



# THE CORNERSTONE MESSAGE

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

VOLUME VI, ISSUE I

JANUARY 2023

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Meeting Dates

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58th Anniversary  
'Selma to Montgomery  
Reenactment March'



# LUCIUS AMERSON

## First Black Sheriff in the South since Reconstruction

# THE GRAND MASTER'S TRESTLEBOARD



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*Resilience is the virtue that enables people to move through hardship and become better. No one escapes pain, fear, and suffering. Yet from pain can come wisdom, from fear can come courage, from suffering can come strength – if we have the virtue of resilience.*

Eric Greitens

**H**appy New Year to all! It is my hope that 2023 is filled with love, peace and prosperity for each of you.

Thursday, January 12, 2023, is a day that many will not forget. Several tornadoes ripped through the state of Alabama taking the lives of seven in Autauga County and delivering significant damage to Hale County and the historic city of Selma, Alabama.

To see the devastation left behind is quite humbling. To see the outpour of support for those affected is promising. To see the **resilience** of those who weathered the storm is encouraging.

Let us do what we can to help those who have been affected by the tornadoes. Many lost everything they had and some lost loved ones. Let us assist all of those affected in their efforts to be **resilient**.

As of January 1st, of this year, the Jurisdiction of Alabama is fully reopened and is back at work in all facets. Lodges are now required to

meet in person again while continuing to practice safety protocols.

It is time for us, as a Grand Lodge, to exercise our **resilience** in the face of COVID. We have moved through the hardship of the pandemic and have become better. We have become more wise, more courageous and much stronger. The challenges of the last few years have made this Grand Lodge more **resilient!**

May God bless you! May He bless the Jurisdiction of Alabama and may He bless the United States of America!

Fraternally,

*Corey D. Hawkins, Sr.*

Most Worshipful Grand Master



# Message from the Editor



RW Herman "Jerome" Glover (50)  
Publication Editor

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

## RECLAMATION DRIVE (TARP)!



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

One of the many ways that the human race moves forward is that we can build on previous knowledge. By quantifying "best practices", we can constantly move forward to the starting point of every process. If we were not able to build on our prior experience, each generation would still be inventing the wheel. Knowledge was originally handed down by verbal tradition, then written language started as symbols, and eventually developed into an

alphabet, which could convey complex concepts with less uncertainty. Symbols are still very effective ways of communicating massive amounts of information quickly. If a concept rings true for some time, it might then become an accepted practice.

One could choose to live a meaningful life in service to others and God. Telling the truth at all times, especially keeping promises; practicing charity to all, especially the less fortunate; showing love for others; practicing moderation in all things.

Consider the square, compasses, level, and other symbols of Masonry. I encourage each of you to research the various meanings associated

with each of these symbols. Masonry may not have invented these symbols, but they were carefully selected to convey any of the values of Masons. As Masons, we embrace many of these precepts by acting upon the square, keeping a tongue of good report, and practicing charity.

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 2023 to add to the mission of making sure Prince Hall Masonry is at the forefront in the state of Alabama.

- RW Herman "Jerome" Glover  
Publication Editor

## Reclamation Drive (TARP)

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.

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

- \$25.00 reinstatement fee
- \$25.00 taxes
- \$25.00 registration
- \$50.00 assessment (Have two years to pay the remaining \$150.00)
- \$125.00 Total

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

- \$25.00 reinstatement fee
- \$25.00 taxes
- \$25.00 registration
- \$50.00 assessment (Have two years to pay the remaining \$200.00)
- \$125.00 Total

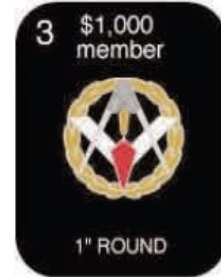
**TARP** serves a two-fold purpose: (1.) It gives suspended Brothers a more affordable means of reinstating and (2.) It gives dying lodges a final opportunity to salvage their existence by increasing their numbers before being forced to close or merge. Our Grand Master has extended a challenge for the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

# Support the Temple Renovation

**M**<sup>ost</sup>

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!





# SUPPORT THE PRINCE HALL LEGACY FOUNDATION OF ALABAMA, INC.



## PURCHASE YOUR ALABAMA PRINCE HALL GRAND LODGE LICENSE PLATE

**YOUR PLATE MAY BE DISPLAYED UPON  
THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF VEHICLES**



- private passenger automobiles
- pickup trucks
- motorcycles
- pleasure motor vehicles (i.e., recreational vehicles)



**FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:**

<https://www.revenue.alabama.gov/license-plates/>

(You may purchase the MWPGL of AL Tags Anytime, You do not have to wait for your renewal Month!)

# MOST WORSHIPFUL PRINCE HALL GRAND LODGE of ALABAMA

## 2023 VIRTUAL REGIONAL MEETINGS

<u>DATE</u>	<u>REGION</u>	<u>HOST</u>
<b>FEBRUARY 18, 2023</b>	<b>REGION 5</b>	<b>JAMES GRAY</b>
<b>MARCH 11, 2023</b>	<b>REGION 6</b>	<b>JEROME GLOVER</b>
<b>MARCH 25, 2023</b>	<b>REGION 1</b>	<b>LLEWELLYN SPENCER</b>
<b>APRIL 8, 2023</b>	<b>REGION 2</b>	<b>LURIE WALTON</b>
<b>MAY 6, 2023</b>	<b>REGION 4</b>	<b>ERWIN CHAMBLISS</b>
<b>MAY 13, 2023</b>	<b>REGION 3</b>	<b>RAYMOND FRANKLIN</b>

**REGION 1 – DISTRICTS 1, 3 and 4**

**REGION 2 – DISTRICTS 2 and 12**

**REGION 3 – DISTRICTS 5 and 6**

**REGION 4 – DISTRICTS 7, 8 and 10**

**REGION 5 – DISTRICTS 13, 14 and 15**

**REGION 6 – DISTRICT 17**



# HAPPY NEW YEAR

N N Z C E L E B R A T I O N J B H T N  
 J T U Q R M P X L U L H K F F O M X Q  
 T D T F R I E N D S F E N J L T H Z S  
 Q Q Q Z O V J Q Z Z K X G I O A S R L  
 X S R E L K R A P S L E D A P K V M C  
 B S V X Q I R Y M T S A S P R G E A A  
 D T S S L A O G Y R Y T Y O O N I B L  
 R R H N C I S Y E A P K W T W G C P E  
 S E Z I O F T K G A E E X O M L H I N  
 F A G Y D I A T R O R K D V R T F J D  
 B M S B L M T T E I S T G U Q P U J A  
 A E D S E O Y U F F N N O F V I A B R  
 L R B S I Y Z E L U N F O D V N R D U  
 L S I L L K C Q O O D O R O U B O Y A  
 X O O I F H K C I K S Y C A L D C L N  
 N Y M R E C X T M L M E R W P L F H E  
 V A E E O D I X S H C Y R S B C A D H  
 F E R L U M I D N I G H T I I J C B K  
 J S C V M M A G F C N O I T I D A R T

ball	family	midnight
balloons	fireworks	noisemakers
calendar	friends	party
celebration	goals	resolutions
cheers	happy	sparklers
clock	holiday	streamers
confetti	January	toast
countdown	kiss	tradition

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 Right Worshipful Grand Senior Warden  
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### F. & A. M. of Alabama



Corey D. Hawkins, Sr., Esq., 33°, KYGCH, Grand Master

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January 5, 2023

TO: Grand Lodge Officers, Grand Trustees, Worshipful Masters, Past Masters, Wardens, and Brothers of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge, Free and Accepted Masons, Jurisdiction of Alabama

C: Grand Worthy Matron, Sister Shirley Pratt, Grand Worthy Patron, Brother Calvin Miller, II

Greetings:

For the tenth consecutive year and in an effort to be more involved in our communities, to remember our past, and to look to our future, I am calling on the entire jurisdiction to converge on Selma, Alabama, on **Sunday, March 5, 2023**, to participate in the 58th anniversary of the historical walk across the Edmund Pettus Bridge. I am asking all brothers and sisters to meet at 119 Washington Street, Selma, Alabama 36701, diagonally across from Washington Street Marketplace, at 11:00 a.m. The bridge crossing re-enactment will begin at 2:30 p.m. A large crowd is expected; therefore, I am asking all brothers and sisters to arrive at the designated time. Please bring plenty of water, snacks and lounging chairs as they will be needed, particularly by our elderly brothers and sisters. **All brothers are to participate in the March dressed in proper masonic regalia to include a black suit (including the jacket), white shirt and solid black tie.** We will march while social distancing.

It is very important that we assemble in Selma, Alabama in mass numbers. This is an opportune time to stand in solidarity in support of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which is currently under attack nationwide, in a state where a federal court recently struck down the newly drawn congressional map (gerrymandering). Consider this March as a time to remember for the seasoned brother and a history lesson for the younger brother. I am counting on you to help make this another great success.

