all six code-required degrees upon active candidates, engaging in district visitations, and holding a Table Lodge, this award emphasizes the essential practices that keep Masonry alive and meaningful. It was my intention to design a program that would not only measure success in numbers, but in lived experiences where Brethren learn together, labor together, and celebrate the traditions that make our Craft so unique and enduring.

Equally important was the call for Lodges to encourage individual achievement through pursuits such as the Zerubbabel Award, and to focus on the long-term health of the Fraternity by meeting the 3-5-7 membership criteria as a whole. These elements were chosen because they point toward a sustainable future where new Brothers are welcomed, former Brothers are re-engaged, and every member is inspired to be active. My motivation has always been to help Lodges rediscover the joy of Masonry in action, and this award was crafted as a roadmap for doing just that: inspiring Brethren to excellence, strengthening the bonds of fraternity, and ensuring that every Lodge in Ohio is positioned to deliver an uplifting and transformative Masonic experience.

The list of recipients of the Grand Master's Award will be reported at the Annual Communication, along with presentation of the award to the Worshipful Master of the Lodge or his representative.

Edicts

During my term of office, two edicts were issued by me. The official edicts are filed in the office of the Grand Secretary and may be viewed by all members in the Grand View system:

Edict 2025-01 – Funeral Services for Entered Apprentices and Fellow Crafts

“WHEREAS the Code of the Grand Lodge of Ohio, in Section 22.01(a), outlines the duties and requirements associated with Masonic funerals for Master Masons; and, WHEREAS Section 22.01(b) provides recourse for the Grand Master to authorize Masonic funeral services for Entered Apprentices and Fellow Crafts; and, WHEREAS Masonic ritual in the Entered Apprentice degree reflects that an Entered Apprentice is in fact a just and upright Mason; and, WHEREAS it is critically important that Masonic culture reflects congruity between ceremony and action, THEREFORE, I, William Michael Carter III, Grand Master of Masons in Ohio, by virtue of the powers in me vested by the Constitution of the Grand Lodge of Ohio, hereby decree that: Blanket approval is granted to all Masonic Lodges to conduct Masonic funerals for Entered Apprentices and Fellow Crafts in accordance with the remainder of Chapter 22 of the Code of the Grand Lodge of Ohio. I FURTHER DIRECT that this edict be read and entered upon the minutes at the next Stated Meeting

of each Lodge in this Grand Jurisdiction. This edict will remain in effect until midnight on October 24, 2025 unless modified or revoked by the Grand Master of Free and Accepted Masons in Ohio. Given under my hand and Seal of the Grand Master of Masons in Ohio in the City of Springfield, Ohio on this 27th day of October, A.D. 2024, A.L. 6024.”

Edict 2025-02 – Balloting for Candidates for Masonic Weekend

“WHEREAS the Code of the Grand Lodge of Ohio, in Section 24.01(a), specifies that a petition for the degrees of Freemasonry must “lie over to a subsequent Stated Meeting” following its reading and investigation; and, WHEREAS Section 27.05(a) provides the Grand Master the authority to authorize the conferral of all three Symbolic Lodge Degrees as identified in Code Sec. 27.01(a) in one day; and, WHEREAS the planned date for the Grand Master’s Masonic Weekend (hereafter “Masonic Weekend”) is September 12-14, 2025, which immediately follows the period traditionally known as “Summer Darkness” in July and August, during which a large number of Lodges do not hold Stated Meetings; and, WHEREAS candidates for the Masonic Weekend may petition during the months of June, July, or August, if not earlier, and still require the procedure to be declared eligible for the degrees of Freemasonry at the Masonic Weekend; and, WHEREAS it is critically important that a proper vote be taken to approve said candidates for the Masonic Weekend, THEREFORE, I, William Michael Carter III, Grand Master of Masons in Ohio, by virtue of the powers in me vested by the Constitution of the Grand Lodge of Ohio, hereby decree that: A Special Meeting may be called during the months of June, July, or August, 2025, for the purpose of balloting upon a prospective candidate for the degrees of Freemasonry specifically to be conferred during the above specified Masonic Weekend. I FURTHER DIRECT that this edict be read and entered upon the minutes at the next Stated Meeting of each Lodge in this Grand Jurisdiction. This edict will remain in effect until midnight on September 12, 2025 unless modified or revoked by the Grand Master of Free and Accepted Masons in Ohio. Given under my hand and Seal of the Grand Master of Masons in Ohio in the City of Springfield, Ohio on this 3rd day of June, A.D. 2025, A.L. 6025.”

Disciplinary Actions

Brandon Black

On December 23, 2024 I received an email request for discussion with Right Worshipful Brothers Timothy Reddick, Robert Welch and Lawrence Gillinger regarding the conduct of Worshipful Brother Brandon Black. Accompanying the request was a custody report from Brown County, Ohio detailing sentencing of WB Black on charges of Domestic Violence and Felonious Assault on July 1, 2020. This conviction had previously led to Russellville Lodge #166 requesting a Masonic trial, recorded as case 2021-19, in which WB Black was sentenced to the penalty of “Reprimand”.

The custody report further indicated that WB Black had again been sentenced for Domestic Violence on October 20, 2024. Charges of unMasonic conduct were subsequently filed with his Lodge, Russellville #166, which determined that the repeated charge did not necessitate a further trial.

The requested meeting was held, with RWB Robert Welch being absent, where Right Worshipful Brothers Redick and Gillinger requested the benefit of appeal directly to the Grand Master under the provisions of Masonic Code, section 43.03(h). After further consideration, the matter was referred by me in writing to the Trial Commissioner-in-Chief, on February 20, 2025. It is the opinion of this Grand Master that, regardless of whether deemed a felonious or misdemeanor offense, Domestic Violence is by its very nature grossly unMasonic conduct.

The result of the ensuing trial, number 2025-13, can be found in the report of the Trial Commission.

Rodney A. Mann

On December 11, 2024, the Office of the Grand Secretary received a letter from the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Indiana indicating that their disciplinary process had found their Past Grand Master, Most Worshipful Brother Rodney A. Mann, guilty of unMasonic conduct with a sentence of expulsion under their Grand Jurisdiction. Most Worshipful Brother Mann is also a dual member of Fellowship Lodge #106, member #49024. The Grand Master of Indiana, Most Worshipful Brother David G. Morgan, requested equal consideration of expulsion by the Grand Lodge of Ohio.

Giving due consideration of Most Worshipful Brother Morgan's request, it was my decision to direct all evidence gathered and submitted by the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Indiana to be sent to Fellowship Lodge #106. Furthermore, due to the nature of the charges, Most Worshipful Brother Mann was placed by me under temporary suspension pending the outcome of the Lodge's review due to the nature of the charges. Fellowship Lodge then followed the process for grievances outlined in our Masonic Code and subsequently requested a Masonic trial regarding Most Worshipful Brother Mann. The result of this trial, number 2025-08, can be found in the report of the Trial Commission.

Gary E. Brinley

On July 24, 2025, the Office of the Grand Secretary received a letter from the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Indiana indicating that their disciplinary process had found their Past Grand Master, Most Worshipful Brother Gary E. Brinley, guilty of unMasonic conduct with a sentence of expulsion under their Grand Jurisdiction. Most Worshipful Brother Brinley is also a dual member of Greenville Lodge #143, member #132241. The Grand Master of Indiana, Most Worshipful Brother Randolph L. Seipel, offered details of the case to the Grand Lodge of Ohio.

Giving due consideration of Most Worshipful Brother Seipel's request, as in the prior case of Most Worshipful Brother Rodney Mann, it was my decision to direct all evidence gathered and submitted by the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Indiana to be sent to Greenville Lodge #143. Furthermore, due to the nature of the charges, Most Worshipful Brother Brinley was placed by me under temporary suspension pending the outcome of the Lodge's review due to the nature of the charges. At the time of the writing of this report, the matter is still under review with Greenville Lodge #143.

Paul A. Weglage

In a letter dated April 4, 2025, Worshipful Brother Ed Kampbell, secretary of Linden Lodge #637, indicated that the Lodge wished to again file charges of unMasonic conduct against Past Grand Master, Most Worshipful Brother Paul A. Weglage. These charges were based upon original charges filed and addressed during the Annual Communication in 2023, with an additional 17 charges/issues in the updated filing. Additionally, a "Witness list for prosecution" was included in the charges listing MWB Steven E. Cokonougher as "Complainant", MWB Timothy S. Wheeland as "Complainant assistant", 18 additional witness names including mine, and the "14th District Officers". These charges were hand-delivered to me in hard copy form by MWB Cokonougher on April 5, 2025, prior to a District reception.

By provision of section 41.02(a) of Masonic Code, and my deeming the charges of sufficient gravity, notification and a copy of the charges was furnished to MWB Weglage on April 16, 2025 for response per Code section 44.01(d). MWB Weglage returned his responses on April 25, 2025. After thoroughly reviewing MWB Weglage's responses inline with the charges, I directed such responses be sent to Linden #637 on April 29, 2025 in accordance with Code section 44.01(d). A copy of MWB Weglage's responses was also furnished as a courtesy directly to MWBs Cokonougher and Wheeland, as Complainant and Complainant assistant respectively, on April 30, 2025.

On May 4, 2025 the secretary of Linden #637 issue a response letter indicating that they felt that MWB Weglage's responses "were not sufficient and that further steps must be taken given the gravity of his misconduct". After reviewing this letter, in accordance with Code section 44.01(d), I ordered a committee be formed to execute upon Code section 44.01(e) on May 6, 2025. The committee was settled consisting of the following ex-officio Grand Lodge officers: RWB R. Wesley Webber (Trial Commissioner-in-Chief), RWB Robert C. Cygan (Past District Deputy Grand Master and Trial Coordinator), Most Worshipful Brother Kevin B. Todd (Past Grand Master), with RWB Mitchell L. Alperin (Past District Deputy Grand Master and practicing attorney) as Judge Advocate. The proceedings of the committee were assigned to case 2025-16 in the Grand Secretary's office.

On June 2, 2025 the assembled committee notified me that the dates for collecting witness testimony would be July 16-17, 2025, due to the large number of witnesses called by the Complainant. No witnesses were called by MWB Weglage. On July 9, 2025, I issued a letter to the committee formally empowering them to hear all evidence, deliberate in accordance with Masonic law and principles, and prepare a decision based upon facts and testimony in accordance with Code section 44.01 and Article VIII of our Constitution. The committee was also ordered to make preparations to present their findings at the next Annual Communication for the consideration and final decision of the assembled delegates in specific accordance with Code section 44.01(g).

