

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 VI, ISSUE III

JULY 2023



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Grand Lodge
Schedule of Events

Let Brotherly
Love Prevail

SUPPORT
THE PRINCE HALL
LEGACY FOUNDATION OF ALABAMA, INC.



YOUR PLATE MAY BE DISPLAYED UPON THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF VEHICLES

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



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

INSIDE
THIS
ISSUE:

Editor's Message	2
Temple Renovation Fundraiser	3
Alabama Cities Word Puzzle	5
Let Brotherly Love Prevail	6
From Whence We've Come	7
A Blast from the	11
Dollars and Sense	13
Health and	15
In The Spotlight	17
Military Affairs	18
Grand Lodge Schedule of Events	19
News & Events from Region 3	21
News & Events from Region 4	22
News & Events from Region 5	32
News & Events from Region 6	39
Article Submission Guidelines	41

THE GRAND MASTER'S TRESTLEBOARD



*We've come this far by faith,
Leaning on the Lord.
Trusting in His holy word,
He's never failed us yet.
Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh –
can't turn around,
We've come this far by faith.*

Welcome to the beautiful city of Mobile, the Gateway to the Gulf and the oldest city in Alabama. As we gather for our 153rd Annual Communication, let us remember to pay homage to those brothers who have laid the foundation of this great Grand Lodge. Those brothers who had an unwavering faith in our Lord and Savior, who leaned and depended on Him. We are standing on their shoulders and due to their resilience and hard work we have one of the most prominent Grand Lodges in all of masonry.

Our beloved Grand Lodge continues to grow. Our TARP program continues to attract those Masons who desire to come back home. We continue to be that beacon of light in our communities.

As I travel throughout this great jurisdiction I am continuously met by motivated brothers, who love masonry and this Grand lodge, and are excited about the direction we are going. None of our success would be

possible without the hard work and dedication of the membership. Thank you brothers for being who you are and doing all that you do for our Grand Lodge.

This will be the first year that we have brothers to complete our masonic college courses, the Alabama School of Masonry. The Alabama School of Masonry is a great way for brothers to enhance their masonic knowledge. Those who accept the challenge are among the elite. Congratulations to the graduating class!

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

As we celebrate our 153-year history, let us keep the faith and continue to move this Grand Lodge onward and upward. It is imperative that we keep our trust in Him. As long as we keep God first and lean and depend on Him, we can accomplish all things. He has never failed us, and He never will.

May the Grand Architect of the Universe, the All-seeing Eye, continue to bless us all and may He bless our precious gift, the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge F. & A. M. of Alabama!

Fraternally,

Corey D. Hawkins, Sr.

Most Worshipful Grand Master

Front Cover: Support The Prince Hall
Legacy Foundation of Alabama, INC.

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."



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 great necessities of operative Masons was the need to travel. This is a key piece of the origin story of our craft and translates into a great privilege that we enjoy today as we enjoy the ability to visit other lodges. We have a much better chance of getting closer to the truth with different perspectives and understandings. In my mind, this means if we aspire to learn more about truth, a continual journey of learning and relationships is needed. This

cannot happen without travel. Modern technology is a wonderful tool, but it has its limitations. It does not enable all the senses. Additionally, it holds the potential for adding a second veil to the truth: a reality filtered by editing processes that hide elements deemed unimportant or unpleasant by those transmitting the information.

Becoming a leader in anything requires a decision to invest in adventure and in the people that are around you – for better and for worse. It is a decision to gather and consider multiple perspectives. The best way I have found to do this is to travel and continually grow my network. This does not happen by staying at home. In your adventures,

you will no doubt find people you want to follow. If you are mindful of those that are around you, you will also likely find people that want to follow you. Perspective is everything. We belong to a wonderful fraternity full of different perspectives and backgrounds that are bound by a great set of principles.

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

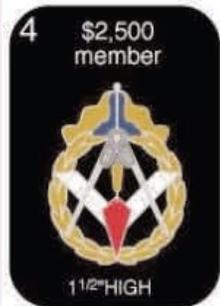
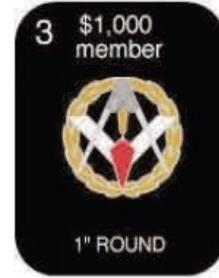
Members suspended after June, 2002, can reinstate by paying the following:

- \$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

Most
 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.

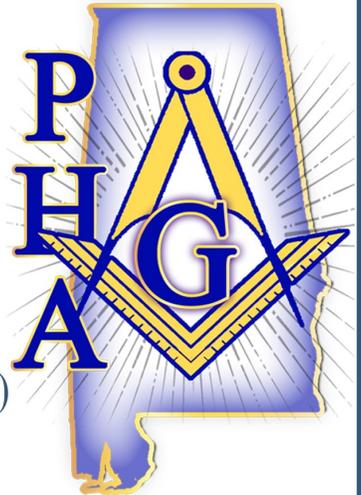


PURCHASE YOUR ALABAMA PRINCE HALL GRAND LODGE LICENSE PLATE

**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!)

ALABAMA CITIES

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

Andalusia

Anniston

Auburn

Bessemer

Birmingham

Daphne

Decatur

Demopolis

Dothan

Eufaula

Eutaw

Gadsden

Huntsville

Lanett

Livingston

Mobile

Montgomery

Muscle Shoals

Prichard

Selma

Talladega

Troy

Tuscaloosa

York

LET BROTHERLY LOVE PREVAIL

We meet on the level, we act on the plumb, and we part on the square. What does that mean?

No matter the brother, the degree, or the position in life, we as masons are taught to meet each individual, more especially a brother, on the level that they present themselves, act accordingly, and part squarely.

So how do we meet?

In our everyday life, we need to understand the LEVEL on which we should approach each encounter, dilemma, or conversation, whether it be with the initiated or the profane. When we engage with our fellow man, we need to determine if it is during our usual avocation, study, or recreation. Once we obtain the level in which we are engaged, we need to maintain that level of understanding and try our best not to ascend or descend from that plane. The only deviation from this rule, in my humble opinion, is when a person tries to assassinate your character; in that regard, I would like to quote First Lady Michelle Obama in saying, "When they go low, you go high." Do not compromise your integrity or morals, nor should you lower your standards.

Many of us have traveled in freemasonry and have obtained multiple degrees. One may have been fortunate enough to have obtained the 33rd degree. However, if a GIG is talking to an EA, the said GIG has to descend to the level of an EA to have a proper discussion because the EA cannot ascend to the level of a GIG. The only time we should look down on anyone is to help someone up. So, be true to meeting all people from all walks of life that you encounter on the level in which you find them.

How do we act?

In modern times, in our speculation of the plumb from a Freemason's perspective, I see it as one of, if not the hardest tool to set accurately, or live by, in our everyday lives. Depending on the level we meet people, the foundation we set will dictate the accuracy of the plumbline. So, if the foundation is not level, your plumbline, no matter the vertical exactness, will not produce a square result. Think of a clock that has struck six o'clock; the hour and minute hands are vertical in their exactness. We, as fellows and brothers, should, in turn, try to be just as exact. Not 5:55 nor 6:05, but straight up and down like 6:00.

