



# THE CORNERSTONE

M E S S A G E

® "The Official Organ of the M.W. Prince Hall Grand Lodge, F&AM of Alabama."

VOLUME V, ISSUE III

JULY 2017

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Prince Hall Americanism  
Day Classic Weekend

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147th Annual  
Communication  
Schedule of Events



*Past Grand Masters*

*Walter J. Woods  
& Reuben R. Mims*

# THE GRAND MASTER'S TRESTLEBOARD



AN OFFICIAL  
PUBLICATION OF  
THE M.W.P.H.G.L.  
OF ALABAMA

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*I will bless the Lord at all times: his  
praise shall continually be in my mouth  
Psalms 34:1*

Welcome to the Master from 1816 to 1901 birthplace of and the Honorable Walter Prince Hall T. Woods, who served as Freemasonry in the State of Grand Master from 1913 to Alabama, Mobile, the Port 1936, by laying masonic City. Our convening in the wreaths at their gravesites. Currently this Grand Lodge is on an upswing. Our membership continues to increase. Our participation and visibility continues to improve. Our efforts to renovate our temple are going well. We are definitely moving in the right direction. With our combined

efforts we will continue to prosper and make ongoing improvements to our beloved Grand Lodge.

Our regional meetings were very productive and well attended. I enjoy traveling to the various areas of the state to meet and greet the brothers. I am always met with smiling faces and firm handshakes. Your attendance and participation in our regional meetings is very encouraging.

I am looking forward to our Fourth Annual Prince Hall Americanism Football Classic Weekend. This year our PHA Classic Weekend will be held on September 22-24, 2017, in Birmingham, Alabama. The Miles College Golden Bears will play host to the Morehouse Maroon Tigers. We will celebrate our Prince Hall Americanism Day that Sunday on the campus of Miles College. I am looking forward to a fun-filled weekend and to full participation and support from the Jurisdiction.

Congratulations to all newly elected Worshipful Masters and Officers of our subordinate lodges. You play a very important role within this organization. I challenge each of you to give your best and to uphold the rules, regulations and edicts of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Alabama.

I am excited about this 147th Annual Communication and about the future of our Grand Lodge. As we enter this Annual Communication let us come prepared to conduct our business with respect for one another and the organization, as well as, with dignity.

Last, we should always strive to love one another as God loves us. Love for one another is the strength of our fraternal bond. Let us continue to strengthen this tie.

May the Grand Architect of the Universe continue to bless you and may this awesome Grand Lodge remain highly favored!

Fraternally,

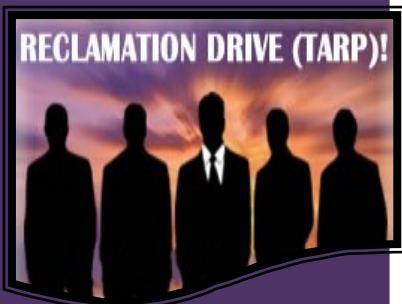
*Corey D. Hawkins, Sr.*

Most Worshipful Grand Master



PM Herman "Jerome" Glover (50)  
Publication Editor

"This program is designed to allow suspended members to reinstate for a more affordable fee."



## Message from the Editor

To all readers and supporters of this Official Publication of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Alabama entitled *The Cornerstone Message*, Greetings:

I would like to take this time to thank all of the contributors to this edition of *The Cornerstone Message*. I would also like to take this opportunity to commend the Grand Lodge Staff and the subordinate lodges for a very successful year while moving this Jurisdiction in a positive direction and building upon the foundation that has been previously laid. Your good works have been put on display for all to see through the use of this newsletter.

I do ask you to be mindful of the Article Submission Guidelines on the last page of this newsletter. Many articles are still being submitted that do not meet those guidelines. No more than two articles per lodge can be submitted for each edition of the newsletter. Individual pictures should be of good quality in JPEG and not as a collage. Pictures should also capture actions of the event showing the readers your event and not just a group picture of the brothers in the lodge. The write up should be at least one paragraph and should tell the story of your article to the readers.

Last, I wish much success to the Honorable Corey D.

Hawkins, Sr., Esq., Grand Lodge Officers and the brothers in the Jurisdiction of Alabama for a harmonious and productive 147th Annual Communication here in Mobile, Alabama.

As always, I encourage all subordinate lodges to continue to support *The Cornerstone Message* and show all readers of this newsletter what your lodges are doing in your respective areas to add to the mission of making sure Prince Hall Masonry is at the forefront in the state of Alabama.

- PM Herman "Jerome" Glover  
Publication Editor

## Reclamation Drive (TARP)

Members suspended after June, 2002, can reinstate by paying the following:

In an attempt to give suspended Brothers an opportunity to become active again during these tough economic times, our Most Worshipful Grand Master has devised a plan named TARP- Traveling Again Reclamation Program. This program is designed to allow suspended members to reinstate for a more affordable fee.

- \$20.00 reinstatement fee
- \$10.00 taxes
- \$25.00 registration
- \$50.00 assessment (Have two years to pay the remaining \$200.00)
- \$105.00 Total

Members suspended before June, 2002, can reinstate by paying the following:

- \$20.00 reinstatement fee
- \$10.00 taxes
- \$25.00 registration
- \$50.00 assessment (Have two years to pay the remaining \$150.00)
- \$105.00 Total

**TARP** serves a two-fold purpose: (1.) It gives suspended Brothers a more affordable means of reinstating and (2.) It gives dying lodges a final opportunity to salvage their existence by increasing their numbers before being forced to close or merge. Our Grand Master has extended a challenge for the members of this jurisdiction to go out and reclaim our lost Brothers. TARP will be in effect through July 31, 2017.

REGISTER ONLINE AT [WWW.BAMAPHACLASSIC.COM](http://WWW.BAMAPHACLASSIC.COM)



# ALABAMA PRINCE HALL MASONS AMERICANISM FOOTBALL CLASSIC WEEKEND

*Miles vs Morehouse*  
SEPTEMBER 22-24, 2017

ITINERARY | REGISTRATION | COOK-OFF INFORMATION

HOST HOTEL: FAIRFIELD INN & SUITES BY MARRIOTT 5008 ACADEMY LN. BESSEMER, AL 35022 (205) 277-1700  
ROOM BLOCK CODE: "PRINCE HALL MASONS"

The mission of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge, Free and Accepted Masons of Alabama is to continue the legacy of making good men better through fraternal brotherhood, to aid and assist our widows, orphans, and distressed brothers, and to contribute to the community through service, scholarship, charity and training.

-The Prince Hall Legacy Foundation of Alabama, Inc. 501(c)3

BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA

**PRINCE HALL AMERICANISM DAY CLASSIC WEEKEND 2017**

**SEPTEMBER 22-24, 2017**  
**WEEKEND LINEUP**

DATE/ TIME	EVENT	LOCATION
<b>9/22</b> TIME: 7AM REGISTRATION 8AM TEE-OFF	GOLF TOURNAMENT	FRANK HOUSE GOLF COURSE BESSEMER, AL
<b>9/22</b> TIME: 11AM	GOLF TOURNAMENT LUNCHEON	FRANK HOUSE GOLF COURSE BESSEMER, AL
<b>9/22</b> TIME: 2PM-6PM	AMERICANISM REGISTRATION	FAIRFIELD INN & SUITES BESSEMER, AL 2017 HOST HOTEL
<b>9/22</b> TIME: 8PM-MIDNIGHT	KICK OFF JAM	THE PARTHENON BIRMINGHAM, AL
<b>9/23</b> TIME: 11AM-UNTIL	GAME DAY TAILGATE	MILES COLLEGE CAMPUS FAIRFIELD, AL
<b>9/23</b> TIME: 3PM	GAME DAY COOK-OFF CONTEST & WILD-GAME TASTING	MILES COLLEGE CAMPUS FAIRFIELD, AL
<b>9/23</b> TIME: 5PM	GAME TIME MILES COLLEGE VS. MOREHOUSE	ALBERT J. SLOAN- ALUMNI STADIUM FAIRFIELD, AL
<b>9/24</b> TIME: 10:00AM	PHA AMERICANISM CHURCH SERVICE	PEARSON HALL ON THE CAMPUS OF MILES COLLEGE

# PRINCE HALL AMERICANISM DAY CLASSIC WEEKEND 2017 SEPTEMBER 22-24,2017 | REGISTRATION FORM

Please print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

QTY	EVENT	AMOUNT
	VIP PACKAGE <small>Game Ticket, Opening Mixer Admission, Commemorative T-Shirt, Tailgate Access, VIP Parking on campus</small>	\$85 PER PERSON
	BLUE LIGHT SPECIAL VIP PACKAGE <small>Game Ticket, Opening Mixer Admission, Commemorative T-Shirt, Tailgate Access, VIP Parking on campus   Offer Expires June 30, 2017</small>	\$75 PER PERSON
	GOLF TOURNAMENT REGISTRATION	\$50 PER PERSON
	KICK-OFF JAM	\$25 PER PERSON
	PHA GAMEDAY TAILGATE	\$25 PER PERSON
	PHA GAME TICKET	\$20 PER PERSON
	COMMEMORATIVE T-SHIRT S ___ M ___ L ___ XL ___ 2X ___ 3X ___ 4X ___	\$15 PER PERSON

Hole Sponsor>>>> Lodges, Businesses, Individuals (per hole)..... \$100

### VENDORS

\_\_\_1 Table ..... \$100\_\_2 Tables ..... \$200

**TOTAL: \$** \_\_\_\_\_

Please address questions or concerns to R.W. Godfrey Johnson @ 205-317-9951

**PAYMENT METHODS:** Check or Money Order Make checks payable to: Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Alabama Mail registration form along with payment by August 30th to the following address:

MW Prince Hall Grand Lodge F&AM of Alabama Attn: R.W. Godfrey Johnson  
P.O. Box 10504 Birmingham, AL 35202-0504

# Americanism Day

## BBQ Cook-Off Guidelines

Saturday, September 23, 2017

Prince Hall Tailgate Area

### THE CONTEST

1. Teams may cook with any type of wood and/or charcoal. Other flammables (propane, compressed or liquid gas, etc.) may be used within the cooker only to start the initial fire. No type of flammable other than wood or charcoal may be used within the cooker once the meat has been placed there. Flammables may be used outside and away from the cooker to make additional coals. Local fire and safety laws may prevent the use of any type of gas anywhere on the grounds at any time, and, if so, these laws prevail.
2. Electrical devices may be used within the cooker as long as they do not directly generate heat. Approved devices include rotisseries, fans and delivery systems for approved fuels. Electric smokers, holding ovens or containers or any devices with heat producing electrical coils are not allowed.
3. There will be three categories, Chicken (half chicken), Pork ribs 3.5 lbs. or less and Boston Butt (8-12 lbs.). Meat must be cooked on-site at the contest from a raw state whether fresh or frozen. Meat must be maintained at a temperature below 40 degrees fahrenheit prior to cooking, and at or above 140 degrees during and after cooking. Judging of the competition will be blind judging. Each team will be provided a box to place the entry into and one team member will be responsible for bringing the entries to the judging tent on time.
4. Your team may enter one or all three categories as long as you are registered before the cut- off date 8/31/2017.
5. There will be a first and second place trophy given for all three categories. We will see which brother/sister/lodge or district will have bragging rights for the entire year. GoodLuck!!!!!!