The committee met on the dates as planned, and on July 28, 2025 I received a secure certified summation of the committee's findings. Following my review, I ordered the summation released to the Grand Secretary. As a courtesy, and in congruence with Code section 43.01(n), a summation of the committee's findings was released via letter to Linden #637, MWB Steven E. Cokonougher (Complainant), MWB Timothy S. Wheeland (Complainant assistant), and MWB Paul A. Weglage (accused) on August 1, 2025. In verbal conversation with witnesses present on August 1, subsequent to release of the summation, Complainant Most Worshipful Brother Steven E. Cokonougher agreed that the process followed Code procedurally correct despite disagreeing with the summation.

Regardless of the nature of the summation, Masonic Code dictates that the final outcome of this matter is subject to the vote of the delegation at the upcoming Annual Communication.

At the time of the writing of this report, the committee is prepared to present the charges and specifications against the accused, his responses to them, the testimony, and their report and recommendation as directed in the July 9, 2025 letter. The matter will then be put to the vote of the delegation for final disposition.

Other Actions

On April 11, 2025, I removed Right Worshipful Brother Michael I. Dodds from the office of District Advisor of the 15th Masonic District. This decision was made in collaboration with RWB Dodds, who agreed it was best for the District while he dealt with several items of concern in his local Lodge. In his place and with his recommendation, I appointed RWB Charles A. Hall to assume the office for the remainder of the Masonic year. Should occasion arise and he be willing to serve again in the future, I see no reason why RWB Dodds cannot resume his faithful and effective service as District Advisor.

Recommendations

Recommendations will be given at the Annual Communication.

To the Craft

Closing comments to the Craft will be given at the Annual Communication.

To the Tremendous 22nd Masonic District

Closing comments to the 22nd Masonic District will be given at the Annual Communication.

To my Brothers of Dover Lodge #489

Closing comments to my Mother Lodge will be given at the Annual Communication.

Conclusion

Concluding remarks will be given at the Annual Communication following election for the office of Grand Master.

Respectfully submitted for purposes of the preprint for the 2025 Annual Communication,

William Michael Carter, III

Grand Master

Grand Lodge of Ohio, F&AM

DEPUTY GRAND MASTER'S ANNUAL REPORT

Most Worshipful Brother Carter, Distinguished Brethren, Brethren All:

It has been one of the greatest honors of my life to serve the brethren of the great state of Ohio and this Grand Lodge as your Deputy Grand Master. The overwhelming support I have received throughout the past seven years is something I will cherish always. That support has been a source of strength and inspiration throughout my travels, and it has been a driving force in shaping my vision and program for the upcoming Masonic year should I be elected to continue this journey.

There was a renewed sense of excitement and purpose I felt as I presented my rollout plans across 13 districts in our jurisdiction to more than 700 brothers. It was especially meaningful to begin these rollouts in my home lodge, among the brethren of the 9th Masonic District. Your unwavering support throughout this journey has been foundational to my efforts, and I am deeply and sincerely grateful.

During my presentations, I emphasized the importance of continuing our cherished traditions, most notably, our ritual work. Our degrees must be delivered with the utmost care and precision so that they remain the transformative experiences they were always intended to be. But we must also recognize that the candidate's journey does not begin with the opening gavel or the first degree, it begins the moment they arrive at our lodge.

Every detail matters. From the condition of our parking lots to the cleanliness and appearance of our buildings, from the first handshake to the silence of the preparation room each element should impress upon the candidate that what they are about to receive is meaningful, sacred, and deeply valued by us all.

The preparation room, in particular, must be more than a functional space. It should serve as a place of solemn reflection a threshold between the profane and the sacred where the candidate begins to prepare his mind and heart as a living stone ready for the builder's hand.

As part of this year's preparations, I have taken time to review all Grand Lodge committees, District Advisors, District Deputy Grand Masters, and District Education Officers. These dedicated Brothers are essential to the effective operation of the Grand Lodge and the health of our Craft. Our committees must function not only under the direction of Grand Lodge leadership, but with the initiative to act, to serve, and to bring forth new ideas and solutions for our collective benefit.

Likewise, leadership at the district level is vital. It is our local leaders who keep our brethren engaged, who set a positive tone, and who help preserve peace and harmony by whispering good counsel when needed. It is through their efforts that we ensure Freemasonry in Ohio remains strong and vibrant.

Brethren, it has been a true privilege to serve as your Deputy Grand Master and to travel with the Grand Master and all of the Grand Line officers throughout the state and I pledge to continue serving with dedication, humility, and unwavering commitment to the Craft we all love.

Thank you, my brothers.

Fraternally

Shawn Johnson

Deputy Grand Master

STATE OF THE CRAFT REPORT

As I reflect on the state of the Craft, one word comes to mind: hungry. Over the past seven years of travel across this great state, I have witnessed firsthand an encouraging and consistent theme our active Brethren want more. They are engaged. They are invested. They are passionate about the day-to-day operations of their lodges and districts. There is a genuine desire among them to grow, to lead, and to strengthen our beloved fraternity.

But with this enthusiasm, we must also acknowledge a concern. There remains a small, yet noticeable, portion of our membership who seem to have lost sight of the obligations they solemnly took. This is troubling because as we know, negativity breeds negativity. And it is especially disheartening when even some senior Brethren must be reminded of the standards we swore to uphold by our obligations.

The good news, however, is this: those truly committed to the Craft far outnumber those who have strayed. The core of our fraternity is strong. The Craft is not only ready for more they are ready for the future. They are eager to lead, and to ensure that Freemasonry continues to stand firmly on the moral foundations our forefathers built.

One area that demands our thoughtful attention is social media. While we are blessed with the right to free speech, we must exercise that right with wisdom and restraint. The public eye is always watching, and the profane world is ever ready to twist or exploit what we say. Let us be mindful and let our words reflect the dignity of our institution.

Brethren, the state of the Craft is not only alive it is awakening. And with careful guidance, unwavering commitment, and brotherly love, we will ensure that our future is just as noble as our past.

Fraternally
Shawn Johnson
Deputy Grand Master

REPORT OF WAYS, MEANS AND ACCOUNTS

*To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Ohio:
Most Worshipful Grand Master, Most Worshipful Past Grand Masters, Right
Worshipful Brethren, Worshipful Brethren, Brothers all Good Afternoon.*

Your Grand Lodge Officers, in cooperation with the Ways, Means & Accounts Committee, have worked industriously to prepare a budget that does not exceed our spending parameters while providing funding to effectively operate the functions of your Grand Lodge. I thank our Grand Secretary, MWB Keith Newton and his staff, Grand Treasurer MWB Steven Cokonougher, Asst. Grand Treasurer MWB Steven Grindle, Deputy Grand Master RWB Shawn Johnson, Grand Master MWB William M. Carter, III and the members of this committee for their part in developing this budget.

Today I present the following budget for Fiscal Year 2026:

Estimated Expenses:

Payroll/Personal	\$384,057.00
Office/Administration	\$126,050.00
Fraternal	\$445,350.00
Grand Lodge session	\$328,000.00
Travel/Conference	\$49,250.00
Charitable	\$55,000.00
Sales, Cost of goods	\$37,000.00
Building and Grounds	\$23,975.00
Total expenses	\$1,448,682.00

Estimated Income:

Per capita (58,386 Masons @ \$15.00, 750 EA@\$2.00)	\$877,290.00
Sales revenue	\$50,000.00
Investments	\$550,000.00
Total	\$1,477,290.00
Surplus	\$28,608.00

Brethren, we are drawing \$550,000 from our investments this year. By Code, the maximum we could use for this budget is \$590,000. Our current cost per member is \$24.81, with a per capita of \$15. I ask you, is this all that your Masonic membership is worth to you?

Most Worshipful Grand Master I move acceptance of this budget and of the Ways Means & Accounts Committee report.

Fraternally submitted,

Eric R. Schau PGM

Chairmen, Ways, Means, and Accounts

REPORT OF THE GRAND SECRETARY

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Ohio:

It is my pleasure to submit this brief report of my stewardship of the office of Grand Secretary during the past year to the 216th Annual Communication.

First, I begin my report with a note of thanks to the devoted Grand Lodge Office Staff. It is through their hard work and devotion to service that enables us to keep the records and maintain the business of the Grand Lodge of Ohio. Our Grand Jurisdiction is one of the largest Masonic jurisdictions in the world. Few Ohio Masons realize the amount of effort required to provide the quality service that our 420 lodges and approximately 59,000 members deserve. Many thanks go to Gayle, Darlene, Elora, Jim and Doug for their commitment to excellence to all of whom we serve.

The Grand Lodge of Ohio and the Grand View membership program continue to make improvements to the membership tool for Ohio Masonic Lodges. We have been using the Grand View Program since 2018 and influenced much of the functionality that is available today. 2025 is the fifth year that we are utilizing the Grand View program for the Annual Communication reservations. We hope you found it easy to navigate to make your reservations for GL2025. The communication options continually improve, one being the Calendar. I encourage all lodges to create Calendar Event items in Grand View when promoting your lodge activities. Communicate – communicate – communicate.

The Membership Renewal (dues) Notice process is running very well. Lodge Secretaries are reporting earlier payments and ease of recording with the current renewal process, especially those signed up for ACH (direct deposit). More members are responding earlier to pay their dues. Online member payment activity increases each year. Members can select auto-renewal to make it even easier for future renewals. The first communication was sent by email in early August to all members who have their email address in Grand View. This resulted in a September 2024 disbursement to lodges of more than \$271,267 for member dues. As I write this report in mid-September 2025, over 15,100 members have already paid their 2026 dues or are Service Exempt by their lodge.

More than 88% of Ohio lodges receive their Grand Lodge disbursements by Direct Deposit (ACH). Lodges have responded well to this service to relieve some of the workload off of the Lodge Secretary and Treasurer. It offers significant savings to the Grand Lodge budget. Please join with the others, if not already done, and sign your lodge up for ACH or Direct Deposit. Taking advantage of the Direct Deposit program helps us save on check processing and postage costs. Call the office with the name of your bank, account and routing number and we'll sign you up.

The Ohio Masonic Communities Springfield Campus houses the Grand Lodge of Ohio Museum and Library. The Grand Historian held quarterly open houses at the Grand Lodge Museum in Springfield. Many visitors have been residents of the Masonic Communities Springfield Campus, but there have also been visitors from symbolic lodges at each open house who saw announcements in the *Ohio Beacon* or arranged for special visits. Displays have been updated and await your visit. Call to schedule your visit the next time you travel close to Springfield.