We were told by our parents and stewards to ACT RIGHT when we were children, but as Free and Accepted Masons, we are taught to act UPRIGHT in all of our endeavors. Remember, The ALL-SEEING EYE is always watching. So, whether it's in public or behind closed doors, a plumbline should always be set in hopes of squaring our actions.

How do we part?

If we are regular and in good standing, we should part from a brother on the point at which we met, with both parties on a perpendicular path, depending on their vantage point. So when we choose to part ways, we should be confident that we did everything in our power to meet on the level that is presented, acting in a manner that is parallel or as close to parallel with the plumbline as possible and parted in a way that cements our brotherly love, socially and morally. Hopefully, we each will leave finding ourselves better than how we arrived. Disputes and quarrels are a part of life, but regardless of the nature of the discussion, excluding the violation of one's obligation, regardless of being agreeable or disagreeable, brothers should always find it in their hearts to part peacefully for the sake of maintaining harmony in the craft.

So may we meet, act, and part.

May brotherly love prevail, and never forget that...

Manners Maketh Man.

Fraternally yours,

PM Keith D. Daniel 33° ADD No. 7

From Whence We've Come...

In Their Own Words: MWGM Dr. William O. Jones

This article will highlight one of gems of the Grand Lodge, M.W.G.M. Dr. William O. Jones. In particular, we will review his writings on June 25, 2000.

Greetings:

As we gather here today for our 130th Annual Session, I thank the Lord that he has allowed his tender mercy to smile upon us and has made it possible for all of us to see the beginning of this new millennium. Unfortunately, many brothers did not make it. In memory of those brothers who have passed on since our last Annual Session, we will have our Lodge of Sorrow program on Tuesday evening at 7:00 p.m. in the Mobile Civic Center.

In this troubled world where men and women are questioning the benefits of prayer, religion, and the Bible and in a world where the highest court in the land has ruled that it is unconstitutional to say a prayer in schools, I am so glad that Prince Hall Masons have the right and the privilege to call on the Grand Architect of the Universe to invoke his blessings upon us whenever and wherever we choose. I am going to ask our Assistant Grand Chaplain to come and pray for us and for all the people everywhere.

Pause

Since my last semiannual report in January, 2000, I attended the Phylaxis Society meeting in Kansas City, MO, the 119th Annual Session of the United Supreme Council of the Northern Jurisdiction in Denver, CO, the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge Session of the Jurisdiction of Oklahoma in Tulsa, OK, and the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge Session of the Jurisdiction of Georgia.

During the Masonic year ending June 30, 2000, we have collected \$622,219.00, which has been distributed, to our several accounts as provided by law, and we have a "counted" membership on the rolls of the Endowment Department of 22,983. At this point, I am requesting Rev. Jesse Montgomery, Grand District Deputy of District #13, to please come forward and award the prizes and escort the winners to their seats of honor.

District Meetings

Our District Meetings began during the last week of March 2000, and ended during the third week of May. I want to extend my congratulations to all Grand District Deputies and to their assistants for having outstanding meetings. I traveled approximately 3,100 miles throughout the 17 districts at a total cost of approximately \$3,114.86 for lodging, meals, and fuel. The increase in cost over last year was mainly due to the increase in automobile fuel prices this year.

The District Meetings were well attended, and the brothers' enthusiasm was extremely high. The highlight of the meetings was the [question-and-answer] period that followed the Grand Master's presentation. The brothers indicated that this period gave them the opportunity to ask questions that were important to them and to get advice and directions from the Grand Master. As a matter of fact, I intend to continue this question and answer period during future meetings.

Bank Accounts

All of our bank accounts remain the same at Citizens Federal Savings Bank in Birmingham, Alabama

Relations with Insurance Department

Our relationship with the State Insurance Department has changed since our last report. As you know, in the past, we have been audited periodically by the State agency because it states that we sell insurance policies to our members, and therefore, we must fall under their jurisdiction just like the big insurance companies (i.e., Alfa, Metropolitan, New York Life, etc.). Because of the hard work of our Grand Attorney, Brother Tyrone Means, we were able to draft a bill and get the bill passed in the House of Representatives and in the Senate, which exempts the Masonic and similar organizations that provide an opportunity for their members to purchase death benefits for their beneficiaries. This was a very difficult task, and many of you also had to work hard lobbying members of the House and the Senate to get this bill passed. For this, I am expressing my sincere thanks to you and to Attorney Means for a job well done.

Temple Operations

The Temple in downtown Birmingham, Alabama, on the corner of 4th Avenue and 17th Street North is our principle real estate holding. The building is well built and is in fairly good condition. However, we must investigate the possibility of having to do some extensive renovations to remove asbestos from the building, to convert a coal burning furnace to gas or oil burning furnace, to remove and to install new wiring where needed to conform to city codes, and to replace the roof and the elevators. All of these repairs will be expensive, but we must have them done in order to maintain our property in good condition.

Recommendation

The following recommendations are made for the current year. I recommend that the Grand Lodge donate:

- *\$500 to the NAACP,*
- *\$500 to the NAACP Legal Defense Fund,*
- *\$1,000 to the Independent Economic Study Commission, and*
- *\$500 to the YMCA.*

In addition, I recommend that the Grand Lodge purchase or lease the necessary equipment and furnishings for the Grand Master's office. I further recommend that the Grand Lodge spend the necessary funds to paint, renovate, update, and improve all Grand Lodge properties.

Report of Officers

The following officers and committees will make their report for this year. Unless you request otherwise, the reports will be given as follows: Deputy Grand Master, Grand Medical Registrar, Grand Attorney, Grand Secretary, Grand Treasurer, Grand Lodge Auditing Committee, Endowment Secretary, Endowment Treasurer, Grand Auditor, Educational Committee, and Trustees.

Conclusion

"Looking back in order to move forward!" I said, "Looking back in order to move forward!" I have been looking back over the operations of this Grand Lodge to see how we can improve our entire operation. I know that there is a saying, "You should never look back." Well, I do not totally agree with that. For example, if you are parked on the side of a busy highway, you must look back to see what is coming before you pull out into the road to go forward.

We also study history to learn about what happened in the past in order to have a better appreciation for what has happened in order to plot a course for the future. Strategies must be developed to ensure that whatever mistakes we made in the past will not continue to be made in the future.

"Looking back in order to move forward!" The question then becomes, "What did I find while looking back in order to move forward?" I found many, many positive things that had been done by good black men who made great sacrifices to keep this Prince Hall group functioning and providing service to Black Americans. Many of our brothers had been active in their local lodges for 50 and 60 years and had never missed a year paying their dues no matter how hard times were for them. There is evidence of their work with youth and with other groups in their communities and evidence of how they fought the clinches of segregation. Our Temple in Birmingham represents one example of how they tried to find a way for Black Americans to have a place to congregate, a place in which they would feel comfortable and safe. One of our brothers that was a victim of the Syphilis Study in Tuskegee was almost 100 years old, but he still was active in his lodge. Brother Herman Shaw who went to the White House, sat next to the President of the United States, and made an eloquent public response on national television to the President's apology was still active in his lodge when he died. Nothing shook Brother Shaw's faith in Prince Hall masonry.