### CONTESTANT RESPONSIBILITIES:

Each team competing shall supply ALL of its own meat (for the contest tasting portion only), cooking ingredients and utensils. All contestants MUST adhere to all electrical, fire, and other codes set forth in the acceptance packet. Teams will be allowed to set up Saturday morning September 23, 2017 @ 7a.m.

### QUESTIONS:

For any questions or additional information please feel free to contact:

R.W. Godfrey Johnson 205-317-9951 or R.W. Charles Motley 205-301-9063

Team Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Team Captain: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

CATEGORIES (Circle Those That Apply)			
A. Half Chicken	B. Pork Ribs 3.5 lbs or less	C. Boston Butt 8-12 lbs	D. All of the above

# Update on Temple Renovation



The Celebrated Colored Masonic Temple Building with Proposed Parking Deck Addition

**LEGENDARY PRESENCE FASHIONED ONLY BY A LEGACY OF COMMUNITY, SERVICE & CHARITY**

◆ Now Accepting New Occupancy Pre-Leasing ◆

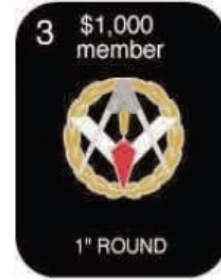


### ***SAMPLE TYPICAL NEW FLOOR PLAN***

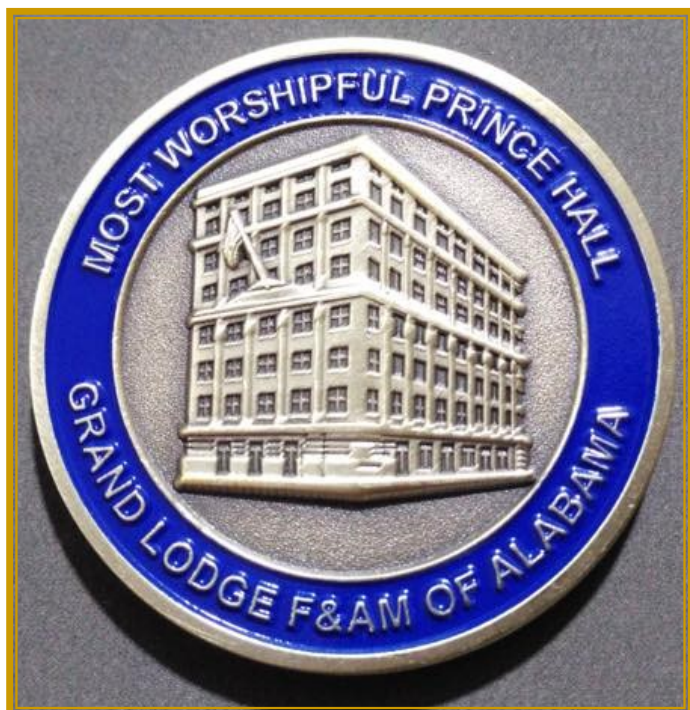
- ◆ Large enough to accommodate the needs for 10 or more staffers
- ◆ Flexible office arrangements available to satisfy the small professional entrepreneur
- ◆ All new infrastructure—Plumbing; Heating Ventilation Air Conditioning; Lighting; Power; Communications; Wi-Fi connections; Video teleconferencing
- ◆ Access to shared conference rooms
- ◆ Centralized Downtown Location
- ◆ Professional Office environment having competitive square foot costs
- ◆ Historical setting updated with current technologies
- ◆ ADA— Compliant
- ◆ Non-Profit Organizations invited
- ◆ We will work with you to customize to your organization’s specifications
- ◆ Convenient location to Local, State & Federal Court Houses

# Support the Temple Renovation

**M**ost  
 Worshipful Prince  
 Hall Grand Lodge  
 of Alabama Temple  
 Renovation Lapel  
 Pins are still  
 available for new  
 and existing  
 members upon  
 receipt of donation  
 (s). Collect up to  
 each level.  
 Display your  
 support  
 for the temple  
 renovation!



## Reserve Your Place in History



**Front**



**Back**

The Master's Closet recently unveiled the Temple Renovation 2016 Challenge Coin Project. The project introduced a challenge coin to the community with a depiction of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall F&AM Grand Lodge of Alabama with a full color Masonic and Order of the Eastern Star Emblem. Proceeds from the sales of the coins will go to help renovate the Grand Lodge to its original form of the early 1900's.

Go to: [www.TheMastersClosetGifts.com](http://www.TheMastersClosetGifts.com)

These Temple Renovation coins are limited editions; Get Yours Today!

# From Whence We've Come...

## The Architect of the Colored Masonic Temple of Alabama: M.:W.: Grand Master Walter Thomas (W.T.) Woods

**N**estled gently in the heart of downtown Birmingham is the Colored Masonic Temple, affectionately known as the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Alabama. When visiting this structurally sound edifice, the observer is required to take a hard look at the Cornerstone, which will forever hold the name of Past Grand Master W.T. Woods.



Born in February of 1872, to the creole couple of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Woods of Mobile, AL, GM Woods would become an aptly overlooked figure in the history of Alabama's Grand Lodge. GM Woods would be educated in Mobile's Creole Schools and would be seen by his peers and community as a worthwhile figure in the Port City.

Often in history we re-write the descriptive characteristics of notable persons; however, below is a narrative of his professional and fraternal attributes:

*"It often happens that a man's talent as a financier is brought to light through other agencies than through the marts of trade. It was so with Walter Thomas Woods. He came into light as a financial genius by reason of his connections, in the main, with a number of fraternal organizations.*

*He was educated in the public schools of Mobile, but his learning was marked with many hardships and intense labor. At the age of twelve he was forced to give up school and go to work, and during the period that he attended school his morning and afternoon hours, before the opening and closing exercises, he devoted to manual labor.*

*In May, 1908, he was married to Miss Louise Harney, a teacher in the public school. From this union was born two sons and a daughter: W.T. Woods, Jr., James Harney Woods, and Claribelle Emma Woods. He [was] a member of the African Methodist Episcopal Church of Mobile.*

*We now come to consider the distinguishing features of his career, which as has been suggested, grew out of his connection with fraternal organizations, especially that of the Masonic order. In 1892, when he was twenty years old, he became a Mason. His first official position in the lodge was that of Senior Deacon.*

*In 1894, he was admitted to the St. John Lodge No. 2, in which he was soon elected Senior Warden, an office he held for one year and was then elected to the office of Worshipful Master; which position he filled for seven years. He declined to serve longer in this office for the reason that the law of the Grand Lodge would not permit him to continue as Worshipful Master and at the same time hold an office in the Grand Lodge.*

Creole		233
<b>COLORED.</b>		
<p>THE STATE OF ALABAMA, MOBILE COUNTY.</p>	<p>Know all Men by these Presents, That we, <i>Walter T. Woods &amp; James T. Peterson</i></p>	
<p>are held and firmly bound unto the State of Alabama in the penal sum of Two Hundred Dollars, for the payment whereof, we bind ourselves, our heirs, executors and administrators, jointly and severally, firmly by these presents.</p>		
<p>Sealed with our seals, and dated this <i>25th</i> day of <i>May</i> A. D. 190<i>8</i></p>		
<p>THE CONDITION OF THE ABOVE OBLIGATION IS SUCH, That whereas the above bound..... <i>Walter T. Woods</i></p>		
<p>has obtained License to intermarry and be joined together in the Bonds of Matrimony with..... <i>Louise C. Harney</i> <i>her age one 18 years of age</i></p>		
<p>NOW, if there be no lawful cause why such marriage should not be celebrated, then this obligation to be void, otherwise to remain in full force and effect.</p>		
<p><i>Walter Thomas Woods</i> <b>L.S.</b></p>		
<p><i>James T. Peterson</i> <b>L.S.</b></p>		

When he was first elected Worshipful Master of the lodge, the lodge did not have a penny in the treasury and was in debt. Under his wise and skillful administration of seven years service, when he voluntarily surrendered his gavel, the lodge was free of debt and had to its credit in the bank, one thousand dollars. In addition, the membership of the lodge had been increased by twenty members. In token of its appreciation of his valuable services the lodge presented him with a beautiful Masonic apron.

1898, he stood and passed the Civil Service Examination and was appointed a mail carrier in the Mobile Post Office, a position [held until the erection of the Colored Masonic Temple]. Mr. Woods [took] deep interest in matters looking to the improvement and development of the colored race and [encouraged] his people in their efforts to establish business enterprises. He [was] a stockholder and director of Mobile's only shoe store owned and operated by [African-Americans], and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Mobile Forum, [one of Mobile's African-American newspapers].”

In 1905, at Selma, Alabama, he was elected Junior Grand Warden of the Grand Lodge and was re-elected to the same position in 1906. Shortly thereafter, in 1907, he was elected Senior Grand Warden, and was continuously re-elected to this office until the Grand Lodge met at Tuskegee Institute in 1911, when he was [elected] Deputy Grand Master.

When the [Masons of] Mobile decided to erect a temple, a building committee was formed consisting of one member from each lodge. Mr. Woods represented his lodge upon the committee. Under the guidance of this committee, the temple was built at a cost of \$24,000.

