

The Virginia MASONIC HERALD



VOL. 102

November 2008 Web Supplement

Most Worshipful and Doctor Jeffery Eugene Hodges



Most Worshipful Jeffery Eugene Hodges was born in Norfolk, Virginia, on May 10, 1957, the son of James E. and Elaine B. Hodges. He graduated from Menchville High School in Newport News, received a Bachelor of Arts Degree from the University of Richmond and a DDS Degree in Dentistry from the Medical College of Virginia. Brother Hodges has been in private practice in Charlottesville since 1983 and previously worked as a clinical faculty member of the Medical College of Virginia School of Dentistry.

Brother Hodges was raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason in Widow's Sons' Lodge No. 60 on August 26, 1985. He is a Life Member in Perpetuity and served as its Worshipful Master in 1996. He is also a Life Member in Perpetuity of Fredericksburg Lodge No. 4, Chester Lodge No. 94, Mount Jackson Lodge No. 103, and Peyton Randolph Research Lodge No. 1774. He was District Deputy Grand Master of Masonic District 18 in 1999. He is the Grand Representative to the Grand Lodge of Western Australia, near Virginia. He was elected Grand Junior Deacon in November 2004 and installed as the 164th Grand Master of Masons in Virginia on November 8, 2008, in Richmond, Virginia.

He is a member of the Valley of Lynchburg and the Valley of Richmond, Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, where he received the Knight Commander Court of Honour in 2007; Keystone Royal Arch Chapter No. 58; Charlottesville Commandery No. 3; Acca Shrine Center, A.A.O.N.M.S.; Richmond Court No. 16, Royal Order of Jesters; and the Royal Order of Scotland. He is a Past President of the Piedmont Shrine Club and Past Commander of the Acca Mini Patrol. He is a Life Member in Perpetuity of Fredericksburg Chapter No. 545, National Sojourners, and Past Patron of Queen Esther Chapter No. 14, Order of the Eastern Star. He served as Chairman of the Bicentennial Committee for Widow's Sons' Lodge No. 60 in 1999. In the Grand Lodge of Scotland, he holds honorary membership in Lodge Fraser No. 267 and Lodge Aberdeen No. 164 and is a member of Lodge Knightswood No. 1445. Since 1996, he has headed the Virginia Traveling Masons.

Brother Hodges has been named in "Who's Who in America" several times during his tenure as a member of the Charlottesville/Albemarle County Jaycees. He is a recipient of the Eagle Scout Award and previously served as a Scoutmaster in the Petersburg, Virginia area. He holds membership in the American Dental Association, the Virginia Dental Association and the Charlottesville/Albemarle County Dental Association.

He is married to the former Susan Elaine Lascola of Newport News, Virginia, and resides in Charlottesville. They are the proud parents of a son, Jason, and a daughter, Ashley. They are members of First United Methodist Church where Brother Hodges serves on various committees.



Grand Master's Address

Installation Address

Thank you. I am humbled at the task of serving our Grand Lodge. I feel honored to be in the company of some of the finest Masonic Leaders our Craft has known: our Past Grand Masters. I spent an afternoon communing with the photo gallery in the Museum. To think of all the Masons who have shaped this Grand Jurisdiction into what it is today. The efforts of each building upon the other much like the symbolism of the bricks being laid in my pin. I admire the wisdom exemplified by these Masons each time I research the Methodical Digest. I salute each of you for your efforts to make our Grand Lodge into the premier organization it has the capability of becoming. Most Worshipful Cohen, I compliment your thoroughness and tireless efforts this year. I said you were a genius four years ago and I am certain your efforts for our gentle Craft will go down in the archives to prove such. I extend my compliments to you for an outstanding job.

To the Journeymen and their Ladies, I want you to know how much Susan and I have appreciated your assistance in preparing for what we are about to undertake. It has been a wonderful journey, we have traveled together to this moment, and, I expect, it will be a fantastic journey we will share over the next twelve months. Thank you.

