

# The Oklahoma Mason

THE GRAND LODGE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA

Vol. 4 • Fall 2013 • Grand Lodge Issue



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Brother Terry Story  
keeps the Grand  
Lodge building and  
grounds in great  
shape!

# From the Grand Master

**H**ave you ever looked at a photograph that unexpectedly seems to capture something about you? It jolts you and often it's hard to characterize what is special about that photograph or how to re-capture that moment.

Envision your masonic experience as a series of photographs. As Masons, we take our degrees, attend meetings, help with breakfasts, and express our membership with a ring or sticker on our car. We also perform charitable acts, listen over coffee with another brother, or just remember a father or grandfather who was a Mason, and are drawn closer to him. Each of these experiences is like a snapshot in time of our membership.

But Freemasonry itself – the essence of it - is like that unexpected photograph which captures us in a most surprising way. Could this unexpectedness explain why it is often difficult to express to someone what Freemasonry means, and why we remain a member? Don't we end up speaking around the essence, but not capturing its real meaning?

What is the primary value of any organization? Not its function – what it does – but its purpose. The success or failure of an organization depends on how well it fulfills its purpose.

For me, the purpose of Freemasonry is to help us become better men by assisting each Mason along his path to selfimprovement. How well Freemasonry fulfills that purpose depends on how well our members think we are engaging towards that purpose.

This past January I wrote, "...the future of our organization depends upon the quality of the experience each Mason has as a Mason. We must commit to improving the Masonic experience for all brothers – and that includes ourselves."

If the masonic experience is not meaningful to you, then it cannot create change in your life. Does Freemasonry fulfill its purpose for you? If the masonic

experience is not meaningful, how will you be able to express its purpose to someone interested in joining – or deciding not to recommend someone who does not share that purpose?

During our Leadership Retreat in August, Cliff Porter spoke powerfully on the transformative power of Freemasonry in his life, and how time and again, those men who saw potential in him were Masons. I was proud of those Masons who helped him, and simultaneously wondered if I have been or could be as transformative in someone's life. Has Freemasonry been transformative in your life?

Too often we desire big changes that bring about conversion experiences, and when the big changes don't occur, we feel as though we have missed something. But there are many small things and incremental changes which improve our experience as Masons. If you can attend lodge, do so. Not because we need more men to listen to the minutes of the previous meeting, but because if you attend you can begin to make the meetings more meaningful.

If you cannot attend lodge, you can still express Masonry in your life and actions. Be a force for good in your community and family (such as helping with Prevent Blindness or other program). Try those first, and we will progress!

This past year has not been my year, but yours. I hope that you are making progress in the goals you have set for yourself and your lodge, and look forward to laboring with you and the craft as we travel towards the future. Reflect on the snapshots of your masonic experience, and you may find an unexpected insight.

About ten years ago, I served as a trustee at our lodge. The older brother I replaced told me when I sign something my signature has value only due to my reputation – and to never act in a way that damages that reputation, because that is all I have. Strong words. But all Freemasonry really has is its reputation.



If we don't bring in members deserving of being Masons, or we are caught doing or acting in ways we shouldn't, it affects each one of us. How can we change ourselves inwardly if we don't act appropriately outward? Are you willing to sign your name to your masonic experience?

Finally, as I write to you in this fourth and last edition of the Oklahoma Mason in 2013, I am fully aware my time as Grand Master is drawing to a close. I thank you for the honor of having served you, and I know that you have a great team of Grand Lodge officers who are following me, who will serve you well.

Fraternally,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brad Rickelman".

Brad Rickelman, Grand Master

# ANY OKLAHOMA MASTER MASON IS WELCOME TO ATTEND GRAND LODGE

Grand Lodge meets Friday, November 8th, in the Main Auditorium of the Scottish Rite Temple in Guthrie, starting with formal opening at 1:00 PM. There is a public, open meeting starting at 4:00 PM.

Friday Evening the Ballroom will open for the **Banquet in Honor of the Grand Master**, hosted by the Museum & Library of the Grand Lodge. The banquet will begin at 6:00 PM. Tickets are \$25. See the box to the right.

At 7:30 PM there will be an Awards and Recognition open meeting in the Auditorium. The Youth Orders will be honored and bring greetings, and the State Teacher of the Year will be our speaker.

You can register for Grand Lodge from 10AM until 5PM Friday at the temple, or on Saturday from 7AM to 10AM.

**Grand Lodge will open at 8:30 AM** on Saturday, November 9th in the Auditorium. Only Master Masons with creden-

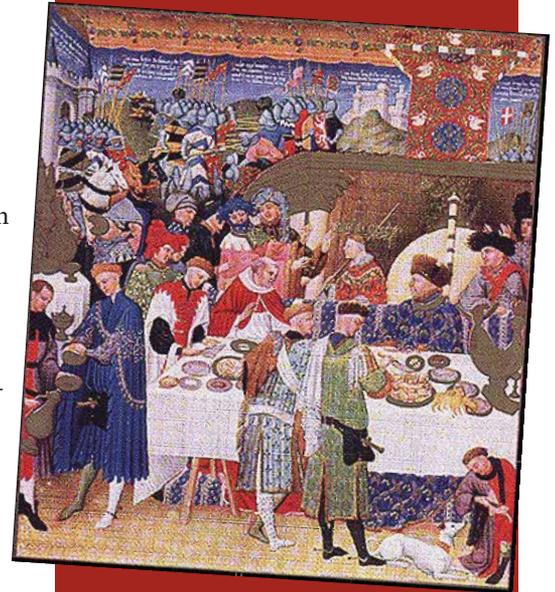
tials or proxies can speak in debate or vote, but all MASTER MASONS ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND.

**Voting for officers will begin at 7:00 AM in the Ballroom of the Temple and close at 10:00 AM.** Voting on resolutions is during the session. Apron required—paper aprons will be on sale in the Atrium. Cost is \$1.

The session will adjourn in the afternoon, and resume at 6:00 PM for the Installation of the 2014 Officers. Installation is open and all are welcome to attend.

**To reserve a room in the Inn at the Temple for Thursday and/or Friday night: Cost is \$10 per night Reserve a room by e-mailing the Innkeepers at [innkeep@att.net](mailto:innkeep@att.net)**

Please do not call the Grand Lodge or the Scottish Rite Temple to reserve a room. We will be unable to help you. Use the e-mail address given above.



Join us Friday Evening for the

**MUSEUM & LIBRARY BANQUET IN HONOR OF THE GRAND MASTER**

Order tickets for \$25 each by sending a check (payable to the Grand Lodge of Oklahoma), cash, or money order to

P.O. Box 1019  
Guthrie OK 73044

Tickets will be held for you to pick up at the Scottish Rite Temple on Friday.