[In 1913, he would be elected Grand Master following the failed proposal of tenure for the Office of Grand Master by Past Grand Master James T. Gregory. GM Woods would later be lauded by his sister jurisdictions for the progress seen within their jurisdiction.] In 1916, he was elected a delegate to the International Conference of Grand Masters which met in Chicago. He was elected First Vice-President of the Conference [, and later President]

When he was elected Grand Master, the lodge was one hundred thousand dollars in debt, which debt he removed. He [wore] with a great deal of pleasure and pride his 32nd degree watch charm presented to him by St. Johns Lodge upon his election as Grand Master. [He would also receive his 33° and serve as a Deputy for the Valley of Alabama (Mobile).

[GM Woods was] also a member of the Odd Fellows. For four years he was Deputy Grand Master of the Odd Fellows. He represented [their] lodge at the eleventh B.M.C., 1904, at Columbus, Ohio; at the twelfth B.M.C., Richmond, Virginia in 1906; and at the thirteenth B.M.C., 1908, at Atlantic City, New Jersey.

While the fraternal orders no doubt awakened his financial and executive ability, his services in this line did not end with them. From 1899 to 1906 he served as President of Protector Fire Company No. 11. When he took charge of the company it was in debt but under his management the debt has been paid, their hall remodeled, the sidewalk paved; with a balance in the treasury of \$2400. When he resigned the company presented him with a beautiful watch and chain valued at \$150, in recognition of his services and as a mark of high appreciation.”

– Bio of Walter T. Woods



Shown here is a photo of the Creole Fire Company Wagon in Mobile.

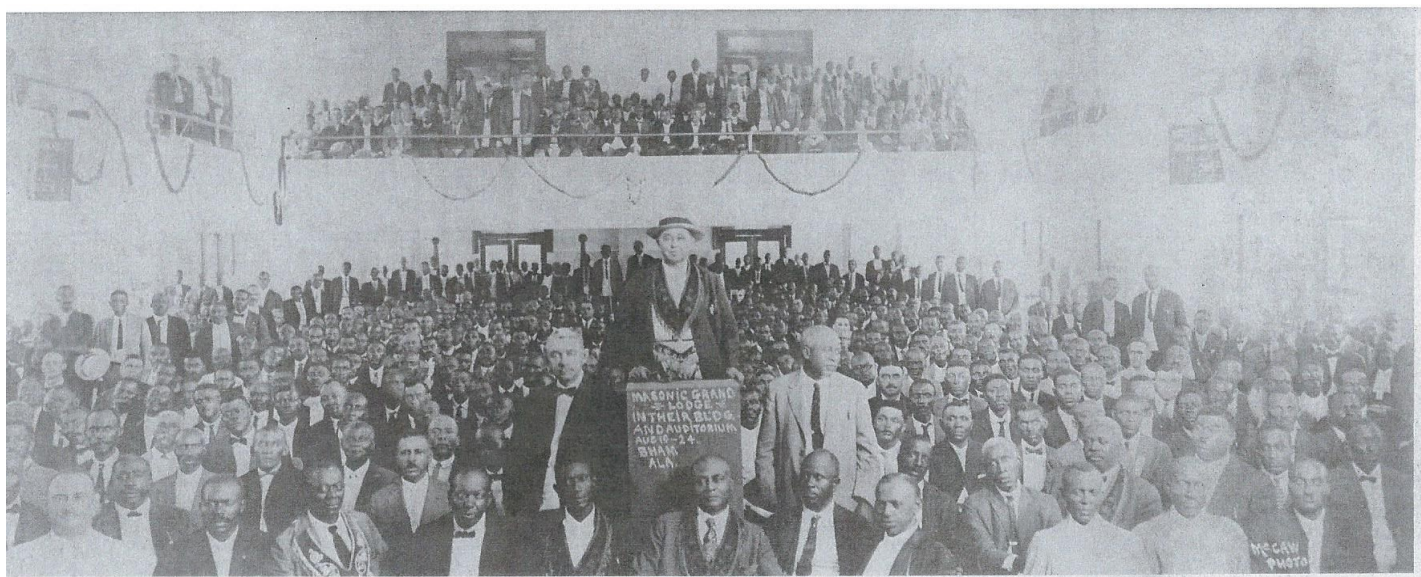
As early as 1900, GM Woods began engaging talks with African-American notables throughout the state, namely his brother Freemasons. Those whom he would meet regularly during Masonic and social functions would be (soon-to-be Bro.) Dr. Booker T. Washington, of the Tuskegee Institute.

An acquaintance made through Dr. Washington, would be non-other than an unknown jewel, known as Bro. Robert Robinson (R.R.) Taylor. Bro. Taylor was the first colored graduate from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (M.I.T.), graduating from that Institution in the year 1892, with the degree of B. S. After working in some architectural offices, Bro. Taylor yielded to the persuasion of Bro. Dr. Booker T. Washington, and accepted a position as an instructor of Architectural and Mechanical drawing and architecture for Tuskegee Institute. After remaining at the Institution for a number of years during which he designed and supervised the construction of all of its buildings he resigned and went to Cleveland, Ohio, where he remained for four years, working in an architect office and later engaging in private work. The relationship between GM Woods and Bro. Taylor flourished and he was chosen as the architect of the Colored Masonic Temple; meanwhile Leo Persley was tasked with Construction.



Contrary to the times, the Prince Hall Masons of Alabama maintained a thriving jurisdiction. White banking institutions were hesitant to lend money to African-American organizations and interest rates for organizations of color, were often inflated. Even the African-American banking institutions were seeing hard times during the roaring 20s.

The genius of GM Wood's leadership was the establishing internal-loan systems backed by public bonds. The godsend of the Order was the well-funded Endowment Department. The Department was the method in which the Grand Lodge funded the building of the Masonic Temple without needing outside funding. The body was able to hold its own note and pay it internally without the need for a mortgage



28th Annual Communication PHGL of Alabama in 1928. GM W.T. Woods (center podium), Bro. R.R. Taylor (left of GM Woods).

The Colored Masonic Temple was the only modern African-American Grand Lodge designed, financed and constructed by African-Americans. Through the financial ingenuity of GM Woods and his team, the Grand Lodge was able to pay for the building \$750,000 (cash-in-hand) which is \$10,925,580 (in today's dollars with inflation). Of note, the Colored Masonic Temple was highlighted (upon completion) as "the largest, finely built and state of the art Negro facility in the world"

During the 1928 Grand Lodge Communications, the Grand Lodge held it's Mortgage Burning Ceremony. The address delivered by Grand Master Woods' included,:

*"...I found the order in bad condition in every respect. The entire membership threatened to quit. Many had quit paying their dues.*

*My predecessor turned over to me one Grand Lodge Seal, and four dilapidated houses in Mobile, Alabama, that the Endowment Department had taken from our former Endowment Secretary in settlement of the money he misappropriated.*

*Forty acres of land in Bessemer that I had to finish paying for in 1914, and more than \$100,000 worth of death claims owed to Widows and Orphans.*

*Today, we have the best building owned by colored people in America, the only building without Temple Tax -- \$750,000.00 cost.*

*...I am thankful to God for his manifold blessings that he has bestowed upon us. We are out of debt, and have thousands of dollars in our treasury. We have the largest membership and more wealth than any order in the State of Alabama, barring none."*

*– Proceedings of the 28th Annual Communication of the MWGL AF&AM of Alabama, p. 29.*

Under GM Woods leadership the Grand Lodge was able to survive World War I and the depression. As GM Woods moved up in age, he utilized a very capable young attorney, Howard University Law grad and Hendley-Binford family member as his Deputy Grand Master, Chas. V. Hendley, Esq.

In the Fall of 1935, GM Woods was requested by his physician that he needed to get to cooler climates and he moved to live with his daughter in Chicago, IL. In 1936, while living with his daughter, it became inevitable that he would not be able to fulfill his duties as Grand Master. When he arrived at the 1936 Grand Lodge Session, the following took place:

*"Committee appointments were read by the Deputy Grand Master after which a committee was sent to bring every Grand Lodge officer into the session as word had been received that the Most Worshipful Grand Master Walter T. Woods was ready to make his annual address. An escort composed of Brother Oscar W. Adams and Bro. H.C. Trenholm was sent to assist the Most Worshipful Grand Master to the East. The Most Worshipful Grand Master, who because of illness had been unable to attend the Grand Session, entered the Grand Lodge for the first time at 11:00a.m., was greeted with thunderous applause and was escorted to the Grand East."*

*– Proceedings of the 38th Annual Communication of the MWGL AF&AM of Alabama, p. 2-3.*

*"...the Grand Honors were given after which Grand Master Woods took the gavel and announced that due to weakened physical condition he would have to call on the Deputy Grand Master (Hendley) to read his address."*

*ibid, p. 3*



*GM W.T. Woods, circa 1928*

“...for thirty years I have been a Grand Lodge officer and for twenty-three years and five months I have served you as Grand Master. Together we have gone forth in toil in the field and side-by-side we have borne the heat and burden of the day. Throughout these years there has grown up a higher appreciation of all these associations, a warmer love for you and may I say, a deeper need of you. We have faced our tasks without fear.... I would count it a great privilege to live these years over again with you, but owing to ill health forced to decline the reelection as Grand Master with much regret...This word of cheer I leave you with and this tribute of appreciation I pluck from my heart and lay in your hand. I surrender to you untarnished, as before, the gavel of authority and wish for you a peaceful, happy and profitable session...Our relation has been cordial and the years work is a testimonial of their fidelity...May the benediction of Heaven rest and abide with you and yours.”

*– ibid, Grand Master’s Address, p. 29-30.*

This point in time marked the end of the era of Most Worshipful Grand Master W.T. Woods. The Craft was said to have openly wept because of the fond admiration of the Woods Administration.

Five years later, Past Grand Master Walter Thomas Woods, residing in Chicago, would enter the “House not Built with Hands, Eternal, in Heaven,” on July 26, 1941. He would be interred in his hometown of Mobile, with full Masonic Ceremonies, on July 30, 1941.

As we review the life of Walter Thomas Woods, it is imperative that we reflect on the humble beginnings of this jurisdiction, leasing a small building in 1878. The fortitude and leadership of PGM Woods and the Brothers of that era to erect the edifice at the heart of downtown Birmingham remains today. We must remain ever vigilant to restore that edifice under our current leadership, on our watch and with our unfettered support.

