

GRAND MASTER’S ADDRESS

The Masonic Year in Review

Brethren All,

As you read this, your Grand Lodge Officers and staff are in the final preparation for our 281st Annual Communication of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Ancient Free Masons of South Carolina in Columbia, SC. The Grand Lodge Officers are looking forward to being with you and especially those officers that are the voting representatives of the Lodges in the Grand Jurisdiction. I always enjoy the Annual Communication and fellowship.

Brethren, it has been a busy year with many accomplishments and opportunities. I am particularly pleased with the increased awareness of the primary initiatives that your Grand Lodge Officers and staff have been promoting during the year.

Improved Ritual Work Quality - increases new member engagement.

Full Candidate Proficiency – Impresses our great lesson on new members.

Improved Member Communication – Staying in touch with all members.

Improved Masonic Education – Providing Quality Educational Programs.

Improved Financial Management – Lodges taking ownership of budgets.

Brethren, those Lodges that are embracing these programs, through their hard work and effort, are seeing improved membership experience.

As a Grand Jurisdiction, we have made an impact in many ways during the year. We have supported several charitable programs, including the Disaster Relief for Florida, Texas, and Puerto Rico. We are supporting many other programs with our projects and dramatically improving our Grand Lodge Library and Museum, expanding the Grand Lodge Membership System, and facilities improvements made possible through the combined effort of members and our outstanding leadership team. We, too, continue to support charities with our George Washington Portrait Program, our MSA Program, many community projects and even support for our Veterans in the several Masonic Homes in South Carolina.

The support and generosity of our Grand Lodge is both impressive and extensive. Brethren, each member IS our Grand Lodge.

We have worked this year to understand how to improve our member communication and advance educational training so that all of our members have a full and rich understanding of Who We Are As Freemasons.

We have much to share at our upcoming Annual Communication! Come be with us, celebrate our success and our work done for others. Be part of your Grand Lodge Experience! Come to learn what we are working on for the future! Come to celebrate your membership with your Brethren. Come to experience an exciting and dynamic Fraternity! You will take back ideas for your Lodge to implement as you build for the future.

I look forward to seeing you at our sessions, and our Grand Lodge Banquet on Thursday Evening!

Fraternally;

Michael D. Smith, Sr.
Grand Master

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MASONIC EDUCATION CORNER

Relentless

As I sit down with pen in hand, my thoughts are dominated by a recent tragedy. Two police officers in a city near Columbus, Ohio, were shot and killed Saturday while responding to a 911 hang-up call involving potential domestic abuse. Chief Joe Morbitzer of the Westerville Police Department said the officers, Eric Joering, 39, and Anthony Morelli, 54, had responded at 12:10 p.m., eight minutes after the call, about a potential domestic situation. “As they went into the apartment they were immediately met with gunfire, and both officers were shot,” Chief Morbitzer said at a news conference. Officer Joering, a 16-year veteran of the department, died at the scene. Officer Morelli, a 29-year veteran, was transported to the Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center in Columbus in critical condition and later died. Officer Joering had a wife and four daughters, and Officer Morelli had a wife and two children. Chief Morbitzer, while speaking about Officer Morelli and Officer Joering, “Both gave their lives for the protection of others, and that’s what they lived and breathed.” So I ask you, what do you live and breathe for? What do you want to be remembered for? What do you do for others to make our world a better place? What is your TRUE purpose on this earth? We are all dying, yet there are only a select few which are living. It is time to step out of obscurity and into the light. As leaders of your Lodge, we understand through our Ritual that we are affirming what we stand for with our society. Therefore, our candidates will see the pride we have in our Fraternity joining us towards a dedicated, united goal. The desire to learn more and become more proficient was apparent in our instructional workshops this year. Congratulations to our Masonic Education Committeemen and faculty. Our MEC met several times with their team of instructors to ensure you would get the best instructions possible as evidenced in the breakout sessions. We talked about the Lodge System of Masonic Education, which to me is vital, ensuring our aspirants become relentless in the comprehension of our tenants and in service to humanity. What are you going to accomplish with this knowledge? We must educate our candidates ensuring their wives and family will not be surprised or disappointed in what we expect of them. Consider how before our aspirant knocks on the door, we have investigated him, voted on him, and talked with his family sharing how we desire good God-fearing men who want to make their community a better place to raise their family free to worship God in their own way. The Lodge’s work has just begun after we confer the Degrees of Masonry. Each new Brother must have a mentor who provides direction and support. Masonry is the moral compass teaching our tenants while establishing you can change a day if you redefine your view of success. You can

rebalance your priorities in life. You can transform damaged relationships. You can forgive yourself and others who have hurt you. You can become a better parent and a better son. You can become a leader by becoming a mentor. However, you cannot make more time. Marcus Aurelius said “Time is a sort of river of passing events, and strong is its current; no sooner is a thing brought to sight than it is swept by and another takes its place, and this too will be swept away.” Yes ritual is important, but it is not everything! We must keep “the Fraternity” in our Fraternity. My Brother, you were meant for more than to recite Ritual. The world really needs each of you now more than ever. This is the time, now is our place in history ... and none other would satisfy us.