I found that most masons were well known in their communities because they were visible in their communities as masons. They worked hard in their communities to make things better for everyone. They provided service on a continuous basis, and people knew who they were. I found the answer to the question, "Who are the Prince Hall Masons," and I will give you the answer a little later as I continue here.

On the other hand, I found some things of which I am not at all proud. I found some masons who have not acted in accordance with the landmarks and the standards of Prince Hall masonry. For example, our Prince Hall Grand Lodge has always been known for providing financial assistance to brothers who were in need and to brothers who wanted to provide better things for their families, but they were held back because the same borrowing opportunities provided for the white race were not available for Black men. This Grand Lodge made every effort to lend money to its members at almost no interest rate in comparison to that being charged by banks and in most cases required no collateral. Such an opportunity was unheard of by most people. Any brother should have been so grateful to this Grand Lodge that he would have done everything humanly possible to pay these loans back, so the next brother in need could have the same borrowing opportunity. "Looking back in order to move forward!" What did I find while looking back?

I found that many brothers had borrowed money from this Grand Lodge many years ago and had never paid that money back. They were not even trying to pay it back, and they had not made any effort to offer any type of insurance or collateral to cover their loan. They had let your loan become a gift to them, a gift which they knew this Grand Lodge could not afford to give. They did not care about the next brother who might need help; they had what they wanted, and they were satisfied.

I also found that some lodges are collecting money from their members for dues, but this money is never sent to the Grand Lodge. Brothers have called to inquire about their financial status because they think their dues have been sent to the Grand Lodge, and they find that their dues are in arrears. Where is the money going? Is this acceptable behavior for a Prince Hall Mason or for anyone?

Who are we? Is this all we represent? I don't think so. We must stop this practice immediately! The Grand Lodge will not tolerate this type of action any longer. Brothers, this money belongs to you, and I hate that a few brothers have gotten this Grand Lodge to the point of having to stop making loans to honest brothers who need it and would pay their loans back, if they had the same opportunity to borrow. As your leader, I have instructed our Grand Attorney, Brother Tyrone Means, to take whatever legal steps necessary to collect all money overdue to this Grand Lodge. Opportunities have been provided for all brothers to bring their loans to current status; some brothers responded positively, but other simply ignored our plea. Therefore, if it means going to court to collect what is owed to this Grand Lodge, that is what Attorney Means will have to do, and in some cases, that is what we have already done.

I have requested that all Worshipful Masters display the monthly lodge rolls received from the Endowment Department at every meeting in order that each brother can check the roll to make sure that the money he paid has been applied to his dues at the Grand Lodge.

"Looking back in order to move forward!" I have even looked at our Grand Lodge membership and have compared it to the list of names on the Temple and on the consistory membership lists. What did I find? I found that we have brothers that have been dropped from the lodge roll for failure to pay dues but are listed as members in good standing in the local temple and in the local consistory. How can that be possible? Brothers, if one is not financial with the Blue Lodge, he cannot be an active member in any of the upper houses, such as the Shriners and the Consistories.

"Looking back in order to move forward!" In looking back, I found many, many good things that we can build on as we move this Grand Lodge forward. I also found some things that we need to correct that will make us even stronger than we have ever been. How can we do this? We must get back to being visible again in our communities, so people will know what we stand for and who we are.

Well, who are we? I'll tell you who we are. We are the Prince Hall Masons! We are the people of an ancestry that authored a legacy through their deeds and declarations; our Prince Hall Mason forefathers sounded the chords of the nation to pause and to ponder-what manner of people are these? Historically, we were those with little more than a nickel and a nail in our pockets who started out against all odds to capture a vision-and we rose again and again as stalwarts in the storm, as giants in our chosen field of endeavor - sometimes we stumble, but we refuse to fall; we became tired, but we refused to quit; we bent, but we refused to break. The hallmark of our success as Prince Hall Masons has been our unique utilization of the tools of survival.

We can point to our rich and pure heritage - Booker T. Washington, Justice Thurgood Marshall, George Washington Carver, Martin Luther King, Jr., S. J. Bennett, Sr., and R. D. Nesbitt, Sr. We are the products of suffering and sacrifice. We are strong; we are talented; we are creative, and we have imagination. Our capabilities are diverse, and our qualifications are excellent.

Who are we? We are the scholars, the scientists, the educators, the lawyers, the preachers, the doctors, the businessmen, the farmers, the trash collectors, the janitors, the street sweepers, the plumbers, the electricians, the carpenters, and the truck drivers. We are the implementers, the innovators, the creators, and the orators - we are men of courage and men of substance. We are thinkers and doers. We are today's choice and tomorrow's challenge.

Who are we? We are black people, and we are proud people! We want people to know us because Prince Hall Masons' story must be continued in this new millennium. Who are we? Who are we? Who are we? We are Alabama Prince Hall Masons, and we are on the move!

*RW Dr. L. Ken Collins, II
Grand Historian*

A Blast from the Past

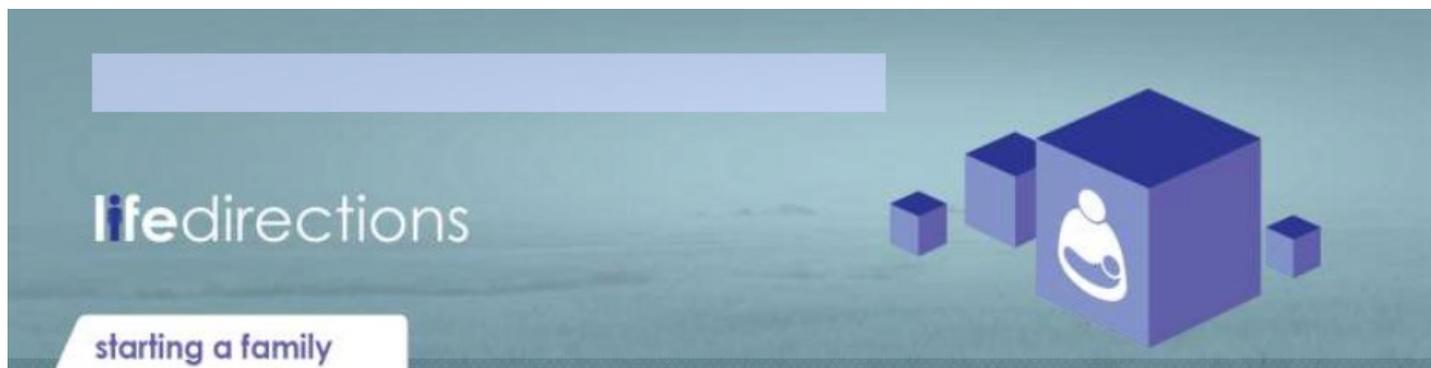
2014 Grand Lodge Officers at the 144th Annual Communication in Birmingham, AL.



Pictures from the 144th Annual Communication



\$ Dollars and Sense \$



Investing as New Parents

When you become a parent for the first time, the realization that another life depends on you financially can be overwhelming, especially if you haven't thought much about your finances or investing goals before. This may be the first time you're developing a real investing plan, or maybe you already have a plan that you're looking to overhaul in response to your life event. Your goals and investing strategy will probably need to change when you become a parent, but not necessarily in the ways you're expecting.