Since our last Grand Lodge session, Most Worshipful Brother William M. Carter, III has approved three Lodge consolidations. An accounting of these consolidations during the 2024-2025 Masonic year can be found in the report of the Committee on Charters and Dispensations. These activities bring the number of Lodges at year-end to 420.

Bi-monthly Grand Secretary zoom meetings continued this year. I want to thank all of those who attend making them a success. This is another tool we use to connect the office with our Lodge Secretaries on a more frequent basis. The agenda begins with upcoming events, a few Secretary training tips and news from the office. The remaining time in our one-hour meeting is left for questions and answers in an open discussion format. The office staff looks forward to them as much as those attending. The zoom invitation link is emailed to Lodge Secretary's and Assistant Secretary's the week prior to each meeting. Meetings are scheduled at 10:00am and 7:00pm, same agenda at each meeting, held on the last Tuesday of November, January, March, May, July and September.

During the year, I had the pleasure of attending many Grand Master Receptions and local Lodge and appendant body events around this great jurisdiction. I attended the 2025 Conference of Grand Master's and Grand Secretaries held in, Myrtle Beach, SC and the Ohio Council of Deliberation hosted by the Valley of Akron.

The Grand Lodge Office continues to receive, preserve and store original Lodge Charters in a secure vault for safekeeping. A total of 288 active Lodges have taken advantage of the service for their charters. There are 302 extinct charters on file.

It has been a pleasure to serve this year with Most Worshipful Brother William M. Carter, III, Grand Master. Through his leadership, the sacred flame of Ohio Freemasonry is shining brightly. I wish the very best for Most Worshipful Brother Carter and Lady Zoe in the months and years ahead.

Respectfully and fraternally submitted,
Keith W. Newton, PGM
Grand Secretary

Report of the Grand Secretary

The following is a report of Membership and Lodge data as of July 31, 2025

GAINS		2,025	2,024	+/- Change
	Raised	604	647	(43)
	Affiliated	378	446	(68)
	Reinstated	791	847	(56)
	GM Restoration	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Total Gains	1,773	1,940	(167)
LOSSES				
	Deceased	2,139	2,281	(142)
	Demits	376	363	13
	N.P.D.	1,990	1,783	207
	U.M.C.	11	0	11
	Expelled	19	18	1
	M.M. Exam	4	4	0
	Total Losses	4,539	4,449	90
NET GAIN (LOSS)		(2,766)	(2,509)	(257)
	Membership	58,293	61,038	(2,745)
	Emails in Grand View	72%	69%	3%
	Cell Phone Numbers in Grand View	57%	52%	5%
	Addresses verified in Grand View	99%	99%	0%
	Number of Chartered Lodges	420	424	(4)
	Average Member Loss Per Lodge	10.8	10.5	0
	Average Members per Lodge	138.8	144.0	(5)
	Average Annual Dues	\$68.82	\$67.91	\$0.91
	Average Fees For Degrees	\$148.15	\$147.36	\$0.79
	Average Member Age	65.7	66.7	(1)
	Lodges Reporting Net Gain in Membership	51	61	(10)
	Lodges Reporting No Change in Membership	26	38	(12)
	Lodges Reporting Net Loss in Membership	343	325	18
	Lodges with a Membership of 50 or Less:	26	25	1
Lodge Name and Number	Members	Lodge Name and Number	Members	
Alembic No. 793	13	Sherwood No. 620	42	
Sycamore No. 520	27	New Straitsville No. 484	43	
Stonecutter No. 802	31	Arts & Sciences No. 792	43	
Erie No. 239	36	Dunkirk No. 549	44	
Corning No. 584	37	Carey No. 420	44	
Fort Recovery No. 539	39	Napoleon No. 256	45	
Flat Rock No. 580	40	Amesville No. 278	46	
Senate No. 378	40	Gibsonburg No. 575	46	
Rushville No. 211	41	Liberty Center No. 518	46	
La Rue No. 463	41	Weston No. 560	47	
Clemente Amitie No. 285	41	East Liberty No. 247	49	
Sullivan No. 313	42	Oberlin No. 380	49	
Alturas No. 537	42	Dover No. 489	50	

REPORT OF THE GRAND TREASURER

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Ohio

It has been a pleasure to serve the Grand Lodge of Ohio as Grand Treasurer for the past eight Masonic Years. The Grand Secretary's Office has done exceptional work, making the job of the Grand Treasurer easy to perform. These employees are professional, accurate, and accommodating in their work. I sincerely appreciate all they do.

All Grand Lodge funds, including Charitable Accounts, have been audited by our auditors, Clark, Schaefer & Hackett, Springfield, Ohio. Their reports are available from the Grand Secretary's office on request.

The Grand Treasurer's office is responsible for managing the assets of Grand Lodge, including all accounts as listed. This has been accomplished with the assistance the Grand Lodge Investment Committee and our Investment Advisor, Merrill Lynch Wealth Management of Findlay, Ohio. The Investment Committee has been diligent in maximizing returns on Grand Lodge investments while minimizing risk inherent to market conditions. The financial markets have been volatile for the past twelve months and the one-year composite return on the Grand Lodge portfolio was 10.89% at the end of the second quarter of 2025.

I am pleased to say that the returns for the Grand Lodge portfolio have met the pre-determined benchmarks established by the Investment Policy of the Grand Lodge. The members of Grand Lodge Investment Committee and Merrill Lynch Wealth Management of Findlay, Ohio have worked hard and should be commended for their dedication.

At the end of the second quarter of 2024 the fund balances totaled:

Endowed Membership Fund	\$ 15,004,140
Grand Lodge Master Account	\$ 13,270,836
Charitable Foundation	\$ 3,424,262
Scholarship Fund	\$ 2,507,452
Masonic Model Student Assistance	\$ 1,928,682
Total Invested Assets	\$ 36,125,370
Gain in last year	\$ 2,459,002

The funds in all accounts are restricted for specific purposes except the Grand Lodge Master Account. This account represents only 36.76% of the total financial assets.

The Grand Lodge Investment Committee has approved a distribution of \$37.70 for the \$600 Endowed Members and \$50.00 for the \$800 Endowed Members. These distributions represent five percent of the Endowed Membership funds, which is the maximum payout permitted from that fund. The payout is covered by investment gains for that account. None of the restricted funds were used.

The Charity fund has been extensively used this year. The fund has continued to grow from prudent investment. This fund increased 84% in eight years. The scholarship fund paid seventy-five scholarships this year. There have not been significant donations to these funds. Their growth is predominantly from investment income. The Scholarship Foundation is the recipient of income from the Masonic License Plate program. Scholarship distributions for 2026 will remain the same.

I would urge the brethren of Grand Lodge to make a concerted effort to raise funds for the various Charitable funds.

The financial condition of Grand Lodge is sound. The future of this success is the fiduciary responsibility of the Grand Treasurer's Office. However, the future is dependent on several factors. Market Conditions, Grand Lodge annual spending, and Grand Lodge membership. Market conditions are to some extent uncontrollable. Grand Lodge spending and membership are the responsibility of the members of this Grand Lodge. The Ways, Means, and Accounts Committee is charged each year with placing before Grand Lodge a budget to assist in controlling expenses. The Grand Lodge spending policy allows for using up to five percent of the thirteen-quarter average of the Grand Lodge Master Account to supplement the per capita income. This five percent has been accessed the last five years and will need to be accessed in 2025. Like all our expenses, Grand Lodge is facing significant increases in spending necessities. A Per Capita increase is needed to keep up with spiraling costs. The Grand Lodge of Ohio has one of the lowest Per Capita in the country, if not the lowest, and our decline in membership makes it imperative to raise the Per Capita.

I urge each lodge and member to make a renewed commitment to membership retention and development. The future success of our beloved fraternity depends on you.

My brethren, it has been my honor and pleasure to serve the brethren and the Grand Lodge of Ohio as Treasurer for the last eight years.

Respectfully submitted,
Steven E. Cokonougher, PGM
Grand Treasurer

THE GRAND LODGE OF FREE & ACCEPTED MASONS OF OHIO

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

YEAR END AUGUST 31, 2025

THE GRAND LODGE OF FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS OF OHIO
FINANCIAL SUMMARY
Year Ended August 31, 2025

Support and Revenue

Grand Lodge Dues	\$	1,087,532
Endowed Memberships		331,800
Sales of literature and accessories		78,565
Total Revenues	\$	1,497,897

Expenses

Per Capita payment - Ohio Masonic Home	\$	128,236
Endowment payments - Ohio Masonic Home		18,820
Per capita payments - Geo. Washington Memorial		61,293
Payments of Endowed Member Dues		702,712
Charitable Programs		44,263
Fraternal		446,447
Grand Lodge session		255,966
Operating Expense		511,273
Total Expenses	\$	2,169,010

Excess revenue/ (expense) from operations	\$	88,972
Other Income		7,448
Investment Income/(Loss) - net		1,728,924
Increase in Net Assets	\$	1,825,344

Member's Equity

Beginning of Year	\$	28,693,925
End of the Year	\$	30,519,269

Assets, Liabilities & Members Equity

Current Assets	\$	15,317,586
Endowed Members Assets		15,693,471
Leasehold and F/A net of accumulated depreciation		44,691
Operating Lease right-of-use Asset		437,671
Total Assets	\$	31,493,419

Liabilities and Members Equity

Current Liabilities	\$	543,927
Operating lease liability, current portion		3,135
Total Current Liabilities	\$	547,062
Operating Lease liability, long-term portion	\$	434,536

Total Member's Equity	\$	30,511,821
Total Liabilities and Member's Equity	\$	31,493,419

Note: The amounts that appear in the financial summary shown are derived from the financial statements for the FYE 8/31/2025 and have been audited by our independent CPA firm. Draft financial statements were made available 9/18/2025.

The complete audited financial statements for The Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Ohio is available upon request.

INVESTMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Ohio:

The Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Ohio By-Laws require that the Investment Committee is to consist of the Grand Treasurer, Grand Secretary, and Chairman of the Ways, Means, and Accounts committee, as well as at least three at large members. The at-large members are appointed by the Grand Master to serve a three-year term. The Investment Committee consists of:

Steven E. Cokonougher, PGM, Grand Treasurer
Keith W. Newton, PGM, Grand Secretary
Eric R. Schau, PGM, Chairman of Ways, Means, and Accounts

At Large members:

Thomas Savage
C, Michael Watson, PGM
Ronald L. Connelly
Michael Leichner
Brent D. Gross
Mark Howard

A longtime member of the committee retired this year. Brother Ron Sharer had served on the Investment Committee for more than 20 years. His expertise will be missed.