Fraternally,

*Corey D. Hawkins, Sr.*

Corey D. Hawkins, Sr., Esq.  
 Most Worshipful Grand Master







# 58th Anniversary Selma to Montgomery Voting Rights March *'Bloody Sunday'*

## The Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge F. & A. M. of Alabama

**Invites all Brothers and Sisters of the  
Jurisdiction to be a part of this  
Historic re-enactment of our State's  
History in the struggle for equality...**

**March 5, 2023**

**National Participation is Expected  
We will gather at 119 Washington Street  
Selma, Alabama  
at 11:00 a.m.**

# From Whence We've Come...

## Sheriff Lucius D. Amerson

**L**ucius D Amerson was born October 7, 1933 in Greene County, Alabama, which was a predominantly agricultural and farming area, where the economic conditions were at an extremely low ebb at that time. It could be said that anyone who survived in that locality and was able to be reared in those poverty-stricken conditions, and was still able to rise to any prominent status in society had experienced nothing less than a miracle. Amerson left Greene County at age 17, after having dropped out of high school in the 11th grade, and entered the military on March 9, 1951. During his tenure in the military, he rose from the rank of private to sergeant first class. He saw duty in the Pacific and Korean Conflicts and also spent a tour in the European Theater, where he served in Germany. He went to the most prominent military posts in the United States, the last being at Fort Bragg, North Carolina with the 82nd Airborne Division as a paratrooper. Perhaps the last period of service was the most enjoyable of all his 91/2 years of continuous military service.



*Brother Lucius D. Amerson*

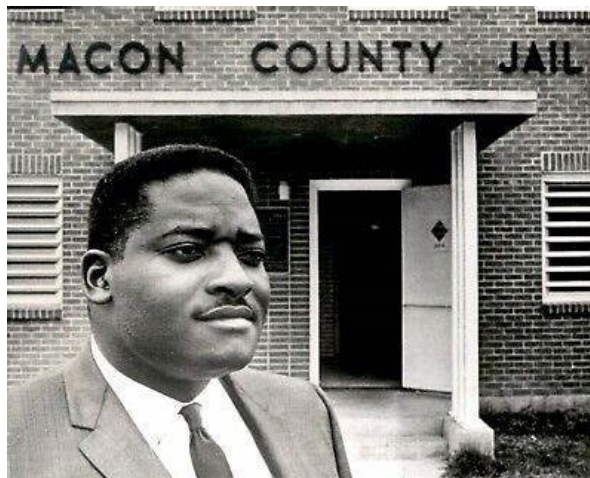
After serving for several years in the military he started thinking about his career ahead as he had not finished high school, Amerson felt it necessary to do so, and therefore went to school in the Army at Fort Riley, Kansas under the Army Education Program, and received a high school diploma. Later, he decided that he must go to college because he felt that an African-American would not be able to excel to his highest degree in the military because of all the bigotry and prejudice which was ever present among white officers and other enlisted men in military units.

In 1958, black people across the country became seriously involved in civil rights issues and turmoils. Consequently, Amerson felt that he would not be able to contribute his fair share to the cause by remaining in the military. He was discharged honorably on September 17, 1959, and enrolled in Tuskegee Institute, Tuskegee Institute, Alabama in a curriculum of Electronics. Amerson further found that the knowledge he had acquired in the military was not very useful to him in the pursuit of any technical curricula in college, but it had taught him how to deal with humanity and the social problems of his community and had shown him a sense of equity pointing toward an interest in politics, more specifically law enforcement. Because it appeared to him that much of the conflicts between the "haves and have-nots" occurred in the execution of the law by white oppressors, and he was simply tired of seeing his people subjected to these reprisals.

While enrolled in college, he worked part-time as a postal employee in Montgomery, Alabama, and in Dietetic Service at the VA Hospital, in Tuskegee, Alabama. It was during this time that he met and married his wife, the former Windora E. Smith of Birmingham, Alabama.



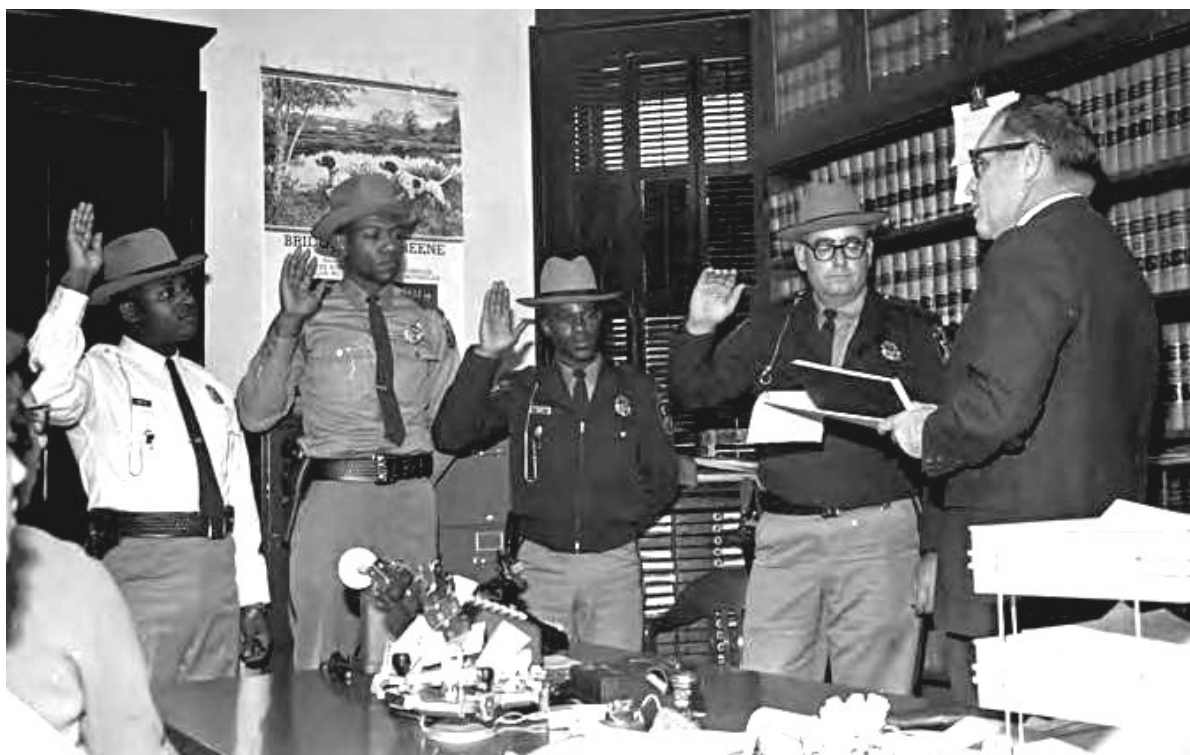
Perhaps always in the back of Amerson's mind was the ambition to be a political leader, and the opportunity came in 1966 when he qualified and ran for Sheriff of Macon County, Alabama. A part of his dream was realized when he was elected to the position on November 8, 1966. After his election, Amerson continued his studies at Tuskegee Institute with a change in major from Electronics to Political Science. He also graduated from two civil and criminal investigation schools, attended law enforcement seminars at Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio, and Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan, and several other law enforcement seminars sponsored by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. He also attended a police executive conference at the invitation of the Attorney General of the United States.



Amerson held membership in the Democratic National Committee, The Alabama League for the Advancement of Education, Macon County Democratic Club, Masonic Order, Shriners, IBPOEW, American Legion, National Sheriff's Association, NAACP, International Platform Association, YMCA, Lions Club, International.

He was affiliated with Mount Olive Missionary Baptist Church, Tuskegee, Alabama. Amerson was listed in Who's Who in Alabama, Who's Who in the South and Southwest, and International Biographical Society of London, England, and Outstanding Personalities of the South.

Brother Amerson served as Sheriff of Macon County for twenty years (1967-1987), being re-elected four times. Brother Amerson passed away on March 15, 1994.



*Lucius Amerson, at left in the white shirt, is sworn in as sheriff of Macon County in January 1967. In June 1966, Amerson was the first African American elected sheriff in Alabama since Reconstruction, and according to some accounts, the first in the South. The passage of the Voting Rights Act in 1965 strengthened voting rights and brought into Alabama and other southern states federal officials to oversee voting procedures. With him in the photograph are his African American deputies Eddie M. Ivory and Joseph Meriwether, his white deputy Arthur L. Knowles, and Probate Judge Preston Hornsby administering the oath of office.*

# A Blast from the Past

**ANDREW B. McKENZIE**



PHYSICIAN, now deceased, of Tuscaloosa, Alabama. Born in Tallassee, Alabama. Graduate of Tuskegee Institute, and the Leonard Medical College at Shaw University. Thirty-five years of medical practice in Tuscaloosa.