Balancing Your Goals

Before you became a parent, you likely had a long-term investing goal of retirement. Perhaps there were short-term goals too, such as buying a house or another large purchase. Adding a child to the family introduces a new short-term goal: paying for his or her college education. In addition to your investing goals, you might have debt to pay down, an emergency fund to build up and a budget that needs to find a balance among all of your new childcare costs.

Many new parents become overwhelmed by the cost

of pregnancy, childbirth and raising a young child—between paying for day care and buying new clothes every few months, it can be hard to keep focused on investing for retirement. The best-case scenario is to continue making regular contributions to your retirement accounts even after the baby is born.

While the diaper budget may be out of control now, you don't want to sacrifice the power of compound interest by neglecting your retirement savings. If you have an employer-sponsored plan with a match, make sure you at least meet the minimum contribution to receive the match. Otherwise, you're leaving money on the table.

It may not be possible to continue to invest as much while budgeting for the new expenses that come with child-rearing, so the important thing to keep in

mind is balance. Try not to focus all of your money and attention on baby spending, and don't ignore your long-term savings goals completely. Your first priority will have to be day-to-day spending and budgeting, followed by your retirement savings. When these two goals are being met, you can add your child's college education as a third priority.

Abandoning your investing goals in favor of a child's education is actually not putting the child first—if you retire with nothing, your child will be left supporting aging parents.

Saving for College

You may be tempted to put your child's education fund first. There's nothing wrong with putting your children first, but abandoning your investing goals in favor of a child's education is actually not putting the child first—if you retire with nothing, your child will be left supporting aging parents, which can be much more difficult than funding a four-year degree. Students have access to scholarships, work-study programs and student loans when funding their college degree, but there's no financial aid for retirement.

That said, investing in your child's education early in his or her life is a good idea if you can afford it. Compound interest can be just as magical for your child's college savings as for your retirement account. You can start saving for college even when your child is only an infant, either in traditional investment vehicles or in a 529 plan, which is a tax-deferred plan designed specifically for education costs. As long as the earnings are used for qualified education expenses, the account grows free of federal (and often state) taxes. Just like a 401(k) or IRA, 529 plans have annual contribution limits, but you can ask grandparents and other family members to contribute to the account as well, as an alternative for birthday gifts for your child. Another upside to 529 plans is that the funds can be used any time in the future, and the beneficiary can change. An alternative to the 529 plan is the Roth IRA, from which you can withdraw the principle at any time without facing penalties. You can also make tax-free withdrawals of the earnings from the account if they're used for qualified educational expenses. If you haven't set up a designated college savings account, or if you decide a 529 plan is not for you, a Roth can be a viable alternative to use instead.

Revisit Your Strategy

Your lifestyle will likely look dramatically different once you become a parent, and the same goes

for your finances and investing strategy. The budget may be tighter, decreasing your weekly savings amount. You may want to take on less risk to account for your new financial responsibilities. Or maybe you'll seek out higher risk investments to make up for your diminished contributions. As you work to balance your short- and long-term goals, your investing time horizons may change, too, prompting a reassessment of your asset allocation. You should be regularly rebalancing your portfolio anyway. If you aren't, now is a good time to start. Now that your goals have changed, your strategy must as well.

The most important thing to remember is that you shouldn't abandon your good financial habits just because you now have a child. Keep your long-term goals in mind as you readjust your finances and get acquainted with your growing family.

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and Financial Planner*

HEALTH AND WELLNESS



Mental Health Is Just As Important As Your Physical Health

drink
WATER

eat
LESS SUGAR

journal
ABOUT
YOUR FEELINGS

be kind
TO YOURSELF

GO FOR A
walk

MAKE YOUR
Mental health
A
priority

go
outside
GET SOME
SUNSHINE

talk
TO A THERAPIST

breathe
DEEPLY

establish
A BEDTIME
ROUTINE

MAKE A
gratitude
LIST

meditate
ON THE TRUTH:
God's Promise:
You will have suffering in this world,
but I have overcome the world.
(John 16:33)

put down
YOUR
PHONE

What is mental health?

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make healthy choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood.

Why is mental health important for overall health?

Mental and physical health are equally important components of overall health. For example, depression increases the risk for many types of physical health problems, particularly long-lasting conditions like diabetes, heart disease, and stroke. Similarly, the presence of chronic conditions can increase the risk for mental illness.

Can your mental health change over time?

Yes, it's important to remember that a person's mental health can change over time, depending on many factors. When the demands placed on a person exceed their resources and coping abilities, their mental health could be impacted. For example, if someone is working long hours, caring for a relative, or experiencing economic hardship, they may experience poor mental health.

How common are mental illnesses?

Mental illnesses are among the most common health conditions in the United States.

- More than 1 in 5 US adults live with a mental illness.
- Over 1 in 5 youth (ages 13-18) either currently or at some point during their life, have had a seriously debilitating mental illness.
- About 1 in 25 U.S. adults lives with a serious mental illness, such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, or major depression (ref: World Health Organization 2023).

What causes mental illness?

There is no single cause for mental illness. A number of factors can contribute to risk for mental illness, such as:

- Adverse Childhood Experiences, such as trauma or a history of abuse (for example, child abuse, sexual assault, witnessing violence, etc.)
- Experiences related to other ongoing (chronic) medical conditions, such as cancer or diabetes
- Biological factors or chemical imbalances in the brain
- Use of alcohol or drugs
- Having feelings of loneliness or isolation

Measures for maintaining good mental health

There are also a number of factors can contribute to the improvement of your overall mental health, such as:

- Take the time to eat well.
- Be sure to get enough sleep.
- Keep active or exercise every day.
- Engage in activities that promote relaxation and well-being (yoga, meditation and breathing exercises, creative or artistic exercises).

Miguel L Ferguson, BSN, MPH, RN

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 John Kenneth Radford, V

Brother John Kenneth Radford, V is the owner of Piquarius Graphics, a subsidiary of Piquarius Communications, LLC, a company that specializes in low voltage cable installations, sign making and apparel. This Lanett, Alabama company was started and incorporated in 2006, and Piquarius Graphics was started on July 10, 2012. His signs and graphics can be found at various locations throughout the Greater Valley Area and his entire portfolio can be found at www.facebook.com/PiquariusGraphics.

In 1996, Mr. Radford earned his B.A. in Business Administration, concentration in Finance with a minor in Management from Morehouse College and is a member of the Morehouse Alumni Association Columbus, GA chapter. Before starting his own company, Mr. Radford worked in the banking, accounting and real estate industries from 1996 until 2000. In 2000, Mr. Radford and his father John Allen Radford; IV purchased Bob Lee's Graphics Displays in Lawrenceville, GA and were the proprietors of that business from 2000-2005. Mr. Radford has over 23 years of sign making experience.

In addition, Brother Radford is a layman at Mt. Hermon Baptist Church in Lanett, AL, located in Oak Bowery, Alabama. He was an Ambassador for the Greater Valley Area Chamber of Commerce, where he had won Ambassador of the Year Award for two consecutive years. Radford was the Chairman of the Jr. Ambassador Committee of the GVACC which is comprised of local high school students. He currently serves as the Vice-President of the Board of Directors of the Chattahoochee Humane Society. He is a charter member of the West Central Georgia Black Chamber of Commerce.