The Grand Lodge Investment Committee met quarterly during the 2024-2025 Masonic Year to review the investment performance of the individual money managers and to make necessary adjustments to the Grand Lodge Investment strategy. The Committee members are to be congratulated for their diligence and dedication in serving the Grand Lodge as the fiduciaries in the extremely important function of the Grand Lodge of Ohio. Merrill Lynch Wealth Management continues to work closely with the Investment Committee to maximize investment returns and at the same time minimize market risks. The financial markets have had a mixed performance in the past year. The Investment Committee continues to manage Grand Lodge assets in compliance with the Grand Lodge Investment Policy and in a consistently conservative and prudent manner.

Annual distributions for the Endowed Membership Program are determined by the Investment Committee based on the Endowed Membership fund earnings and market performance. Annual Endowed Membership distributions are determined by the originally established Grand Lodge of Ohio Free and Accepted Mason By-Laws. The uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act was adopted by the Committee in 2017. As specified in the Ohio Masonic Code, the annual distributions are not to exceed five percent of the Funds balance. The Investment Committee approve a \$37.75 distribution for \$600 Endowed Members and a \$50.00 distribution for \$800 Endowed Members for 2025. The distribution is five percent and is covered by income from fund investments. Program to date, Grand Lodge has returned over \$8,200,000 in endowment payments of the lodges. There were 16,523 eligible Endowed Members for 2025. At the end of the second quarter 37.85% of the Endowed Members are deceased.

On behalf of the members of the Investment Committee, it is a pleasure to serve the Grand Lodge of Ohio in this important role.

Respectfully submitted:

Steven E. Cokonougher, Chairman

Keith W. Newton, PGM

Ronald L. Connelly, PGT

C. Michael Watson, PGM

Brent Gross

Thomas Savage

Michael Leichner

Mark Howard

REPORT OF THE DEPOSITORY, SECURITY BONDS, AND AUDIT

To The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Ohio:

The Depository for the Grand Lodge of Ohio funds and investments are PNC Bank for cash and cash equivalents and Merrill Lynch Wealth Management for investments. Security bonds for the Grand Secretary and Treasurer are required by Section 3.03 of the By-Laws of the Grand Lodge of Ohio have been approved and issued. Pursuant to Section 2.05(A) of the By-Laws, the accounting firm of Clark, Shaefer, & Hackett, Springfield, Ohio was selected to audit the accounting records of the Grand Secretary and Grand Treasurer. Their audit reports have been filed and are available to review upon request.

Respectfully Submitted,
Steven E. Cokonougher, PGM
Grand Treasurer.

Report of the Grand Lodge Technology Committee

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Ohio:

In our society today, changes in technology occur on a daily basis. The Grand Lodge Technology Committee continues to evaluate these advances to see how they might improve tools for Freemasonry in Ohio in the 21st century. Areas affected include administrative, social, and educational opportunities to become more agile and effective in the delivery of the Masonic experience. Embracing new technological advances raises the visibility of Freemasonry via online channels. As such, multiple technology initiatives were accomplished this Masonic year.

The Grand Master created educational program videos for use as education programs. District Education Officers presented these videos, followed by a discussion period as a review. They were received very well by the membership.

Technology continues to be used for remote meetings by the Grand Lodge Officers, staff as well as by Lodges across our jurisdiction. These are especially helpful for use with committee meetings where time and distance can bring key resources together. These meetings consist of both in-person and online participants utilizing digital teleconference technologies.

The Grand View membership system continues to improve with an increase in the communication cadence of current as well as potential members. It is used for membership renewal as well as Annual Communication reservations and communications. Lodge communications have been made easier with the use of Newsletters and emails in the membership program.

The Grand Lodge of Ohio will augment voting at the Annual Communication with the use of digital voting for legislation again this year. The results of digital voting provide immediate and accurate voting responses. Voting for Grand Lodge Officers requires a written ballot.

In summary, the Technology Committee strives to integrate tools to augment the membership experience for both members and the administration. The committee embraces the theory that such improvements can provide resilient processes that enable our Lodges to focus on the work of Freemasonry in our communities.

Respectfully submitted,

Keith W. Newton, PGM – Chairman, Grand Secretary

William M. Carter, III – Grand Master

Jess N. Raines, PGM

Richard A. Dickerscheid, PGM

Steven M. Grindle, PGM

Kenneth D. Chamberlin

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMS

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Ohio:

Beacon Publication

We continue to use the Beacon as our assured tool to reach out and make contact with all members of the Fraternity. We've put an emphasis on featuring events and Masons from around the state that are living our virtues for all to see. We also try to highlight Masonic Lodges that are going above and beyond in their communities. We also always document the Grand Masters Travels throughout the year as well as any major events that he has planned such as the Masonic Weekend on Sept. 13-14.

Background Checks

Handling of the Background Checks was monitored by Darlene Shirk in the Grand Lodge Office. We continue to use ESA Checks and BIB for our Background Check needs. There were 298 background checks that were completed this past year, and we are happy to say that the only issues with these checks were linked to user errors.

Social Media/Website

We are still using Cercone Brown as our premier content creators for our Social Media channels: Facebook, LinkedIn, & X(Twitter). Currently we have over 16,000 followers on Facebook, over 5,500 followers on LinkedIn & over 7,600 followers on X (Twitter). When compared to jurisdictions local to us we are above most in followers! They provide a constant flow of Masonic content month to month that we distribute on Socials. They give us the weekly posts that all Masons look forward to such as the Monday Mason posts. They'll also key in on Masonic History and events that have happened in US History that is appropriate to share on our feeds. At all times they are also willing to promote different events that are happening during the year such as: The Masonic Weekend, Annual Communication, Deputy Grand Masters Rollout Schedule. Along with this Cercone Brown provide us with the Blogs that are released every Thursday and the Newsletters that we put out with information that I send them about events across the state. They also manage our website, www.freemason.com. Their goal is to make our website the most pleasing to the eye and a guide to joining the craft. They are constantly retooling the site to rank in the upper positions of google search for the best visibility. These constant updates and rankings give us the best possibility to attract new members via the internet that may not have an in-person connection available to them.

Bro. Kyle Heib & I continue to be vigilant on watching and policing our Social Media channels as well. We try to answer questions that followers may have to help them along their way. We also are deleting and blocking individuals posts that go against Freemasonry and what we consider to be healthy social media posting.

New Programs

We still feature the Grand Lodge of Ohio Store and continue to update its items as availability allows us. There are some items that we simply cannot sell through the store as they cannot be produced in that fashion.

The Grand Lodge of Ohio was proud to partner with the Cleveland Cavaliers for a Masonic Brotherhood Night. This night we were able to get discounted ticket prices for any Brother and his family or friends that wanted to attend the game. We were also able to get early entry to the game to view both teams warm up for the game. We had a great turn out last year and were very excited to see our numbers this year increase, which only helps our Masonic visibility in public. We encouraged anyone that was going to attend to tag the Grand Lodge of Ohio in their social media posts and hashtags to further spread our reach. Unfortunately, with the Cavaliers having an exceptional season ending with the best record in the Eastern Conference tickets were bought up at an alarming rate. There were a few Masons who acted quickly on purchasing their tickets before they were gone. The Cavaliers representative that we worked with issued anyone who had bought tickets last year a discounted rate to any upcoming games that we could attend as they couldn't block the seating with the team doing so well. It was a nice gesture that the team certainly didn't have to do. We will be working with them next year to provide another game for our members who are basketball fans again!

We were also honored to be picked as the September Grand Lodge of the Year at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial in Alexandria, Virginia. I worked along with MWB Keith Newton to come up with a display that would appropriately fit at the Memorial. We came up with an ode to the Masonic Presidents that came from Ohio. I created custom graphics for each President: James A. Garfield, Warren G. Harding, William H. Taft, & William B. McKinley that were placed in frames and sent to the Memorial along with a copy of Frontier Cornerstone & a large "This is Ohio Freemasonry" sign that highlights our Monday Mason program.

Inquiry Process

The inquiry process is something that we've considered and worked on at great lengths throughout the year. I will not go into the whole process of how it works as I have done so in the past reports as it would be redundant. We have been working to pinpoint where in the process the hangups are and how can we work around them so that we can have the best possible outcome for our Lodges and for the potential candidates that are trying to join them.

Working along with MWB Doug Kaylor and MWB Keith Newton on the problem day to day we've once again come to the conclusion that the bottle neck is at our Lodge level. Leads and Prospects come in via www.Freemason.com and through our social media channels directed by Cercone Brown and are processed and sent to the District Prospect Manager as quickly as possible. The District Prospect Managers have been on top of acknowledging and sending these along to the Lodges that are local to the prospect or will best suit his needs. The Lodge is where we fall short consistently. Lodge's either send a basic email inviting these potential masons to their dinner before a stated meeting or do not acknowledge them at all. This cannot be a case of the prospect not getting back in touch with the lodge that is assigned to them because we've heard multiple stories and know of multiple Lodges that are gaining members and handling prospects in a timely manner.

We've come up with at the urging of RWB Shawn Johnson a new flowchart that will lay out the complete steps that a Lead/Prospect has to take along his journey from internet to Freemason. We've also created a new Prospect Manager 2.0 that will help District and Lodge Prospect Managers delegate these Prospects to the Lodges that will best work for them. Also, it will let them disregard Lodge's that are turning a blind eye to the prospects that have been assigned to them in the past.

The goal with this entire inquiry process is to streamline how a man can become a Mason via the internet in a quick and orderly fashion. We also know that if the person becomes a prospect online then we must deal with him with the same urgency that we would if we were shopping for something we wanted on the internet. When we want something on the internet, we type it in and want it now. The man who has just become a Prospect wants the same thing; they want Freemasonry NOW! Better said that they at least want their questions answered right now so they can make an informed decision on whether or now they want to continue to pursue becoming a Mason.

Respectfully Submitted,
James R. Hall DDGM, RSS

CHARTERS AND DISPENSATIONS

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Ohio:

On March 11, 2025, Blue Steel Lodge No. 791 merged into Stonington Lodge No. 503, the latter being the surviving lodge.

On April 17, 2025, Ashlar Lodge No. 639 merged into Summit Lodge No. 213, the latter being the surviving lodge.

On May 15, 2025, Marks Lodge No. 359 merged into Perseverance Lodge No. 329, the latter being the surviving lodge.