DELTA LODGE #425  
IN ANTICIPATION OF HIS ELECTION &  
INSTALLATION AS  
MOST WORSHIPFUL GRAND MASTER  
OF THE M.:W.: GRAND LODGE  
AF&AM OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA  
ANNOUNCES THE  
APRON PRESENTATION CEREMONY  
HONORING OUR DISTINGUISHED  
BROTHER  
**RONALD CHAMBERS**



# BRETHREN AVAILABLE FOR OFFICE

Below are brief biographical sketches of Brethren who have made themselves available for the Office of Junior Grand Warden or for election to the Board of the Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma. The information is taken from the forms they filed with the Grand Secretary. Their biographies are presented in the order of the dates the forms were received.



**R**ichard L. Allison lives in Enid, Oklahoma. He is retired, having recently sold Enid Iron and Metal, a company he owned and operated for 28 years.

Worshipful Brother Allison served Garfield Lodge #501 as Worshipful Master in 1984 and again in 2004. He has served the Grand Lodge as District Deputy Grand Master in 1990, Grand Pursuivant in 2009, Grand Marshal in 2010 and 2012, Grand Tyler in 2011, and DDGM in 2013.

He is a member of the Guthrie Valley of the Scottish Rite, where he holds the 33<sup>rd</sup> degree. He has served as the Director of the 21<sup>st</sup> degree and as Wise Master of the Chapter of Rose Croix. He is also a member of the Chapter #6, Council #48,

and Commandery #1 of the York Rite, and Past Commander of the Enid Commandery.

He is a member of India Shrine, the Red Cross of Constantine, the Royal Order of Scotland, the Order of the Eastern Star, and the Order of the Sacred White Buffalo.

His leadership experiences in organizations other than Masonry include having served as a member of the Board of his church, State Representative for Oklahoma to the National Archery Association, several terms as President of the Oklahoma Archery Association Board of Directors, and the Viet Nam Veterans Association.

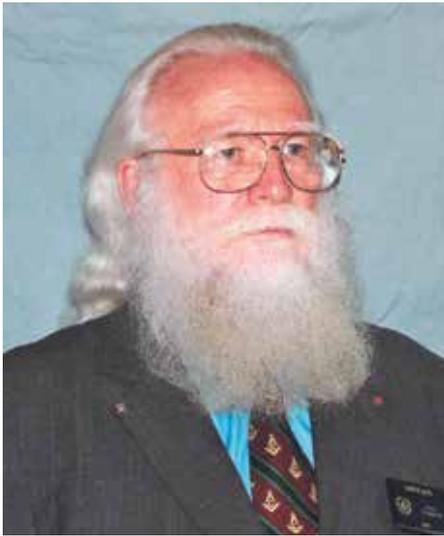
In answer to the question “Why do you seek this office?” Brother Allison wrote: *Masonry in Oklahoma has a long tradition of hard work and dedication by its members, staff, officers, and leaders. I hope to carry on that long tradition. I have been with the same company for 41 years and was President of the corporation for 28 of those years. I know what hard work and dedication can mean to an organization. Masonry has given me more than I could ever repay, and I want to use the skills I have learned in business and in life for the good of Masonry. That, after all, is what we all want, to give back to the fraternity that has given us so much—the fraternity we all know and love.*

In answer to the question “What goals would you like to attain as a Grand Lodge Officer?” Brother Allison wrote:

*In 2012, Oklahoma Masonry received a wonderful booster shot. This last year we have seen many Masters raised and continue to see many new Brethren initiated and raised. This, however, is not the end of what we must do for the future of Freemasonry in Oklahoma. We must have programs to insure we retain our new Brethren that we have raised. To do this, we need new programs to make sure they become active in the Lodge. Also to make Lodge meetings a pleasant experience for Brethren to come to. We need to make Masonry something that our young Brethren will want to encourage their friends to be a part of. Various areas of our great state differ in many ways and what may work for a Lodge in one part may not in another, so we need programs which can be tailored to fit different needs around the state. Futures are not set in stone—futures do not “just happen.” The future of Oklahoma Masonry depends on us all. All of us who love Masonry and what it stands for must work hand in hand to insure that future. I want to be a part of that great effort. To help along with so many others who are dedicated to Fraternity—to lead, to work, and dedicate myself to the future of Masonry.*

Note: Legislation passed in 2007 requires this question: Have you ever been suspended or expelled from a Lodge or from Freemasonry? (If so, provide date(s) of suspension or expulsion and of reinstatement.)

*Brother Allison has not been suspended or expelled.*



**J**ohn Edwin King and his wife, Vicki, live in Altus, Oklahoma. He is retired from the United States Air Force and the Great Plains Technology Center. He served 28 years in the Air Force and taught 14 years at Great Plains where he taught electronics. A graduate of four USAF Leadership Academies, he holds an Associate of Science from the Community College of the Air Force, an Associate of Arts Degree from Western Oklahoma State College, a Bachelor of Science Degree from Southern Illinois University, with Post Graduate work at OU and OSU. He holds a standard secondary Oklahoma teaching certificate.

He served as Worshipful Master of Altus Lodge in 2005 and of Mangum Lodge in 2010 and 2013. He is a Perpetual Member of Altus Lodge #62, Mangum Lodge #61, and the Oklahoma Lodge of Research as well as a member of Yeldel Lodge #196.

He has served the Grand Lodge as a member of the Grave Marking Committee in 2008, as District Deputy Grand Master in 2009 and 2010, was appointed Grand Representative to Rhode Island in 2011, and served on the Unity Committee in 2012. He is a Perpetual member of the Guthrie Valley of the Scottish Rite and holds the 33<sup>rd</sup> degree. He served as Commander of Kadosh in 2008. He is the Director of the 7<sup>th</sup> degree team and Director of the Supernumeraries.

In the York Rite, he is a Perpetual member of the Altus and Perpetual Member of the Elk City Chapters and

Councils, and the Elk City Commandery. He has served as Grand High Priest of the Royal Arch Masons of Oklahoma and the Grand Steward & District Deputy Grand Master of the Grand Council.

He is a Perpetual member of India Shrine, where he is Potentates Aid Emeritus, Past Captain SWOKIES, Past President of the Altus Shrine Club, and Director and Secretary of the Lawton Shrine Santas. He is a Past Worthy Patron of Altus Eastern Star Chapter #49 and Past Royal Patron of Altus Court #33, Order of the Amaranth. He is a Perpetual member and Past Master and current Secretary of the Oklahoma Lodge of Research, and a member of National Sojourners Tinker Chapter #43, the Royal Order of Scotland, Allied Masonic Degrees, Philalethes Society, York Rite College, Knight Masons, Country Boy Degree Team, Texas Lodge of Research, and is a Past DeMolay Dad—holding the DeMolay Legion of Honor—and Past Rainbow Dad.

