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The Grand Master's Message

The District Meetings began on May 16, 1988 with the first in Wallace Lodge No. 595 at Wallace, North Carolina for the 10th and 12th Masonic Districts. The final District Meeting was held on August 25, 1988 in Mount Vernon Lodge No. 143 in Bonlee, North Carolina for the 31st and 37th Masonic Districts. A total of thirty-one District Meetings were held and I am pleased to report that overall the attendance was very good. A total of 2,921 Master Masons, the vast majority of whom were lodge officers, attended the meetings. This afforded me the unique opportunity to meet with and present this year's program "The Positive Image of Freemasonry" to almost 3,000 Masons in positions of leadership across the state. The program presented was received with interest and enthusiasm and I received many requests for copies of the remarks I made at the meetings. In response to this request, I am including in this issue of the *North Carolina Mason* a condensed version of the presentation made at the meetings which follows:

The program we are presenting this year is entitled, "The Positive Image of Freemasonry." It can be divided into three principle parts: 1. Leadership Development for Lodge Officers. 2. Candidate Motivation. 3. Masonic Visibility and Public Awareness.

Practically every major corporation has a training program for its key people. The Masonic Fraternity is not a commercial enterprise, but we do have 70,000 members in North Carolina and the 394 subordinate lodges conduct business and deal with finances. We own and operate two of the finest institutions for child care and care for the elderly in the nation, each with multi-million dollar annual budgets. Yet, we leave our leaders to train themselves. I believe that there is a need and that we have the responsibility to offer a basic training program for subordinate lodge officers.

At the present time a program for leadership development is being prepared by the Grand Master's Committee on Masonic Research and Development. It is anticipated that a workshop or seminar on leadership will be held at perhaps nine locations across the state, perhaps in November of this year. The lodges will be notified of the time and places of these meetings and we expect that they will consist of good practical presentations on Masonic leadership skills presented by well qualified individuals. The workshops are being designed for the lodge officers beginning with Stewards through the Wardens and any Brother will be welcome to attend.



The second principal part of the program we are presenting is Candidate Motivation. Candidate motivation must first of all insure that candidates for the degrees of Masonry are favorably impressed by those degrees. It includes thorough instructions in the ethics and protocol of Masonic Lodges. All of us would agree that there is nothing more important in Masonry than excellence in the conferral of the degrees.

The Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft and Master Mason degrees should always be conferred in an expressive, meaningful and proficient manner, in an atmosphere of solemnity, void of laughter and frivolity. It is the responsibility of the Worshipful Master to make certain that this most important practice is observed in his lodge.

We should never assume that when the candidate is raised that he will automatically begin to attend and take his rightful place in the lodge. Candidate motivation involves the proper and effective presentation of the lodge system of Masonic education. In addition, I strongly recommend that a special program be presented at the first stated communication after the candidate is raised. On that occasion the candidate should be recognized as the newest member of the lodge, extended a cordial welcome and the program presented should be designed to instruct the candidate on a variety of subjects including Masonic protocol, Masonic charities and especially on the subject "What can I tell a non-Mason about Masonry."

The mentor program is highly recommended where the Worshipful Master assigns a veteran Mason to serve as mentor or advisor companion to each newly raised Master Mason for perhaps a twelve-month period. The mentor should be carefully selected and should be an individual the new Mason will respect and look up to and should attend lodge with the new brother and be available to answer questions and instruct him.

The third part of the program is Masonic Visibility and Public Awareness. We hold membership in the oldest and largest fraternity in the world. Masonry is an organization with a few secrets, and yet all too often we are perceived in the public eye as a secret order or a mysterious society of men meeting in secret. In fact, the average non-Mason knows very little about us. I think this is unfortunate because it simply is not true that we are a secret society. Our lodge buildings are prominently located and are usually identified by the square and compasses and the lodge name on the front of the building. Frequently, notices of our meetings are published in the local paper.

There are a number of reasons why the public does not know who we are and what we stand for. Our members generally do not discuss Masonry with their non-Mason friends. Lodges seldom sponsor programs that gain public attention, and we do not utilize modern methods of communications to tell the Masonic story.