Submitted on behalf of:

Jess N. Raines, PGM, Chairman

Jack L. Allen, PGM, Member

Eric Muehlenbein, Grand Marshal, Member

Daniel Hall, Junior Grand Deacon, Member

REPORT OF THE EDUCATION AND INFORMATION COMMITTEE

Shortly after the start of the Masonic year, we worked with RWB Jim Hall to upload Powerpoint versions of the Culture and Strategies video series to Grand View. Many Brothers reported that this allowed for a more personable and interactive presentation of the material and was preferred by the DEOs as they did their visitations while offering the material.

In December, we uploaded, "A Guide to Performing Masonic Funerals". This document centralized much of the information about our Funeral Rites and also covered the logistical considerations with performing this public ceremony. Currently listed under "Grand Lodge year 2024-2025" in Master Mason Resources, in the fall we will work with RWB Hall to relocate the resource to a new but prominent location within our Grand View Resources.

A reorganization of our Officers Manual is being drafted by WB Fred Nickerson of the 19th District to reduce redundancies and reconcile some inaccuracies between the document and the "Quick Sheet" that was released several years ago. When this draft is completed, it will be shared with the committee for consideration.

A frequent complaint I have heard during my time as Chairman concerns the turn-around time between Brothers completing the online Education Courses (Masonic Code Courses, Officers Manual, and Ancient Charges) and the time that a completion certificate was presented by the DEOs. DEOs also reported that due to the number of officers repeating courses as they continued serving in a chair, there was less enthusiasm for this presentation as Brothers would report they had multiple certificates from completing the course in the past. Presenting Zerubbabel awards and Royal Scofield Society complete certificates is proving to be a more rewarding use of their travel time.

After extensive communication with the Grand Lodge office and the Grand View development team, we have work submitted that will allow certificates to be auto generated for the Brothers within Grand View and can be printed at their leisure, should they desire a paper copy. This is much more in keeping with common practice among corporate entities that offer similar online training. The Grand View development team is hoping to have this function live by September.

There is some considerable expense to creating this function, but I believe the benefits justify the cost. In our modern world it's virtually unheard of to be waiting months for confirmation of successfully completing an online curriculum. Allowing these certificates to be auto-generated also has the potential to streamline Past Master's Convocations. Instead of having Convocations that require a morning education session as Brothers work through a truncated version of the courses together, Districts can ask that the Masters-Elect bring copies of their code course and officer's manual

completion documents along with their certificate of election. This would dramatically reduce the amount of hours that a Past Masters Convocation takes and allows the District teams to focus their Convocation on review and discussion of the year's Grand Lodge initiatives and the needs of the District. The knowledge inquiry portion in the Past Master's Degree can be truncated as all the Masters-elect have proven their proficiency by completing the courses prior to the day of the Convocation. Allowing auto-generation of these certificates respects the time and energy of our members and District leadership teams by utilizing 21st century resources to streamline our operations.

The Zerubbabel Award continues to be received favorably around the Jurisdiction. This program provides a framework for new Masons to get involved with their Lodge and District association. Brothers who complete a series of tasks and visitations are recognized with a "Z" pin with the motto, "I am the future of Freemasonry", as it is those who get involved that will determine the future of our fraternity. The number of awards presented this year is lower than last year, but that is to be expected. In its inaugural year (2023-2024), we allowed new Masons (those who have been members two years or less) to back-date activities that they already completed. Now the amount of awards will more closely match the number of new candidates we take in throughout the State. Still, we have exhausted our initial order of Zerubbabel pins, and a new inventory has been ordered that should last us at least two years.

At the request of the Deputy Grand Master, we developed more specific guidelines on Chambers of Reflection. WB Bob Painter from the 22nd District, whose Royal Scofield Masterpiece centered on the topic, was an invaluable resource in completing this work. Lodges should look for this document to be uploaded to Grand View at the conclusion of our Annual Communication.

Other efforts we have completed at the request of RWB Johnson include an updated Grand Masters Class script, a video promoting our Masonic Youth groups coordinated by WB Nick Bolyard, and a program on the proper handling of a 3rd degree candidate that will be presented by the DEO's during the 2025-2026 Masonic year.

On a point of personal privilege, this will be my final report as Chairman for the Education and Information Committee. I would like to thank Most Worshipful Brothers Wheeland, Wegelage, Grindle, and Carter for entrusting the work of this Committee to me over the last four years, and the multiple Brothers who served on the committee and worked on our projects during my time as Chairman. Masonic Education is any activity, properly framed, that teaches men the lessons and values of Freemasonry and helps Brethren incorporate them into their daily lives. As long as we never lose sight of this, the future of Freemasonry remains hopeful in our Jurisdiction.

Steven K Hessler

Chairman, Grand Lodge of Ohio Education and Information Committee

REPORT OF THE SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

To The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Ohio:

The 25 Grand Lodge Scholarship Committees throughout the state submitted their individual winners well within the required time frame established by the Grand Lodge of Ohio. An early line communication via e-mail was established to create a smooth transition between the District Chairmen and the Grand Lodge Scholarship Chairman as to the deadlines established by the Grand Lodge.

Each Masonic District was awarded three scholarship winners which included at least one male and one female from each district if the applications allowed such to be the case. Each scholarship was in the amount of \$1,500.00. This meant that each district awarded \$4,500.00 in scholarships and the total for the entire state was \$112,500. The checks were mailed to the individual winners in their respective districts.

The scholarship chairmen were encouraged to attend the high school awards programs of the winners to announce the names of the winners and many chairmen also sent pictures and an article to local newspapers to inform the public how we as Masons support our future leaders.

On a special note, I would like to inform our Brethren that when you purchase a Freemason logo license plate in Ohio, a contribution is made directly to the Grand Lodge Charitable Foundation to support the Scholarship Fund. This can be purchased through your local DMV.

I would like to thank each of the District Scholarship Chairmen and their committees for another outstanding job. Their timeless hours and expertise are greatly appreciated.

Respectfully Submitted:

WB William M. McGowan
Grand Lodge Scholarship Chairman

2025 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS BY DISTRICT

District 1

Brooke Ann Burger
Sonia M. Davis
Emily Woodruff

District 9

Braydon A. Cox
Ayla M. Gill
Leah H. Via

District 17

Jack Cablish-Kristofco
Clara J. Maxwell
Emma Middleton

District 2

Telisah R. Bray-Harris
Jared W. Hitchcock
Kinsey Snelling

District 10

Lexi J. Hanson
Catalina K. Jimenez
Jalon E. McInnis

District 18

Lillian M. Baker
Preston J. Chandler
Andrew A. Neff

District 3

Martha Chrisman
Garbiella Leeper
Carter Wooddell

District 11

Andrew Amborski
Ethan DeTray
Addison Kiefer

District 19

Anthony Blizzard III
Mackenzie Gostrue
Evan K. Roberts

District 4

Karsen D. Donat
Abigail R. Rollins
Alison A. Uphaus

District 12

Ava G. Circle
Danielle P. Epple
Marlo M. Norris

District 20

Haylee G. Breyley
Brianna A. Ciphers
Everett J. Smith

District 5

Mariah K. Boyer
Eli D. Jewell
Brooke E. Moreland

District 13

Madison E. Lacy
Noah A. Peck
Jade A. Simpson

District 21

Madelyn T. Adkins
Evan M. Dilley
Shyann Landals

District 6

Mason P. Murphy
Ella R. Neal
Emma G. Yochum

District 14

Marcus D. Brown
Macy S. Pettit
Avery R. Pollock

District 22

Angelina R. Mondì
Aiden Sadowski
Alexa R. Soranno

District 7

Ryken A. Copas
Addison C. Mullins
Kylee N. Newland

District 15

Levi Buchenroth
Avery T. Perk
Halle Roby

District 23

Lauren Doane
Karter W. Kaplet
Madison Zeroski

District 8

Gracelynn Boone
Alyvia M. Lawrentz
Joseph Thompson

District 16

Ava C. Dickman
Shayleigh Foreman
Elijah Sudarma

District 24

Chadler D. Hoffman
Kennedy J. Lewis
Sena Smith

District 25

Luke Barbo
Madison Kita
Sydney Wyllie

TEMPLE COMMITTEE REPORT

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Ohio:

The following is the report of the Grand Lodge Temple Committee for the year 2024- 2025.

During the year the Grand Lodge recommended the following requests:

<u>Lodge</u>	<u>Request</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Approval</u>
West Shore #804	Capital Improvements	\$120,000	yes
New Lexington #250	Sell Lodge Building	N/A	yes
Avon-Miami #542	Improvements to interior	\$60,000	yes
Aurora #48	Replace carpet	\$50,000	yes
Ashland #151	Dissolution of Temple Company	N/A	yes
Edenton #332	Sell building---Consolidating	N/A	yes
Gibsonburg #575	Major renovations	\$100,000	yes

Respectfully Submitted,
Ronald L Winnett PGM
Chairman Grand Lodge Temple Committee

FRATERNAL CORRESPONDENT'S REPORT

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Ohio;

Brother Joseph J. Morrow, Grand Master from Scotland took the decision to resign from Scottish Freemasonry with effect from Monday 16th September 2024. This decision was based on valid personal reasoning, and we take this opportunity to thank him for his recent contribution to the Scottish Constitution and wish him well on his future endeavors away from Freemasonry

The UGLE approved the recognition of 2 Grand Lodges from Brazil. The Grand Orient Paulista and the Grand Orient of the State of Mato Grosso. Neither one of which has asked for recognition as of yet.

The United Grand Lodge of England also resolved in their Quarterly meeting that recognition be accorded to the Grand Lodge of the State of Puebla (Mexico); Union Grand Lodge of Florida and Belize; Grand Lodge of Belize and the Grand Orient of Santa Catarina (Brazil). None of these Grand Lodges have asked for recognition as of yet either.

Most Worshipful Brother Christer Persson, Grand Lodge of Sweden would like to extend his compliments to your Grand Master Paul A. Weglage (Letter received after our Grand Session) and at the same time inform you regarding the changes we have decided concerning our organization for representatives regarding foreign Grand Lodges that are recognized by the Swedish Order of Freemasons. The old tradition of appointing Grand Representatives is now changing across most of the world due to the increasing availability of information on the internet and that most of our contacts nowadays take place via our international departments and chancelleries. A system with Point of Contacts (POC) will most probably enhance and deepen our contacts. E-mail addresses between or chancelleries will facilitate contacts and visits. In the review of our organization, we have also realized that several of our representatives no longer are active due to the normal course of life. We have now decided, in line with the changes mentioned above, that our future contacts and representation for your Grand Lodge will be handled by our Foreign Relations department instead of through a representative.