He is Past and current President of the Altus Lions Club, Chairman and Assistant Scout Master of Troop 212 Altus AFB, and holds the Order of the Arrow, has various military medals and awards, and is an “A” Certificate Lecturer.

In answer to the question “Why do you seek this office?” Brother King wrote: *To help Masonry grow and prosper. Masonry’s charge is to “Take good men and make them better.” We can only do that by making Masonry the desire of “ALL” good men.*

In answer to the question “What goals would you like to attain as a Grand Lodge Officer?” he wrote: *To make better rapport between the Grand Lodge and all the Lodges. To have the Grand Lodge maintain personal relationship with all Lodges, serving the Lodges better.*

Note: Legislation passed in 2007 requires this question: Have you ever been suspended or expelled from a Lodge or from Freemasonry? (If so, provide date(s) of suspension or expulsion and of reinstatement.)

*Brother King has not been suspended or expelled.*

## Available for Election to the Board of the Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma

**E**vert Keith Liles and his wife, Dorothy, live in Oklahoma City. He is retired from Gulfstream Aerospace, where he worked for 44 years. His charitable / non-profit experience outside the Fraternity includes service on the Board of Trustees of the United Methodist Church and President of the Gulfstream Employees Club.

M.:W.: Brother Liles is a member of Myrtle Lodge #145, Mustang Lodge #407, Del City Lodge #536, and India Lodge #551, which he served as Worshipful Master in 2009. In 1969 he served Westwood Lodge #512 as Worshipful Master (the Lodge subsequently consolidated with Del City #536). He served the Craft as Grand Master in 2003.

In answer to the question “What strengths or experience do you feel you can bring to the Masonic Charity Foundation?” he wrote: *In 51 years of service to the Masonic Fraternity and representing the Craft as Grand Master in 2003, I have a genuine concern for the benevolent obligations we have to our members and their families.*

In answer to the question “How do you feel the Masonic Charity Foundation can best serve the Masonic Fraternity in Oklahoma,” he wrote: *By understanding the needs of our Masonic families and assisting local Lodges with programs to promote Masonry in their communities and continue to expand those programs that spotlight the many masonic charities supported by the Masonic Charity Foundation.*

Note: Legislation passed in 2007 requires this question: Have you ever been suspended or expelled from a Lodge or from Freemasonry? (If so, provide date(s) of suspension or expulsion and of reinstatement.)

*M.: W.: Liles has not been suspended or expelled.*

*continues on page 6*

## Available for Election to the Board of the Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma

**W**arren Lee McConnell and his wife, Margie, live in Hennessy. He is retired from owning his own oil company. He serves on the Board of Directors of Sooner Completions, Inc., and Vice-President of Spring Valley Oil and Gas. He is also the owner of Snuffy's Oilfield Service. He has served on the Board of the Foundation for 15 years. As he wrote on his filing form, "I know the goals and accomplishments and what works and what doesn't work." Non-profit experience also includes the Lions Club and the Board of his church.

W.: Brother McConnell served Coronado Lodge #56 as Worshipful Master in 1974 and 1999. He has served on numerous Grand Lodge committees and holds the Oklahoma Masonic Medal of Honor.

In answer to the question "What strengths or experience do you feel you can bring to the Masonic Charity Foundation?" he wrote: *"Have 15 years experience on the Board, have owned my own successful business, am active in several Masonic organizations."*

In answer to the question "How do you feel the Masonic Charity Foundation can best serve the Masonic Fraternity in Oklahoma," he wrote: *"They should continue doing what they are doing and find even more ways that will benefit Masons and the fraternal needs and goals."*

Note: Legislation passed in 2007 requires this question: Have you ever been suspended or expelled from a Lodge or from Freemasonry? (If so, provide date(s) of suspension or expulsion and of reinstatement.)

W.: Brother McConnell has not been suspended or expelled.

**J**ohnny D. Onkst and his wife, Yvette, live in Tulsa. He is a Business Development Manager with Otis Elevator Company. Responsible for developing people, finances, marketing, new construction and maintenance. He has been listed in Outstanding Young Men in America, has an MBA from Oklahoma City University, and is currently pursuing a doctorate in Leadership Management from the University of Oklahoma.

M.:W.: Brother Onkst is a member of Jenks Lodge #497, Nicoma Park Lodge #541, and Del City Lodge #536. He served Oklahoma Masonry as Most Worshipful Grand Master in 2008.

In answer to the question "What strengths or experience do you feel you can bring to the Masonic Charity Foundation?" he wrote: *Past Board Member, Special Olympics, Past Board Member, Junior Achievement, Past Treasurer of the Institute of Management Accountant, and has served as a credit committee member of the Tulsa Federal Employees Credit Union.*

In answer to the question "How do you feel the Masonic Charity Foundation can best serve the Masonic Fraternity in Oklahoma," he wrote: *"The Charity Foundation current programs play a vital role to Oklahoma Lodges, by helping do more in communities that otherwise Lodges could not do without Charity Foundation support."*

Note: Legislation passed in 2007 requires this question: Have you ever been suspended or expelled from a Lodge or from Freemasonry? (If so, provide date(s) of suspension or expulsion and of reinstatement.)

M.: W.: Onkst has not been suspended or expelled.

**C**harles R. Belknap and his wife, Linda, live in Enid. He is a band director at Cimarron Public Schools and owner of Charles Belknap Piano Services. For several years he was the K-12 Principal of the Drummond Schools and was Red Carpet Honor Band Director of the Year.

M.:W.: Brother Belknap is a member of Waukomis Lodge #161, and served the Craft as Grand Master in 2010. He has served one term as a member of the Board of the Charity Foundation. He also serves on the Vestry of St, Matthew's Episcopal Church in Enid.

In answer to the question "What strengths or experience do you feel you can bring to the Masonic Charity Foundation?" he wrote: *"I have the capacity to think through a problem by myself, and act on my decisions regardless as to whether they are popular or not."*

In answer to the question "How do you feel the Masonic Charity Foundation can best serve the Masonic Fraternity in Oklahoma," he wrote: *"The Masonic Charity Foundation needs to continue to find new and better ways of serving the Craft, and the Fraternity itself needs to better support the Foundation. We need to go beyond one being the giver and one being the receiver."*

Note: Legislation passed in 2007 requires this question: Have you ever been suspended or expelled from a Lodge or from Freemasonry? (If so, provide date(s) of suspension or expulsion and of reinstatement.)