*Contributor — RW L. Ken Collins, II  
Grand Lodge Historian*

# From Whence We've Come... (Continued)

Reprint from October 2014 Edition

## PGM MAJOR Reuben R. Mims

### A Leader of Men: Civilian, Military and Masonic

#### MWPGM Major Reuben Romulus Mims

#### 1886 – 1901

**M**WPGM Major Reuben Romulus Mims was born in July of 1851 (circa) in Aberdeen, Mississippi, to Ms. Lida Lee. Little is known of his early life. His first marriage with his wife Mary F. Williams on March 2, 1876 lasted until her death in 1887. He later married his loving companion Augusta “Gussie” Elizabeth Knight on March 24, 1891. They had one son named Reuben.

Mims became a Master Mason in the year of 1874 under the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free & Accepted York Masons of Alabama – National Grand Lodge, which later became St. John’s Lodge No. 2.

In 1875, Mims was elected as Secretary and was also appointed as Grand Sword Bearer in the Grand Lodge. In 1878, through the consolidation of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Ancient Free & Accepted Masons of Alabama (Independent) and the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free & Accepted York Masons of Alabama – National Grand Lodge, Mims became a member of Cumberland Lodge, No. 22 and was its chartering Senior Deacon. In 1881, Mims was elected as Junior Warden and in 1883, he was elected Worshipful Master.

In 1885, Mims was elected Deputy Grand Master and subsequently, in 1886, Most Worshipful Grand Master Geo. W.

Braxdall stepped down as Grand Master. The Most Worshipful Sovereign Grand Lodge of Ancient Free & Accepted Masons of Alabama (now the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge, Free & Accepted Masons of Alabama) elected Reuben R. Mims as its Most Worshipful Grand Master at the ripe age of 35, in 1886.

MWGM Mims became the figurehead of leading and securing Alabama Freemasonry on the national stage. He became close friends with MWPGM William T. Boyd of Ohio. MWGM Mims later served as Vice President of the 1893 Grand Masonic Congress (predecessor organization to the Prince Hall Conference of Grand Masters) behind President, MWPGM W.T. Boyd during the World’s Fair in Chicago, IL.

MWGM Mims held a high standing in the eyes of the brethren around the state. He tried numerous years to step down, by stating he would not seek re-election, only to be nominated solely and by acclamation without a dissenting vote. In 1890, MWGM Mims was elected Right Excellent Deputy Grand High Priest of the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Alabama.



*MWPGM Major Reuben Romulus Mims*

News of Mims political and Masonic success traveled throughout the State. In fact, in April 1888, shortly after a visitation to Olive Branch Lodge, No. 1, in Mobile, Mims was shot in the leg eight (8) times by white attackers while on his horse. He lived through the incident and was further respected as a strong leader with grit.

His life outside of Freemasonry was one of exemplary civilian and military leadership. As early as 1873, it appears Mims entered politics during Reconstruction. He was listed as a part of the Republican Party's Resolutions Committee. The Committee at that time wrote an endorsement of Governor-Elect David P. Lewis's fiscal policy.

In 1882, Mims is again seen active in Republican politics in Mobile's First Ward, as a delegate supporting Gen. James E. Slaughter's bid to become Postmaster General. Mims would later be appointed as mail carrier on January 27, 1882, under the patronage of Gen. Slaughter. Mims would hold this position until his death, even after Gen. Slaughter left office, which lends credence to his capabilities and standing in the local community.

As the end of Reconstruction loomed and the birth of Jim Crow emerged, the State was looking to fill its need for a militia. To answer the call, African American men signed petitions and made themselves available to serve with Governor Edward A. O'Neal's blessing in the new company in Mobile, which was called Gilmer's Rifles.

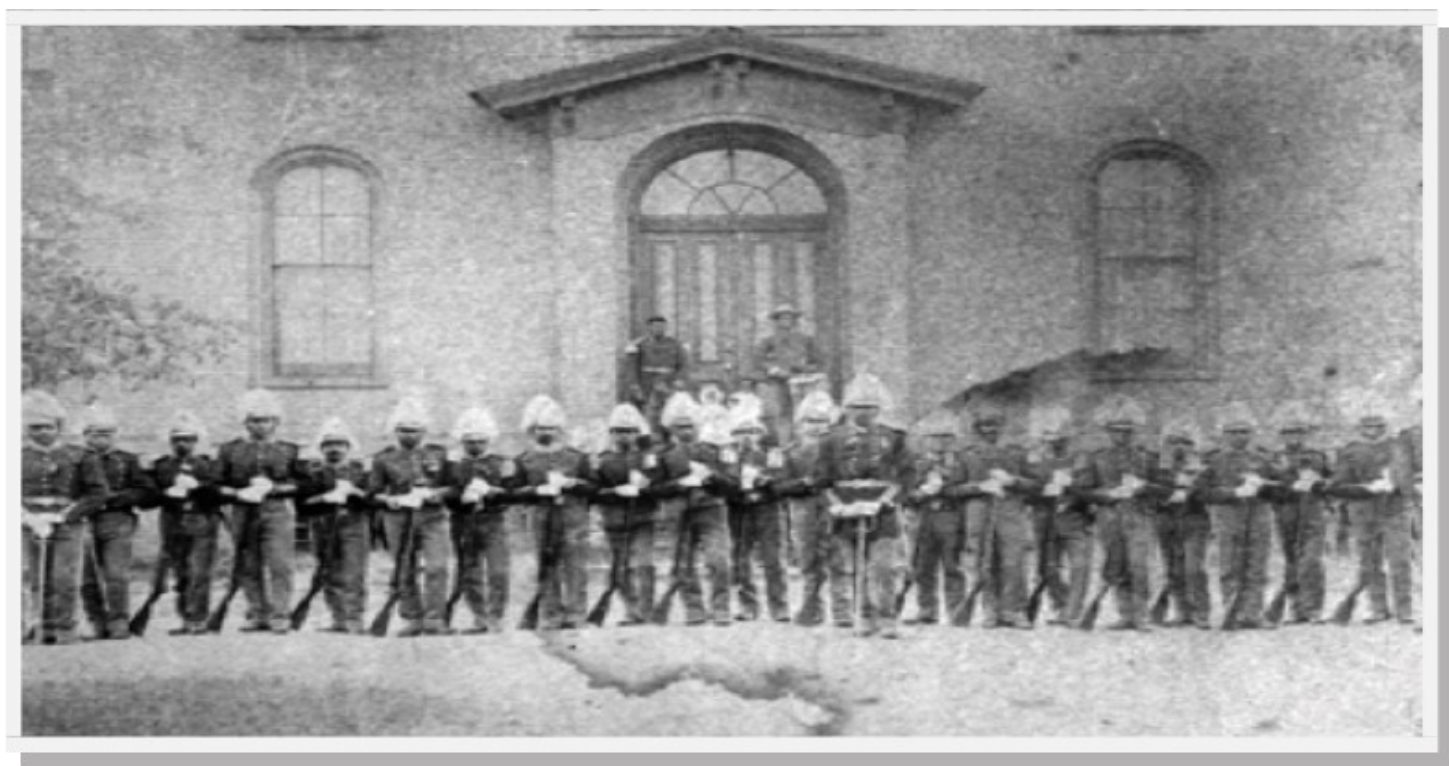
Among the first three African American officers chosen, Mims appeared again amongst the leadership ranks. It is clear with his known background as a skilled, yet, modest politician, he was elected amongst his peers as their leader and commissioned by the Governor and sworn in as a 1st Lieutenant on August 25, 1883.

As with his civilian role as a mail carrier, and his work within the Republican Party, his reputation as "engaging politics no more than necessary," a "worthy citizen," and "held in high esteem by our people, respected by whites and blacks alike." Mims' role in Gilmer's Rifles solidified his standing in the community, both African-American and White alike, not only in Mobile, but in political circles in Montgomery, namely in the eyes of the Governor.

On August 11, 1884, Mims was again elected as a leader amongst his peers and became the Company Commander of the Colored Regiment, being sworn in as Captain. With reports on Captain Mims of stellar leadership, he brought about the birth of the Capitol City Guard, Montgomery's African American Company, in July of 1885.



*MWPGM Major Reuben Romulus Mims*



*Members of Gilmer's Rifles*

Typical issues relating to Jim Crow tactics were taking place within the militia. The African-American Guards saw little to no monetary support or supplies. Captain Mims remained an advocate for his soldiers and maintained contact with leaders informing them of his troops needs. While acts of this nature could have been frowned upon coming from an African American in those times, Captain Mims leadership status remained his ample defense.

In 1895, Captain Mims was elected by his troops and supported by the political and military establishment by becoming Major. Major Mims remained the highest ranking African American military officer until the birth of the Tuskegee experiment. Sadly enough, Major Mims and his colored troops saw the Capital City Guard mustered out in 1897.

Throughout his civilian, military and Masonic leadership roles, MWPGM Major Reuben Romulus Mims demanded the respect of all who knew him. On the evening of March 7, 1901, the Masonic brethren and family of Major Mims contacted Right Worshipful Deputy Grand Master Dr. S.S.H. Washington to attend to Major Mims at his bedside. Upon his arrival on March 8th, there was nothing the Deputy Grand Master could do. He later died on March 9, 1901, of kidney failure.

**(GRAND HISTORIAN'S NOTE:** Brothers, be proud that we have standard bearers of African-American history in our ranks within our Masonic Leadership! Take in the information, disseminate it and teach those in our lodges and community.)

**(NOTE:** Special thanks to Bro. Alton Roundtree and Jamer Morgan, III of the MWPHGL of DC. Mrs. Beth Muskat for her extensive work on Gilmer's Rifles and the impact of the African American militia during the late 1800's.)