To our Grand Lodge Officers, I pledge my unwavering support of all you plan to do in preparation for this office. We are truly fortunate to have so much talent. As the saying goes, "For such a time as this we have been prepared." I believe each one of us has been called at this time and at this place to apply his talents to see our fraternity succeed. We have many opportunities ahead and many bridges to cross in our pursuit of the dream we have molded for this Grand Jurisdiction. May it never be said that we did not rise up to the task.

I chose the scripture of **Jeremiah 29:11**, "For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, they are plans for good and not evil, for a future and hope." I find direction in these words fitting to the occasion. As I entered this fraternity, my mentor, Right Worshipful Donald Wright, taught me that this Craft, we comprise, consists of men who believe God lays out the plan for their lives. We discussed the ritual of this Fraternity as having so many components interwoven together as to be the design of the hand of the Almighty, and the union of men called together for the common causes, we celebrate, as His plan to illustrate to the masses how good men and true men would exist in respect and harmony. We discussed the design of the universe was so well orchestrated that only a Supreme Power could organize such, and that each of us united in that common cause would build an edifice to God. I found this complimentary to my understanding of life. I still see things this way. I know that I have a life filled with good and not evil, because my moral basis guides me to make decisions that keep me on that track. I know that I have a hope, not just to succeed but that my life is of value and has a reason for being here. So to does this fraternity.

My pin design compliments my past and reaffirms my dedication. I would not be here had I not served as Worshipful Master of Widow's Sons' Lodge, for that I

(Continued on Page 3)

Virginia Masonic Herald Supplement

Posted monthly for the Brethren of Virginia

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Chairman & Editor

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Installation Address (Continued)

have incorporated the colors of my pin from 1996 and the essence of the design in our Bicentennial Plaque which we dedicated in 1999. We sought to depict the importance of Masons coming together, being cemented with that Brotherly Love we advocate exists in our fraternity, erecting that façade of living stones dedicated to God, our Heavenly Father. I profess the same today. My theme is “*Discovering Our Potential.*” I don’t mean just the potential to raise funds to underwrite our charitable endeavors, though that is important. No, more specifically I mean that we should search in our own minds to find the potential for each of us to realize his true potential to aspire to the plan God has set for us which our ritual so eloquently proclaims. Not to be satisfied at merely performing the task, but learning to improve because of the experience. Not just saying the words, but meaning what we say. Personal improvement of the individual Mason bonded together with other Masons doing the same by that sincere affection we say we create when we mentor each other is the goal. We, as a Grand Line, have been professing that the most important means of accomplishing the creation of a true Brotherhood is by mentoring each other. Great success has occurred in providing the resources to assist our Craft to do this very task. Now, I ask all of us, you, me and the new man who hasn’t even knocked on the West Gate yet, to dedicate ourselves to look beyond the here and now, to aspire to greatness in our personal lives, not greater than the next man but greater than we were yesterday. What we will ultimately find in *Discovering Our Potential* is that that potential is limitless. I challenged a Lodge once to dream dreams big enough for God to be involved. These Brethren took the challenge and have a new project ready to institute which we will unveil in the very near future. The potential of this project is electrifying. I told my team that I dreamed of an opportunity for Masons to unit en masse to pay tribute to our Masonic Heroes of World War II. I envision five thousand Masons showing patriotism, respect, and admiration on Memorial Day 2009

I dreamed of a need for our Fraternity to unite. Unite to change our attitudes to reflect the next generation of men and women who will ask to be members. Unite to work for a common cause in areas of our Commonwealth where we see less of a positive effect from our Fraternity than we could have. Regionally we will have activities being planned involving numerous bodies of the fraternal family.

What is our Potential? Limitless. Inspiring. God-given. Join me as we venture on that journey of *Discovering Our Potential*.

Grand Master’s Goals for 2009

Freemasonry has under its fraternal umbrella a vast expanse of charitable assistance to mankind. We respect and salute all of these endeavors. It is our goal to have you exposed to all of these philanthropic ventures. We need to remain proud of how our efforts make a positive impact upon our fellow men, women and children. It is a true measure of our fulfilling our obligations as Masons. Each Lodge needs to support our youth organizations more actively. We need to visit and support their meetings, and we need to contribute to their foundations. We ask each Mason to remember the welfare of his fellow Brethren and support the Masonic relief Fund.