Member of Medical Staff, Druid City Hospital, and of the John A. Andrew Clinic, Tuskegee Institute.

Trustee, Stillman College, Tuscaloosa: Member of Advisory Board, Alabama Federation of Colored Women's Clubs.

In the first World War he was Medical Officer of the 317th Sanitary Corps, attached to the famous 92nd Division.

Chairman of the Negro Advisory City Board of Education; member of Board of Directors of the Community Center; member of the Tuscaloosa City Chamber of Commerce.

Member, and Trustee of hunter's Chapel A. M. E. Zion Church, Tuscaloosa. Master of Little Warrior Lodge. Grand Medical Registrar of Masons of Alabama. 33rd degree Mason. Elk. President of Beta Phi Sigma Chapter of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. Member of Khedive Temple of Shriners; Member of Veterans of Foreign War.

He had extensive downtown real estate holdings, including a two-story office building which housed his own medical office, as well as, others.

Married: Miss Marie Sanford, Children: Mrs. Dorothy Landers, of Tucson, Arizona, and Sanford D. McKenzie of Tuscaloosa.

Died: December 17, 1951.



# \$ Dollars and Sense \$

## Money Management

### ***Saving with a Variable Income***

*If you are one of the millions of Americans with a variable income, here are some strategies you can utilize to keep your savings on track*



#### **Set Up a Savings Plan**

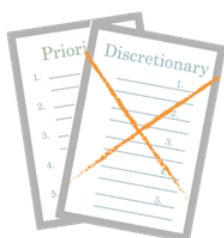
Automatically calculate savings as part of your monthly expenses. Setting aside either a fixed dollar amount or a percentage of your income each month will ingrain savings into your budget

#### **Maintain an Emergency Fund**



It is important to plan for gaps in income when you do not have a steady cash flow. Keeping 3-6 months of reserve cash for expenses will allow you to maintain your retirement plan even when months are lean

#### **Prioritize Expenses**



Know the difference between fixed and discretionary expenses. Cut out the least important expenses if you need help hitting your savings goal. (Making a list will help!)

#### **Limit Splurging**



It is easy to pat yourself on the back for good saving and spending habits by splurging, especially if recent income has been high. Rewarding yourself can be healthy, but don't go overboard and damage your overall plans.

#### **Review and Adjust**



While it is important to stick to a plan, it is equally as important to review it regularly. Major changes in expenses or income can make an existing savings plan unrealistic. Adjusting your budget is better than holding yourself to impossible standards

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*Contributor – RW Gregory Clark  
Convention Coordinator/Corporate Liaison  
and Financial Planner*

# HEALTH AND WELLNESS



## NEW YEAR, NEW START!!

It's the start of the New Year, and it's good to know where we stand when it comes to our health — especially if our New Year's resolution is health-related. Doctors say following a New Year health checklist will give you a baseline idea of your health and to set yourself up for success.

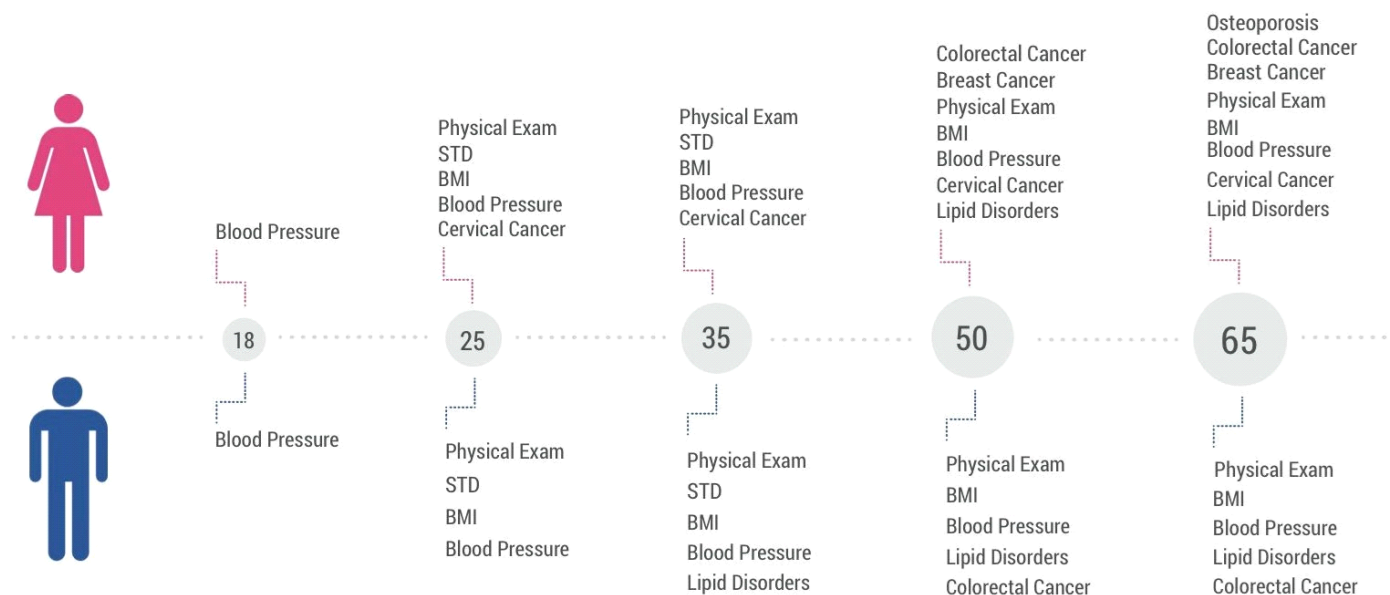
Your New Year health checklist should include:

- Schedule annual wellness and mental visits with your primary care provider.
- Get a blood pressure cuff at home. Monitor your blood pressure and cholesterol regularly.
- Get a diabetes screening.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Routine screenings for cancer are also key to staying on top of your health.
- Know your medicines, know what they are and why you take them. Know what the side effects are.
- Incorporate more healthy foods and water into your diet.
- Exercise regularly.
- Get plenty of rest.
- Not smoking and or reduce alcohol consumption.

# Health Screenings By Age and Gender

What screenings are generally recommended for your age and gender?<sup>1</sup>

What additional screenings should you consider if you're at increased risk for certain diseases and conditions? Here is a guide:



## Additional screenings for those with increased risk:

**Diabetes:** Adults of all ages who have blood pressure greater than 135/80 should be screened for type 2 diabetes.

**Lipid disorders:** Men and women 20 and older who are at increased risk for heart disease (family history of heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, smoking, obesity, kidney disease).

**Osteoporosis:** Women under 65 with family history, smoking, low bodyweight, medications such as steroids, chemotherapy, radiation.

Knowing where we stand with our health at the start of the New Year can help us see how much progress we've made throughout 2023. Stay Healthy and Safe!!!

*Miguel L Ferguson, BSN, MPH, RN*



# Achievements

## Bro. Erick Wade Receives Governor Kay Ivey's PALS 2022 Award

**H**e did it again! In November 2022, Bro. Erick Wade was awarded Governor Kay Ivey's PALS 2022 Award in the Adopt-A-Mile category. Bro. Wade has earned this award for two years, consecutively. Bro. Wade continues to maintain his stellar participation and contributions to Temple Lodge No. 98. He always displays the attributes of a dedicated, committed, and essential Master Mason that strives to execute the tenants of Masonry by contributing to the community through service, scholarship, charity, and training. Mayor Tommy Battle, Huntsville, AL, stated, "Mr. Wade is recognized for his dedication to his community's environment." George Martin, Operation Green Team said, "Erick is just a get-up-and-go kind of guy. He wants to get it done and gets out in the community and does the hard work himself. His whole goal is to make a difference in the community." This is not an urban myth, dedicated to making the Rocket City a cleaner place to live, Wade proved his commitment earlier this year, the weekend he married his wife, LaChelle. Bro. Wade and his wife-to-be managed to sneak a few hours in at the Flint River Cleanup event before exchanging vows. Wow! Commitment personified!

In addition to being hailed as a "Huntsville Hero," Erick embodies and strives to propel the State's program mandate of "Striving to enhance their environmental and economic impact through a litter-free, cleaner, and more beautiful environment."



# Brother Jason M. Jones, Esq.

## New Southern Province Polemarch

Recently, Attorney Jason M. Jones, of Eagle Lodge No. 97, was appointed as the 12th Southern Province Polemarch of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Incorporated. Brother Jones will be responsible for those states and territories that make up the Southern Province of Kappa Alpha Psi. The Southern Province is comprised of Alabama, Bahamas, Dominican Republic, Florida, and U.S. Virgin Islands.

Brother Jones is from Mobile and has lived in Huntsville since 2007. He received his Bachelor of Science degree in Mathematics from Alabama A&M University, his Master of Science in Business Administration from Texas A&M University-Texarkana, and his Juris Doctorate from Birmingham School of Law. He is the owner and managing attorney of the JMJ Law Firm, LLC.