Words of the month:

Relentless - unyieldingly severe

Fraternity - a group of persons associated by or as if by ties of brotherhood.

Quote for the month:

You are responsible for what you say, but also for what you do not say. Martin Luther

Thought for the month:

The world has missed gifted and talented people due to the severe lack of motivation, strive not to be that person.

Carpe Diem

Together we can protect, preserve, serve, and grow

O.B. Smith, SGW
Chairman, MEC

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GRAND LODGE ANNUAL COMMUNICATION

The 281st Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of Ancient Free Masons of South Carolina will be held on April 26th & 27th, at the Jamil Shrine Center located at 206 Jamil Road, Columbia SC 29210.

The Religious Service will commence on Thursday, April 26th at 9:00 AM and will be conducted by Reverend and Right Worshipful A. Robert Nix, Grand Chaplain. Following the Religious Service, the Grand Lodge will be officially opened at 10:00 AM by Most Worshipful Michael D. Smith, Sr., Grand Master, with the assistance of the Grand Lodge Officers and Brethren. The Annual Banquet will be held on Thursday, April 26th at 7:00 PM in the Ballroom of the Double Tree Hotel located at 2100 Bush River Road, Columbia, SC 29210.

The Double Tree Hotel will be the Headquarters Hotel. Those desiring to stay at the Headquarters Hotel are encouraged to make reservations as soon as possible since there is a limited number of rooms available. Elected Grand Lodge Officers, Appointed Grand Lodge Officers, Past Grand Masters, and Committeemen are requested to stay at the Headquarters Hotel and to make their reservations promptly. Each person including Grand Lodge Officers, Past Grand

Masters, and Committeemen are responsible for making their own reservations. Reservations may be made by calling the Double Tree Hotel in Columbia at 803-731-0300. When calling, you must ask for group reservations and identify yourself as being with The Grand Lodge of Ancient Free Masons of South Carolina (Code: AFM) in order to obtain the special room rate of \$129.00 plus tax per night. Since the Headquarters Hotel will be unable to accommodate everyone attending the Annual Communication, the Sleep Inn located at 1901 Rockland Road, Columbia, SC, which is actually next door to the Double Tree Hotel and shares the same parking lot, may be contacted for room reservations at 803-731-9999.

LOCAL COMMITTEE 2018 GRAND LODGE ANNUAL COMMUNICATION

MWB Ron & Sue Mitchum, RWB John & Martha Marcucci,
Chairman Co-Chairman
803-730-1819 803-920-8089

RWB Tommy Watson RWB Trent Henderson &
864-505-0497 Cathy Leichter
864-621-1021

RWB Todd & Julia Schofield RWB Rawl & Linda Scheibler
803-528-8946 803-606-1288

WB Ronnie Thompson WB Dennie & Bobby Jo
803-331-0497 Holcomb
803-374-6876

WB Bill & Diane Campbell WB Ed & Dee Dee Simpson
803-206-1696 864-923-3486

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DISTRICT DEPUTY GRAND MASTER BREAKFAST MEETING

The Annual District Deputy Grand Masters’ Breakfast Meeting will be held on Friday, April 27, 2018, at 7.00 AM on the second floor, Room A of the Jamil Shrine Center. The cost is \$10.00 per person. If you plan to attend, please notify Right Worshipful Brother John R. Marcucci, DDGM, 10th District at Home Phone: 803-736-5041 Cell Phone: 803-920-8089 or Email: jrmarcucci@aol.com

GRAND LODGE ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

The Grand Lodge Organizational Meeting will be held on Saturday, May 21, 2018 beginning with registration at 8:30 AM at the Grand Lodge Office Building located at 1445 Pisgah Church Road, Lexington, SC 29072 (Exit 51 on Interstate 20). All Elected Grand Lodge Officers, All Appointed Grand Lodge Officers including District Deputy Grand Masters, Masonic Education Committeemen, Masonic Service Committeemen and Chancellors are required to attend. All Past Grand Masters are requested to attend. Since photographs will be taken, the dress for all Elected Grand Lodge Officers and Past Grand Masters will be black tails with black bow tie, black vest, jewel and apron. The dress for all other Officers and Committeemen will be black tuxedo with black bow tie, black vest, jewel and apron.

ANNUAL GEORGIA/SOUTH CAROLINA MASONIC EXCHANGE MEETING

The Annual Exchange Meeting between the Georgia and South Carolina Brethren will be held on Friday, June 8, 2018 beginning with dinner at 6:00 PM with the meeting to follow. The Exchange Meeting will be held at the Greenville Scottish Rite Center located at 817 Cleveland Street, Greenville, SC.