Brother Radford is Worshipful Master of Early Star Lodge No. 395, Scribe of Valley Chapter No. 77A, charter member and first Thrice Illustrious Master of Enoch Council No. 17, Royal and Select Masters, a Sir Knight of Howell & Shumpert Commandery No. 12, and a Sublime Prince of Booker T. Washington Consistory No. 115.

Brother Radford is married to LaShunda Michelle Sutton-Radford, a native of Valley Alabama, and has two sons, John Malik Radford, VI and Brodis Clay (deceased).



Brother John Kenneth Radford, V

Military Affairs

Keeping our MWP HGL of Alabama Veterans Informed

VA's commitment to Veterans regarding health care and benefits

The VA is committed to ensuring every Veteran is aware of the care and benefits they've earned by their service. Whether the veteran is new to VA or has been receiving care and benefits for years, veterans can now receive toxic exposure screening, and take steps to file a claim for toxic exposure. Although this effort is expected to draw many Veterans seeking assistance on recently passed legislation concerning toxic exposures (via the "PACT Act"), VA welcomes all Veterans and survivors seeking assistance for VA benefits and services.

VA is delivering more benefits, and quicker, to more Veterans than ever before. As of March 4, VA has received more than 362,000 toxic exposure-related claims from Veterans since the legislation passed on August 10, 2022. In the past six months, VA has completed nearly 158,000 PACT Act-related claims for all Veterans and survivors, including terminally ill Veterans.

Outreach initiatives, such as the ones currently underway, will continue for the foreseeable future until every Veteran or survivor has had an opportunity to learn more about the health care and benefits, they earned. For a complete listing, as well as other outreach events, see www.va.gov/outreach-and-events/events. For more information about the PACT Act, visit www.va.gov/PACT. For general questions about health care and benefits, go to www.va.gov

VA Geriatric Programs at a Glance

The GRECC (Geriatric Research, Education, and Clinical Centers) Connect program aims to improve access to geriatric care for Veterans in rural areas. This project allows elderly veterans to receive real-time virtual care from geriatricians, eliminating the need to travel long distances for specialty care. Since 2014, the GRECC Connect project has served more than 10,000 veterans, supported more than 4,700 providers and staff, and saved veterans nearly 890,000 miles of travel.

The Geriatric Scholars program trains local VA clinicians to provide care to older rural veterans helping to overcome the critical provider shortage in rural communities. Geriatric Scholars Program increases aging rural Veterans' access to quality care by integrating geriatrics into existing services at local VA community-based outpatient clinics (CBOCs). Since 2008, the Geriatric Scholars program has trained more than 1,000 VA clinicians. Those providers have collectively served more than 680,000 Veterans. Gerofit uses telehealth to connect rural Veterans over the age of 65 with exercise programming to improve their physical and mental health and overall well-being. Veterans receive guidance from trained exercise staff, including physiologists, nurses, and physical therapists. Gerofit is now offered at 30 VA Health Care Systems. To find a location near you go to www.va.gov/geriatrics.

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

***Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge
Free and Accepted Masons of Alabama
153rd Annual Communication***

~ SCHEDULE OF EVENTS ~

Sunday, July 23, 2023

7:00 a. m. - 10:00 p. m. Vendors.....Preconvene 2 Center (Riverview Plaza Hotel)
12:00 p. m. - 12:00 a. m. Grand Lodge OfficeTree House

Monday, July 24, 2023

7:00 a. m. - 12:00 a. m. Grand Lodge OfficeTree House
7:00 a. m. - 8:00 p. m. RegistrationMoonlight Foyer
7:00 a. m. - 10:00 p. m. VendorsPreconvene 2 Center (Riverview Plaza Hotel)
7:00 a. m. - 7:00 p. m. COVID Check-inAshland Place B
8:00 a. m. - 11:00 p. m. Trustees MeetingMoonlight A
8:00 a. m. - 6:00 p. m. Choir RehearsalOakleigh Garden
8:00 a. m. - 6:00 p. m. Committee MeetingsBienville Square
7:00 a. m. - 8:00 a. m. Worshipful Master's Certification Registration.....Moonlight B-E
8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p. m. Worshipful Master's Certification..... Moonlight B-E
12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m. Veteran Affairs Workshop.....Moonlight A
1:00 p. m. - 3:00 p. m. Trustees LuncheonCrystal Ballroom
2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. Alabama School of Masonry Testing.....Moonlight B-E
3:00 p. m. - 6:00 p. m. WorkshopMoonlight A
5:00 p. m. - 7:00 p. m. Holding Room.....Jubilee Suite (Riverview Plaza Hotel)
6:00 p. m. - 8:00 p. m. Welcome & Awards 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 25, 2023

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

***Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge
Free and Accepted Masons of Alabama
153rd Annual Communication***

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

7:00 a. m. - 8:00 p. m.	Registration	Moonlight Foyer
7:00 a. m. - 10:00 p. m.	Vendors	Preconvene 2 Center (Riverview Plaza Hotel)
7:00 a. m. - 7:00 p. m.	COVID Check-in.....	Ashland Place B
8:00 a. m. - 12:00 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 26, 2023

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.	COVID Check-in.....	Ashland Place B
7:00 a. m. - 1:00 p. m.	Registration	Moonlight Foyer
8:00 a. m. - 1:00 p. m.	Grand Lodge Closing Session	Moonlight Ballroom

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.

REGION 3

News and Events from Region 3

Saturn Lodge No. 80 Supporting Its Community

On Saturday, May 6, 2023, at 6:00 P.M., Saturn Lodge No. 80 attended The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People's (Coffee County Branch No. 5017), 16th Annual Freedom Fund Banquet, which was hosted at Union Grove Missionary Baptist Church located in Enterprise, AL. The members of Saturn Lodge No. 80 were recognized for their deeds within their community, and as a result, received a plaque from the local chapter for its efforts to improve the neighborhood, educate the masses, and lead the revolution to fix problems identified within the community, while simultaneously exemplifying the philosophies of Dr. Martin Luther King through their ongoing acts of community service. Attendees for this event were P.M. Dana Perdue, P.M. Mikolas Roberson, and Bro. Robert Benders.



On June 10, 2023, Saturn Lodge No. 80, in concomitance with Shekinah Chapter No. 899, Order of The Eastern Star, assisted Enterprise City Councilwoman Sonya Wheeler-Rich, by serving the community during her community fish fry, feeding over two-hundred (200) members of the Bennett Side Community. The event served as a Meet & Greet, affording past and present neighbors of District No. 1 an opportunity and venue to connect. The event was held at Quida Street Park, located at 101 North Quida Street in Enterprise, AL.



Councilwoman Wheeler-Rich's primary objective was to use her platform to serve the people of her community, seeking nothing in return. In addition, her ultimate goal for District No. 1 was to see the community revitalized to the pristine state she remembered as a child.