Attorney Jones is a Spring 2002 initiate of the Mobile Alumni Chapter. He is a Life Member of the Fraternity. Brother Jones has served as a member of the National C. Rodger Wilson Leadership Conference Committee, National Membership Training Academy Committee, Code of Conduct Taskforce, Grand Chapter Nominating Committee, Grand Chapter Elections Committee, and the Grand Chapter Constitution and Statutes Committee.

He has served the Southern Province as Senior Province Vice Polemarch, Board Member, C. Rodger Wilson Leadership Conference Chairman, Membership Training Academy Coordinator, Foundation Board Member, and Time and Place Committee Member. He is also a Life Member of the Southern Province.

Brother Jones is currently a member of the Huntsville Alumni Chapter. He has served the chapter as Guide Right Chairman, MTA Chairman, Board Member, Keeper of Records, Vice Polemarch, and Polemarch. He has also served as the advisor of the University of Alabama-Huntsville Chapter, The Nu Mu of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc., and on the Advisory Committee of the Alabama A&M University Chapter, The Gamma Phi of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc.

He also finds time to serve Eagle Lodge No. 97 as its Treasurer.

Brother Jones is married to the former Nekeysha Holt and they have two lovely daughters, Breanna and Melanie.

Congratulations Brother Jones! Keep ACHIEVING!



*Brother Jason M. Jones, Esq.*

# 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:

## Brother Quinton T. Ross, Jr.

Dr. Quinton T. Ross, Jr., serves with distinction as the 15th President of his alma mater, Alabama State University. He is a servant leader who set a bold vision for ASU. Dr. Ross assumed the helm of the University with a vision of growth and innovation and has been the driving force behind new initiatives and partnerships under his guiding mantra of “Moving ASU 150 years forward.” Under President Ross’s leadership, the University has experienced several significant achievements. Beginning his presidency at Alabama State University in October of 2017, President Ross took on the daunting task of bringing fiscal stability to the financially challenged institution by reducing debt, imposing across-the-campus budget cuts, reallocating resources, and eliminating wasteful spending. Dr. Ross’s transformative fiscal leadership has led to an upgrade in the institution’s Moody’s bond rating.

As a personal and intentional priority, he immediately set out to improve the University’s declining infrastructure. With an aggressive plan, leveraging relationships and partnerships, Ross and his administration completed numerous capital projects including a campus-wide asphalt resurfacing project, installation of new campus-wide security cameras, replacement of boilers, HVAC systems and elevators, and residence halls renovations that included roof replacements which total an estimated 13 million dollars.



*Bro. Quinton T. Ross, Jr.,*

In 2021, Ross and his leadership team successfully ushered the University through reaffirmation by its accrediting body, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), with no recommendations, through 2030. Since becoming the 15th President, Dr. Ross has led the development and implementation of an ambitious strategic plan and agenda for the institution, titled FOCUS 2030: Advancing the Legacy and Bridging Communities through Commitment, Collaborations, and Creativity. Alabama State University has risen to new heights in providing access and equitable opportunities for students. Under the leadership of Dr. Ross, ASU has seen improvements in academics, enrollment and retention, fundraising, partnerships, and student success. Amid enrollment stability, ASU saw its retention and graduation rates increase. According to the U.S. News and World Report 2022, ASU is in the Top 25 HBCUs, moving up in rank by 10 spots since 2021, now ranked at 22.

Dr. Ross has set a new standard for fundraising at ASU. During the first two years of his administration, fundraising at the institution increased by nearly 130 percent with more than \$7.6 million raised over two years through corporate and individual donations, as well as increased legislative appropriations. More recently, the University has experienced a 205% total giving increase with a 20% increase in the total number of gifts received. Notably, his charismatic leadership has encouraged donors to increase the size of their contributions, growing the average gift size by 154%. The University also has experienced a 150% increase in its total number of donors. A good steward of resources with a commitment to fiscal responsibility, Dr. Ross leads an advancement team that raises 15% more per advancement staff member than its peer institutions and 67% more per dollar invested. President Ross’s increased focus on alumni engagement and prior established partnerships, coupled with his ability to develop innovative mutually beneficial relationships have transformed ASU’s growth and success.



Dr. Ross has led the charge for development and constituent relations, under John O. Killens' concept of CommUniversity. ASU has forged new partnerships and re-energized existing relations with international, federal, state, and local stakeholders. Dr. Ross has increased the institutional partnerships to enhance the institution's visibility. He also has established a positive and open line of communication with local, state, and national media. Dr. Ross has been engaged by national media as an expert on the future of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), thereby allowing for an elevation of the University's brand. He has appeared on several networks such as ESPN, CNN, and Cheddar to name a few. Dr. Ross has been featured in Bloomberg News, Chronicle of Higher Education, HBCU Connect Magazine, HBCU Digest, Reuters News Service, and USA Today. Dr. Ross continues to be engaged and serves as a pivotal voice in the community. In the wake of the George Floyd killing in 2020, Dr. Ross pinned an Open Op-Ed, What do we tell our children and our Students, which was published in the Atlanta Daily World Magazine (June 1, 2020), New Pittsburgh Courier (June 1, 2020) and Diversity Issues in Higher Education (June 3, 2020).

Recently, President Ross was appointed to the Board of Advisors of the White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) by President Joe Biden. President Ross was recognized as a Yellowhammer-15 Hall of Fame 2021 and given to those Alabamians who help to shape the state of Alabama in a positive and meaningful way. In June of 2021, Alabama Today Magazine named President Ross to its annual listing of Alabama's 32 Powerful and Influential Alabamians to know. He was awarded the Leadership Award by the Alabama Alliance of Black School Educators 2021. Dr. Ross's growing prominence as an educational leader was recognized by his election to the position of vice-chairman of the Alabama Commission on Higher Education's Council of Presidents. The Council consists of the presidents of each public four-year institution of higher education in the state of Alabama, as well as the State Superintendent of Education and the presidents of three public two-year institutions of higher education.

Dr. Ross has made it his mission to be a community advocate for public education and to help young people "grasp the light of knowledge through embracing diversity." Dr. Ross is a distinguished career educator with more than 27 years of experience in Higher and K-12 public education. Dr. Ross held various leadership positions in Secondary Education including being a classroom teacher, administrative assistant, assistant principal, and high school principal. Before becoming President of his alma mater, he had begun his fourth term in the Alabama State Senate after having been elected to his first term in 2002. While serving in the Senate, Dr. Ross distinguished himself as a true statesman and was one of seven African Americans serving in the Alabama State Senate. In 2015, he was elected as Senate Minority Leader and the first Minority Leader elected to a four-year term. During his legislative tenure, Dr. Ross served on numerous legislative committees and was an established legislative leader with an unwavering advocacy for public education, as well as issues dealing with child safety and the general welfare of all Alabamians.

Dr. Ross has received regional and national recognition for his outstanding leadership through numerous awards and recognitions. Dr. Ross received The Montgomery Advertiser King Spirit Award, K.E.E.P. Production's Young Legend Award, and the Dare to Make a Difference Community Service Award. Dr. Ross also received the Alabama School Board Association's Power of One Award. He has been recognized by Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., locally, statewide, and district-wide as Citizen of the Year. Dr. Ross is the recipient of the Michigan Chronicle Men of Distinction Award. Other awards include the Alabama Adult Education Director's Association Champion Award, Citizen of the Year for the Montgomery Alumni Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., and the Beloved Community Award from the Alabama State University Friends of the Theatre. Dr. Ross also was selected by the Business Council of Alabama as a Business Champion and was the recipient of the Charles Townsel Higher Education Leader Award.

Dr. Ross is a three-time graduate of Alabama State University, where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Political Science, a Master of Education degree in Secondary Education English, and a Doctorate of Education in Educational Leadership, Policy, and Law.

Brother Ross is an active community leader who serves with various local and national civic, professional, and community organizations such as the Montgomery Chamber of Commerce, YMCA Board, I See Me, Inc. board of directors, Montgomery Committee of 100, Alabama Council of Presidents, American Association of State Colleges and Universities, American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, National Education Association, National Council of Higher Education, Alabama Education Association, and 100 Black Men, Inc. He is a member of Goshen Lodge No. He is a member of Goshen Lodge No. 530 and a 33rd-degree mason. A lifetime member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., President Ross serves as the International Chair for the Omega HBCU Education Committee.

His most notable accomplishment is being a loving husband and father of two sons.

# Military Affairs

## Keeping our MWPHGL of Alabama Veterans Informed

### **New Life Insurance for Veterans with service-connected disability**

In January 2023, VA will launch a new life insurance program called Veterans Affairs Life Insurance (VA Life), which provides guaranteed acceptance whole life insurance coverage to Veterans age 80 and under, with any level of service-connected disability. Some Veterans age 81 and older may also be eligible.