*Contributor — RW L. Ken Collins, II  
Grand Lodge Historian*

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# Message from the Grand Medical Registrar

**G**reetings:

How good and truly blessed it is to see another day. I am going to address a subject that you may have probably seen discussed a great deal on television concerning Hepatitis C. I am going to high light certain aspects about Hepatitis C in order to stimulate interest in getting tested for this disease. Hepatitis means inflammation of the liver. Hepatitis C, causes inflammation of the liver because it is a viral infection. Hepatitis C can progress in some cases to serious liver damage such as cirrhosis. Cirrhosis is scarring of the liver. Cancer of the liver may occur also as another complication. It has been estimated that over 3 million people are infected with Hepatitis C in the United States. However, most people do not know that they have the disease because there are few symptoms associated with it. Some symptoms associated with Hepatitis C are: a) stomach pain b) loss of appetite c) jaundice (yellowing of the skin and eyes and can cause dark urine) d) nausea e) fatigue.

The mode of transmission is primarily blood from an infected person. The forms of contact can be a) blood transfusions b) IV drug use (most common) c) medical equipment not well sterilized d) needle sticks involving medical professionals. Hepatitis C can also be contracted by having rough intercourse in which the skin is broken. This is however a low risk. Using appropriate protection is always encouraged such as latex condoms. The Centers for Disease Control recommends that people get tested if: a) there is a history of IV drug usage b) individuals have had blood transfusions and/or organ transplants before July 1992 c) there has been long term dialysis d) individuals have HIV e) individuals were born between 1945-1965 f) the mother had Hepatitis C during childbirth.

Screening for Hepatitis C is done by scheduling an appointment with your physician and obtaining a blood test. There is currently no vaccine for Hepatitis C. Medical technology has progressed whereby you can be treated for Hepatitis C and many have been cured of this disease. Your physician would be best suited to discuss and guide you through the appropriate channels for treatment if necessary. If you test positive for Hepatitis C, a gastroenterologist or hepatologist is usually consulted to see what is the most appropriate treatment.

Brothers, you may wonder why people born between 1945-1965 are being singled out in commercial ads for Hepatitis C. These are the "baby boomers". This group of people have the highest rates of Hepatitis C. It has been postulated that this may be due to the fact that in the 1970s and 1980s blood was not screened as thoroughly as it is now.

There is no need to shun people whom have Hepatitis C. There is no evidence that Hepatitis C can be transmitted without blood to blood contact. If you should fall into any of the risk factor categories, you owe it to yourself to get properly tested and treated.

To summarize, there is currently no vaccine for Hepatitis C. Treatment may be available by consulting your medical doctor. Make use of reputable places for tattooing, body piercing or pedicures. Question businesses of this nature about sterilization techniques and use of new equipment. Do not be afraid to ask these questions as you are protecting your health. Practice safe sex. Causal contact does not lead to contracting Hepatitis C; therefore, there is no need to shun someone with Hepatitis C. Try not to share personal items such as razors, toothbrushes or items that can cause exposure to blood. Last, do not be ashamed to get tested.

Thank you for this opportunity to share this subject with you. May GOD bless and keep you.

*Contributor – RW Dr. Belfondia Pou  
Grand Medical Registrar*

***Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge  
Free and Accepted Masons of Alabama  
147th Annual Communication***

***~ SCHEDULE OF EVENTS ~***

***Sunday, July 16, 2017***

7:00 a. m. - 12:00 a. m.	Vendors.....	Preconvene 2 Center (Riverview Plaza Hotel)
12:00 p. m. - 12:00 a. m.	Grand Lodge Office .....	Tree House
4:00 p. m. - 6:00 p. m.	First Aid and CPR Certification.....	Beinville Square

***Monday, July 17, 2017***

7:00 a. m. - 12:00 a. m.	Grand Lodge Office .....	Tree House
7:00 a. m. - 8:00 p. m.	Registration .....	Moonlight Foyer
7:00 a. m. - 12:00 a. m.	Vendors .....	Preconvene 2 Center (Riverview Plaza Hotel)
7:00 a. m. - 4:00 p. m.	Health Fair .....	Ashland Place B
8:00 a. m. - 1:00 p. m.	Trustees Meeting .....	Moonlight A
8:00 a. m. - 6:00 p. m.	Choir Rehearsal .....	Oakleigh Garden
8:00 a. m. - 6:00 p. m.	Committee Meetings .....	Beinville Square
9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.	Worshipful Master's Certification.....	Moonlight B-E
1:00 p. m. - 3:00 p. m.	Trustees Luncheon .....	Crystal Ballroom
3:00 p. m. - 6:00 p. m.	Workshop .....	Moonlight B-E
5:00 p. m. - 7:00 p. m.	Holding Room.....	Jubilee Suite (Riverview Plaza Hotel)
6:00 p. m. - 8:00 p. m.	Welcome Program.....	Bon Secour Bay (Riverview Plaza Hotel)
8:00 p. m. - 10:00 p. m.	Meet and Greet.....	Mobile Bay Ballroom (Riverview Plaza Hotel)

***Tuesday, July 18, 2017***

7:00 a. m. - 8:00 p. m.	Grand Lodge Office.....	Tree House
7:00 a. m. - 8:00 p. m.	Registration .....	Moonlight Foyer

***Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge  
Free and Accepted Masons of Alabama  
147th Annual Communication***

***~ SCHEDULE OF EVENTS ~  
(Continued)***

7:00 a. m. - 12:00 a. m.	Vendors .....	Preconvene 2 Center (Riverview Plaza Hotel)
7:00 a. m. - 4:00 p. m.	Health Fair.....	Ashland Place B
8:00 a. m. - 3:00 p.m.	Dignitaries Holding Room .....	Leinkauf
8:00 a. m. - 5:00 p. m.	Grand Lodge Opening Session.....	Moonlight Ballroom
8:00 a. m. - 6:00 p. m.	Committee Meetings .....	Bienville Square
8:00 a. m. - 7:00 p. m.	Chorus Rehearsal .....	Oakleigh Garden
5:00 p. m. - 7:00 p. m.	Dignitaries Holding Room.....	Jubilee Suite (Riverview Plaza Hotel)
7:00 p. m. - 9:00 p. m.	Lodge of Sorrow .....	Bon Secour Bay (Riverview Plaza Hotel)

***Wednesday, July 19, 2017***

5:00 a. m. - 7:30 a. m.	Past Master’s Degree .....	Moonlight C-E
7:00 a. m. - 1:00 p. m	Grand Lodge Office .....	Tree House
7:00 a. m. - 12:00 p. m.	Vendors .....	Preconvene 2 Center (Riverview Plaza Hotel)
7:00 a. m. - 1:00 p. m.	Registration .....	Moonlight Foyer
8:00 a. m. - 1:00 p. m.	Grand Lodge Closing Session .....	Moonlight A-B



**Our Mission**

***“The mission of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge,  
Free and Accepted Masons of Alabama is to continue the  
legacy of making good men better through fraternal  
brotherhood, to aid and assist our widows, orphans, and  
distressed brothers, and to contribute to the community  
through service, scholarship, charity and training.”***

# Achievements

## Brother Marcus T. Orr

**B**ro. Marcus T. Orr was honored by the United Negro College Fund for his outstanding contributions in community service and his commitment to philanthropy. Bro. Orr is the chairman of Goodway Lodge No. 222's Community Service Committee. In this role, Bro. Orr has coordinated a trip to the Civil Rights Museum in Memphis. The lodge sponsored 12 youth from the local Boys and Girls Club on a trip to the museum. He provides free haircuts every Monday at the same Boys and Girls Club. He serves as fundraiser chairman for a kick ball tournament to raise funds and awareness for the Lupus Foundation. Bro. Orr also serves as fundraiser chairman for a Toys-for-Tots campaign and partners with several local churches to support their back-to-school initiatives. Bro. Orr also was one of the three recipients of the District No. 17 Leonard A. Jackson Community Service Award from RW Anthony Johnson during the last Regional meeting. Bro. Orr's hard work and dedication to his Lodge and to helping others is a shining example of what Freemasonry is all about!

*Contributor- WM Jarvis L. Noel (No. 222)*



*Pictured from left to right are WM Jarvis L. Noel, Bro. Marcus T. Orr, PM Marion Orr Jr., and SS Gary Moore at the United Negro College Fund's (UNCF) 39th Annual Gala.*

# In The Spotlight

Each quarter the MWPHGL of Alabama will place one of our worthy brothers In The Spotlight. The worthy brother placed In The Spotlight this quarter is:

## Grand Trustee R.W. Morris Toolles, Jr.

**B**ro. Morris E. Toolles, Jr. was born on July 30, 1972 in Chatom, AL. Bro. Toolles is the son of Morris and Billie R. Toolles of McIntosh, AL. Bro. Toolles has one younger sister, Tomekia D. James, who resides in Richmond, Virginia. Bro. Toolles is married to his lovely wife, Michelle E. Toolles and they have two children, Desinique and Tre'Morris.

Bro. Toolles is an entrepreneur specializing in transportation and civil logistics for the past 25 years. Bro. Toolles followed in the Masonic footsteps of his grandfather, the late Bro. Will Toolles and his father Bro. Morris Toolles by joining Milton W. Howze No. 408 in April 1990, under the leadership of Past Master George D. Echols. Bro. Toolles served as Worshipful Master from 2006 to 2011.

Currently, Morris E. Toolles, Jr. serves under the leadership of the Honorable Corey D. Hawkins, Sr., Most Worshipful Grand Master, as Grand Trustee.

#### Masonic Affiliations:

Past District Deputy (District 7) Deputy of the Year for 2 consecutive years

Freeman Jackson No. 7 Holy Royal Arch, Excellent High Priest

Solomon Council No. 15, Thrice Illustrious Master

St. John Commandery No. 47, Generalissimo

GIG Booker T. Washington Consistory No. 115, Keeper of Seals and Archives

Mizraim Temple No. 119, Past Potentate



# REGION 4

## News and Events from Region 4

### District No. 7 St. John's Day Program

District 7 held its annual St. John's Day Program on Sunday, June 25th, at Beulah Baptist Church in Notasulga, Alabama. Masonic brothers from the ten lodges and OES chapters from the district were on hand to celebrate the Feast of St. John's. Pastor Willie Smith delivered the powerful message to the more than 300 audience members. Grand District Deputy Erwin Chambliss from Milton Howze Lodge No. 408 and Assistant Grand District Deputy Carlton Jones from Phoenix Lodge No. 428 recognized several of the lodges and OES chapters and welcomed everyone for the occasion. Worshipful Master's Council Scholarship Chairman, WM Carlton Jones, announced several recipients for the District 7 Scholarships. Several lodges also announced scholarship winners from their respective lodges. Phoenix Lodge No. 428 presented five scholarships to five deserving students. The deserving scholarship winners were: Tyra Sharp — will be attending Chattahoochee Valley Community College this fall, Zaria Wiltshire — attending Tuskegee University this fall, Na'dstasha Lawrence — attending University of Alabama at Birmingham this fall, Queenyetta Delaney — attending University of Alabama at Birmingham this fall and Nakayla Randolph Moore — attending Alabama A&M University this fall. Congratulations to all the winners and a job well done by the brothers of District 7 and Phoenix Lodge No. 428!