M.: W.: Belknap has not been suspended or expelled.

# RESOLUTIONS TO BE VOTED UPON AT GRAND LODGE “SIMPLE ENGLISH” VERSION

Oklahoma Masonic law is changed when Brethren introduce Resolutions which are debated and adopted during the Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge. Because they are amending a legal document, the language is often difficult to understand. The “simple English” versions are provided here just as a matter of clarity. Note that only the “official” versions, which have been printed in the “Yellow Book” and sent to the Lodges contain the actual language of the Resolutions.

The Board of Grand Lecturers is recommending changes to the esoteric work. These changes will be exemplified during the closed session Friday afternoon after the formal opening of Grand Lodge at 1PM.

**1 Resolution #1** Amends section 401. Many Brethren have suggested that it would be much easier for members to learn the Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft, and Master Mason proficiency material if they could study from a cipher for the Degree as well as with their teacher. Currently, that is against Masonic law, as only Master Masons may own a copy of the cipher key. This Resolution allows the Grand Lodge to prepare and sell cipher keys designed for Entered Apprentices and Fellowcrafts.

**2 Resolution #2** Amends section U 204. Presently, a Brother must pass his Master Mason proficiency before he can serve in any appointed or elected office in the Lodge. This Resolution would allow Brethren to serve as appointed officers while they are still learning the proficiency. They still could not be elected to the office of Worshipful Master, Senior Warden, Junior Warden,

Treasurer, or Secretary until they have passed the Master Mason proficiency examination.

**3 Resolution #3-A & 3-B** Amends sections 301-J & 302. Each Lodge automatically has 3 votes at Grand Lodge—one cast by the Worshipful Master and one by each Warden. If a Lodge officer cannot attend, he can assign a proxy for his vote to any member of the Lodge. Sometimes, one brother may cast all three proxies. In order to provide more opportunity for participation in Grand Lodge, these Resolutions limit the maximum # of proxy votes a member may carry to two.

**4 Resolution #4** Amends section 502. Adds \$2 to the per capita (total \$10). The \$2 goes into a fund for the repair, maintenance, and capital improvement of the Grand Lodge building.

**5 Resolution #5-A - 5-E** A Masonic trial can be very expensive for a Lodge, since it is necessary to hire a court reporter and other expenses may also accrue. This set of Resolutions establishes a fund to help offset those costs, so that if a Lodge requests a Grand Lodge Trial Commission to handle a Masonic trial, and the Grand Master accepts the request, the Lodge’s financial obligation for expenses is limited to \$400. After the Lodge has expended that amount, the Grand Lodge fund will take over.

**6 Resolution #6** Amends section 402. Moves Grand School from May to just before Grand Lodge in November. This had been changed a few years ago to increase participation, but has not done so.

**7 Resolution #7** Amends section U 308. Allows a Lodge to do business in the Entered Apprentice Degree or Fellowcraft Degree if the Worshipful

Master do wishes. Note: the Resolution does not require a Lodge to do so, it merely gives permission to the Worshipful Master.

**8 Resolution #8** Amends section U 401. Reduces the time which must elapse between the day a petition is read in Lodge until it can be voted upon from 28 to 14 days.

**9 Resolution #9-A & 9-B** Amends sections 109 & U109. The sections speak of a majority of members present, but since some members carry proxies and have more than 1 vote, it should speak of a majority of votes cast. The Resolutions change the language from “members present” to “votes cast.” This conforms to our long-standing practice.

**10 Resolution #10** Adds section U324. Requires that official communications with Lodges in other Grand Jurisdictions or with other Grand Lodges by e-mail, etc., must go through our Grand Lodge. It is a matter of Masonic protocol expected in other states.

**11 Resolution #11** Amends section U 302-B. Clarifies the language concerning types of meetings and observations, open and tyled meetings, etc.

**12 Resolution #12** Amends Section U 308. Adds reading from the Constitution and Code to the agenda of a meeting.

**13 Resolution #13** Amends section U 602. Housekeeping Resolution. Previously, Grand Lodge voted to amend section U 405 regarding the 28-day waiting period for affiliations. Section U 602 deals with the same matter and should have been amended at the same time.

*continues on page 8*

**14 Resolution #14** Amends section T 1003, § 2. Housekeeping Resolution. Section T 1001 of the Trial Code, dealing with restoration of membership after Masonic discipline, had been amended but a similar amendment should have been made to section T 1003, paragraph 2. This Resolution corrects that omission.

**15 Resolution #15** Amends section 301-A. Currently, the new Grand Lodge officers have to be installed on the last evening of Grand Lodge. This works a hardship on some people because everyone is tired and often family members of the new officers

do not have a chance to attend. This Resolution provides that the installation of new Grand Lodge officers may be held any time up to eight days after Grand Lodge, at a location chosen by the newly elected Grand Master.

## From the Deputy Grand Master

Our recent leadership Conference was a huge success. We had 80 lodges registered and well over 100 attendees. That is just a little over one third of the lodges in the state. Each year the number of Junior and Senior Wardens has been increasing since we began our Leadership program.

As Grand Lodge Officers it is our intention to provide as much information as possible in order for our junior officers to become better leaders in their respective lodges.

Each person attending is given a questionnaire asking what they would like covered during the next year. This is how we determine the program for the upcoming year. They also received an evaluation form in which to let us know how well we did this year. From the responses we received everyone was pleased with the information presented, and of course, everyone wanted more of M.:W.: Bobby Laws PGM and the Constitution and Code.

Since Investigations has been a topic in several of my previous articles, I was able to put together a "Petition Investigation Manual" which was distributed to everyone who attended.

I had a presentation on the Electronic Verification Process, or National Back Ground checks for petitioners. And I asked if there were any lodges who would like to volunteer to be a part of a Pilot Program to see how well this process would work in Oklahoma. I had fourteen lodges who were interested in this project. Of course it will be neces-

sary for those brethren to propose the project to their respective lodges and get approval from the lodge in order to proceed.

My program for next year, if elected, will be called "Hand to Back" and has Three main components.

Number one is called, "The Western Gate" and it is quite obvious that it deals with the proper investigation of Petitioners.

Number two is called, "The Masonic Trail" and deals staying in contact with the candidate, through the Master Mason degree and beyond. Contacting the people who went through the Chance to Advance and encouraging them to become active in the lodge. The Oklahoma Mason - 2013 Grand Lodge Edition 9

And the third is called "Alas My Brother" and deals with Masonic Memorial services. We need young men to learn the Masonic service. We have several good men in the state who will travel many miles, when called, because a lodge in that area doesn't have anyone to do a service for a departed Brother.