Without a doubt, the premier charitable program will be our Masonic Home of Virginia. Our Home is an investment in our souls, for what better nourishment for your soul than to know that you are making a difference in the lives of friends, maybe even relatives. Our “Outreach program” needs to be expanded to assist more in living an acceptable standard of living, in their own homes, surrounded by relatives and friends. This dream can only occur when we see beyond ourselves and contribute to underwrite these expenses. We need to have our Home reflect the kind of community that “we” want to live in. “For he who is placed on the lowest spoke of fortune’s wheel may be entitled to our regard, because a time will come, and the wisest knows not how soon, when all distinctions but those of merit and goodness shall cease...”

We will host a forum on Freemasonry for 21st Century on January 10, 2009. We ask that any and all Lodges, Appendant and Associated Bodies have representatives present for this worthwhile Masonic event.

(See Page 10)

Five Principles for Success of the Fraternity

- 1) Become aware of your importance as a Mason. Every individual should contribute to the overall success of the Fraternity.
 - A) Each of us are more than just members of a group; we are or should be representatives of God's charity.
 - B) Live, think, and react as a Man of virtue and honor would live, think, and react.
- 2) Become a manager of the idea that we are the Premier Men's Organization of men of integrity and character to which the burdened heart can pour out its sorrow, that distress can prefer its suit, whose hand is guided by justice and whose heart is expanded by benevolence.
 - A) Institution of Freemasonry and all those who espouse the cause of its ideals, its morality, and its brotherly love.
 - B) Strive to improve, be better tomorrow than you were yesterday.
- 3) Be proud of who you are and what you stand for!
- 4) Realize the possibility you have to attain great things.
- 5) Understand what we mean in the "Fatherhood of God"
 - A) "If God is for us, who could be against us?"
 - B) But, don't be false in your living of this realization.

Grand Master's Calendar

November 2008

- 20 Piedmont Shrine Club
- 21 Hampton VA Hospital
- 22 Acca Ceremonial, Richmond
- 24 Valley of Richmond AASR
- 29-30 Miss Job's Daughters Pageant and Supreme Visitation, Williamsburg

December 2008

- 3 Midlothian Lodge No. 211
- 6 Oyster Roast, Cape Charles
- 10 DeMolay Legion of Honor Ceremony
Masonic Home Board Meeting
Richmond Commandery No. 2
- 12 Grand Lodge of D.C.
- 14 Wreath Laying, Mount Vernon
Reception, Collinwood
Christmas Parade, Chester
- 18 Fredericksburg Commandery No. 1
Christmas Observance

Discovering our Potential

Mission and Vision Statements of The Grand Lodge, A.F. & A.M., of Virginia

The **mission** of the Grand Lodge of Virginia is to teach and perpetuate a way of life that promotes the Brotherhood of Man under the Fatherhood of God and to assist its Lodges to grow and prosper.

The **vision** of the Grand Lodge of Virginia is to be the premier organization composed of men of integrity and character, who are honest, true to their word, believe in God, are devoted to family, charitable in their community, and courteous and helpful to each other.

SUMMARY - GRAND LODGE – 2008
230TH GRAND ANNUAL COMMUNICATION
SHERATON RICHMOND WEST HOTEL, I-64 AT BROAD STREET ROAD
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA
NOVEMBER 7 - 8, 2008

Most Worshipful Edmund Cohen, Grand Master greeted the Brethren and distinguished guests.