(Top) Phoenix Lodge No. 428 Scholarship presentation to Zaria Wiltshire  
(Bottom) Phoenix Lodge No. 428 Scholarship presentation to Nadastasha Lawrence

Contributor — WM Carlton Jones (No. 428)

## R. H. Rice Lodge No. 345 Assists in Annual Easter Egg Hunt

**O**n April 15, 2017, the brothers of R. H. Rice Lodge No. 345, in Montgomery, AL partnered with Day Street Baptist Church in their Annual Easter Egg Hunt. The brothers provided a monetary donation to assist in funding the event, as well, as volunteered to set up and oversee the event. This community outreach for the youth also afforded brothers the opportunity to provide some hands-on mentorship at the grass roots level. This was a successful event that received direct praise from the pastor and congregation of Day Street Baptist Church, as well as, the community.



*Brothers prepping for egg hunt.*

## R. H. Rice Lodge No. 345 Hosts Family and Friends Fun-Day



*Group shot enjoying bingo and refreshments.*

**O**n June 10, 2017, the brothers of R.H. Rice Lodge No. 345, in Montgomery, AL hosted their annual community wide Family and Friends Fun-Day. This event provided refreshment and prizes, free of charge, in an effort to achieve maximum participation. Attendance was greater than expected. The brothers participated in groups, as well as, one-on-one interaction with members of the community. This highly successful community outreach established a good rapport for future endeavors.

*Contributor - PM Johnny Cunningham (No. 345)*

# Hamilton Lodge No. 365

## Showing Charity in the Community

On May 8, 2017, the brothers of Hamilton Lodge No. 365 held a bible and prayer event for the residents at Cedar Crest Nursing Home. The brothers passed out bibles and said a prayer with each resident at the nursing home. Hamilton Lodge also played bingo with the residents who were playing for prizes and snacks.



On May 11th, the brothers of Hamilton Lodge No. 365 visited Past Master John Sawyer at the Country Cottage Assisted Living Facility. The lodge members conversed with Bro. Sawyer about the good old days in Prince Hall Masonry. The brothers of Hamilton Lodge No. 365 believe that all PHA brothers are family; it doesn't matter what lodge you're from. A brother is a brother. The brothers from Hamilton Lodge No. 365 thanked Bro. Sawyer for giving them wisdom and strength to keep the lodge moving forward as Prince Hall Masons. The lodge members also passed out goody bags for the residents at the Country Cottage Assisted Living Facility.



On May 19th, the brothers of Hamilton Lodge No. 365 helped Cedar Crest Nursing Home by escorting the patients to the front of the facility for their Family and Friends Day. There was music, food, and lots of fun and laughter by all that attended.

On June 10th, the brothers of Hamilton Lodge No. 365 and the Blue Heart Foundation, came together to help feed the students of Mrs. Tonea Stewart's, Teaching through Theatre (Camp 3T) on the campus of Alabama State University. The lodge prepared over 200 sack lunches, which contained a sandwich or hotdog, chips, candy, and a juice. "It always feels refreshing to give back to the kids because you never know, one of these kids could be our next school teacher, governor or president", stated Bro. Brian Smith.



The brothers of Hamilton Lodge No. 365 teamed up again with the Blue Heart Foundation and held a bowling event called "Bowling for a Purpose". This event helped to raise money for The Salvation Army.

*(Top) Lodge No. 365 at Cedar Crest Nursing Home with residents for bible and prayer event*

*(Middle) Lodge No. 365 visiting PM Sawyer at Country Cottage Assisted Living Facility.*

*(Bottom) Lodge No. 365 with Mrs. Tonea Stewart prepping to feed students at her Camp 3T on the campus of ASU*

*Contributor – Bro. Brian Smith (No. 365)*

# District No. 10

## Celebrating St. John's Day

The Henry Howell Worshipful Master's Council of District 10 celebrated St. John's Day at Second Baptist Church in Wetumpka. Worshipful Master Lewis E. Washington, Sr., of Hill City No. 21, was the host Master of Ceremony. RW Dexter Antonio Madden is the Grand District Deputy of District 10. Stone Chapel A.M.E. Zion Male Chorus provided song service and Pastor J. J. Fountain blessed the congregation with a powerful message. The celebration was one of the most well-attended in recent memory for the District.



*Contributor – RW Dexter Madden*

# Milton W. Howze Lodge No. 408

## Community Service Efforts

The Brothers of Milton W. Howze Lodge No. 408 gathered on Saturday, April 29, at Auburn City Fest in Auburn, Alabama, to work a fundraiser event. The brothers sold hamburgers, hot dogs, and a number of other items to raise money for their Scholarship Fund.

On Saturday, June 17th, Milton W. Howze No. 408 made a food donation to the Cornerstone Community Center. Lodge members delivered plates of food to the sick and shut-in of the facility, as well as, fellowshipped with them.

On Sunday, June 25th, Milton W. Howze celebrated Saint John's Day at Beulah Baptist Church in Notasulga, Alabama. Through their continued efforts of fundraising, Lodge No. 408 was able to exceed the previous number and give \$1000 scholarships to three college bound seniors.

*Contributor – Bro. Steve Blackmon (No. 408)*



*Lodge No. 408 delivering plates of food at Cornerstone Community Center*



*Lodge No. 408 at Auburn City Fest in Auburn, AL*

# Rising Phoenix Youth Awards Program

**O**n Saturday, June 10, 2017, Phoenix Lodge No. 428 held its inaugural “Rising Phoenix” Youth Awards Banquet. The event theme was “Rising to Excellence; If You Can Believe, You Can Achieve”. Phoenix Lodge No. 428 has a long tradition of recognizing the youth and giving back to the community. To date, the lodge has given out more than \$20,000 dollars in college scholarships to local high school seniors and college students. The youth awards program recognized eighteen youths in several age groups ranging from ages seven to seventeen years of age. Children in several of the local elementary, middle, junior high and high schools in Phoenix City and Russell County were recognized. The categories of recognition were Academics, Sports, Theater and Community Service. The event was held at the American Legion Post 135 in Phenix City, Alabama. More than 100 guests, friends and family members were on hand to support and honor the youth as they were recognized for their accomplishments this past school year. WM Carlton Jones, was Master of Ceremony for the event. Guest Speaker, Russell County Coroner, PM Arthur L. Sumbry, Jr., delivered a powerful message to inspire the youth. Entertainment was presented by local artist, “Free Will Joe”. The event brought tears of excitement from the children and their parents as their names were called to receive their awards. In the end, all the members of Phoenix Lodge No. 428 and Camp Field Joy Chapter No. 690, OES rose to give a final salute to all the awardees, as each member shook each of the 18 recipients’ hands as they walked in a procession to honor the youth.

Phoenix Lodge No. 428 also took time to present three Community Star Awards to individuals who have contributed numerous hours in community service and for their involvement with mentoring the youth. The first community star award of recognition was presented to Coach Charles Fortune, Central High School’s Track Coach for more than 40 years. His wife Lenia, received the award on behalf of her husband. The next two community star awards were presented to two of Phoenix Lodge No. 428’s own members, Past Master Tim Miller for his years as a volunteer coach for the Phenix City Titans youth football league, his involvement with Bethel AME Church and his many hours performing community service as a member of Phoenix Lodge No. 428. The next community star award of recognition was presented to WM Carlton Jones, presented by his lodge brothers. The members presented WM Jones with a beautiful handcrafted wooden masonic shadow box. WM Jones spearheaded the Youth Awards Program and has been instrumental in the ongoing Lodge Youth Scholarship program. Phoenix Lodge No. 428 presented five college scholarships in the amount of \$500 each to local high school students. Well done Lodge No. 428!

*Contributor - WM Carlton Jones (No. 428)*



*Group picture of PM Miller and Phoenix Lodge No. 428 after receiving award*



*Group picture of Phoenix Lodge No. 428 and some of the awardees*

# Mount Nebo Lodge No. 511

## Boy's and Men's Conference

On Saturday, June 17, 2017, the brothers of Mount Nebo Lodge No. 511 and the Town Creek District held its Annual Boy's and Men's Conference. The event was held at the Town District Center in Tuskegee, AL. The conference showed the young men good positive role models from their community who have achieved their life goals. There were different speakers from all walks of life who spoke to the young men. Bro. Johnny Bailey, who retired from the Department of Corrections, told the attendees what happens behind the prison walls and how easy it is to get caught up doing the wrong thing by just being with the wrong crowd. There were teachers on hand to tell them how important it is to get their education to be successful in life. Bro. Clinton Boyd, Jr., retired Sergeant Major, gave an encounter on his military accomplishments and how the military shaped and changed his life for the good. Bro. Ken Woodard, a retired NFL Football Player, gave the young men encouraging words about the life of a NFL Pro Football Player. The young men were very inspired by the program. Elijah Duncan, one of the participants stated, "I learned so much from being at the program and that I hope that this program continues because it teaches us how to be good productive young men." The young men were encircled by the men and prayed for by Rev. Jonas Rutledge. The closing remarks were given by Senior Warden Eddie Moore, Mount Nebo No. 511 and Rev. Jonas Rutledge, moderator for the Town Creek District. Everyone was invited to a delicious lunch and fellowship at the end of the program.