On June 18, 2022, Saturn Lodge No. 80, in conjunction with Shekinah, Order of The Eastern Star Chapter No. 899, participated in the City of Enterprise's 1st Annual Juneteenth Parade. The procession lead down Main Street Enterprise featuring both large and small African American Businesses and Non-Profit Organizations, Churches, Fraternities, and Sororities from the local and surrounding area. The event concluded with an African American Business Expo sponsored by the Enterprise Black Chamber of Commerce, and fellowship service conducted at Johns Chapel A.M.E Church.



Contributor – P.M.L.J. Bynum (No. 80)

REGION 4

News and Events from Region 4

District 8 Hosts Teachers Appreciation Day

On 9 May 2023, the brothers from several lodges within District 8 collaborated to host a Teachers Appreciation Day at MacMillion Elementary School in Montgomery. Brothers from District 8 were well represented as they volunteered to grill lunch for the teachers and staff members, who were very appreciative of this act of kindness. This is one of the district's favorite events and community service projects because they get a chance to show support for the teachers of generations to come. District 8 Lodges represented were Hamilton Lodge, R.H. Rice, A.A. Peters Lodge, Abraham Lodge, and King Solomon Lodge.

Contributor – WM Carl Howard (No. 345)



R.H. Rice Lodge No. 345 Hosts Annual St. John's Day Family and Friends Celebration

On 17 June 2023, R.H. Rice Lodge No. 345 hosted its Annual St. John's Day Family and Friends Celebration. A day of relaxation, music, food, and games was planned for the entire day. Members of all Masonic affiliated and concordant bodies and their families were extended an invitation to attend the celebration, which had a great turnout. Attendees were served a full menu of grilled items and freshly cooked fish, just to name a few. Along with the great food that was prepared, there was also a live DJ and bingo that everyone thoroughly enjoyed. The brothers of R.H. Rice No. 345 worked together to orchestrate this event which was enjoyed by all in attendance. R. H. Rice Lodge No. 345 will continue to host this event at the same location next year. They intend to make this a day of celebration and unity for the members of all Prince Hall Affiliated Organizations in Montgomery and its surrounding areas.



SW Frank Benefield manning the grill

Contributor – WM Carl Howard (No. 345)



PM Johnny Cunningham and his wife Joyce at the Bingo table



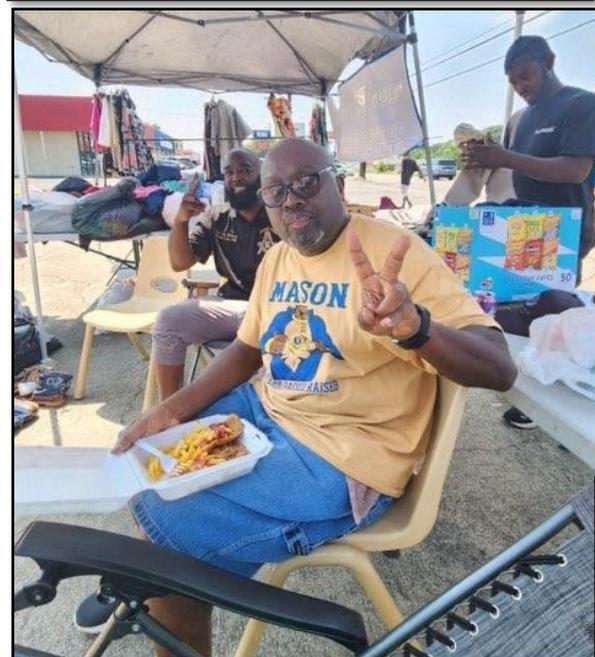
Member of R.H. Rice Lodge No. 345 cooking fish

Hamilton Lodge No. 365 Continues Its Community Service

During the month of April 2023, the brothers of Hamilton Lodge exemplified their spirit of giving by donating over four hundred Easter Eggs to Second Mom's Day Care, showing their support for the day-care's Easter egg hunt. Their thoughtful contribution added an extra touch of joy and excitement to the event, bringing smiles to the faces of the children and fostering a sense of community within Second Mom's Day Care. The dedication of the brothers to spreading happiness and creating memorable experiences for the young ones reflects their commitment to making a positive difference in the lives of others. Hamilton Lodge generously donated hygiene supplies to the preschool of Evangel Christian Academy in Montgomery, Alabama, during the month of May. The staff and faculty of the academy expressed their gratitude for this thoughtful contribution from the lodge.

In May 2023, the brothers of Hamilton Lodge joined forces with the City of Montgomery in a collaborative effort to beautify and maintain the streets of Montgomery, ensuring they remain safe and clean for everyone. By combining their dedicated efforts, the brothers demonstrated their commitment to enhancing the local community and fostering a sense of pride among its residents. Their collective endeavor serves as a shining example of how unity and civic engagement can create a positive impact, making Montgomery a more vibrant and welcoming place for all who reside there.





During the month of June, the brothers of Hamilton Lodge organized and successfully hosted a community fish fry and clothing giveaway event in Montgomery, Alabama. This event not only provided a safe and enjoyable experience but also attracted a significant number of attendees. The demand for both fish and clothing kept the brothers busy throughout the event, ensuring everyone was served.

On June 25, 2023, members of Hamilton Lodge No. 365 actively participated in the MWP HGLAL, District 8 St. John's Day Program, held at First Missionary Baptist Church in White Hall, Alabama. This gathering brought together members from District 8 and neighboring districts, including a substantial representation from Hamilton Lodge. Speculative Freemasonry honors two patron Saints, namely St. John the Baptist, commemorated close to the summer solstice on June 24th, and St. John the Evangelist observed close to the winter solstice on December 27th. In Masonry, these two figures are often seen as parallel symbols, depicted as two lines touching the outer circumference of a circle. The symbolism of a point within the center of the circle is easily understood when pondered upon. The Point symbolizes an individual Brother, while the Circle represents the boundaries of his responsibilities to God and his fellow human beings. It signifies the importance for a brother to refrain from allowing his passions, prejudices, or personal interests to betray him beyond these prescribed limits.

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



Phoenix Lodge No. 428 Hosts Annual Youth Day Awards

On Saturday, June 10th, Phoenix Lodge No. 428 continued its tradition of recognizing the youth in their community. The 4th Annual Youth Awards was held at Bethel AME Church in Phenix City, Alabama, recognizing area youth in the field of Academics, Sports, and Community Service. There were 15 total youths recognized and honored. Each of the youths was presented with plaques for their hard work in school. Parents and teachers from three local elementary schools were in attendance. It was an evening filled with praise and celebration as the audience was entertained with several motivational songs from local artists. The guest speaker for the occasion was Coach Carlton Spivey. Coach Spivey shared his own story as he was counted out by others but persevered through it all and never gave up. He emphasized to the students they should follow their dreams and never give up. Regardless of their situation or if they don't fit the mode of what others perceive they should be like. His inspiring words drew a standing ovation from all in attendance. The food was catered for by the brothers of Phoenix Lodge No. 428. Worshipful Master Keith Daniel gave his closing remarks from the podium and thanked everyone for coming to the event, and gave a brief history of the Annual Youth Day Awards Program and how important it is to continue to uplift their youth. He stressed empowering their youth and being a beacon of light for them in their moments of darkness. Before leaving the podium, Worshipful Master Keith Daniel surprised several members of Phoenix Lodge No. 428 with awards and plaques for their service and dedication in and outside the lodge. Upon conclusion, all the youth were presented with bowties for the young boys and roses for the girls. Parents and teachers thanked the lodge brothers for hosting the event and for all they did for their community.