#### **What is Guaranteed Acceptance Whole Life Insurance?**

Guaranteed acceptance is a whole life policy that does not require a medical exam or ask health questions. It also does not have a limited two-year window to sign up. Whole life insurance provides coverage for the entire life of the individual policyholder, provided that premiums are always paid. Premium rates are locked in for the life of the policy, and unlike term policies will not increase as the policyholder ages.

#### **What benefits does it offer?**

Created by Public Law 116-315, the new program meets the needs of service-connected Veterans who may not have previously qualified for life insurance with VA. VA Life offers guaranteed acceptance whole life insurance coverage that lasts for an individual's entire life and provides the following benefits:

- All service-connected Veterans age 80 and under with 0-100% VA disability ratings are eligible.
- Fully automated online enrollment with instant approvals.
- Coverage comes in increments of \$10,000, up to a maximum of \$40,000, and premiums are competitive – or better – than what's available in the private sector. There is a two-year waiting period for full face value coverage to take effect.
- No medical requirements for enrollment.
- Cash value that builds over the life of the policy after the first two years of enrollment.
- Rates are best the earlier you sign up. Once locked in, premiums will never increase.

### **Who is eligible?**

All Veterans age 80 or younger with a VA disability rating of 0-100% are eligible for VA Life, with no time limit to apply.

Veterans who are 81 or older may apply for VA Life within two years of receiving a new service-connected disability rating if:

- They applied for VA disability compensation before age 81, and,
- They received a new service-connected disability rating after turning 81.

How does this impact other VA Life Insurance programs? VA Life opens life insurance coverage to more service-connected Veterans than ever before. In contrast to Service-Disabled Veterans Life Insurance (S-DVI), VA Life has no medical requirements and there is no two-year time limit to apply if a Veteran is age 80 or under.

Veterans who currently hold an S-DVI policy can either keep their current coverage or apply for VA Life when the application goes live. Veterans can keep their S-DVI policy until the full coverage of VA Life begins two years after enrollment as long as the application is received between Jan. 1, 2023, and Dec. 31, 2025

S-DVI will close to new enrollment after Dec. 31. Veterans interested in S-DVI should apply by this date, even if they are interested in applying for VA Life in the new year. Applying for S-DVI now allows eligible Veterans to have life insurance coverage while waiting for two years for their VA Life coverage to become available.

Where can I learn more? To learn more about VA Life and whether it's the right choice for you and your family, please visit the webpage here: <https://www.benefits.va.gov/insurance/valife.asp>.

### **More News for Veterans:**

#### **VA Benefit Payment Rates Increase**

The Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) for VA disability compensation benefits programs became effective on December 1, 2022. The 8.7% COLA increase is for the calendar year 2023.

Veterans and beneficiaries receiving VA disability compensation will notice an increase in their monthly payments, starting January 1, 2023. This annual increase impacts disability benefits, clothing allowance, Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC), as well as other VA assistance programs. If you do not see a difference in the amount, you should contact the VA regional office near you.

To ask questions about applying for VA disability benefits or appealing a VA decision, reach out to a VA-accredited representative today.

*Contributor – RW Carlton Jones  
Committee on Military and Veteran Affairs*



# REGION 1

## News and Events from Region 1

### Cedar Grove Lodge No. 722 Participates in Community Service Projects

The brothers of Cedar Grove Lodge No. 722 completed a project named "Community Nourishment". This project was voted on in an open meeting to assist the families of the Prichard Community during the Thanksgiving holiday. These families were faced with difficult times and without any questions, the brothers of Cedar Grove were ready to assist. A total of six families were selected to receive thanksgiving baskets to ensure that their families were well-fed. Bro. Patrick Miller, who was the chairperson for the project, ensured that the baskets were delivered on time and also let the families know that the lodge heard their call. Cedar Grove has been dedicated to supporting the Prichard, AL community and continues to make great strides. The families were overjoyed and informed the lodge that they had a great Thanksgiving.

Cedar Grove Lodge No. 722, partnered with the Dearborn YMCA in downtown Mobile, making a difference for the kids...Bike Angel Tree Bike & Toys Drive. The brothers of Cedar Grove Lodge No. 722 completed a project entitled "Project Cedar Clause". This project was inspired by all members of the lodge to adopt underprivileged children who weren't going to have anything for Christmas. The lodge donated four bikes (two boys & two girls). The children informed the lodge that they have never received or ridden a bike before. The lodge immediately took action and purchased bikes for those awesome kids. The lodge also took it upon itself to donate toys to Toys for Tots and The Angel Tree. The brothers have been partnering with them for many years and felt it should continue the tradition. Over \$300 worth of toys, electronics, and games were donated. To see the joy and smiles on their faces was indeed a treasure. The donation was completed one week before Christmas so the kids would know that they have something under the tree and didn't have to worry if they were loved. Cedar Grove No. 722 loves the kids and will do anything to ensure that they know someone cares for them.



*Contributor – WM. Cliff Barren (No. 722)*

## REGION 2

### News and Events from Region 2

# Goshen Lodge No. 132 Helpful In 2nd Annual HBCU Pigskin Classic

On Saturday, December 7, 2022, over eighty college football athletes from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) from all over were in Marion, Alabama showcasing their talents and skills and keeping their National Football League (NFL) dreams alive and well. That Saturday marked the 2nd Annual HBCU Pigskin Classic. Following is an excerpt from [www.hbcupigskinshowdown.com](http://www.hbcupigskinshowdown.com)'s homepage detailing the event: "Taking place at Marion Military Institute in Marion, AL., located just outside of Selma, AL., the HBCU Pigskin Showdown provides a platform for student-athletes to showcase their talent to a national audience and perform in front of NFL scouts. The inaugural HBCU Pigskin Showdown in 2021 featured 84 top HBCU players competing in front of scouts from 16 NFL teams. "This is a great opportunity for HBCU pro prospects to get even more national exposure," said Executive Director/Co-Founder Chris Williams. "We're excited to be in the Black Belt region of Alabama and happy that the histories of Marion and Selma, Alabama will be on display as we provide a stage for these young athletes. "Through NBCU Academy – a journalism training and development program designed to prepare college students and young professionals for careers in the news and media technology industry -NBC Sports will present select students from HBCU institutions with the opportunity to cover the event for NBCSports.com. "HBCUs are so important to our nation," said Director of Operations/Co-Founder Bryant Grove. "We're thankful for NBC recognizing our vision and partnering with us to continue to provide a platform for these young men while highlighting the history of the Black Belt region between both Selma & Marion, Alabama, as well as, the campus of Marion Military Institute. The HBCU Pigskin Showdown adds to NBC Sports' robust HBCU college football programming roster and complements upcoming events across NBC Sports including the Bayou Classic, which recently announced a three-year media rights extension, and the HBCU New York Football Classic."

Although the game was a success in 2021, this year (2022) the event's organizers searched high and low for help to facilitate the game. Goshen Lodge No. 132, under the leadership of WM Cad Ford, Jr., hastily and readily stepped up and came to the rescue. Scores of Goshen Lodge brothers worked from the entrance gates to the actual sidelines of the field to ensure that this year's football game was also a tremendous success. The group was especially delighted and excited to have special guest, Deputy Grand Master Robert Glenn, in attendance at the game.

Following the game, the event organizers were so impressed by Goshen Lodge that they asked the lodge to please consider helping next year. WM Ford has already urged the brothers to keep their sleeves rolled up so that they can continue helping the community, and most importantly, helping to keep some positive dreams alive.

*Contributor – Bro. Robert D. Bryant (No. 132)*



## REGION 3

### News and Events from Region 3

# Saturn Lodge No. 80 Supports “Operation Holiday Cheer”

*“My brothers and sisters, what good is it if people say they have faith but do nothing to show it? Claiming to have faith can't save anyone, can it? Imagine a brother or sister who is naked and never has enough food to eat. What if one of you said, 'Go in peace! Stay warm! Have a nice meal!?' What good is it if you don't actually give them what their body needs? In the same way, faith is dead when it doesn't result in faithful activity. (JAMES 2:14-1)*

On December 17, 2022, the brothers of Saturn Lodge No. 80 donated funds and food items in support of “Operation Holiday Cheer”. The lodge’s initiative was created by Worshipful Master Michael T. Mallory, to provide local families enough food items to serve breakfast, lunch, and dinner. In addition, the challenge of “Operation Holiday Cheer” was extended to Shekinah Chapter No. 899, Order of Eastern Star. The challenge issued was whichever organization provided the most food items would win bragging rights until the next Holiday season. As a result, two boxes valued over five hundred dollars were donated to families in the local area.

Contributor – PM L.J. Bynum (No. 80)



Pictured from left to right are Worshipful Master Michael T. Mallory (Saturn No. 80) and Worthy Matron Karla Segars (Shekinah No. 899).