OFFICERS
GRAND LODGE, A.F. & A.M., OF VIRGINIA
2007 - 2008

MT. WOR. EDMUND COHEN	<i>Grand Master</i>
RT. WOR. JEFFERY EUGENE HODGES.....	<i>Deputy Grand Master</i>
RT. WOR. WILLIAM EARLE RORER, JR.	<i>Grand Senior Warden</i>
RT. WOR. JOHN MASON CHAMBLISS, JR.....	<i>Grand Junior Warden</i>
MT. WOR. WILLIAM LEE HOLLIDAY	<i>Grand Treasurer</i>
MT. WOR. ALAN WAYNE ADKINS	<i>Grand Secretary</i>
RT. WOR. WILLIAM TALBOTT ELLISON, JR.....	<i>Grand Senior Deacon</i>
RT. WOR. LOUIS KERFORD CAMPBELL.....	<i>Grand Junior Deacon</i>
RT. WOR. DAVID CARROLL MORRIS.....	<i>Grand Marshal</i>
RT. WOR. NORMAN ALFRED MAYO.....	<i>Associate Grand Marshal</i>
RT. WOR. DAVID NATHAN SILVER.....	<i>Administrative Assistant to the Grand Master</i>
BRO. EDWIN POWERS ELLIOTT, JR.	<i>Grand Chaplain</i>
RT. WOR. HOEN McGUIRE EDWARDS, JR.....	<i>Grand Lecturer</i>
RT. WOR. PAUL DAVID SLEEPER	<i>Grand Provost</i>
RT. WOR. LAMBROS GEORGE DELIGAN	<i>Grand Pursuivant</i>
RT. WOR. GORDON HECTOR SPRIGG, JR.....	<i>Grand Purveyor</i>
WOR. AARON SHELDON ZENO	<i>Grand Senior Steward</i>
RT. WOR. GEORGE WILLIAM THOMAS, JR.	<i>Grand Junior Steward</i>
WOR. FRANCIS REED BROWN	<i>Grand Organist</i>
WOR. SAMUEL MOSELEY JONES	<i>Grand Physician</i>
RT. WOR. LONNIE LEE GODFREY	<i>Grand Tiler</i>

OFFICERS EMERITUS

RT. WOR. EDWARD CLEVELAND BARDEN, JR. *Deputy Grand Secretary*

The Grand Master proceeded to open the 230th Grand Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of Virginia. Friday morning's session included the ADDRESS TO GRAND LODGE of Most Worshipful Edmund Cohen, as well as a memorial service conducted by Most Worshipful Charles Franklin Shuler, P.G.M.

James Noah Hillman Awards and Seymour Jonas Levy Awards will be presented to those Lodges, which qualified by the District Deputy Grand Masters when they officially visit the Lodges during 2009.

Most Worshipful Brother Cohen recognized his distinguished guests as well as the Past Grand Masters of Masons in Virginia.

The Perfect Ashlar Award was presented to Brother Stuart A. Shipley, a member of Varina Lodge No. 272.

John Blair, Jr. Awards were presented on Friday to Right Worshipful Matthew Todd Szramoski of Yorktown Lodge No. 205, and Right Worshipful William Edward Hershey, Jr. of Hay Market Lodge No. 313. The George Washington Distinguished Service Medals were also presented to Most Worshipful George Harry Chapin of Springfield Lodge No. 217, and Most Worshipful James Milton Scarce, Jr. of Pleasants Lodge No. 63.

The Grand Master's Award of Excellence for the Outstanding Sponsoring Body of a Virginia Chapter of the International Order of DeMolay was presented to Westhampton Lodge No. 302 by Right Worshipful Michael Earl Williams, Executive Officer in Virginia. Brother Howard Kenneth Smith, Sr., on behalf of the Virginia DeMolay Foundation, presented the Odie R. Howell Leadership Award for individual support of the Virginia DeMolay Foundation to Worshipful Ronald Eugene Heald.

The Grand Master recognized those Lodges and individuals who qualified for the Lodge Builders Pin.

(Continued on Page 6)

Grand Annual Communication (Continued from Page 5)

Committee meetings were held during Friday afternoon, and a banquet for the delegates and distinguished guests was held on Friday evening at 6:30 P.M.

The Grand Master called the Craft from Refreshment to Labor at 8:30 A.M. on Saturday morning, November 8, 2008.