I will continue, with the help of our lodges, to support OETA, Fund raising efforts for the needy and giving emphasis to the CHIP program for childhood identification.

I also have an FFA committee, which will work with our rural lodges in support of the FFA programs. For those of you who are unaware, the FFA was started by Masons. And should you



R.:W.: Ron Chambers

have the opportunity to attend one of their meetings you will definitely see the resemblance to your own lodge.

The purpose of my program is to enrich the fraternal experience for all of us, new Masons and Masons who have been around for some time. Because I truly believe that, in this age of instant communications – and instant isolation – men truly long for the personal human touch. We long for the friendly hand upon the back.

R.:W.: Ronald Chambers  
Deputy Grand Master

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## From the Senior Grand Warden

**C**harity  
A few nights ago I had the opportunity to be present at an Entered Apprentice Degree. Just before the new Brother was returned to the Preparation Room, the Worshipful Master told him words to the effect that “Charity is the distinguishing characteristic of Masons”. Then in the Third Section Lecture of that Degree, the new Brother was told that Charity is designated one of the three principal rounds of the ladder Jacob saw in his vision and that “Charity extends beyond the grave, through the boundless realms of eternity”. Later, in the Symbolism of the Entered Apprentice Degree, we heard that “good men and true, knowing each other to be such, do always love the more as they be the more good”. And in the Charge, the Brother is admonished that there are three great duties which he is charged to inculcate – to God, his neighbor, and himself.

Those words given the Brother as he was being sent back to the Preparation Room were impressive. Yes, Charity is something in which we as individual Masons and as a Fraternity are deeply and proudly involved. We help the needy in many ways; we help with medical expenses; we help with home repairs; we help the band with new instruments; and on and on. We assist people that come to us in need; we even search out those people who are in need of financial assistance. Charity does indeed characterize us. But later after I thought about it more, I began to wonder how “Charity” can be THE distinguishing characteristic of Masons. We as individual Masons are concerned with many things other than financial Charity. My

idea of Masonry goes way beyond being financially charitable to the needy. And, if Charity were truly our main charge, then I am reminded of the words in the song by Janet Lee from the ‘60s: “Is that all there is?”

The words in the Third Section Lecture also caught my attention. But, they gave me more questioning thoughts than clarifying thoughts. I understand how Charity can extend beyond the grave; if we give money by way of a trust or an endowment, then yes, the charitable gift can continue after death. But for it to continue beyond eternity, that is suspect.

So, what is all this about Masonic Charity? What does it really mean? How can Charity be THE distinguishing characteristic of Masons? My dictionaries indicate that Charity is the helpfulness toward the needy; the provision of help to the poor; almsgiving – nothing new here, this is what we usually think of when we hear the word Charity – something material given to someone in need.

But, dictionaries also indicate that the word “Charity” comes from an older English word, *charite*, meaning dearness, love and from the Latin *carus*, dear, to care. It is also defined as: benevolent goodwill toward or love of humanity; the love of God toward man; the love of man for his fellow men; Brotherly Love.

Thinking of Charity in this way is what I think of when I think of Masonic Charity. It is not only helping the needy in financial and material ways, but also in making them feel better and making them physically, mentally, and spiritually better. It is even more than treating a



R. W. Gary Beisly

person as you would want them to treat you; Charity includes treating yourself – being charitable to yourself – in ways to make yourself better physically, mentally, and spiritually!

Now, the instructions in the Entered Apprentice Symbolism and Charge become much more meaningful. We do love the more as we be the more good – the more Charitable – to God, our neighbors, and ourselves. Yes, CHARITY is the distinguishing characteristic of Masons!

R. W. Gary L. Beisly  
Senior Grand Warden

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## From the Junior Grand Warden



R. W. Ridge Smith

Brothers, One of the things that keeps me going, that “charges my batteries,” is working with our youth groups: Rainbow, Job’s Daughters, and DeMolay. These young people are a vibrant, exciting part of Masonry and sponsoring them is one of our best endeavors as a brotherhood.

This year I had the privilege of attending the state-wide meetings of our three appendant bodies: The Rainbow Grand Assembly at the University of Oklahoma, the State Rally of the Oklahoma Job’s Daughters in Oklahoma City, and the DeMolay Conclave at Oklahoma State University. These young people were outstanding in every way.

I was privileged to be a ritual judge at the Rainbow Grand Assembly and also at the DeMolay Conclave. These young men and women perform excellent ritual work. They work hard to be the best and the brightest. Oklahoma Rainbow Girls and DeMolay Boys consistently bring home high honors and awards from the Frank Marshall Tournament in Arlington, Texas.

All of Oklahoma Masonry can be proud of these three youth groups. I know that some of us wish that more of these outstanding young people would join the adult organizations when they become eligible. We all hope that these young people get positive experiences from their association with the adults, and are motivated to join the adult organizations. The purpose of these youth organizations is to give these young people the lessons of leadership, morality and high ideals. One of the secondary benefits that we have seen at my Lodge and OES Chapter is that we have had several parents who have chosen to join because their children belong to one of our youth groups.

I have worked with Rainbow and DeMolay for over twenty-five years and have seen these young members develop from shy, retiring children into dynamic leaders who can lead and direct local and state organizations. They have developed into

young men and women who have become doctors, lawyers, engineers, business leaders and successful adults in a multitude of fields.

I encourage all of my Masonic Brothers to take the opportunity to attend a meeting or function of a local assembly, bethel, or chapter of some of our youth groups. The young people will be excited to have you, and you will renew your faith in the future of our country and the future of our fraternity.

Brethren, Grand Lodge is just a few weeks away -- November 8 and 9. All voting members should make every effort to attend Grand Lodge. This is your annual opportunity to have a say in the future of your fraternity. There are several resolutions which need to be considered, we will choose our next Junior Grand Warden, and several members of the Masonic Charity Foundation. Please, attend if you are able.

Brethren, I want to thank you for the friendship and brotherly love that I have received while traveling around the state as your Junior Grand Warden. It has been a great honor and privilege to visit you and I look forward to meeting more of you in the upcoming years.

R. W. Ridge Smith  
Junior Grand Warden

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## From the Grand Treasurer

In my continuing effort to keep the brethren in the State of Oklahoma informed of the financial position of your Grand Lodge, the Boards of Trustees meet monthly and review the Investment statements. Though the first nine months, the overall revenue is 100.7 % of budgeted income through July 31, 2013. Our expenses for the same period are operating at 82.4 % of budgeted expenses. The monthly income and expense are amortized over the 12 months of operation and to date is well within the guidelines of the approved Budget.