## REGION 4

### News and Events from Region 4

## R. H. Rice Lodge No. 345 Supporting Its Community

On December 17, 2022, R. H. Rice Lodge No. 345 reached out to the Montgomery Salvation Army to volunteer assistance with their annual Christmas Cheer Toy Drive. The lodge assisted by unloading several truckloads of toys, bicycles, and much-needed clothing items. Over 500 families were blessed and benefited greatly from this event. Supporting the local community is something the lodge takes pride in. R. H. Rice Lodge remains committed to the Salvation Army and will continue to assist this organization as needed.

On Dec 24th, R. H. Rice Lodge No. 345 teamed with Malachi Chapter No. 186, OES, to assist with providing Christmas Cheer for a needy family. The combined efforts were enough to provide clothing in the form of winter coats, boots, and several outfits for the five grandchildren of the family. GDD Donald R. Parks thanked everyone for participating in this act of goodwill. It was evident from the heartwarming comments that the recipient was extremely grateful for the gifts for her grandchildren and herself.

*Contributor – WM Carl Howard (No. 345)*



# Hamilton Lodge No. 365

## Continues Its Community Service

Early October 2023, Hamilton Lodge No. 365 conducted its annual recognition of National Breast Cancer Awareness Month by honoring Ms. Jackson, who is a breast cancer survivor, undergoing chemotherapy, with a basket filled with gift cards and other essential items, including gas cards that will help her as she travels to chemotherapy. The lodge has been having this event for almost a decade. “African American women are nearly twice as likely as white women to be diagnosed with triple-negative breast cancer, which is more aggressive and harder to treat than other subtypes of breast cancer.”

In late October 2022, the members of Hamilton lodge joined in the spirit of Halloween by dressing up in costumes and visiting the residents of Capitol Hill Healthcare in Montgomery, Alabama. The brothers decided to reverse the tradition instead of collecting candies and goodies, they distributed candies and goodies to residents and staff of the facility. Often people who go to these facilities either do not have family that can take them in or in other cases, are rarely visited. For almost a decade, Hamilton Lodge has participated in some sort of community event for Halloween and this tradition will continue to be a fun event for all. “Capitol Hill Healthcare is committed to supporting the health and well-being of older Americans and the disabled.” The facility is proud to be home to a diverse group of residents who have a variety of needs and interests. Earlier in the year some of the brothers of Hamilton lodge visited the facility and delivered watermelons and Jell-O products to serve the residents.

For Thanksgiving and Christmas 2022, Hamilton Lodge was busy in the community. Hamilton Lodge partnered with the Montgomery, Alabama campus of Evangel Church by donating and distributing over two hundred frozen turkeys and other traditional Thanksgiving essentials to families in need so they could have a complete Thanksgiving dinner. For Christmas, the lodge provided food toys and other gifts for a single mother and her daughter.

*Contributor – Bro. Marion Avery Dortch, Jr. (No. 365)*





# Phoenix Lodge No. 428

## Partners with Ridgecrest Elementary

Phoenix Lodge No. 428 welcomed Halloween 2022 with plenty of candy and treats for the students at Ridgecrest Elementary in Phenix City, Alabama. The ongoing partnership with Ridgecrest Elementary and Phoenix Lodge No. 428 continued with Ridgecrest Elementary's Annual Halloween Trunk-or-Treat event that was held on October 31, 2022. In the past few years, Halloween trunk-or-treat has become a popular activity for local schools and community recreation centers throughout the city. Trunk-or-Treat events have become a safe alternative to the traditional door-to-door Trick-or-Treat. These events take place in school parking lots or recreation center parking lots. Vehicles are decorated in Halloween decorations as students are ushered from car to car in their favorite costumes with bags and pillowcases in hand in hopes of receiving plenty of candy. Brothers from Phoenix Lodge No. 428 arrived early for the event and lined their vehicles in a row with the other vehicles. Parents and community volunteers all participated in the event and donated candy and refreshments for the students and faculty. Worshipful Master Keith Daniel commended the brothers who took time from their busy schedules to come and participate in the annual school event. He also commended the brothers who were unable to attend but donated bags of candy for the event. Ms. Veatrice Thomas, principal of Ridgecrest Elementary, thanked all the volunteers who participated and made the event a success.

*Contributor – R.W. Carlton Jones (No. 428)*



*Top: Ridgecrest Elementary School Trunk-or-Treat with members of Phoenix Lodge No. 428*

*Bottom: Phoenix Lodge No. 428 brothers prepare for Trunk-or-Treat*





# Mount Nebo Lodge No. 511 Receives 2022 Alabama PALS Governors Awards

**O**n November 16, 2022, the members of Mt. Nebo Lodge 511 attended the 2022 Alabama PALS Governors Awards Program. The lodge received the 2022 Alabama PALS Governors Award for the Adopt A Mile Program. The lodge adopted the mile that's in front of the lodge and Mt. Nebo Church on US Hwy 29 South in Macon County Alabama. The members of Mt. Nebo Lodge 511 participate every year in the Spring Cleanup program sponsored by AL PALS and clean up the mile and remove any large items dumped on the right of way when the state DOT (Department of Transportation) cuts the grass on the highway. The members were very appreciative of this accolade for all the hard work to keep Alabama Beautiful.



*Contributor – Bro. Dominguez C. Hurry (No. 511)*

## South Griffin Lodge No. 697 Supporting Its Community

**I**n late October, South Griffin Lodge No. 697 donated food, candy, and school supplies to Meadowlane Elementary School in support of the Fall Festival event. Each year the kids look forward to this event, and the teachers appreciate the partnership and support. The Brothers of South Griffin Lodge also provide mentoring support at the school once a month.

In November, South Griffin Lodge held its Annual Turkey Giveaway at Mother Mary Mission. 100 packages were given away to the South Phenix City community. The intentions were to help less fortunate families have a nice meal on Thanksgiving Day. The lodge looks forward to giving to the community each year and expects to continue to be a blessing to others.

*Contributor – Bro. Oree Heard, Jr. (No. 697)*



# REGION 5

## News and Events from Region 5

### St. John Lodge No. 57 Providing for Others

On October 12, 2022, the brethren of St. John Lodge No. 57, in an act of kindness and goodwill, donated to the Max Bus Transit System in Birmingham, Alabama. This donation allowed 60+ people a complimentary ride on MAX buses as they travel to work or other destinations. The MAX riders were thrilled to receive complimentary All Day passes courtesy of the lodge. The bus passes were given out to the riders the week of Thanksgiving. The members of the St. John Lodge No. 57 will continue to be community-focused and together we can make a greater impact!



During November, the brethren of St. John Lodge No. 57 partnered with Robinson Reality Group and donated Gadsden Job Corps toiletries, cleaning supplies, and everyday items for the young adults attending the program. The donation will help the attendees retain some of the revenue they earn during the program. Special thanks to the Secretary of St. John Lodge No. 57, Bro. Trent Robinson, for spearheading this endeavor.

*Contributor – WM Quinton Bell (No. 57)*





# Meridian Sun Lodge No. 65 Hosts Their Annual Christmas Fellowship

On December 17, 2022, Meridian Sun Lodge No. 65 along with Ervin McConnel Chapter No. 323, OES in Fayette, AL came together again for their Annual Christmas Fellowship after being unable to due to the Covid-19 pandemic. They had a wonderful time getting together as brothers and sisters of one of the greatest organizations in the world, Prince Hall Masonic Family! They remembered and honored those members that have passed away since the last Christmas Fellowship in 2019. The lodge lost Worshipful Master Rev. Larry C. Madison and Secretary Kenneth Hill, and the chapter lost Worthy Matron Cara Whiteside plus Sis. McCollum. Therefore, they have been in a transition of leadership with brothers and sisters in new roles, heading forward.



The brothers and sisters enjoyed a timely message from the lodge's new Worshipful Master who is also a minister Bro. Deitrick J. Wallace from Joshua 1:1-4 titled "Next person up". He spoke about the importance of remembering those that came before them and maintaining the standards handed down to them, as well as, training those that will come behind them. Also, he reminded them that they are at a critical point and emphasized working together and being visible in the community by serving and organizing upcoming events.

They also were addressed by the Worthy Patron Bro. James Whiteside who also serves as treasurer in Meridian Sun Lodge No. 65. The new Worthy Matron spoke as well. Everyone enjoyed a great meal prepared by the members of Ervin McConnell No. 323, OES. After the meal, everyone played games which, of course, added to the fun and laughter. It was a pleasure for the brothers and sisters to get together and support one another.

*Contributor – WM Deitrick J. Wallace (No. 65)*





# Dothan Lodge No. 112

## Letting Its Light Shine in Bessemer



On October 9, 2022, Worshipful Master John Harris, represented the men of Dothan Lodge No. 112 in the Annual Real Men Wear Pink Modeling Show held in Bessemer, AL. This was a fundraiser held to raise money and awareness of breast cancer and honor several local survivors. Dothan Lodge also made a sizeable donation to the cause.