The booklet of Committee Reports was adopted as printed. The report of the Finance Committee was given and the budget for 2009 was presented and approved, as was the report from the President of the Board of Governors of the Masonic Home of Virginia. The Report of the Past Grand Masters was presented by Most Worshipful Charles Franklin Shuler and adopted. Resolutions 08-01 through 08-03 were acted upon with the results as listed elsewhere in this summary. Most Worshipful Donald Maynard Robey conducted the election of Grand Lodge Officers with the following results:

OFFICERS GRAND LODGE, A.F. & A.M., OF VIRGINIA 2008 - 2009

MT. WOR. JEFFERY EUGENE HODGES	<i>Grand Master</i>
RT. WOR. WILLIAM EARLE RORER, JR.	<i>Deputy Grand Master</i>
RT. WOR. JOHN MASON CHAMBLISS, JR.	<i>Grand Senior Warden</i>
RT. WOR. WILLIAM TALBOTT ELLISON, JR.	<i>Grand Junior Warden</i>
MT. WOR. WILLIAM LEE HOLLIDAY	<i>Grand Treasurer</i>
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RT. WOR. LOUIS KERFORD CAMPBELL.....	<i>Grand Senior Deacon</i>
RT. WOR. PAUL DAVID SLEEPER	<i>Grand Junior Deacon</i>
RT. WOR. REESE EDWARD CARROLL, JR.	<i>Grand Marshal</i>
RT. WOR. ROBERT ASHBY CLORE	<i>Associate Grand Marshal</i>
RT. WOR. MORING ELBERT GRAVITT.....	<i>Administrative Assistant to the Grand Master</i>
BRO. JASON ELLIOTT HODGES.....	<i>Associate Administrative Assistant to the Grand Master</i>
RT. WOR. EDWIN CLIFTON WHITLOCK.....	<i>Grand Chaplain</i>
RT. WOR. HOEN MCGUIRE EDWARDS, JR.	<i>Grand Lecturer</i>
RT. WOR. WALTER WINCHELL YOUNG.....	<i>Grand Provost</i>
RT. WOR. DAVID ALEX BURKUS.....	<i>Grand Pursuivant</i>
RT. WOR. JOHN QUINTON SHEPPARD.....	<i>Grand Purveyor</i>
RT. WOR. JAMES FRIEND DICKERSON	<i>Grand Senior Steward</i>
WOR. BERNARDO FONTELERA MOLINA, JR.	<i>Associate Grand Senior Steward</i>
RT. WOR. RICHARD GUSTAVUS MOTLEY.....	<i>Grand Junior Steward</i>
WOR. FRANCIS REED BROWN	<i>Grand Organist</i>
WOR. SAMUEL MOSELEY JONES	<i>Grand Physician</i>
WOR. DOUGLAS EUGENE PHILLIPS	<i>Grand Tiler</i>

OFFICERS EMERITUS

RT. WOR. EDWARD CLEVELAND BARDEN, JR. *Deputy Grand Secretary, Emeritus*

The newly-elected Grand Master, Most Worshipful Jeffery Eugene Hodges, announced his appointments to the Board of Governors of the Masonic Home of Virginia for a three-year term. They are Most Worshipful Alan Wayne Adkins, Right Worshipful Gordon Hector Sprigg, Jr. and Worshipful Harris Traill Luscomb, III.

The Committee on Credentials gave its report. There were 255 Lodges represented with 1,297 registered by the Committee.

A motion was entertained and passed to pay the bills of this Grand Lodge.

At the conclusion of all business, the Grand Lodge of Virginia was closed in Ample Form until the Friday preceding the second Monday in November 2009 unless sooner convened in emergent or special communication at the will and pleasure of the Most Worshipful Grand Master.

The Installation of District Deputy Grand Masters and Grand Lodge Officers was held at 5:30 P.M. in the ballroom of the Sheraton Richmond West Hotel. The newly elected Grand Master, Most Worshipful Jeffery Eugene Hodges, gave an address outlining his goals for the coming year.