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SPECIAL COMMUNICATIONS OF THE GRAND LODGE

SATURDAY, MAY 19, 2018, PENDLETON, SOUTH CAROLINA:

For the purpose of Rededicating Pendleton Lodge No. 34, AFM. Lunch will be served at 11:30 AM at the Lodge Hall. After lunch, the Grand Master, with the assistance of the other Grand Lodge Officers, will open the Grand Lodge of AFM of SC in Ample Form and Pendleton Lodge No. 34, AFM in Due Form on the First Degree at 12:30 PM with the Rededication Ceremony following. The Pendleton Lodge Hall is located at 118 Exchange Street, Pendleton, SC 29670.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2018, GEORGETOWN, SOUTH CAROLINA:

For the purpose of Rededicating Winyah Lodge No. 40, AFM. Lunch will be served at 11:30 AM. The Grand Master with the assistance of the other Grand Lodge Officers, will open the Grand Lodge of AFM of SC in Ample Form and Winyah Lodge No. 40, AFM in Due Form on the First Degree at 12:30 PM with the Rededication Ceremony following. The Winyah Lodge Hall is located at 2617 S. Fraser Street, Georgetown, SC 29440.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2018, SPARTANBURG, SOUTH CAROLINA:

For the purpose of Laying a Cornerstone and Rededicating Cherokee Lodge No. 135, AFM. Lunch will be served at 11:30 AM. The Grand Master with the assistance of the other Grand Lodge Officers, will open, the Grand Lodge of AFM of SC in Ample Form and Cherokee Lodge No. 135, AFM in Due Form on the First Degree at 12:30 PM with the Cornerstone Laying and Rededication Ceremonies following. The Cherokee Lodge Hall is located at 132 Cherokee Circle, Spartanburg, SC 29307

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2018, SWANSEA, SOUTH CAROLINA:

For the purpose of Rededicating Oliver Lodge No.133, AFM. Lunch will be served at 11:30 AM at the Lodge. The Grand Master, with the assistance of the other Grand Lodge Officers, will open the Grand Lodge of AFM of SC in Ample Form and Oliver Lodge No. 133, AFM in Due Form on the First Degree at 12:30 PM with the Rededication Ceremony following. The Oliver Lodge Hall is located at 265 South Cardiff Avenue, Swansea, SC 29160.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2018, BATESBURG-LEESVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA:

For the purpose of Rededicating Batesburg-Leesville Lodge No.138, AFM. Lunch will be served at 11:30 AM at the Lodge. The Grand Master, with the assistance of the other Grand Lodge Officers, will open the Grand Lodge of AFM of SC in Ample Form and Batesburg-Leesville Lodge No. 138, AFM in Due Form on the First Degree at 12:30 PM with the Rededication Ceremony following. The Batesburg-Leesville Lodge Hall is located at 222 Church Street, Batesburg, SC 29006.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2019, SOUTH CAROLINA:

For the purpose of Rededicating Union Lodge No. 75, AFM. Lunch will be served at 11:30 AM at the Lodge. The Grand Master, with the assistance of the other Grand Lodge Officers, will open the Grand Lodge of AFM of SC in Ample Form and Union Lodge No. 75, AFM in Due Form on the First Degree at 12:30 PM with the Rededication Ceremony following. The Union Lodge Hall is located at 805 S. Duncan Bypass, Union SC 29379.

All Brothers including Entered Apprentices, Fellow Crafts and Master Masons with their ladies and friends are invited to, attend. All Elected Grand Lodge Officers, Subordinate Grand Lodge Officers and the District Deputy Grand Master of the Lodge's District are expected to attend. All Past Grand Masters and all other District Deputy Grand Masters are invited to attend. All Elected Grand Lodge Officers and Past Grand Masters should wear their black tails with black bow tie, black vests, Jewel and Apron. All other Grand Lodge Officers should wear black tuxedos with black bow ties, black cummerbunds or black vests, and Jewel and Apron.

IN MEMORIAM

“Correction”

CARL RANDOLPH TRUESDALE
PAST DISTRICT DEPUTY GRAND MASTER

December 28, 1941	Camden, SC
January 19, 2018	Camden, SC

Worshipful Brother Harold Van Buren Thames, Jr., Worshipful Master of Sumter Lodge No. 364, AFM, passed away March 4, 2018.

We wish to express our deepest sympathies, to the family, friends and Lodge Brethren.

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This morning I had the honor, with the assistance of Past Junior Grand Deacon, Joe Whitener, Jr., of presenting our Grand Lodge Service Awards to:



Brother Olin Ramsey, a member of Buffalo Lodge No. 202, AFM received his Sixty-Year service award. Brother Olin's wife was present to give him the customary kiss. Thank you!



Brothers Jack O. Evans and James G. Thomas of Buffalo Lodge No. 202, AFM received their Fifty-Year service awards. No kiss for 50 years!

Thank you, Brothers, for your service to the Craft and Buffalo Lodge No. 202-- 160 years of combined service.

(USPS 332-760) Official bulletin of the Grand Lodge of Ancient Free Masons of South Carolina issued bimonthly from the Grand Lodge Building, 1445 Pisgah Church Rd., Lexington, S.C. 29072-71017
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Masonic Light, Gerald L. Carver, Editor, P.O. Box 2185, Lexington, S.C. 29071-2185, Telephone 803-808-4377
E-mail: grandsecretary@scgrandlodgeafm.org



Since 1928

Periodicals postage paid at Lexington, S.C. 29073-9998
Subscription Rate: One Year, \$20.00; Life, \$100.00
AUTO
Vol. 91 April/May 2018 No. 1