This year the brothers of Dothan Lodge No. 112 co-sponsored a city's high school basketball team. They purchased an ad on the back of t-shirts of the Bessemer City Tigers, that they will be selling to raise funds. Along with this comes the lodge's name being announced at each home game for this year. This was an excellent way to gain better local relations with the community and to let everyone know Prince Hall Masonry is stronger than ever in Bessemer, Alabama!

On November 24th, the brothers of Dothan Lodge No. 112 along with members of Carter's Success Chapter No. 870-A, OES, and local city and county officials, fed both Jess Lannier and Thompson Manor for the holiday. They set up a line for the residents that were able to come down and delivered door-to-door to the ones that weren't. Also, they had brothers travel to some of the lodge's elderly residents offsite to make sure they had hot meals, as well. Around 300 residents were fed in the Bessemer area on that day!

Dothan Lodge No. 112 worked on two Christmas charity projects this year. The lodge donated Christmas toys to the Bessemer area Salvation Army. The toys were distributed to needy children in the Bessemer area for Christmas. The lodge also was informed of a family in need of a television and decided to purchase a television for that particular family.

*Contributor – WM John D. Harris (No. 112)*



# Pride of North Birmingham Lodge No. 319 Partners with Don Hawkins Recreation Center

On October 15, 2022, the brothers of Pride of North Birmingham Lodge No. 319 had the pleasure to assist with the Roebuck Meet & Greet/Job Fair. The event was held at the Don Hawkins Recreation Center. The brothers served as Activity Captains for the games and had two employees participate in the job fair. This is an annual event sponsored by the City of Birmingham Department of Parks and Recreation. The event was family oriented and included a day of fun, games, and prizes. The Birmingham Fire Department was present with one of their fire trucks, as well as, firemen. The brothers of 319 were honored to assist with the event. The lodge was very grateful for the opportunity to serve and give back to the community. This has allowed them to build relationships, network, assess the needs of the community, and make a difference.

Also on Saturday, October 15th, the brothers of Pride of North Birmingham Lodge No. 319 sponsored a Voter Registration Drive at Don Hawkins Recreation Center located in the Roebuck Community of Birmingham, Alabama. With the assistance of several brothers of 319, they were able to help register a significant number of people to vote. They also helped many others to verify their current voter registration status to ensure no issues were raised during the voting process. The brothers of 319 were honored to spearhead this event.

On Saturday, October 22nd, the brothers of Pride of North Birmingham Lodge No. 319 showed up and showed out to assist the Don Hawkins Recreation Center with their TRUNK or TREAT event. Present at this event were many vehicles decorated to impress and filled with trunks of candy for the kids (adults also!). They provided a very fun and family-friendly atmosphere for everyone. The lodge enjoyed the event and appreciated the opportunity to serve and give back to the community. It was a blessing to be able and willing. The lodge sent a special thank you to Bro. Chevelle Lee and the Don Hawkins Recreation Center for the opportunity to serve.

*Contributor – Bro. Tony O. Lloyd (No. 319)*





# Stillman Lodge No. 490

## Provides Community Service

In every community, there is a family in need and too often the needs of those families go unnoticed. Mama's Pantry was created by Tammy Clarke in 2012 to honor the humanitarian efforts of her mother Ms. Virginia Elliot-Hensley. Ms. Hensley would feed the homeless on the west end of Tuscaloosa with various items from her pantry. On November 20, 2022, the brothers of Stillman Masonic Lodge No. 490 partnered with "Mama's Pantry" in Northport, Alabama to help with providing Thanksgiving food boxes for various families.

Stillman Masonic Lodge No. 490 has endured a rich history of community service and commitment to the City of Tuscaloosa and its surroundings. In November of 1992, the lodge established The Mason's Caring and Sharing Program to better serve the needs of its community. On November 22nd, the lodge held its Annual Mason's Caring and Sharing Thanksgiving Dinner at the local Salvation Army. For 30 years, the lodge has aided those in need, and each year, they look forward to filling this void in its community. With the assistance of sponsors, Tuscaloosa Chevrolet, the Fraternal Order of Police, Buffalo Rock, and WUVA, the lodge was able to provide Thanksgiving meals for over 120 residents and share their humanitarian efforts in a positive light.



*Contributor – WM Patrick A. Sparks (No. 490)*





# P. S. Howard Lodge No. 516

## Making a Difference

On October, 31, 2022, P.S. Howard Lodge No. 516 partnered with Brown Beauty Chapter No. 679, OES and Brighton Fire Department, under the Leadership of Chief Antonio Marable, a member of P.S. Howard Lodge No. 516, to assist in a Halloween Trunk a Treat. The brothers and sisters set up a safe location in front of the Fire House for the local kids in the community to receive goodie bags, food, chips, and drinks. While some brothers were attending to the kids, other brothers were talking to the community leaders about how the lodge can continue to contribute within the City of Brighton, Alabama.

On November 23rd, the brothers of P.S. Howard Lodge No. 516 provided a full-course Thanksgiving meal with dessert for families in the community. The meals were pre-cooked to allow more ease for the families during the Holiday season. All the families were thankful and expressed tremendous gratitude to the brothers for their contribution.

On December 21st, the brothers of P.S. Howard Lodge No. 516 distributed over 100 throw blankets to the homeless in Linn Park and the Firehouse Shelter located in the City of Birmingham. This was done in anticipation of the upcoming frigid temperatures.

*Contributor – PM Carlos D. Black (No. 516)*





# Woods Joy Lodge No. 752

## Involved in the Community

On November 20, 2022, the brothers of Woods Joy Lodge No. 752 came together to feed the homeless citizens at Linn Park in Birmingham, AL. Brother Alwahiid graciously loaned his food truck to the lodge that day and the members served hamburgers, chips, and beverages. It's just another way of showing how much the lodge cares for the needy or unfortunate citizens in its community.

Also on November 20th, the brothers of Woods Joy Lodge No. 752 had a bowling night with their sister chapters of District 19, OES. Sunbeam Chapter No. 844, Evening Star Chapter No. 678, Cannon's Beauty Chapter No. 589, and Queen Of The South Chapter No. 895, all got together and celebrated mutual love and respect for what we all do in the community! The OES Chapters have been very helpful in the lodge's efforts to serve the community and it was the lodge's way of thanking them for everything they do to help them be successful.

On November 29th, the brothers of Woods Joy Lodge No. 752 donated \$500 to the Phillips Academy Band. The donation was for the acquisition of new uniforms.

On December 17th, the brothers of Woods Joy Lodge No. 752 in conjunction with Be Kind Birmingham participated in the 1st Annual Clothes and Food Giveaway at Ensley Recreation Center in Birmingham, AL. Volunteers of all ages made this event a success! Woods Joy Lodge thanked Be Kind Birmingham for assisting them in making this event awesome for the community!

*Contributor – Bro. C. L. Evans (No. 752)*





# Council Lodge No. 778

## Conducts Youth Charity Bike Drive



Freemasons consider charity a great virtue. The brothers of Council Lodge No. 778 completed its 2nd Annual Bike Drive on November 21, 2022. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the lodge's support for the local community had been hindered. On October 2022, the brothers of Council set goals to donate a minimum of 10 bikes or no less than \$800 to support the Smithfield Community Center in Birmingham, AL, to provide bikes for the local youth for Christmas. Council Lodge donations far exceeded their planned goal. The lodge donated forty-nine (49) bikes for the youth at a cost of nearly \$4000 on November 21st, 2022. The event was an absolute success due in part to the project leadership of Brother Cliff Melton, 32° and the gracious donors from Council Lodge No. 778.

During the week of December 12th-16th, the good brothers of Council Lodge No. 778 & Occidental Lodge No. 31 partnered up to run a Christmas Toy Drive for the local Birmingham youth. The lodges collected toys and donations from 1:00 pm to 6:00 pm at the Dollar General on Highway 79. Brothers from the lodges donated funds and came out to support them, but it was the local patrons at the Dollar General and the store itself that made this such a great event. Every dollar collected was used to purchase toys in the Dollar General store for donation.

On December 17th, the lodges donated over \$2500 worth of toys to the Fairfield Housing Authority. Well done to the project leaders for making this charity event a success for the children of Birmingham, Alabama. Congratulations Bro Patrick Bailey, 32° (No. 778), WM Dennis Simmons, 33° (No. 778), and WM Cedric Hrabowskix, 33° of Occidental No. 31 on a well-organized event.

*Contributor – Bro. Bakari P. Dale (No. 778)*



## REGION 6

### News and Events from Region 6

# District No. 17 Hosts Remembrance Rites and Soil Collection

Our community was honored to come together on November 12, 2022, to remember Robert Mosely, who was lynched in Madison County on March 21, 1890.