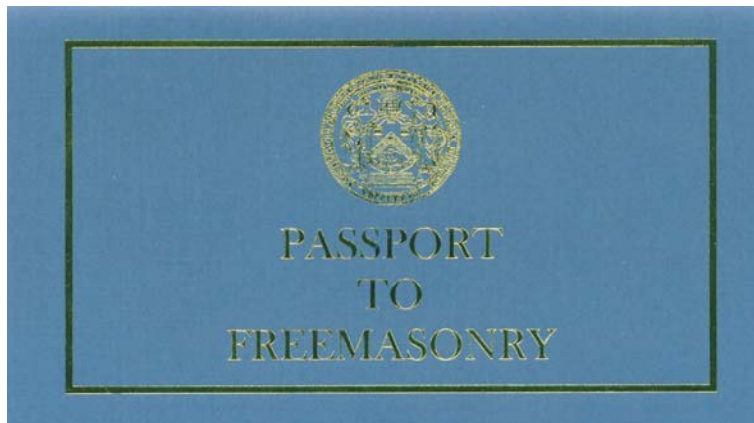
Respectfully submitted,
Alan W. Adkins
Grand Secretary

Masonic Passport

The National Park System has a "Passport" program, where you take your passport to each of the Federal Parks and have your passport stamped. To go along with the "Traveling Trowel" program, we are introducing a "Passport to Freemasonry" booklet, which will be a fundraising project for the Masonic Relief Fund. The "Passport to Freemasonry" program will hopefully endure for the lifetime of the Master Mason using it, as a way in which, to keep a track of all the Lodges he visits as a Freemason. During each visit, the Secretary would stamp the Lodge Seal on the participant's "passport."

This program will hopefully encourage the Masons holden under the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge, A.F. & A.M., of Virginia to travel around the Commonwealth for the purpose of visiting and participating with other Lodges and to visit and participate with the youth organizations and appendant bodies. Points can be earned toward the Grand Master Traveling Trowel Award by filling the pages of the "Passport."

The "passport" will be in booklet format. The size will be approximately 6 1/2" wide x 4" tall, it will be bound, and have a printable area advertising our fraternal organizations. The front side of each page will contain a place for three Lodge Seals (see front cover, inside of the front cover and sign-off sheets below). They can be purchased from Grand Lodge for \$5.00 plus S&H.



The Grand Master encourages you to visit all "Masonic Family" organizations.

The first fifteen sign-in pages are to record Lodge visits and the remaining two pages may be used to record visits to appendant bodies.

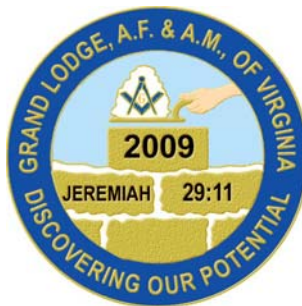
The information about each organization has been edited due to space, but the Grand Master trusts it will give you a positive look at the tenets of each organization.

The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge
 OF ANCIENT, FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS
 OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
 4115 NINE MILE ROAD
 RICHMOND, VA. 23223-4926
 TELEPHONE 804-222-3110
 WEB-SITE www.grandlodgeofvirginia.org

Dear Brother,

It is a pleasure to see that you have requested a Passport to Freemasonry. This is an excellent way to record your visits to other Lodges. I trust that in your Masonic travels, you will not only enjoy your travels, but make new and everlasting bonds of friendship and Brotherly Love.

Sincerely and fraternally
 King Solomon, Past Grand Master



PRINT YOUR NAME		
YOUR LODGE NAME AND NUMBER		
HOME ADDRESS		
HOME TELEPHONE NUMBER		
Lodge Name & No.	Lodge Name & No.	Lodge Name & No.
Holden Under (Name of GL)	Holden Under (Name of GL)	Holden Under (Name of GL)
Date of Visit	Date of Visit	Date of Visit
Type of Visit (Reason) (Stated, called, etc.)	Type of Visit (Reason) (Stated, called, etc.)	Type of Visit (Reason) (Stated, called, etc.)
STAMP LODGE SEAL HERE or:	STAMP LODGE SEAL HERE or:	STAMP LODGE SEAL HERE or:
Signature of Worshipful Master	Signature of Worshipful Master	Signature of Worshipful Master
Signature of Lodge Secretary	Signature of Lodge Secretary	Signature of Lodge Secretary

Membership Retention

Submitted by Wor. Paul A. Miller
Committee on Membership

The Grand Lodge Committee on Membership has in fact two missions. First, to identify those who are not members of the Fraternity who are individuals we would want to call “Brother”. The second is to retain those Brethren who we initiate, pass and raise; and thus insure they are benefiting from all that Freemasonry has to offer. Consequently, there are two elements to the Lodge program for membership development: first, to create a welcome environment for men interested in joining Freemasonry, and second, to retain existing members by keeping them involved and motivated.