The Perpetual Endowed Membership fund has more than \$ 6,534,000 in NAFA Capitol Market account invested in GNMA Bond Funds. Currently these PEM Endowed funds are earning between 7- 8 % interest, which is less than in 2012, due to the current U.S. Economy.

The question continually comes up, is this still a good investment? My answer at this time, is Yes! You

cannot earn this high rate of interest anywhere else and it is an investment in the future of your Lodge. There are other Investments available in the equity market of 4-5 % dividends, but they carry an additional risk. The Trustees believe that we should continue with Investments we currently have.

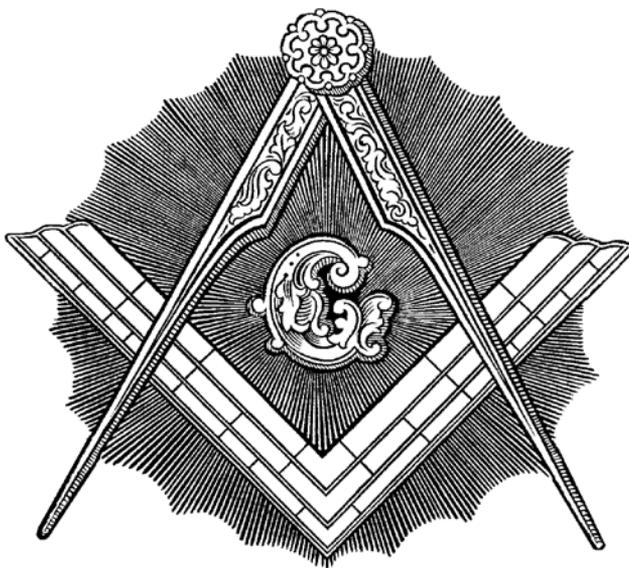
Last Week at Church, I had the opportunity to view a Video entitled "Celebrate What's Right With the World" by DeWitt Jones, a National Geographic photographer. It was a beautiful presentation of photographs of different locations within the World. The narrative of this Video encouraged me to paraphrase the title, why don't we "Celebrate What's Right in Freemasonry." Our fraternity is the largest in the World and does more for our fellow man than any other organization. We are taught in our Lodges, to look for the good in our fellow man. People will judge us by our actions, communication and what we stand for and



R.:.W.:. John Alexander

will set a standard for the Fraternity Remember Faith, Family and Fellowship will be our legacy that others will follow.

R.:.W.:. John Alexander  
Grand Treasurer



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## From the Grand Secretary

Another year is quickly coming to an end. Our Grand Lodge and local lodge officers are approaching the end of their terms, and each will ask "Did I make a difference?" I hope you get the answer you expect.

I recently read a book entitled "For the Good of the Order" by Dr. John Bizzack. He believes (as I do) that the two recurring tasks for the revitalization and sustainability of our lodges are: education and fellowship. No, we can't get there from here if we don't have cat lecturers to teach the work; that is a given. But finding the brothers to learn and teach our work must be preceded by keeping them active in the lodge to begin with!

You all know brothers who receive their 50 year pins and hadn't crossed the threshold of the lodge since they were raised. 75-90% of our lodge members do not attend lodge on a regular basis. Why? We bore them to death. They didn't join to hear brothers read the minutes and spend an hour discussing bean recipes for the next fund-raiser. They joined to become better men.

Giving brothers a reason to come to lodge is, without a doubt, the most important issue on our plates as Freemasons. Education and Fellowship programs, no matter how simple, can make the difference. A dedicated Education program can be as easy as reading and discussing sections of the Constitution and Code, to short talk presentations, all the way to showing short video clips. Increasing/improving our Fellowship is not difficult either. Do you have a nice meal (not fast food chicken or cardboard pizza) once a month before or after your meeting? Do you do anything with your brothers outside the lodge, just for the pleasure of their company- bowl, fish, form a softball team? Give your brothers a reason to come back, then they will want to be part of your success and growth.

I'm off the soapbox! Now; two quick reminders as we approach Grand Lodge. You are not (I repeat NOT) required to be a sitting WM/SW/JW/PM in order to carry your lodge ballot. That is why we have proxies. You can send your newest MM to vote for your lodge. The important thing is to have somebody from the lodge to be at the session to vote for your future leadership and changes to the Constitution and Code. Too many of our lodges have not been in three or more years. That is just wrong. Lodges: pay for your representative's hotel room if travelling from afar, but BE THERE.

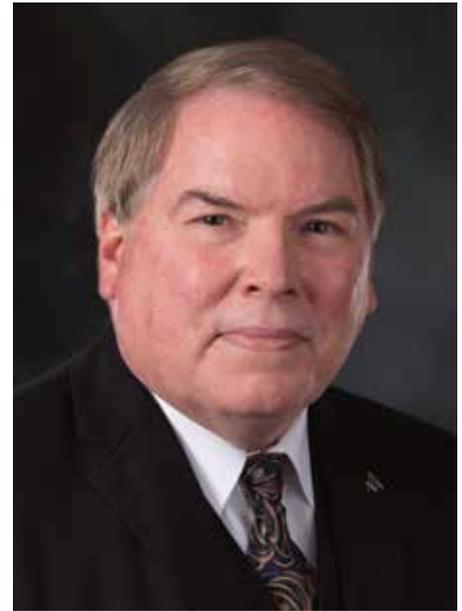
After Grand Lodge, you will be holding lodge elections (which must be done in December). Remember, to be WM you must have been a SW/JW and to hold any office you must be MM proficient. We will be changing the annual report to have you report status of proficiency so that we may track this requirement established in your Constitution and Code.

Speaking of "tracking," a few weeks ago, the Grand Lodge had a sticker sent to each member which can be attached to a cell phone, so that if it is lost it can be returned to the owner. Apparently one fell out of the envelope or pocket of a Oklahoma Mason living in Alabama. We received the sticker, along with this note:

*To Whom It May Concern,*

*My name is Jeff Hopper and I am a City of Gadsden Police Officer. While my work partner and I met for breakfast last Saturday, I found this token outside on the 12th Street McDonald's in Gadsden, Alabama. It appears whom ever was issued this token may have had it in their pocket and it fell out as they opened the door.*

*My late Grandfather, Hoyt Warsham, late brother Jonathan Hopper, and father, Duane Hopper were/are*



R. W. Steve Singleton

*Masons, so I understand the importance of these items and felt it must be returned to the Grand Lodge so the rightful owner can have it returned to him.*

*I wish to thank you for the work you do and the assistance I have seen given by the Masons over the years.*

*Sincerely,*

*Jeff Hopper*

It proves the Masonic circle remains unbroken, even among those who are not members of the Craft, but had loved ones who were.