*Contributor - Bro. Dominguez Hurry (No. 511)*



*Bro. Henry Wilson gives young men advice*



*Young men and the members of Mount Nebo*



*Bro. Johnny Bailey gives pep talk to young men*



*Young men encircled by men for prayer*

# South Griffin Lodge No. 697

## Bowties and Pearls Youth Empowerment

On June 3, 2017, South Griffin Lodge No. 697 and Rising Star Chapter No. 847, OES held their Bowties and Pearls Youth Empowerment Event to help empower the youth in their community. Two educators were speakers for the event. The event also had a gospel rapper, comedy, gospel singing and a full course meal. Everything was absolutely free!!! The Mayor of Phenix City, Eddie Lowe and First Lady Debra Lowe, were in attendance, as well as, other dignitaries like District Deputy Erwin Chambliss of District 7 and Illustrious Potentate Eric B. Harrell of Al Sharif No. 252. Awards of appreciation were given to Gail Green, Assistant Chief of Police for the Phenix City Police Department, for eradicating barriers for women in Law Enforcement. Counselor Veta Lewis also received an award for establishing a program for girls at Central High School. She takes them on college tours and career building seminars. South Griffin Lodge No. 697 and Rising Star Chapter No. 847, OES are working hard in their village to take interest in their future.



# South Griffin Lodge No. 697

## Resurrection Weekend



On April 15, 2017, the brothers of South Griffin Lodge No. 697 in a joint event with Mel and ABE Barbershop were asked to help participate and financially sponsor Resurrection Weekend in their community. The weekend activities consisted of the Easter Egg Hunt, moon bouncers, horseback riding, free food and many other activities. The lodge felt that it was great to be able to give back to its community and it was a joyous time seeing the smiles on children's faces. That will always be a priceless moment to them.

*Contributor – WM Toby Dixon (No. 697)*

# REGION 5

## News and Events from Region 5

# Pride of North Birmingham No. 319 Supporting Autism Awareness

On April 8, 2017, the brothers of Pride of North Birmingham Lodge No. 319 proudly supported and participated in the 2nd Annual Team Jory 5K Run & Walk for Autism 2017 in Veterans Park. This yearly event was hosted by the Jory's Journey Foundation (JJF). JJF was founded by Jarrod and Arlicia Sims whose son, Jory, has autism. One in sixty-eight children in the United States has autism. Early detection is the key to autism being identified and treated. In the African American Community, children are diagnosed three to five years later than those in other communities. Understanding that autism is the least identified and least funded disability that we have, JJF is committed to making an impact. JJF is making sure they bring valuable resources back to undeserved communities in Jefferson County. Their mission: Educate, Empower, and Inspire our communities living with autism; helping to ensure each child reaches their full potential. Pride of North Birmingham encourage all Prince Hall Masonic Lodges and Eastern Star Chapters to support and participate in this annual event. Please consider helping JJF BRIDGE THE GAP in your underserved communities. You can go to the website [jorysjourney.org](http://jorysjourney.org) for ways that you can help.

*Contributor- Bro. Tony "O." Lloyd (No. 319)*



*Bro. Gerren K. Whitlock, Sr, Bro. Darryl Washington (JJF Board Member), Bro. Tony "O." Lloyd, Jarrod Sims (JJF Co-Founder/Pres.), Bro. Timothy Sanford, and Bro. Kevin Reese at Team Jory 5K Run & Walk for Autism 2017*



# REGION 6

## News and Events from Region 6

### District No. 17 and District No. 15, OES Inaugural Joint St. John's Day Picnic

On Saturday, June 24, 2017, the brothers of District No. 17 came together with District No. 15 Order of Eastern Star to kick off a weekend celebration which culminated with the Annual St John's Day Program. The picnic was an event that Grand District Deputy Anthony Johnson and Grand District Deputy Michelle King had implemented in an effort to promote fellowship between the brothers and sisters and their families. The picnic was held at A.C. Banks park in Decatur, AL. Everyone that attended agreed that it was a great idea to have this event and that it should become an annual event for the weekend. There were many activities available during the picnic for kids and adults including inflatables, football, face painting, playground activities, spades and dominoes tournaments, and just sitting back and enjoying good conversation while eating great food and listening to music. Planning has already started for next year's event to make it even better than this year's picnic. At the close of the event, prizes were presented to the winning teams of the spades and dominoes tournaments. Grand District Deputy Johnson and Grand District Deputy Michelle King thanked the brothers and sisters for attending and wished everyone safe travels back to their final destinations.

*Contributor – RW Anthony Johnson*



## District No. 17 Scholarship Presentation



*Assistant Grand District Deputy, Bro. Robert Johnson presenting District Scholarship to Ms. Alexis Fuqua*

On May 18, 2017, Alexis Fuqua was awarded the District 17 Scholarship during her Senior Awards Day at Lauderdale County High School in Rogersville, Alabama. Alexis was presented the award by Assistant Grand District Deputy, Bro. Robert Johnson. Supporters in attendance for Alexis included members of Center Star Lodge No. 25; WM Eric Fuqua, Sr., and her uncle Bro. Antonia Fuqua. Alexis's grandmother, Jessie Fuqua, Past Matron of Warrens Chapter No. 357, OES was also proudly in attendance, as well as, other family members. Alexis will attend Northwest Shoals Community College, and she plans to major in Child Development. Alexis' message to everyone was, "Thanks for investing in my future. I'm truly blessed to have great influences from Warrens Chapter and Center Star Lodge."

*Contributor – Bro. Antonia Fuqua (No. 25)*

## District No. 17 Celebrates St. Johns Day

On Sunday, June 25, 2017, the brothers of District No. 17 and members of District No. 15, OES and District No. 16, OES came together to celebrate their Annual St. John's Day Program. With District No. 17 being the largest geographical district within the Jurisdiction there were two different programs conducted simultaneously in the respective regions. The lodges of the Northeast region along with District No. 15, OES held their program at Big Shiloh Baptist Church in Madison, AL while the lodges of the Northwest region and District No. 16, OES held their program at Mount Hope Missionary Baptist Church in Sheffield, AL. A great message was brought forward by both Speakers of the Hour. Rev. Bro Lathan Strong for the Northeast region and Rev. Antwon Plott for the Northwest program. Both events were well attended.

*Contributor – RW Anthony Johnson*



# Evening Star Lodge No. 6 Awards Educational Scholarships

This year, Evening Star Lodge No. 6 presented scholarships to two deserving local students. The two scholarships are named the Evening Star Lodge and Perry O. Ward Scholarships. Mr. Preston Adams was awarded the Evening Star Lodge Scholarship and Ms. Celena Anderson received the Perry O. Ward Scholarship.

Mr. Adams graduated from Bob Jones High School with a 3.5 GPA. While at Bob Jones, Mr. Adams was on the wrestling team and he was the founder and president of the Animation Club. He plans to attend DePaul University in the fall where he will study Animation and Gaming Design. In his free time, Mr. Adams volunteers at the Boys and Girls Club and the Triana Public Library.

Ms. Anderson graduated from Columbia High School with a 3.2 GPA. She will be attending Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University in the fall majoring in Biology/Pre-Med. While reading Ms. Anderson's essay, two characteristics stood out; tenacity and resilience.

The brothers of Evening Star Lodge No. 6 wish both Mr. Adams and Ms. Anderson the best in their future endeavors.

*Contributor – Bro. Benjamin B. Long, Jr. (No. 6)*



*Pictured in photo from left to right are PM James Lewis, SD Ron Adams, Mr. Preston Adams, Foundation President Charles Crayton and Foundation Treasurer Percell Sykes.*

If a man empties his purse into his head,  
no man can take it away from him.  
An investment in knowledge  
always pays the best interest.

## George W. Braxdall Lodge No. 28's Inaugural “28 Shades of Blue” Charity Social

**B**efore taking on any great and important undertaking, the blessing of the Lord must be invoked. From a dream, to an idea, to a reality. On April 29, 2017, the brothers of George W. Braxdall Lodge No. 28 overcame all obstacles and organized a fundraiser of immense proportions in comparison to anything the lodge has ever taken upon themselves. This event was multipurpose and allowed social intercourse between the lodge and the surrounding communities in a relaxed, but civilized atmosphere. It also allowed Lodge No. 28 to fund more community outreach endeavors that would have otherwise been extremely limited. Last, but most importantly, the process, coupled with dedication and determination, made this small town lodge, big at heart. For the blessing of this success, they are stronger.



## George W. Braxdall Lodge No. 28 Participates in the Decatur Job Fair

**O**n May 17th, the brothers of George W. Braxdall Lodge No. 28 helped to facilitate an educational workshop and job fair in the Decatur community. The brothers of George W. Braxdall No. 28 was asked by Mayor Tabb Bowling, the Mayor of Decatur Alabama, to assist with the presentation of these huge job opportunities to the community. Hundreds of trade job openings were projected because of a major shift in the labor force with local contractors. George W. Braxdall No. 28 was a perfect fit for the platform that the mayor was trying to build, due to the multiple tradesmen that enjoy its membership. Craftsmen such as millwrights, ironworkers, painters, chefs, and mechanics are just a few of the crafts that the lodge retains as members. The lodge was able to facilitate this educational workshop to the job applicants on skills such as interview preparation, having a positive attitude and willingness to learn in on-the-job training situations. WM Engram stated, “It was an honor for the lodge to be recognized by our civil magistrates as an asset to our community.”



*Contributor – WM Xavier Engram (No. 28)*

# Morning Star Lodge No. 50 Committed to Community Service

*'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'*

– Matthew 25:40

**M**orning Star Lodge No. 50 and Hendley Chapter No. 855, OES being supporting pillars within their community continued their support to Huntsville's Downtown Rescue Mission by serving and assisting in meal feeding operations on four missions, April 20 and 27 and May 3 and 10, 2017. Worshipful Master Benson and Worthy Matron Rainey, along with their lodge and chapter members, feel that there is always a blessing in dispensing charity and helping our less fortunate brothers and sisters in need, regardless how they may have arrived there.

The brothers of Morning Star Lodge No. 50 also reached out and served meals during the graduating ceremony of the Operation Make a Difference, INC. (OMAD) on May 11, 2017. The graduates completed a structured program to aid youth and their parents/legal guardians in becoming productive citizens through developmental growth, conflict resolution, self-esteem building and behavior modification. It is the belief of Operation MAD that the application of these fundamentals will enhance not only the individual, but the community and society at-large. OMAD is directed by Bro. Keith Reed who is also a member of Morning Star Lodge No. 50.

WM Jimmy Benson stated, "Nothing warms the heart more than that of giving of yourself in support of someone who is less fortunate than you. This is what we do because it's the right thing to do! No one can do everything but everyone can do something. Our hearts and compasses are open in service to the North Alabama community."