Contributor – WM Keith Daniel (No. 428)



Mount Nebo Lodge No. 511

Awards Scholarship

On May 20, 2023, Mt. Nebo Lodge No. 511 presented Ms. Teanna Story with a scholarship at her graduation held at Notasulga High School in Notasulga, AL. Ms. Story is a bright young lady that has been an honor student and mentor to her fellow students. She has overcome some health challenges and is on her way to success. Ms. Story will be attending Southern Union State Community College in Opelika, AL, to pursue a degree in nursing and will then attend Auburn University Montgomery to receive her BS in nursing with plans of becoming an OBGYN nurse. Congratulations Teanna!

On June 13th, Mt. Nebo Lodge No. 511 presented scholarships to Mr. Elijah McCray and Ms. Janiyah Swanson. Both students attended Booker T. Washington High in Tuskegee, AL. Ms. Swanson is an honor student and a great athlete; she will be attending the University of St. Mary in Leavenworth, KS she has been awarded a full scholarship to play flag football for the University. Mr. McCray is an honor student and an outstanding football player; he was awarded a scholarship to play football at Alabama A&M University in Normal, AL. These two scholarships were made possible by a generous donation by Bro. Ronald LaPread of the world's famous band, The Commodores. Bro. LaPread is a member of Mt. Nebo Lodge No. 511 and wants to give back to deserving students in his hometown of Tuskegee, AL. Mt. Nebo Lodge No. 511 wants to congratulate the scholarship recipients for this year and wishes them well in their future endeavors.

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



Top: Scholarship recipient Ms. T. Story and Bro. D. Hurry

Middle: Bro. H. Wilson, Bro. C. Boyd, Bro. D. Hurry, Ms. J. Swanson (scholarship recipient), WM T. Buford, and Bro. J. Bailey

Bottom Left: Bro. H. Wilson, Bro. C. Boyd, WM T. Buford, Mrs. S. McCray (scholarship recipient's mother), Bro. D. Hurry, and Bro. J. Bailey.



REGION 5

News and Events from Region 5

Pride of North Birmingham Lodge No. 319 Hosts Annual St. John's Day

After a few years of not meeting up close and personal to celebrate the Annual St. John's Day due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the district got back to it! On Sunday, June 25, 2023, District 14 kicked off its first in-person St. John's Day since the pandemic. The celebration took place at Hopewell Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, where their very own Brother, Dr. Edward E. Rodgers (Triune Lodge No. 430), is Pastor.

The church was packed with brothers from District 14, sisters from Districts No. 13 and 19, Order of Easter Star, and honored guests. Pastor Rodgers delivered a great message, and the Hopewell Baptist Church Choir did an outstanding job, as well. Everyone had a great worship experience and enjoyed the camaraderie and the food that was served. It was great for everyone to worship together once again.

Thanks to Brother Dr. Edward E. Rodgers, Lodge 430, and the Hopewell Baptist Church Choir for hosting the 2023 St. John's Day Celebration. The committee commends District Deputy (14) Walter Greene and his staff for a job well done. What a time they all had celebrating St. John's Day 2023!!!

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



Pride of North Birmingham Lodge No. 319 Continues Support for Don Hawkins Rec Center



On June 9, 2023, the brothers of Pride of North Birmingham Lodge No. 319 had the pleasure of assisting the Don Hawkins Recreation Center with the kick-off of their Youth Summer Camp 2023. This is an annual event sponsored by the City of Birmingham Department of Parks and Recreation. The event was held at the Recreation Center in the Roebuck Community of Birmingham, Alabama. The brothers of 319 were blessed to be able to donate a bouncy house, video gaming truck, snow cone machine, resources, and the lodge's time and talent.

A special thanks to Worshipful Master Gerren K. Whitlock, Sr. Junior Warden Cordaro Simmons, Bro. Chevelle Lee and Bro. Melvin Cloud. Pride of North Birmingham Lodge No. 319 was very grateful for the opportunity to serve and give back to the community. This has allowed the lodge to build relationships, network, assess the needs of the community, and make a difference.

In keeping with their commitment and partnership with the Don Hawkins Recreation Center and the Roebuck Community of Birmingham, Alabama, the brothers of Pride of North Birmingham Lodge No. 319 had the pleasure of continuing their assistance with the Youth Summer Camp 2023: Show & Tell Animal Expedition. Their very own Anthony Palmer stepped up as a presenter for this event. Bro. Palmer holds a bachelor's degree in business management and Veterinarian Technology with a specialization in Reptiles. He is the Manager at Double Oak Mountain Animal Hospital and Urgent Care. Bro. Palmer is certified to perform animal surgery.

Brother Anthony Palmer volunteered his time and resources to be a presenter for the Show & Tell Animal Expedition. On Tuesdays and Wednesdays of the month of June and July, he presents various types of reptiles to the kids and educates them about each animal. Brother Palmer has done an awesome job with his presentations, and the kids are learning a lot.

A special thanks to Bro. Anthony Palmer, Bro. Chevelle Lee, and Worshipful Master Gerren K. Whitlock, Sr. We are very grateful for the opportunity to serve and give back to the community.

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

Stillman Lodge No. 490 Assists The Therapeutic Program

On June 16, 2023, members of Stillman Masonic Lodge 490 assisted The Therapeutic Program at the Tuscaloosa Park and Recreation Authority. By lending a helping hand to others in their community, they contribute to the overall well-being and growth of the people around them. Helping the community allows the lodge to address social issues, promote positive change, and alleviate the burdens faced by others. As masons, they are humbled to be actively engaged in community service and play their part in making the world a better place for everyone. For masons, community service stands as a pillar of social progress, fostering unity, empathy, and social responsibility within communities.



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

*We are equal, but with diverse ways and meaning of life,
We are equal, but end with same manner in this life,
At least, we all shall wind up, not knowing the end,
At least our fate make us equal to each other, in this life,*

*We stumble upon the unknown end,
As if it's a new place or planet,
That we would be going to discover,
As we go, we can't come back,*

*Our community is large,
But with less friends,
As we consider others as strangers,
Even though they are our same kind,*

*They came to this world just like us,
And will come to an end just like us,
Our flowers grow, and rot till time,
Just as us, everything carry same fate,*

*In our world, everyone is equal,
But we are confined to communities,
Communities are built on a new dream,
That will come to others hands as well.*

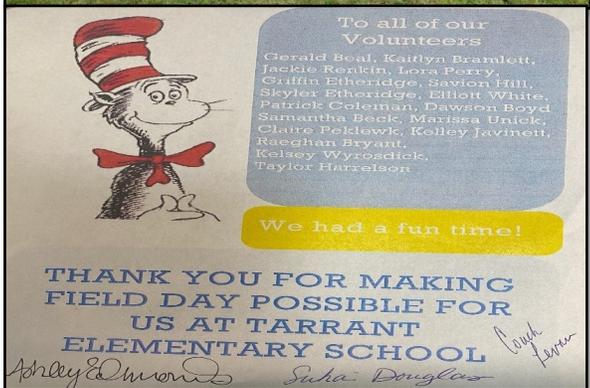
Sarah Shahzad

New Beginning Lodge No. 970 Continues to Work

On May 19, 2023, the brothers from New Beginning Lodge No. 970 participated in Tarrant Elementary’s Annual Field Day event. SW Gerald Beal, Secretary Jackie Rankin, and PM Ron Boone helped set up and manned different events, such as the tug of war and the water balloon race, throughout the day to celebrate the end of another successful school year. Assistant Principal Suhai Douglas, as always, was very appreciative of the lodge’s participation in this annual event. The students and faculty warmed the members hearts with thank you notes written by the students mailed to us days after the event.