Last but not least, visit the new Order of the Sacred White Buffalo website at: <http://www.oklahomawhitebuffalo.com/> and thank you all for supporting this program. A special thanks to M. W. Bobby Laws for making it happen.

I hope to see each one of you in Guthrie November 8-9. If we can fill the Temple to the rafters for 'Chance to Advance,' we can certainly do it for Grand Lodge!

R. W. Steve Singleton

Grand Secretary

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## From the Grand Lecturer

It is hard to believe that another Masonic year is almost behind us, and it's time for Grand Lodge 2013 to be held November 8th and 9th. Don't forget we will also hold the Grandmaster & Grand Lecturer School of Instruction on Thursday November 7th, from 9:00 a.m. until 9:00 p.m. On Friday the 8th school will start at 9:00 a.m. and end at noon.

This is a great time for those who have not checked for 2013 to get that done so they will be in the Blue Book next year.

Just a reminder, you will be able to stay at the Scottish Rite Inn on Thursday night Nov. 7th. Please brethren use these facilities and tell others to join in as well. We will be voting on some regulations in our work so please plan to attend Grand Lodge. I look forward to meeting and visiting with you at the school and Grand Lodge. Don't forget to wear your button.

Fraternally,

Ronald Wray, Grand Lecturer



R.°.W.°. Ronald Wray

## GRAND MASTER'S CALENDAR

### OCTOBER

- 5 - Install Officers, Oklahoma Lodge of Research
- 10 - Grand Master's Night at Akdar Shrine, Tulsa
- 12 - Guthrie Scottish Rite / Pond Creek Harvest Lodge
- 19 - McAlester Scottish Rite
- 20 - Grand Chapter, Eastern Star
- 26 - Tulsa Scottish Rite / District #30 Meeting, Moore
- 31 - Trustees Meeting

### NOVEMBER

- 2 - Grand Lodge Officers march in Blanchard Veteran's Day Parade
- 3 - Scottish Rite Honours Day, Guthrie
- 6 - Final Trustees Meeting
- 7 - Final Jurisprudence Meeting
- 8 - Grand Lodge opens
- 9 - Installation of Grand Lodge Officers
- 10 - G.M. Chambers' apron presentation

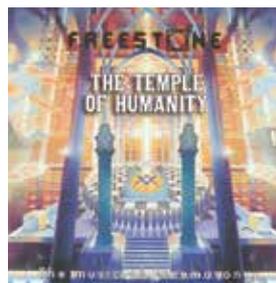
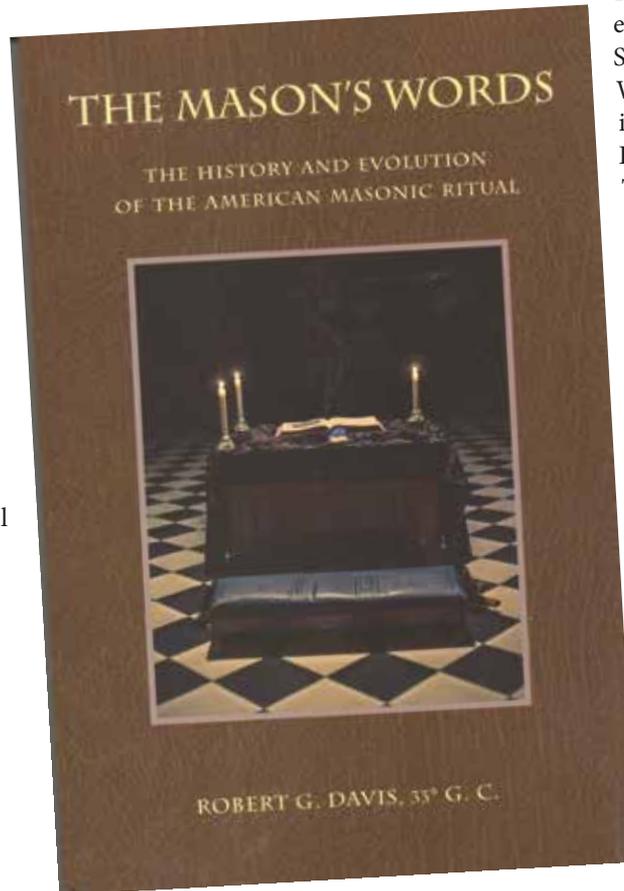
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## From the Museum & Library of the Grand Lodge of the State of Oklahoma

A new book has just been published in which the Masons of Oklahoma can take great pride. The Mason's Words: The History and Evolution of the American Masonic Ritual by Brother Robert G. Davis, 330, Grand Cross, is published by Building Stone Publishing, and was released only a few weeks ago.

Brother Davis' scholarship is well known, and this ground-breaking book is no exception; ground-breaking because it is the only book which traces the development of American Masonic ritual. He pulls together all the information which has been scattered in articles and unpublished manuscripts to give the most complete picture possible of the subject. If you have even wondered why we say the things we do in opening and closing Lodge, or what the Degrees were like hundreds of years ago, you will find the answers here.

Reviews of the book have been universally favorable. As an example, M W Thomas Hauder, Grand Master of Nebraska, wrote: "Once again, Bro. Davis has proven himself to be one of the great Masonic authors of our time. This book belongs on the shelf of every Mason. Bro. Davis takes a very complex subject and manages to make it accessible to every reader. The depth of detail is just right to educate without becoming overly pedantic. If the reader wants to go deeper into the many concepts in the book, the bibliography is well done to allow that further research. I am also impressed by Bro. Davis' ability to explain the ritual without actually revealing anything that non-Masons shouldn't know. This takes a true understanding of the subject and a deep respect for the Craft. As Grand Master of Nebraska, I will put this book on our "must have" list for all Masons in my jurisdiction."



A glance at the Table of Contents will give some idea of the scope of the book: The Making of a Mason - Manners and Customs of the 18th Century Lodge - Tavern Lodge - Early Ritual Practices - The Early Catechisms - English Exposures of 1730 to 1764 - The Master Mason Degree - English Lecturers and Their Work - The American Experience - The Provincial Grand Lodge System in America - Thomas Smith Webb: American Ritualist - The Roving Ritualists - National Quest for Ritual Uniformity - Masonic Ritual Today - The Rebirth of Masonry and Masonic Ritual.