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Masonry and Scouting

Brother Kenneth H. Grace, Marshal of the Southern California Research Lodge, is attempting to compile data on how many members of the Craft attained the coveted rank of Eagle Scout in the Boy Scout movement. If you did, or if you know a Mason who did, please forward appropriate information to: Kenneth H. Grace, 5424 West 134th Place, Hawthorne, CA 90250-4912. Please also furnish the same information to this paper at Oxford Orphanage Printing Department, Oxford, NC 27565, in order that other Masons in North Carolina may be informed of your fine achievement.

We know that Grand Master L. R. Thomas, Jr. was an Eagle Scout, we are sure there are others, so please let us know.

For over three-quarters of a century, the Boy Scouts have practiced the great values that parallel those tenets embodied in our Masonic ideals. Many members of our Fraternity still serve both organizations, even though their "out-of-door" scouting days are over and they now serve on committees, as merit badge counselors, and in similar capacities.

Brother Jack Levitt, Past Grand Master of California and Hawaii, is a strong supporter of Scouting along with entertainers Danny Thomas and Burl Ives. Brother and former President Gerald Ford is an Eagle Scout and a Mason.

Each year in the month of February is designated Boy Scout Month in America to coincide with the birthday on February 22 of Boy Scout founder Lord Baden-Powell. In some parts of the world Masonic Lodges are named for Baden-Powell (Australia has three so named), and the brethren gather in scout uniform and Masonic aprons. (To do that in this Grand Jurisdiction would probably require an opinion of the Grand Master as to the intent of REG. 51-23.)

Take Care!

Raleigh — It is a sad thing even to think of, but it is a fact that there are Masons, or former Masons, or well informed non-Masons, that are aware of Masonry's generosity to the destitute and the unfortunate, and who seek to take advantage of the open-heartedness of Masons.

With varying degrees of frequency, reports come to the Grand Secretary of individual Masons and/or lodges that have given financial aid to someone who appeared to be worthy and in need of that aid, later to learn they had been swindled by some unprincipled scoundrel.

The methods employed by these rascals are as varied as they are many, so lodges and Masons, unfortunately, should treat each request for financial aid with suspicion. If those seeking aid are genuinely worthy, a brief investigation will prove that; if they are not worthy, they will promptly disappear upon learning an investigation is in progress.

One example of methods used to obtain money has fleeced one of our lodges and a Kentucky Mason of \$60.00 each during the past summer: A voice on the phone claimed to be George Ruid, Secretary of a Scottish Rite Valley, and requested \$60.00 be given a Mr. Wilkerson at a specified location to enable the Mr. Wilkerson to visit his desperately ill father. Ruid said his office would repay the \$60.00 and provided a telephone number for use in obtaining repayment. The phone number in one such instance turned out to be that of the Knights of Columbus, who, of course, knew nothing of Ruid or Wilkerson.

This is only one example. Methods and names will vary, but each request should be investigated.

TAKE CARE!



Grand Master Visits With Ailing Masonic Veterans Area Masons Provide Services on Daily Basis

Asheville — On July 13, Grand Master L. R. Thomas, Jr. visited Masonic veterans of the armed forces now hospitalized at the Veterans Administration Medical Center here. During his visit with Raymond Wheeler, a member of Swannanoa Lodge No. 561, he was accompanied by those pictured above, from left: Ralph Copeland, Black Mountain Lodge No. 663; Past Master Ernest Reed, Black Mountain Lodge No. 663; John Lance, Hospital Representative in Asheville for the Masonic Services Association; the Grand Master; Judge David Sentelle of the Circuit Court of Appeals; and Junior Grand Deacon Ray Norris, all standing behind Wheeler.

Describing the visit as a memorable and rewarding experience, the Grand Master said, "It was a humbling experience for me as Grand Master to visit and greet the hospitalized veterans. While the brethren that we visited seemed appreciative of our visit, it was I who was blessed and enriched by meeting and talking with these courageous and gallant men who have served their nation with valor."