# Morning Star Lodge No. 50's Scholarship Presentations

Each year Morning Star Lodge No. 50 presents two \$1500.00 Scholarships to deserving high school graduates. Criteria for applicants is as follows: must be a U.S. Citizen, be a current High School Senior in the Madison County area, must have maintained a minimum 2.5 GPA, must be of good moral character, exhibits initiative and have a desire to achieve higher educational goals and objectives, must demonstrate a financial need within the written essay, must enter college within one year of receiving scholarship award or will forfeit to second choice applicant.

On May 16, 2017, Mr. Jaquez Lawson was presented with the Leonard A. Jackson Educational Scholarship Award at his Awards Day Ceremony at James Clemens High School. Mr. Lawson is a member of New Life Christian Center and a member of Christians Ready Equipped and Willing (C.R.E.W.). Mr. Lawson is the Team Captain for James Clemens Basketball Team and will be attending Huntingdon College on a basketball scholarship in the fall majoring in physical therapy. Mr. Lawson spends his free time doing community service work with C.R.E.W. and the D'Airs' Love Foundation.

On May 23, 2017, Ms. Celena Anderson was presented with the Morning Star Lodge No. 50 Educational Scholarship Award at her High School's Awards Day Ceremony. Ms. Anderson graduated from with a 3.6 GPA from Columbia High School in Huntsville, Alabama where she was a member of the Student Government, committee on system desegregation, and Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA). She is also a member of St. Luke Christian Church where she is a youth leader and Children's Sunday School Teacher. Ms. Anderson and will be attending Alabama A&M University (Pre-Med/Biology) in the fall.

These scholarships were created to assist students who possess the desire to further their education. The individuals awarded these scholarships have demonstrated academic excellence and leadership potential in their community. We encourage and wish God's blessings as they matriculate their academic path.



*WM Benson Presenting Scholarship to Mr. Jaquez Lawson*

*Contributor — WM Jimmy Benson (No. 50)*

# Lincoln Lodge No. 99 Kicks Off 115th Year Charter Day Celebration

Lincoln Lodge No. 99 kicked off a yearlong celebration of its 115th Charter Day. Lincoln Lodge was duly chartered on June 17, 1902 at the 32nd Annual Communication (24th since Consolidation) of The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge A.F. & A.M. of Alabama, Prince Hall Affiliated. Lincoln Lodge No. 99 hosted a series of events celebrating 115 years of continuous light in the Madison and Triana communities. Lincoln Lodge will spend the rest of the year reaffirming the noble values of Freemasonry, as well as, further cementing its history and presence in the City of Madison. Lincoln No. 99 has also commissioned a 115th Charter Day Commemorative Challenge Coin for brothers and sisters near and far to be able to have a piece of this historic occasion.

On Saturday, June 10th, Lincoln Lodge No. 99 returned “home” to the historic Pension Row neighborhood, where it originally met for its first eighteen years and again briefly during the mid-1960s, and spruced up Stewart Street Park. Brothers bagged over fifty bags of leaves and were warmly greeted by grateful residents and neighborhood children who were more than excited to enjoy a freshly spruced up park on a nice Saturday afternoon. Though Lincoln Lodge presently meets a few blocks away from its original location, the brothers have never forgotten to take care of “home”.

On Monday, June 12th, at the invitation of Mayor Paul Finley, Lincoln Lodge attended the regular meeting of the Madison City Council to be presented with a proclamation celebrating Lincoln Lodge No. 99’s 115th Charter Day. The Proclamation noted some of Lincoln Lodge’s storied history, including being the oldest Masonic lodge in Madison, and lauded its service to the Madison community during the previous 115 years. Also, at the meeting, WM Bro. Brian L. Benford presented the Lincoln Lodge No. 99 Commemorative 115th Charter Day Challenge Coin to Mayor Finley and the City of Madison.



*(Top-Right) Bro. Roland Spence, Secretary Bro. Christopher Lee, Bro. Daniel Cunningham, and WM Bro. Brian L. Benford pose after raking up over fifty bags of leaves at Stewart Street Park.*

*(Bottom-Left) Mayor Paul Finley of Madison reads a Proclamation recognizing Lincoln Lodge No. 99’s 115th Charter Day, and WM Bro. Brian L. Benford (right) and Bro. Daniel Cunningham (center) look on.*

*(Bottom-Right) The brothers of Lincoln Lodge No. 99 in the foyer of the Madison Municipal Complex after the Proclamation presentation.*



The brothers of Lincoln Lodge No. 99 got the rare opportunity to celebrate their Charter Day on the actual day of receiving their charter on Saturday, June 17, exactly 115 years after receipt, with a community cookout on the lodge grounds with a DJ and a moon bounce for the kids. Brothers from Keystone No. 40 (Berkley) and Morning Star No. 50 (Huntsville), as well as, sisters from Glittering Star Chapter No. 94, OES (Madison) and Hendley Chapter No. 855, OES (Huntsville) joined in the celebration. Adding to the specialness of the occasion, WM Benford convened a Special Stated Communication for the purposes of installing appointed officers and to formally commemorate Charter Day. Chairman of the 115th Charter Day Committee and Senior Warden, Bro. David J. Mackey offered the following reflection, “This has been an incredible week, from fellowshipping with brothers and sisters across the area to holding a special meeting on our actual charter day, and we just look forward to having our light shine even brighter in Madison for another 115 years!”



*The brothers of Lincoln Lodge No. 99 at their 115th Charter Day celebration.*

*Contributor – Bro. Christopher Lee (No. 99)*



## Goodway Lodge No. 222 Sponsors Youth Trip to Civil Rights Museum

On April 8, 2017, the brothers of Goodway Lodge No. 222 sponsored a trip in which they took 12 youth from the local Boys and Girls Club to the Civil Rights Museum in Memphis. The event was both joyous and very informative. The majority of the youth that participated had never been outside of the Huntsville/Madison County area. “It was an experience of a lifetime to view the rich history of those that have paved the way for us to have the freedoms we possess today! We all left with a better appreciation of the bravery and heroism that our ancestors possessed and a newly found vigor to do our part to continue in the rich legacy of our ancestors!”, stated WM Noel.

*Contributor — WM Jarvis L. Noel (No. 222)*



*Brother Marcus Orr and Worshipful Master Jarvis Noel (both far right) had a wonderful time serving as chaperons for this educational event*

# Temple Lodge No. 98 Participates in Community Clean-up Project

On May 6, 2017, the brothers of Temple Lodge No. 98 participated in the community clean-up project focused on cleaning a north Huntsville neighborhood occupied by elderly residents who are unable to remove large discarded items or mow over-grown lawns. City Councilman Devyn Keith, City Councilman for Huntsville's District No. 1, extended a personal invitation to Temple Lodge No. 98 to participate in the north Huntsville clean-up project. In order to accomplish Mr. Keith's mission, it required numerous city agencies working in unison to complete the clean-up in just a few hours. Temple Lodge arrived at Mae Jemison High School to partner with Operation Green Team, who provided garbage bags, pick-up sticks and gloves, and local residents to complete this task. Temple Lodge No. 98 members in attendance were Brothers Erick Wade, Reginald Mattingly, Andrew Brown, Carl Cooney, Tyrone Harris, Malcom Jessup Jr., Harrison Johnson, and Raymond Kidd.

*Contributor – Bro. Malcom Jessup (No. 98)*



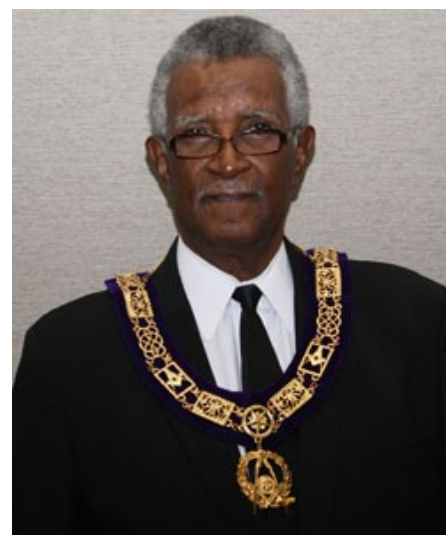
# Obituaries

## Brothers Called Home by the Grand Architect

**B**rother James "Jim" L. Ford a resident of Montgomery, Alabama expired April 29, 2017.

Brother Ford served the Grand Lodge as Grand Senior Deacon from 2013 until his demise. He also served as Assist Grand District Deputy of District 8. Bro. Ford was given his last Masonic Rites.

Bro. Ford is survived by his wife, Joan Ford; daughter, Kimberly Ford; son, James (Leslie) Ford; sister, Anner Catchings; grandchildren, Whitney and Raina Ford; nieces, Christal Malone, Vanessa (Myles) Warnock, Sandra Foster; nephews, David Catchings, James (Cynthia) Ford, Lamar Catchings (Nikki), Marcus Oatis; and a host of great nieces, nephews, cousins, and cherished friends.



*Brother James "Jim" L. Ford  
Dec. 18, 1936 - April 29, 2017*



### Gone From Us

Gone from us that smiling face,  
The cheerful pleasant ways,  
The heart that won so many friends  
In bygone, happy days.

A life made beautiful by kindly deeds  
A helping hand for others needs  
To a beautiful life,  
comes a happy end  
He died as He lived,  
everyone's friend.

# Article Submission Guidelines

*The Cornerstone Message* accepts submissions of articles, flyers, and information of events of general interest to Prince Hall Masons throughout the state of Alabama. The *Cornerstone Message* is published quarterly in the months of April, July, October, and January. Submission of articles and photographs are to be forwarded to the publication's editor via email (cseditor@mwphglal.com). Please include a point of contact and telephone number with each article submission. Articles and photographs become property of the publication and the right is reserved to edit and use the articles and photographs as deemed necessary. **Deadline for submissions for the next issue of *The Cornerstone Message* is 1 October 2017.** These articles should include events from **July 2017—September 2017.** Articles are to be submitted with a minimum of one paragraph and using Microsoft Word (Times New Roman 11) and photographs should be of good quality JPEG format and captioned. No more than two articles per lodge can be submitted for each edition. Permission to reprint original articles appearing in *The Cornerstone Message* is granted to all recognized Masonic publications.

## THE CORNERSTONE MESSAGE



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