The book is available for purchase in a paperbound edition on the Internet, from the Oklahoma Lodge of Research, or at the Guthrie Scottish Rite Temple, and in electronic edition on the Internet.

Many Brethren think that Masonic music ended with such composers as Mozart, Haydn, and J.C. Bach. We sometimes forget that, while we think of their music as "classical" today, it was the pop music of the time. Masonic composers are still active. Those of the last generation include Burl Ives, Al Jolson, Count Basie, Duke Ellington, and many more. Masonic composers and performers are still active in the music scene, in both country and rock

music. One outstanding example in the progressive rock tradition is Harm Timmermans with the group Freestone. His CD The Temple of Humanity includes many songs inspired by Freemasonry, including "Turn the Key," "Brotherhood of Men," "Children of the Widow," "Out of the Dark," "The Ancient of Days," "Masonry Dissected," "Seven Step Staircase," "Walking Through This Sacred Place," "Pathway on my Own," and "Tracing to the West." The CD The Temple of Humanity can be purchased on the Internet.

## Q & A

From time to time Brethren call the Grand Lodge with questions. Often, many others have wondered the same things. Here are some recent questions.

### ***Is the Masonic ritual the same in all the states?***

No, although it is similar in most of them. But, for example, the “eulogy to Mother” which is in the stair lecture seems to have started in Oklahoma. It only appears in the ritual of one other state, and it is a late addition there.

### ***I’ve seen the title of the Lodge officer spelled “Tyler” and “Tiler.” Which is correct?***

Both.

### ***Some people have told me Masonry started in England, some have said Scotland. Where did Masonry start?***

A more answerable question would be: Where did Masonry start to change from a operative association of stone workers into the Fraternity it is now? Most Masonic scholars now think that the process started in Scotland.

### ***In the installation of the officers of our Lodge, the installing officer said something about it being beyond the power of any man to make changes in the “Body of Freemasonry.” What is the Body of Freemasonry?***

The best answer comes from Mackey, one of the most prolific and authoritative writers the Fraternity has ever had. He wrote Mackey’s Encyclopedia of Freemasonry; Mackey’s History of Freemasonry; and Mackey’s Jurisprudence among many other things. He also wrote the Landmarks which have been adopted by the State of Oklahoma, and, most people believe, wrote the installation ritual you mentioned. In Mackey’s Encyclopedia, 1946 edition, volume 2, page 859 he writes “[Differences in ritual do] not affect the universality of Freemasonry. The Ritual is only the external

and extrinsic form. The doctrine of Freemasonry is everywhere the same. It is the Body which is unchangeable—remaining always and everywhere the same. The Ritual is but the outer garment which covers this Body, which is subject to continual variation. It is right and desirable that the Ritual should be made perfect, and everywhere alike. But if this be impossible, which it is, this at least will console us, that the science and philosophy, the symbolism and the religion of Freemasonry continue ...”

### ***Is it true we can’t discuss religion or politics in Lodge?***

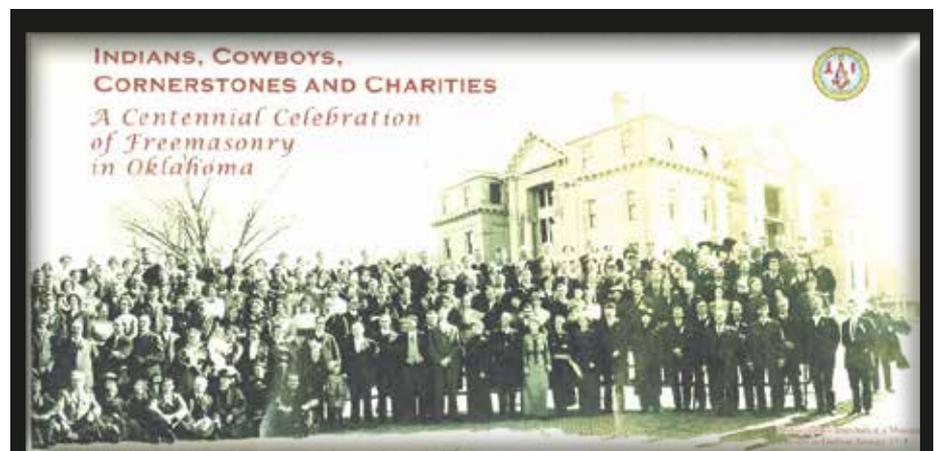
It is not true, although you will often hear it said. Masonry forbids the discussion of sectarian religion and partisan politics, which is not at all the same thing. Discussion of religion is common in many Lodges, as a matter of the education necessary to understand the Degrees. What is forbidden is saying something like, “My church has the truth and yours doesn’t.”

### ***I was looking in the Monitor at Lodge Officer Installation and it says that the Worshipful Master is handed the Book of Constitutions. Is that the same thing as the Constitution and Code?***

No, although many Lodges use it during installations. There are several ancient Masonic documents known as “constitutions,” but anytime you see the phrase Book of Constitutions, they are almost always referring to Anderson’s Constitutions of 1723. It became the first Masonic book published in the New World when Benjamin Franklin printed an American edition in 1732.

### ***I’ve heard people talk about the Blue Book, the Yellow Book, the Green Book, and the Red Book. What are they?***

The names come from the colors traditionally used for the covers. The Blue Book is the List of Oklahoma Lodges published each year, which contains the names and addresses of the Lodges, the names and addresses of the Worshipful Masters and Secretaries, the members of Grand Lodge Committees, “A” Certificate and “C” Certificate Lecturers, Grand Lodge Officers, and much more. The Yellow Book contains the reports of Grand Lodge Committees, the budget, and the Resolutions to be voted on at Grand Lodge. The Green Book is the Address of the Grand Master, distributed at the Grand Lodge Annual Communication. The Red Book is the name often given to the cipher key.



Available from the Grand Lodge Museum and Library through the Grand Lodge of Oklahoma, this history of Freemasonry in our state has hundreds of photographs. Chapters tell the story of the merging of two Grand Lodges to form the current Grand Lodge of the State of Oklahoma, the stories of the early Lodges, the journeys of Joseph Murrow and Albert Pike, and much more. You can order a signed, numbered copy of this limited edition from the Grand Lodge for \$40, which includes shipping.

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Send to *Address Change update, The Oklahoma Mason, P.O. Box 1019, Guthrie, OK 73044*



*The photograph does not do justice to the vibrant flowers and lush grass at the front of the Grand Lodge building. Brother Terry Story, who makes sure that everything in the building works and that the outside is a credit to the community, gives them special care in Oklahoma's fierce summers. It's common for passers-by to comment on the beauty of the plants.*