The Grand Lodge Committee on Membership exists to assist in the development and implementation of a Lodge Membership Program to be used at the local Lodge and District level to promote the attraction of new members and assure the retention of existing members. The program focuses on providing ideas and guidance about effective methods to increase knowledge of Freemasonry, which is instrumental in generating interest among potential members and is also key in retaining the interest of those who are already members of the Craft.

It is important that we recognize the crucial significance that both of these goals play in the long term health of our Lodges. We have been concerned with decreasing membership numbers for years and have developed strategies to reverse that trend. However, as a Fraternity, we have been slow to develop programs and strategies to solve problem areas in membership retention. There is a growing recognition across the Fraternity, that we must strengthen our Lodges from within, by inspiring interest and participation by the Brethren, developing leadership skills in the Lodge Officers, and generally making the time spent at Lodge something which is valued by the member.

How can a Lodge capture the interest and encourage the involvement of a Brother? Simply put, by recognizing the needs and expectations of the Brother! This involves taking an interest in your Brother (both new Masons and those long term members), by offering quality and inspiring programs (including those for the family), and offering opportunities to contribute to the community.

How will you know if you are meeting these goals and expectations? By seeking the opinions of your members! Survey the membership and make a plan to address the results of the survey. Then develop a plan to provide a meaningful role in the Lodge for every member. Give them the opportunity to feel that they are a part of the life of the Lodge. It has been stated the typical Mason becomes inactive in about four years, particularly if he does not become involved with the Lodge or have a role or function he enjoys.

The Lodge can avoid losing the interest of new members when each new Brother has a mentor. The new Brother should be asked about his interests and expectations, and the Master should work to insure those interests are integrated in his involvement in some form of Lodge activity.

Likewise the Lodge must also focus on retaining members that were raised in years past. This can be done by creating a Member Relations committee to determine if there are unrecognized needs and expectations of the members that are not being met, maintaining contact with the Lodge membership to encourage a connection between members and the Lodge, and determining how Lodge programs might be adjusted or supplemented to draw out a larger number of Brethren based on their collective interests and expectations. All of these ideas require the same thing – energy and initiative!

The Lodge leadership must have a willing interest in doing what it takes to improve the Lodge, and in taking steps to begin the process. It will not take place overnight, but it will certainly only take place if there are Brethren willing to take the first step. Start now to retain every Brother in your Lodge.

Contact your Committee on Membership representative to get some ideas on starting or expanding this program in your Lodge. If you don't know how to contact your representative, ask your District Deputy Grand Master, as the committee representative is part of the District Team ready to assist the Lodges with any and all matters pertaining to attracting new members and retaining our existing members.

2008 Country Hoedown



Deputy Grand Master speaking to the participants at the hoedown held at Acca Shrine Center.



The country band which played for the hoedown breakfast at Khedive Shrine Center.

On October 18, 2008, with the permission of our Grand Master, Right Worshipful Jeffery Eugene Hodges, Deputy Grand Master at the time, led a caravan of cars across the state for a statewide “Country Hoedown.” The purpose of this was to increase fellowship among the various Masons and appendant bodies in the state, have a great time, and also to raise money for the Masonic Home of Virginia and the four Shrine Center’s Transportation Funds. The caravan started in Chesapeake at the Khedive Shrine Center for a country-style breakfast and music. Around 9:30 AM, he traveled to Acca Shrine Center in Richmond for a barbeque lunch and more hoedown music. After lunch, they traveled on to Kazim Shrine Center in Roanoke for dinner. Participants from all four Shrine Centers were involved along with Masons and their wives from around the state. In all, 467 Masons, their families, and friends enjoyed a wonderful day of friendship.

Through the one-day Country Hoedown, \$3072 was donated to the Masonic Home of Virginia and \$3072 was split between the four Shrine Centers in accordance with how many they had attend from their or at their locations. Khedive received \$932.00, Acca received \$1173.24, Kena received \$130.06, and Kazim received \$840.70. Hopefully this fun event will occur again next year!