We hope that the accessibility also will increase with this decision. I know that MWB Newton and I had talked about this, and we both were under the impression that we "Grand Lodge of Ohio" stopped assigning Representatives to other Jurisdictions.

In December 2024, The United Grand Lodge of England resolved that recognition be accorded to the Grand Lodge of the State of Puebla (Mexico); Union Grand Lodge of Florida and Belize; Grand Lodge of Belize and the Grand Orient of Santa Catarina (Brazil).

The Brothers of the Russian Federation have established a “Regular Grand Lodge of Russia” and are asking for recognition from the Grand Lodge of Ohio. I have zero paperwork from them on anything relating to their organization. I will keep this file open until further information is sent.

- 1) We received a communication from the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Tennessee, asking for recognition from the Grand Lodge of Ohio. On October 2, 2021, under the leadership of Grand Master Banks, they signed a Recognition Treaty with the Grand Lodge of Tennessee, then led by Grand Master Charlie Mixon. On September 14, 2022, the United Grand Lodge of England's Grand Chancellor, Paul R. Engleham, informed their Grand Lodge of the results of their quarterly communication, where they voted on and approved mutual recognition with the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Tennessee. Then, on October 27, 2022, they were informed by Grand Secretary William M.S. Semple that, at their Regular Communication, the Grand Lodge of Scotland unanimously approved recognition as well.

Grand Master, I move for the adoption of this recognition with the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Tennessee.

- 2) We received a letter asking for recognition from the Grand Lodge of The Grand Oriente do Rio Grande do Norte – GORN in Brazil. After reviewing their information and reviewing their landmarks and traditions, all of their information is in order. It is the recommendation of this committee that we approve recognition with the Grand Lodge of The Grand Oriente do Rio Grande do Norte – GORN in Brazil.

Grand Master, I move for the adoption of this recognition with the Grand Lodge of The Grand Oriente do Rio Grande do Norte – GORN in Brazil.

At it's June Quarterly Communication held on 11 June 2025, the United Grand Lodge of England resolved that recognition be accorded to the Grand Orient of Minas Gerais (Brazil).

It is always a pleasure to serve.

Fraternally,

James F. Easterling, Jr. PGM / Chairman

REPORT OF THE TRIAL COMMISSIONER-IN-CHIEF

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Ohio:

Most Worshipful Grand Master, Members of Grand Lodge and Brethren All:

As Trial Commissioner-In-Chief, I submit the following report:

Activity of a total of TWENTY-NINE (29) cases came before the Trial Commissioner-In-Chief this past year up to this date.

A total of TWENTY (20) new cases have been received by the Trial Commissioner-In-Chief since our last communication.

A trial panel and chairman have been appointed by the Regional Trial Commissioner for each of these cases. TWELVE (12) of the cases completed involved felony convictions or pleas of guilty to a felony.

There were NINETEEN (19) findings of GUILTY OF UNMASONIC CONDUCT. TWENTY-ONE (21) of these cases have been completed and EIGHT (8) are still pending. Many of these pending cases have been received in the last few months.

TWELVE (12) of these cases resulted in the penalty of EXPULSION, SEVEN (7) in the penalty of SUSPENSION, NONE in the penalty of REPRIMAND, and TWO (2) NOT GUILTY.

Since my appointment I have, at the request of our Grand Master, fully implemented Code Section #43 and there have been appointed seven (7) Regional Trial Commissioners and Judge Advocates.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the good brethren who have served on our Trial Panels this year, either as Chairman or a member of a Trial Panel. At best, serving on a Trial Panel is a very unpleasant task. Surely, these dedicated brethren have done just a bit more for Freemasonry in Ohio this year.

Also, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Most Worshipful Brother Newton and his fine staff for their counsel and excellent cooperation this year. It is indeed much appreciated.

Most Worshipful, I want to thank you for all your efforts this year to see that justice has been done and see that the principles of Masonry have been protected. I move for the acceptance of this report and the details of the individual cases attached hereto.

Respectively Submitted,

R. Wesley Webber, Trial Commissioner-In Chief

Regional Chairmen:

1 - Mark Allred

5 - Robert C. Cygan

2 - J. Rodger Caplinger

6 - Hal G. Dill

3 - John R. Teller

4 - Jeffery Rannebarger

7 - Timothy W. Jagers

REPORT OF THE RITUAL COMMITTEE

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Ohio:

The Ritual Committee received several requests for a change to the Ohio Masonic Ritual. Several communications were delivered to the Committee members. The possible changes were discussed among the members, and the decisions were communicated to the requesting Brothers. It was recommended that the information included in the request be used as educational talks among the Brethren and candidates.

The condition of the original handwritten and typewritten rituals stored at the Grand Lodge offices were reviewed. They are being well maintained and still in good condition.

Fraternally submitted,
R. Joseph Shilling

DANIEL CARTER BEARD SCOUTER AWARD

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Ohio:

The Grand Lodge of Ohio Committee for the Daniel Carter Beard Masonic Scouter Award is pleased to report that 2 Brethren were nominated and approved to receive the Award for the 2024-2025 year and 1 Brother is pending by the Committee as of July. These Brethren are to be commended for their exemplary service to Scouting and the exemplification of our Masonic tenets within their communities. Congratulations to this year's recipients!

The Daniel Carter Beard Masonic Scouter Award is a national recognition approved by the Boy Scouts of America and promoted by the various Masonic Grand Lodges in the United States. It may be presented to any Master Mason who has made significant contributions to youth through Scouting. This is a **selective and prestigious award**, by a nomination from a fellow Brother **without the recipient's knowledge**. The purpose of the Award is to recognize the recipient's outstanding service to youth through the Boy Scouts of America. The selection should be based on what the Nominee has done in Scouting as an Adult, not in his Masonic Journey.

Surely many of you know of a deserving individual to receive this Award. Requirements for the Award are listed on the Grand Lodge of Ohio's web page: www.freemason.com. Go to "Awards" and click on "Daniel Carter Beard Masonic Scouter Award" and follow **ALL** of the instructions. Incomplete submittals will be returned for completion and resubmittal. Since the inception of this program in 2002 in the Grand Lodge of Ohio, approximately 117 Ohio Masons have received this Award.

To the District Deputy Grand Masters, we would urge you to take a few minutes at your PM Convocations to mention this worthy Program. If you have any questions, please contact the Chairman at rleon95596@aol.com and I will gladly assist in explaining what needs to be submitted.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ronald H. Leonard, PDDGM, Chair
Brian Arehart
Thomas E. McAllister
Randy Echelberger
William Estell
Charles E. Udischas
Mason "Butch" Wiseman

REPORT OF THE NECROLOGY COMMITTEE

Most Worshipful Grand Master, Distinguished Guests, and Brethren all:

The Necrology Report is a time for us to honor our beloved Brethren: the men that cleared our paths, opened our doors and spoke of our equality in this earthly plane. It's also a time to reflect on the responsibilities we owe to those men that carried the Light of Freemasonry so that we wouldn't find ourselves in a world without it, and without them as we knew them.

This report gives us opportunity to recognize the cycle of life and the harmonic components that, in aggregate, created a lifetime. Such an opportunity reminds us that our brothers are not lost. The love that they shared with us, the human family, lives on within the sacred walls of the faithful breast of all that knew them.

The transformative and speculative tools that fell from their hands are now ours to carry and the Legendary work of Freemasonry lives on through our Labor, our actions and our service to mankind.

As the ancients believed that the afterlife carried their essence so long as their names were spoken, it is my privilege to call your collective attention to the names of those brethren and their ethereal presence, among us.

Michael A. Himes

Past Grand Master

Clifford P. Koss

Past Grand Tyler, PDDGM 2nd Masonic District

Gary L. McElfresh

Associate Grand Chaplain, PDDGM 11th Masonic District

Timothy A. Ward

Associate Grand Chaplain, PDDGM 14th Masonic District

Gene R. Pequignot

PDDGM 2nd Masonic District

Clarence L. Hartzell III

PDDGM 5th Masonic District

Frank R. Clifton

PDDGM 6th Masonic District

Robert K. Brown

PDDGM 7th Masonic District

Dennis L. Myers

PDDGM 9th Masonic District

Thomas R. Price

PDDGM 10th Masonic District

Robert W. Parsons

PDDGM 14th Masonic District

Claude M. Smith

PDDGM 14th Masonic District

Glen R. Sidders

PDDGM 15th Masonic District

Jacob C. Bishop

PDDGM 16th Masonic District

James E. Seyer

PDDGM 16th Masonic District

Edward G. Rinard

PDDGM 17th Masonic District

Donald W. Tice

PDDGM 17th Masonic District

Larry A. Bettinger

PDDGM 18th Masonic District

Patrick J. Rush

PDDGM 18th Masonic District

David L. Walters	PDDGM 18 th Masonic District
James H. Williams	PDDGM 18 th Masonic District
Herman E. Via	PDDGM 19 th Masonic District
Lloyd A. Vaughn	PDDGM 20 th Masonic District
James E. Zemancik	PDDGM 20 th Masonic District
Frank L. Sekeres	PDDGM 21st Masonic District
Donald C. Morgan	PDDGM 22nd Masonic District
Paul J. Belus	PDDGM 24th Masonic District
Harry L.C. Bestland	PDDGM 24th Masonic District
James C. Myers	PDDGM 24th Masonic District
Robert W. Thomas	PDDGM 25 th Masonic District
J. Ray Hays	Secretary Salineville Lodge No. 348
Charles Paine	Secretary Sunbury Lodge No. 362
Hobart L. Crase	Treasurer Manchester Lodge No. 317
Norman H. Wilson	Treasurer Western Reserve Lodge No. 507

Let us pray,

Great Architect of the Universe, who has spoken all things into existence,
 Create within us, a permanent respite for the memories, qualities and essence
 of those brethren that have transitioned from this life to Your refreshing presence. Fill
 our hearts with faithful equanimity for the future, lighten our hearts as we look to the
 past and fill us with hope as we continue in the labors you have set before us.

Comfort every member of our earthly family that has experienced loss this
 year and fill the hearts of those closest to them with gratitude for the time shared
 together. Protect and guide their families and fill us all with the hope and trust owed to
 you, the Creator. Now and forever, Amen

Respectfully submitted,
 Kirk D. Miller, Grand Chaplain

GRIEVANCE REPORT

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Ohio:

The Grand Lodge Grievance Committee met at 10am on May 29th at Northwest Temple in Columbus, Ohio to hear a request for the reinstatement of Mr. Michael Garrett Maxwell.

