

MASONIC EDUCATION CORNER

Lodge of the Future

It is, indeed, a distinguished honor to be elected to serve the Craft of The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Ancient Freemasons of South Carolina as your Senior Grand Warden. I am humbled and honored by your support and our shared love of this great Fraternity. Thank you and I pledge to do my best to support your Lodge, by listening and working together for the benefit of the Fraternity.

I am excited about the future of our great fraternity because of those that are accepting the challenge of examining and improving the experience for our members. Brethren our lodge membership is our most important asset. While I am positive of the great influence we have as Freemasons and our future, and yet I am also greatly concerned about the transition many of our lodges are facing for renewal and even survival in the coming years. I find many Lodges unprepared, and some even unaware of the issues that are on the horizon.

In an effort to support and assist our Lodges, I am pleased to introduce our humble effort to inform, enlighten and assist our lodges in moving forward. We must ask ourselves and prepare to answer together the following question,

What will MY Lodge look like beyond 2020?

Will it be a Lodge of the Future or a Lodge that is struggling to succeed or even still in existence? I believe we have a great opportunity to study, plan and implement actions that will help us with renewal and greater success. It will take work, passion and dedication and in my humble opinion, it must begin now!

It is my intention to offer a series of articles for the Lodges in our Grand Jurisdiction to reflect on their past, their current situation and to look forward to take the actions necessary to define the very success of their Lodge of the Future.

Topics planned for this series will include both the article in our *Masonic Light*, and will also include a brief Masonic Education Lesson Plan for all Worshipful Masters and Secretaries to use in the Lodge, during the period between articles. The lesson plan, will be found on the Grand Lodge website for your access and from the Masonic Education Committeemen and District Deputies. Each Masonic Education Lesson will have a brief introduction and specific action for your lodge to consider and research and implement plans to address the real issues facing your lodge today. Worshipful Masters, I remind you of the obligation you have to provide Masonic Education and each meeting. These Masonic Education topics are provided for use in your Lodge every other month, if you so choose. It is my sincere hope that you choose to do so!

So let's get started and together we can determine our path toward the future, and plan for success so that the generations yet to come, will value what we know and cherish about our beloved Fraternity.

OUR LODGE OF THE FUTURE

BACKGROUND: Keeping our Current Members is Critical to our Long Term Success.

ISSUES: How well do we keep up with our older members, those that do not attend regularly or those that have moved away for work or other reasons?

I believe you would agree that without our members, our Lodge future is in jeopardy.

NEEDS: Lodge Membership Trends that impact our future success

Here is the first opportunity to research your Lodge Membership

1. How many members have we lost in the last 10 years? Why?
2. What is the average age of your Lodge membership?
3. How Many Dues Paying Members do you have in your Lodge?
4. How many Life or Perpetual Life Members do you have in your Lodge?
5. How do you communicate with all you Lodge Members?

FACTS: If you assign a committee you can search the Grand Lodge Proceedings and gather most of these facts for questions 1. Deaths, NPD, Demit and Suspension.

If you assign a committee, you can work with the Secretary and check your past Annual Audits and determine the answers to questions 2 – 4.

Question number 5 will really take some effort by your officers and active members. Two proven and effective methods to reach most of your members are;

Divide the membership list among your Officers and Active Members and call them to check on them and get email address if they have it. Welcome them to come back, share upcoming events and regular meetings.

Mail a written letter to each inactive member and let them know you are trying to reach them. Ask for contact information and get back to them to check on them and invite them back or to a special event.

APPLICATION: These facts will be helpful in the coming months when we look at other topics, so complete the research, share with your Lodge members. You will be glad you did this?

OPPORTUNITY: Build the relationship with your current members and show them how much your Lodge cares about him and his family.