SUMMARY OF RESOLUTIONS PRESENTED AT 2008 GRAND ANNUAL COMMUNICATION

RESOLUTION NO. 08-01 — Adopted

This resolution would change Sections 1.73 and 1.75 of the Methodical Digest to add the Committee on Information Technology as a standing committee.

RESOLUTION NO. 08-02 — Rejected

This resolution would change Section 2.95 of the Methodical Digest to document the procedure to follow when a voucher of a petition is not present when the petition is being taken up for action. It also makes clear what happens when a voucher is from another Grand Jurisdiction.

RESOLUTION NO. 08-03 — Rejected

This resolution would change Section 2.95 to *require* the Master of a Lodge to respread a ballot if it comes up not clear the first time.

Grand Master's Goals (Continued)

We will convene the Grand Lodge at the D-Day Memorial for a commemorative event on Monday, May 25, 2009 to dedicate a plaque in honor of our World War II veterans. I want 5000 Masons in regalia to process into the Grand Plaza of the Memorial as a tribute to our Masonic Heroes. Please make a special attempt to put this event on your calendar. You will not regret your involvement. I hope to see buses of Masons arrive at the site. More will come on this event.

On October 10, 2009, we will host a Black-Tie Gala for the Grand Lodge Library and Museum. We ask for your support and that of your Brethren in any of these efforts.

We will celebrate our heritage this year with a statewide Open House scheduled for October 13, 2009. I am asking all lodges to open their doors and invite in the family of Masonry as well as the general public to celebrate the 231 anniversary of the founding of our Grand Lodge. Make a statement of the importance of Freemasonry by planning participation in these events.

As for membership, I would like every active Mason to replace himself in the year 2009. Share the light and spread the warmth of friendship. All you have to do is talk about what you like in what we do.

Ask Hiram

I have noticed in some Lodges that when the Senior or Junior Warden is called to the East by the Worshipful Master, the Lodge has somebody fill in the chair for him and also wear the jewel of the office. Is this really required? It seems that if they stay within the confines of the Lodge room they should not have to worry about having the chair occupied. In degree work, the chairs are left unoccupied at times, so what is the difference if any?

ANSWER: An argument could be made that, as the Methodical Digest Section 2.48, Decision 37 from 1909 states that 'The Master wears an immovable jewel and his station should never be vacated without a substitute, except as required by the ritual in conferring the degrees', and as Wardens also wear immovable jewels, the same decision would apply to them as well. The Grand Lodge Committee on Work, though, has decided that it is not necessary to fill the Station of the Senior or Junior Warden when either approaches the East to receive or give a presentation (1984).

Festival of the Rites

In January 2009, the Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Virginia, the Grand Commandery of Virginia, and the Scottish Rite in the Orient of Virginia will be holding a three-day "Festival of the Rites." This will occur on January 17, 24, and 31. On January 17, five degrees will be given for the Royal Arch; on January 24, three degrees for the Commandery will be given; and on January 31, the five mandatory degrees of the Scottish Rite will be given.

The event will occur in three locations throughout the Commonwealth: Norfolk, Richmond, and Roanoke (locations are still being confirmed). This is only open to somebody who is not a current member of these three Orders. The cost to the candidate is \$300. This will pay for all of your initiation fees in all three Orders and for your first year's dues! This is truly a good deal.

By taking these degrees, the candidates will have the opportunity to witness expert presentations of the York and Scottish Rite degrees at a bargain cost while expanding their Masonic vistas. Remember the Royal Arch Degree represents the culmination and completion of the Master Mason's Degree, and the Commandery Orders and Scottish Rite Degrees expand upon and compliment the lessons taught in the Symbolic Lodge.

On Page 9, you can find a copy of the petition for the Orders. The petition has to be approved at a Royal Arch Chapter, a Commandery, and at one of the Scottish Rite Valleys. Don't hesitate in getting this done, because it could take some time to get them routed through all three. The earlier the better. The petition can also be downloaded at the Grand Commandery's website: http://virginiaknightstemplar.org/documents/Combined_Petition.pdf