A request for reinstatement was made by Mr. Michael Garrett Maxwell formerly of Clark Lodge #101 and was received by the Lodge. After being laid over and discussed the Lodge voted in favor of reinstatement with 8 votes for. This request, accompanied by the necessary letter from the Lodge and a copy of the minutes, was forwarded to the Grievance Committee. The matter was brought before the committee and after comments from Mr. Maxwell, His father John Maxwell and others for.

The committee discussed the matter further. Due to the nature of the charges being “attempted unlawful sexual conduct with a minor”, the committee voted that Mr. Michael Garrett Maxwell NOT be restored to membership in Clark Lodge #101.

Grand Master, I move for the adoption of this report.

Respectfully Submitted
Joseph C Radocy, PDDGM, Chairman
Eric Muehlenbein, Grand Marshal
Troy Davis, Senior Grand Deacon
Alan W Bacon, PDDGM
Randy A. Williams, PDDGM
Roger Gau, PM
Gary L. Nicholson, PDDGM

MASONIC MODEL STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Ohio:

Thank you for the privilege to serve Ohio Freemasonry in this capacity!

This year the Masonic Model Student Assistance Program held seven (7) programs in only three (3) communities in Ohio. Those programs have served over 350 students/teachers. The details about each program is included below.

We again received a grant from R and M Stephenson Foundation in the amount of \$5,000.00. This grant was submitted once again to the foundation for consideration for 2026.

We have held only five (5) programs this year and are only scratching the surface as to the difference we can make in the lives of school aged children in Ohio. We need to change the thinking about how we promote the program and offer it to schools throughout Ohio.

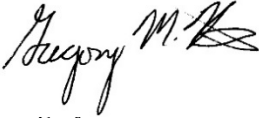
Date	Program	Site	Attendance		Schools	Masonic District(s)
October 29, 2024	Peer Mentorship Program	Toledo School of the Arts	41	Middle School	Toledo School of the Arts	11
October 30, 2024	Unity Day	Toledo School of the Arts	135	6th Graders	Toledo School of the Arts	11
January 18, 2025	Masonic Youth Leadership Day	Aladdin Shrine	98	Youth & Adults	Rainbow, Job's, DeMolay	Masonic Youth Leadership Day
February 25, 2025	Student leader Training	Grand Valley Schools	15	Grades 9-12	Grand Valley Schools	25
February 26, 2025	Student Voice Day and PM Teacher In Service	Grand Valley Schools	50	Grades 9-12 and PM Staff	Grand Valley Schools	25
Number of Students/Teachers served as of February 26, 2025 is over 339.						

I would like to thank all of the District Coordinators for their efforts to spread them program throughout Ohio.

District and Name

- 1-David P. Kelly
- 2-Robert "Rocky" Jackson
- 3-John Beard
- 4-Todd Smith
- 5-Elizabeth French
- 6-Darrell Hawkins
- 7-Dennis Evans
- 8-Bruce Porter
- 9-Johnnie Williams
- 10-Bryan Trego
- 11-Mark Allred, Jr.
- 12-Robert Beegle
- 13-Jeff Milligan
- 14-Doug Moshier
- 15-Jon Reminder
- 16-Denny Claxton
- 17-Roger Calendine
- 18-Kelly Raines
- 19-Mark Bruns
- 20-Jason Boggs
- 21-Jim Seelye
- 22-John Padley
- 23-William McGowan
- 24-Richard Purks
- 25-Linc Jerome, Vice Chairman

Fraternally Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gregory M. K." with a stylized flourish at the end.

Chairman of the Masonic Model Student Assistance Program

HISTORY COMMITTEE REPORT

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Ohio:

Pursuant to Section 4.02(j) of the Bylaws of the Grand Lodge, the responsibilities and duties of the History Committee are as follows:

History. whose Chairman shall be the Grand Historian of the Grand Lodge, shall establish historical facts of events in Lodges, and the lives of members and report their findings to the Grand Lodge to the end that there may be preserved the record of Masonry's contribution to the civic, political and religious life of our State, as well as promote the moral and spiritual principles Masonry seeks to inculcate.

With this charge in mind, the History Committee offers the following report:

The Challenge of Digital Preservation

Today, thanks to the Internet and social media, Ohio Lodges, Districts, and the Grand Lodge are constantly creating new public records of their activities and scheduled events through their websites, Facebook, LinkedIn, X, and other social media platforms. Consequently, there is an abundance of information available that qualifies as primary source material for future histories, much like diaries, letters, and newspapers captured historical information in the past. Today's challenge, however, is the archival preservation of these ephemeral digital communications. A webpage, once changed or taken down, is lost forever, and a Facebook post is often lost in the noise of millions of similar posts and the constraints of algorithms that display only selected information according to proprietary formulas.

The History Committee therefore recommends that Lodges and Districts regularly back up information and develop digital repositories of reports, biographies, and images they use on websites and social media. This data can then become the basis of new lodge histories, which should be written and updated regularly and shared with the Grand Lodge.

Grand Lodge Museum Activities

Under the direction of the Grand Secretary, who by Code is responsible for the library and museum, the Grand Historian has held quarterly open houses at the Grand Lodge Museum in Springfield. The majority of visitors have been residents of the Masonic Communities Springfield Campus, but there have also been visitors from symbolic lodges at each open house who saw announcements in the *Ohio Beacon* or arranged for special visits. To make such visits more interesting, the historian has prepared a different exhibit at each open house. One exhibit featured the Lafayette apron, and the Summer 2025 exhibit showcases a set of gunmetal silver officer jewels, crafted by Worshipful Brother Rezon Wolf, silversmith and third Master of Heber Lodge, No. 501, which were previously on display at the Ohio Village. A new addition to the collection is a fraternal goat initiation device from Clarksville Lodge,

accompanied by information on the folklore about “riding the goat” and a clear statement that it was never used in Masonic ritual.

Of historical note, 2025 marked the 200th anniversary of the Marquis de Lafayette’s last visit to the United States and to Ohio. This famous Mason made stops in Cincinnati, Gallipolis, and Marietta during his 1825 Farewell Tour. This year, lodges in these cities attended or participated in local 200th Anniversary celebrations. Cincinnati Lafayette Lodge borrowed the Lafayette Apron from the Grand Lodge Museum and displayed it along with its minutes book from that time, which shows Brother Lafayette’s signature.

The Museum’s website functioned well with no known problems or downtime. It is searchable by object, donor, and descriptive terms. RWB Shawn Smith serves as the digital curator for the Museum, and he has organized its digital records into collections that bring together related artifacts and contribute to an easily searchable database. Currently, the Museum catalog includes 2,263 entries.

In Memoriam: Worshipful Brother Charles Eichensehr

It is with regret that we note the passing of Worshipful Brother Charles Eichensehr, Grand Historian Emeritus, who served first as a Museum volunteer and then Grand Historian for over forty years. His knowledge of the Museum and its collections was comprehensive. He oversaw the move of the Museum from Worthington to Springfield and, along with Worshipful Brother Chad Simpson, designed the current Museum exhibit spaces. While the Grand Lodge’s Ohio Lodge No. 10 exhibit was open at the Ohio Village in Columbus, he spent hundreds, if not thousands, of hours over the years acting as a docent to public visitors to the Village, explaining or teaching about Freemasonry to non-Masons. He also scheduled and hosted visiting lodges who held special meetings in the historic lodge room. He truly lived respected and died regretted by volunteers and staff alike.

Fraternally submitted,
Douglas N. Kaylor, PGM, chairman

REPORT OF THE GRAND LODGE CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Ohio,

It is my honor to present the report of the Grand Lodge Charitable Foundation for the Masonic Year 2024-2025. Each year as Lodge's review their charter they are reminded that one of our most important duties is the support of our widows, orphans and members in distress. The Charitable Foundation was created to provide aid to our membership and our communities when the need arises.

The Charitable Foundation began offering relief on December 15, 1995. In its first year of existence the fund provided a total of \$6,000.00 in assistance. For the Masonic year 2024-2025, the Charitable Foundation considered 38 requests from 14 Districts. Two requests were withdrawn and 4 requests were not granted based on the information provided to the Trustees. The remaining 32 requests were approved, with disbursements of between \$750.00 and \$5,000.00 for a total of \$62,269.00. Included in the total this year is one award from the Veteran & First Responders fund within the Charitable Foundation in the amount of \$1,504.00. Through August 31, 2025 there have been 831 gifts totaling \$1,194,495.14 since the inception of the Charitable Foundation in support of providing relief to the members of our craft.

The Trustees would like to thank all who have contributed to the Grand Lodge Charitable Foundation. Your donations enable us to help those in need, and as our Foundation continues to grow, we will be able to provide assistance to a greater number of deserving requests from our Lodges. The Trustees and I would also like to thank the District Deputy Grand Masters for their efforts in compiling the information necessary to help the Trustees of the Foundation make the proper decisions on each important request. Without their efforts the task of the Trustees would have been more difficult if not impossible.

Thanks, must be given to the Ohio Masonic Community's coordinators, Samantha Loy, Bobbi Schickler, DeAnna Kinney, Trinity Davidson, Brooke Simonson and Janaye Guess. Their experience, dedication and compassion for each request helped the Trustees by providing in-depth information used in making our decisions. More importantly their skilled help provided a path forward to our members and their families in need of assistance.

I would personally like to express my thanks to the Trustees for their help in providing timely feedback and response to each request. This year has seen changes to help provide updated structure to the Charitable Foundation to make it stronger for the future and I can't say thank you enough for everyone's good council.

Respectfully submitted,

Wayne A. Fischer, Junior Grand Warden, President
Jeffrey M. Sime, Grand Orator, Vice President
Keith W. Newton, Grand Secretary
Steven E. Cokonougher, Grand Treasurer
William M. Carter, III, Grand Master
Shawn A. Johnson, Deputy Grand Master
Michael L. McCandlish Senior Grand Warden
Eric W. Muehlenbein, Grand Marshal
Troy L. Davis, Senior Grand Deacon
Daniel A. Hall Junior Grand Deacon

MASONIC CODE REORGANIZATION

Fraternal Greetings, Grand Master,

I am pleased to offer this Report of the Masonic Code Reorganization Committee.

As was stated at the 2024 Grand Lodge session, the mission of the project was to rearrange the current contents of our Code Book of Masonic Law into a more readable and more accessible format. It is the opinion of this committee that this Reorganized Code Book will facilitate the effective operations of the Grand Lodge and its Subordinate Lodges using common, clear language and systemic organization. The several volumes are structured according to a process approach following guidance as applicable from recognized quality management systems organizations.