The Grand Master also commended Lance and his assistants "for their devoted service in regularly visiting and helping to care for our Masonic veterans who are confined to the hospital."

Lance, Senior Warden of Blackmer Lodge No. 170, also Past Master, Past Secretary, P.D.D.G.M., P.D.E.C., and Life Member, told us that approximately fifty volunteer Masons work about 500 hours monthly in the hospital.



Charlotte — Grand Master L. R. Thomas, Jr. (at left) is shown with officers and members of West Gate Lodge No. 738 as they conduct the ceremony of dedication of the new West Gate temple.

Dedication at West Gate No. 738

Charlotte — Grand Master L. R. Thomas, Jr. presided at the dedication of West Gate Lodge No. 738 on July 25. Assisting in the ceremony were the following officers of the lodge: Master Roland M. Smith, Senior Warden Oscar Bass, Jr., Junior Warden Joseph M. Brackett, Treasurer Wade L. Kirby, Secretary John R. Litaker, P.M., Junior Deacon William D. Burries, Steward Barry L. Cantrell, Steward Bennett H. Achord, Jr., Tyler Larry W. Quick, Chaplain William F. Navy; also Past Masters Roger W. Walters, Charles E. Sherer, Gerald O. Barnes, Bruce Bass, Troy R. Price and Robert J. Sizemore. Member Perry M. Blake filled a Steward's chair.

Other Grand Lodge officials attending were Deputy Grand Master Jerry G. Tart, Grand Secretary Robert P. Dudley, Grand Marshal Richard G. Moore, Grand Tyler Johnny R. West and Past Grand Master Robert N. Bass, Jr.

After the Grand Lodge had been opened in AMPLE FORM by the Grand Master, the public was invited in to

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Raleigh DeMolay Honored

Raleigh — Charles Silber, Master Councilor of the local DeMolay chapter, has been named "DeMolay of the Year" for all of North Carolina. Charles also received the Chevalier Degree during the Annual State Conclave in Charlotte last July.

Other local DeMolay, news of note: The chapter was host to twenty-four Oxford Orphanage boys and counselors at a baseball double-header in the Bulls Stadium at Durham on July 27. The DeMolays and Job's Daughters had earlier staged a spaghetti dinner to provide spending money for the Orphanage lads.

Up Top

Look at the top panel on this page. With this issue we have given the paper a new look which we hope you will like.

What we have tried to portray up there is what North Carolina Masonry does so well, that of which we can all be extremely proud, always remembering "... of these the greatest is Charity ..."

We owe thanks to a number of Masons and others that assisted in getting all this together.

Wiley K. Hill is the Mason shown pointing to his left. Wiley is District Deputy Grand Master in the 4th District, and is also a Past Master and present Secretary of Washington Lodge No. 675, at Washington. It is fitting that a Mason of Wiley's caliber should be the representative "North Carolina Mason" pointing to and supporting the Orphanage and the Home, and we thank him for doing this for us. It is just a shame there is not room up there for pictures of all other North Carolina Masons of equal caliber, for we do indeed have an abundance of Masons in this great Grand Lodge that would have been just as representative as Wiley.

The picture of Wiley was made by Rick Carter, Junior Deacon of Washington Lodge No. 675, an excellent photographer and a splendid young Mason. Rick donated his time, his expense and his talent to do this for us, and we are indeed grateful to him.

Brother Joe Colenda, manager of the Orphanage Printing Department, dug out the picture of the Orphanage children from among his vast store of such pictures. He may later change it for one he likes better, for it is Joe's nature to seek improvement. We thank him for this and for all else he does for us all the time.

Superintendent Tommy Jones arranged for several pictures of Home residents in order to give us a choice. If this one doesn't work out, you can bet he'll keep at it until one is produced that does. Tommy manages to attend to a lot of things, and we thank him for attending to this.

This, of course, was written before the paper was printed, so we had no idea when writing this how well or how poorly these pictures would reproduce. If necessary, we will replace one or more of the pictures in the next issue, or we may decide it will be best to convert all of them to line drawings. Give us a couple of months or so and we will get it right.