Collecting soil from the site of a lynching is an important act of remembrance that will continue the process of reconciliation. Racial lynchings, usually defined as unprosecuted murders, that occurred at the hands of mobs or unidentified people, began in 1877 in Alabama and ended in 1943. More than 300 African-Americans were lynched in Alabama in 66 years. In some cases, the names and dates are incomplete, or the names are unknown.

One of the jars collected on Nov. 12, 2022, will be displayed in Montgomery at the Legacy Museum: From Enslavement to Mass Incarceration. The other will find its home at Huntsville Revisited Museum (2007 North Memorial Parkway, Suite O, Huntsville, AL, United States, Alabama).

District No. 17 believes these ceremonies are steps that must be taken to revisit past injustices - if we are serious about seeing racial healing in our country.

*Contributor – RW H. Jerome Glover (No. 50)*



# Morning Star Lodge No. 50 Continues to Render Its Services



On November 10, 2022, Morning Star Lodge No. 50 started the giving season by honoring local service persons in celebration of the Veterans Day holiday. The lodge partnered with the Downtown Rescue Mission and Outback Steakhouse to provide local Veterans with a steak dinner in honor of their service. The meal consisted of ribeye steak, mashed potatoes, garden salad, a dessert of their choice, and sweet tea. This meal was provided after a Veterans Day presentation facilitated by the Downtown Rescue Mission senior leadership. The brothers of Morning Star Lodge No. 50 felt that Veteran's Day is a time to show service members and their families that we enjoy the liberties of being an American and we honor them for their sacrifices. This was a successful service project for local Veterans that Morning Star Lodge No. 50 hopes to continue in the future.

For Morning Star Lodge No. 50's 13th Annual Black & White Charity Ball, the members decided to use a portion of the proceeds to support The Catholic Center of Concern. On November 18th, the brothers of Morning Star Lodge No. 50 took up a small contribution and presented the director, Kermit Elliott, with a check during their introduction and visit to the facility. The Catholic Center of Concern is a non-profit service that offers emergency financial assistance to individuals or families, regardless of their religious affiliation, who live in one of nine North Alabama counties. Catholic Center of Concern also assists the community with rent/mortgage and utilities, prescription medication, counseling, and newborn packages. They rely solely on support from the community to operate. Morning Star Lodge No. 50 is excited to help raise funds for the organization and looks forward to their partnership in the future.



Christmas time is generally a time for celebrating the birth of Christ and spending time with family and loved ones. To the masonic body, it is also a time to celebrate its community by giving back to the less fortunate and supporting its widows and orphans. Morning Star Lodge No. 50 kickstarted the holiday season by sponsoring a toy drive for teenage children through a partnership with Hendley Chapter No. 855, Order of Eastern Star, and Christmas Charities Year-Round (CCYR). CCYR is one of the oldest, locally funded nonprofit organizations in Madison County. CCYR operates a mobile closet for Madison County and Huntsville City schools. CCYR also provides basic living needs to families and Christmas gifts for the local youth. On December 9th, at the site of CCYR, members of both Morning Star Lodge No. 50 and Hendley Chapter No. 855 presented 24 basketballs, 5 soccer balls, 3 footballs, 3 kickballs, 5 pair of headphones, several assorted card and board games, puzzles, and 3 wireless speakers. The gifts helped support over 200 children this holiday season.

As Masons, they know that it is their responsibility to take care of distressed worthy brothers' widows and orphans. Morning Star remembers this obligation throughout the year; however, they try to make an extra effort during the holiday season. It is said that the best gift around Christmas time is the happy presence of family and friends, so Morning Star Lodge committee members made home visits to some of their elderly members, widows, and orphans to spend some quality time with each of them. This year, Morning Star Lodge members also gifted each member with a personalized card from the Worshipful Master and a holiday gift card during their visit.

On December 19th, the My Brother's Keeper Committee visited 13 families to share stories, laughs, and a little holiday cheer. Brother Daniel Mose appreciated the kind gesture but stated he enjoyed the brotherly love and fellowship even more. This is an excellent time to let their elderly brothers, widows, and orphans know they are not forgotten. Morning Star Lodge No. 50 hopes to keep this tradition going for years to come.

*Contributor – WM Taurean F. Dawkins (No. 50)*





# Athelstine Lodge No. 71

## Continues Its Community Service

During Athelstine No. 71's delivery of Thanksgiving boxes, it was noticed that the outside of the home of a family receiving a box had incomplete work. The homeowner informed the brothers that the work was started by a family member who abandoned the job. The work was too much to complete herself and circumstances didn't allow her to hire someone.

As they drove away, a senior brother commented that "the whole point of Freemasonry, aside from what we do in the lodge, is to be an aide to the community, to be out here helping". The members of Athelstine No. 71 felt compelled to act and they reached out to Bro. Mike Bailey. Bro Bailey is a long-time member of No. 71 and a local businessman, well-known in the community. In the days following, Bro. Bailey and a crew of workers visited the home of the sister in need and they were able to complete spreading gravel to extend her driveway that day. Bro. Bailey also made a financial contribution to relieving the added stress of the holidays. Bro. Bailey relayed that the homeowner was overcome with emotions. He said, "when we help people, you are improving someone's life and making your community better".

As the holiday season began, Athelstine No. 71 continued spreading love to the people of its community. This year Athelstine No. 71 partnered with St. John AME Church of Huntsville, AL, to provide Thanksgiving boxes to community members who needed them. This annual event provided boxes containing items to prepare a full Thanksgiving meal plus a few extras. The boxes were for anyone, free of charge, and were fully funded by donations from Athelstine No. 71 and St. John AME Church. On November 19th, members of No. 71 met at the lodge to finish packing the boxes and deliver them. The ability to put food on the table for all to share is a great blessing of the season and is nothing less than an act of love.

Each Christmas season, the members of Athelstine No. 71 come together to bring good cheer to the widows of their brothers who have entered the Celestial Lodge above. Fruit baskets were delivered, in person, to the residents of the widows or their family members. During the visits, they were reminded of their place of honor and connection to the lodge. Throughout the year the brothers check on their well-being through visits and phone calls. The best way to help a widow is to get to know her well, and include her as part of the family.

In addition to visiting their widows, Christmas boxes were delivered to all that needed them. The boxes contained items for a full Christmas meal and some extras.

Community service is work done by a group or an individual that helps others. It is usually close to where you live, so your community benefits from your work. There's no pay associated with community service, but some personal benefits gained are compassion and responsibility.



*Contributor – WM Johnathan Scott (No. 71)*

# Temple Lodge No. 98

## Continues to Show it Cares



For the 4th Annual Thanksgiving-Feed-a-Family event, during the week of November 14, 2022, Temple Lodge No. 98 partnered with Publix Grocery Store, “The Shoppes at Redstone,” Rocket City Trash Pandas and Clearview Cancer Institute (CCI) to prep, package, and deliver Thanksgiving meal boxes for Madison County families. Based on the current inflation rates, and medical cases of RSV and COVID-19, Temple Lodge No. 98 answered CCI’s call again for increased support and delivered meal boxes to 37 families, which included a turkey and all the trimmings. Thanks to the brothers that delivered meals, with a serving of joy on the side, to the families. Special thanks to the Publix Staff, Rocket City Trash Pandas management and mascot–Sprocket, and of course Clearview Cancer Institute, Huntsville, AL (i.e., Ms. Audra Williams and team.)

In December, Temple Lodge No. 98 partnered with a local organization, Visible Hope, Huntsville, AL, charged with providing over 500+ hot and nutritious meals to less fortunate residents of Huntsville, AL. Much of this group’s ability to operate comes thru donations, and despite severely low temperatures, the lodge spent four hours setting up tables, unloading warm food items, preparing and distributing 300+ plates to Huntsville, AL residents; making the day just a little bit better for an underserved group.

By definition, “to voluntarily perform a task or set of tasks with which one is confronted, especially when motivated by a sense of responsibility or duty”, is answering the call. That is exactly what Temple Lodge No. 98 did following a request by Mrs. Eva Bibbs, Director of Events, at Brookshire Nursing Home in Huntsville, AL.

Temple Lodge No. 98 participated in the center’s Annual Christmas party for 130 residents. The lodge decorated the “dayroom,” prepared snacks plates, and disturbed gifts. Before departing, the brothers spent time walking the halls and presenting gifts to room-bound residents.

*Contributor – WM Carl Cooney. (No. 98)*



# 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 ([hjeromeglover@yahoo.com](mailto:hjeromeglover@yahoo.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 or not use the articles and photographs as deemed necessary. **Deadline for submissions for the next issue of *The Cornerstone Message* is 5 April 2023.** These articles should include events from **January 2023 - March 2023**. Articles are to be submitted with a minimum of one paragraph written in third person 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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