The current Code Book was systematically reviewed for conflicting clauses, outdated language, and legal requirements. Recognized ambiguities, seemingly unnecessary requirements or other issues discovered during the review process were brought before the Jurisprudence Committee for their recommendation before this reorganization was compiled.

This Reorganized Code Book is set into Volumes and Chapters defined as specific to the Grand Lodge, its Subordinate Lodges, and Members individually. Additional Volumes pertain to the Constitution, Trials, Resolutions, Voting and other Appendices. A new section located in the beginning describes the Scope, Structure, Definitions, Documented Information of the Code, including the Responsibility for the maintenance of the Code. A cross-reference tableau has been created to support understanding of the transition and location of familiar clauses in the new format, likely to be incorporated as an Appendix.

The Reorganized Code is in Final Proof stage having been reviewed and proofread for accuracy. It is now being put before the Grand Lodge for consideration at this 2025 session with a layover for discussion and an eventual vote for adoption at the 2026 Grand Lodge session.

The discussion phase of the process is planned to take place within the Subordinate Lodges during the layover. With any questions to the Grand Lodge and this committee coming exclusively through the respective Lodge Secretaries, we anticipate a thorough and efficient processing of feedback and responses across the whole of the Grand Jurisdiction prior to the 2026 Communication.

Respectfully submitted,
Jonathan H. Krapf, PDDGM Chairman
Rich Greater, PM
Rich Dickerscheid, PGM

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Ohio:

The Membership Committee continues to work on ideas and programs to help lodges with their membership challenges.

Recruitment and Retention

For the 2024 Membership year, the Lodges in Ohio showed:

Degree - Initiated - EA	902
Degree - Raised - MM	604
Deceased	2,139
Suspended Non-Payment of Dues	1,990
Reinstated	791

Recruitment and Prospect Management

A review was conducted of the inquiries received in 2024. The Grand Lodge of Ohio received 1521 inquiries in the calendar year of 2023. Which is down from 2032 in 2023. Of those 764 came from the beafremason.org website. Overall, the average age of an inquiry is 40 years.

A breakdown of districts receiving the inquiries:

1- 101	10 - 40	19- 27
2- 175	11- 80	20- 44
3- 33	12- 39	21- 116
4- 9	13- 26	22- 153
5- 14	14- 215	23- 21
6- 24	15- 22	24- 50
7- 41	16- 34	25- 105
8- 30	17- 17	
9- 38	18- 14	

In further research of the inquiries, it was found that the primary source of interest or how they heard about us is from a family member or a friend. It should be noted that social media is growing as a source of interest in our fraternity.

Reviewing the status of the inquiries revealed that we have had SUCCESS! Last March this committee report showed that of the 2032 inquiries received in 2023, 1038 of them or 51% are marked in one of the various

“Inactive” status categories. In 2024, 54% of the inquiries are in an “active” category (prospect, candidate, petitioner, EA, FC or MM).

The committee continues to work with the prospect managers around the state to find better ways to communicate with inquiries with the goal of lowering the inactive status to 20%.

Membership Programs

The Committee continues to try to identify programs that would be beneficial to lodges. Currently, the Grand Lodge has programs to assist. Among them are the Replace Yourself Program and the 3-5-7 program. Also, there are a number of online resources to assist such as, www.beafreemason.org or www.notjustaman.com.

All these programs are there to assist you with attracting new members. We need to continue to bring in good men to our fraternity as well as keep them once have knocked at our door. We need to get back to being Masons and living what our lessons teach us. By doing this, others will notice the change in you and want to know what brought this on, this starts the discussion about Freemasonry. No matter where you are, who you are or what you are doing you are a representative of our Fraternity. Never forget, take a good look at yourself, you are somebody's impression of Freemasonry.

Fraternally Submitted,
The Grand Lodge of Ohio Committee on Membership
Daniel K. Rannebarger, Chairman

OHIO MASONIC COMMUNITIES

This report is submitted on behalf of the leadership of The Ohio Masonic Communities to the Brethren at the annual meeting of the Grand Lodge of Ohio. Each year brings new challenges, but the organization is well-positioned to rise to them and continue fulfilling the mission – living our Masonic Values by serving as a trusted partner to help our communities thrive. As The Ohio Masonic Communities approaches its 131st year, the organization continues to honor its’ history while positioning itself for the future. With a clear vision and purpose, the organization is focused on three key priorities: achieving financial stewardship, becoming an organization of choice, and inspiring excellence as an employer of choice. This past year’s efforts have centered on these three goals. Below is a summary of the past year’s accomplishments and a glimpse into future plans for the organization.

Over the past year, The Ohio Masonic Communities has embraced change—rising to meet new challenges and evolving needs across each campus. As we look ahead to 2026, we are well-positioned to continue delivering the exceptional care that defines us and to meet future needs with concern, compassion, and an unwavering commitment to our residents.

Browning Masonic Community

Last fall, Browning Masonic Community fulfilled a lifelong dream for resident Shirley. Many years ago, Shirley and her late husband created a bucket list that included items such as visiting all 50 states. At 93, the last item on that bucket list was to take a hot air balloon ride.

When the Browning Masonic Community team learned about her dream, they were determined to make it happen. Surrounded by her family, including her son who surprised her by flying in for the occasion, Shirley soared through the sky, completing her bucket list in a truly unforgettable way.

As the evening came to a close, Shirley was brought to tears reminiscing on how beautiful the experience was – and she wasn’t alone, there wasn’t a dry eye around. Just a few weeks later, Shirley passed away on what would have been her and her husband’s 72nd wedding anniversary. It was an honor to not only know and care for Shirley, but to make her dream a reality.

Springfield Masonic Community

Springfield Masonic Community’s strong reputation has been honored with multiple nominations and awards over the past year. Last year, the campus received the Best Assisted Living award in the annual Best of Springfield

Competition and has been nominated for four Best of Springfield Awards this year.

Springfield Masonic Community also received the Clark State Diversity Champion Award. The 2025 Clark State Diversity Champion Award recognized leadership in diversity, honoring an individual or organization who has implemented innovative strategies that promote the development of skills to meet the needs of a multicultural society. Springfield Masonic Community and Clark State College worked collaboratively to create an onsite training program for Certified Nursing Assistants with an embedded ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) element. The program helps immigrants learn English while they are training to become a nursing assistant.

Looking ahead to the future needs of the community, exciting plans are underway to reposition the Springfield campus. This expansion will introduce beautifully designed spaces that reflect the exceptional care and commitment the campus is known for. The project will break ground this fall.

Western Reserve Masonic Community

Expansion and renovations have been the focus of Western Reserve Masonic Community for the past two years. With the first parts of the expansion and renovation complete, including the new state-of-the-art healthcare center and luxury independent living apartments and community spaces, focus shifted to the assisted living neighborhood. Its outdated design didn't match the rest of the campus, and the oversized dining room wasn't the most practical use of space for residents.

While the renovations in the assisted living neighborhood were wrapping up, the Pathways Memory Support Neighborhood also received updates. New paint, flooring, lighting, artwork, and furniture have transformed the entire neighborhood. It's created a more relaxing and functional neighborhood environment for the residents that call it home.

At the beginning of 2025, the second half of the healthcare center opened, marking the end of this multi-year project. Although the project is now complete, it marks only the beginning of Western Reserve Masonic Community's strong reputation in the community for helping residents thrive.

Award Winning Care

At The Ohio Masonic Communities, quality is a core value that guides every aspect of our work. We are committed to delivering excellence in all that we do. As part of our strategic vision, we aim to be recognized as an organization of choice—where our name is synonymous with exceptional care. We want individuals to choose our campuses with confidence, knowing they will receive the highest level of care and services.

One of the ways we ensure we're always providing the best quality possible is feedback from our residents and their families. We partner with Activated Insights to measure the quality of every aspect of our organization—from the care we provide to the meals we serve and the buildings we maintain.

Each month, Activated Insights randomly selects residents and family members from every level of care at each campus to participate in a survey. The survey reports provide our team with valuable insights into our strengths and identify areas for improvement.

We're honored to have been awarded the Activated Insights 2025 Customer Experience Award for assisted living and memory care at Browning Masonic Community; independent living, assisted living, and skilled nursing at Springfield Masonic Community; and independent living, assisted living, memory care, and skilled nursing at Western Reserve Masonic Community. These awards recognize us for being in the top 15% of providers nationwide.

The Ohio Masonic Communities Foundation

The Ohio Masonic Communities Foundation continues to raise awareness of and support for The Ohio Masonic Communities through fundraising efforts with special emphasis on support for Masons and their wives and widows. In 2025, the annual Golf Classic raised over \$125,000 in support of memory care across all three campuses—funding that helps The Ohio Masonic Communities provide exceptional care and continue its mission to be both an organization and employer of choice. Earlier this summer, the Grand Lodge of Ohio, Eastern Star of Ohio, and The Ohio Masonic Communities Foundation hosted an inspiring afternoon of purpose and connection at the Second Annual Wine, Women, and Shoes event. Thanks to the leadership of Zoe Carter, First Lady of Ohio; Marla Barber, Grand Worthy Matron; and Dan Shirk, Volunteer and Special Events Coordinator, the event raised over \$4,000 in support of the foundation's vital work. In an effort to recognize and thank donors for their generosity, The Ohio Masonic Communities Foundation held donor dinners across the state. Hosted at each of our campuses, the dinners were a chance to celebrate the good works made possible by our donors.

The Ohio Masonic Communities Resource Center

Through The Ohio Masonic Communities Resource Center, another program funded through The Ohio Masonic Communities Foundation, financial support is provided to Ohio Masons and their wives and widows, making it possible for them to thrive as they age. In the last year, beyond providing financial assistance when needed, The Ohio Masonic Communities Resource Center has supported Ohio Masons and their wives and widows through a variety of initiatives. These include building ramps to improve home accessibility, providing lawn care and general home maintenance, offering

emotional and social support through home visits and phone calls, delivering bereavement support after the loss of a loved one, and supplying school essentials for youth, among other impactful services.

Last year, 2,013 total clients were assisted across the State of Ohio through The Ohio Masonic Communities Resource Center. Thanks to the dedication of our Masonic volunteers, The Ohio Masonic Communities Resource Center continues to expand its services and reach more individuals each year.

Across all three of our campuses, residents are not just living—they're thriving. With growing communities and vibrant daily engagement, each day brings new moments of connection, joy, and purpose to those live and work on our campuses. As we look to the future, The Ohio Masonic Communities will continue to be guided by our mission to meet the evolving needs of the Brethren and the communities we proudly serve.

Respectfully submitted,
Scott Buchanan, CEO