On June 17, 2023, New Beginning Lodge No. 970 assisted the 9th Episcopal District of the AME Church with their “Stand Up Against Gun Violence” rally held at the Daniel Payne Community Center in Birmingham, AL. The rally consisted of a gun violence panel that was made up of local church leaders, representatives from the Jefferson County Sheriff’s office, and other community leaders to discuss ways to provide alternative programs in the community to help curb gun violence. There were food trucks, a blood drive, health screening, retail vendors, live music, and a basketball tournament held on-site. WM Jerome Womack, SW Gerald Beal with Past Masters, Erroll Brantley, Sr., Roderick Hughley and Ron Boone, as well as, Bro. William Rodgers were in attendance to provide material support in manning water stations and assisting in the parking of cars during this successful event.



Contributor – Bro. Gerald L. Beal (No. 970)



REGION 6

News and Events from Region 6

District No. 17 Celebrates St. John's Day Weekend



On Saturday, June 24, 2023, the brothers of District No. 17 came together with District No. 15 and District No. 16, Order of Eastern Star, to kick off a weekend celebration that culminated with the Annual St. John's Day Program. This was the second annual joint picnic since it was reinstated, after being canceled in the previous years due to covid, to promote fellowship once again between the brothers and sisters and their families. The picnic was held at Jesse Lewis Smith Park in Decatur, AL. There were many activities available, during the picnic, for kids and adults, including playground activities, spades, bid-wiz, 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, bid-wiz, and dominoes tournaments.

Grand District Deputy H. Jerome Glover, Grand District Deputy Michele King, and Grand District Deputy Glenda Reynolds thanked the brothers and sisters for attending and wished everyone safe travels back to their final destinations.



On Sunday, June 25th, the Northeast and Northwest Regions of District No. 17 held programs to celebrate St. John's Day. The Northeast region held its program at Big Shiloh Baptist Church in Madison, AL, hosted by the Northeast Worshipful Masters Council. The speaker of the hour was Pastor Lathan Strong of First Missionary Baptist Church in Town Creek, AL, who delivered a very inspirational message during the program, and the District's Unity Choir provided the song service. Dignitaries in attendance were Grand Trustee Andrew Fuller, Assistant District Deputy Frank Langford, Grand District Deputy Michele King (District No. 15 OES), and Grand District Deputy Quartina Hines-Trafford (District No. 4 OES). After the program, remarks were provided by Assistant District Deputy Frank Langford, Grand District Deputy Michele King, and PM Jeffery Ayers, President of the Northeast Worshipful Masters Council.

The lodges of the Northwest region held their program at Canaan Missionary Baptist Church in Hillsboro, AL, hosted by the Northwest Worshipful Masters Council. Reverend B. J. Bonner served as the speaker of the hour, and the Dynamic Male Chorus of the Cannan M.B. Church provided the song service. The dignitaries in attendance was Grand District Deputy H. Jerome Glover and Grand District Deputy Glenda Reynolds (District No. 16 OES). Also present was PM Robert Johnson, who also serves as Assistant Grand District Deputy and President of the Northwest Worshipful Masters Council. Both programs were well attended by the brothers and sisters, and they look forward to next year's celebration.

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



Brothers of Northeast Region of District No. 17 at St. John's Day Service



Brothers of Northwest Region of District No. 17 at St. John's Day Service



Members of District No. 15 OES at St. John's Day Service



Members of District No. 16 OES at St. John's Day Service

Athelstine Lodge No. 71 Supports Athens Boys & Girls Club

Once again, Athelstine Lodge No. 71 was honored to support the Athens Boys & Girls Club of North AL. The Boys & Girls Club's new Director, Mr. Jarrett Collier, welcomed the opportunity for the brothers to come out and be with the kids. The Club's mission is "to inspire and enable all young people, especially those who need us the most, to realize their full potential as productive, responsible, and caring citizens," a mission that is in line with the goals and purpose of Prince Hall Masonry. The lodge provided Domino's Pizza for approximately 110 kids. While eating lunch, the brothers took questions about their shirts. Some of the youngsters said their family members had shirts with the same stuff on them. Kids are always watching. The food and fellowship were provided by Senior Warden Timothy Irving, Junior Warden Walton Everett, Secretary Leonard Sewell, and Brother Mike Wiley.

Contributor – WM Johnathan Scott (No. 71)



Morning Star Lodge No. 50 Continues to Render Its Services

On April 28, 2023, the brothers of Morning Star Lodge No. 50 and the members of Hendley Chapter No. 855 performed a joint community service. MSL No. 50 was tasked with donating non-perishable food, and HC No. 855 was tasked with donating pro-hygienic items to Rose of Sharon Soup Kitchen. This institution has been a mainstay in the Huntsville community for over 20 years. Rose of Sharon is open five days a week, and they provide breakfast and lunch. They give out approximately seventy food boxes every week.

The brothers of MSL No. 50 donated food products such as peanut butter, jelly, baked beans, green beans, collard greens, green peas, corn, pancake mix, syrup, turnip greens, black-eyed peas, plates, cups, and plastic cutlery. The members of HC No. 855 donated hygienic items such as deodorants, toothbrushes, toothpaste, mouthwash, soap, lotion, and other female toiletries.

Collectively, they had two large carts filled from the collection of the items. The staff at Rose of Sharon was excited and in awe of seeing the number of members and contributions that were made. Senior Deacon Brandon Wesley chaired this community service, and his point of contact was Mr. Charles "Big Chuck" Free of Rose of Sharon Soup Kitchen.

On May 18, 2023, the brothers of Morning Star Lodge No. 50 continued to support the Madison County Area with a donation to the charitable organization, "Catholic Center of Concern." This past March, the lodge held its 13th Annual Black and White Charity Ball. Some of the proceeds are set aside for a donation to a charitable organization. This year's recipient was the Catholic Center of Concern.





Catholic Center of Concern is a non-profit service agency offering emergency financial assistance to individuals or families, regardless of their religious affiliation, who live in one of these nine North Alabama counties: Colbert, Franklin, Jackson, Lauderdale, Lawrence, Limestone, Madison, Marshall, and Morgan. They have been serving the community for over 50 years. They help the community with financial assistance for rent/mortgage and utilities; life-threatening prescribed medication; financial counseling; and free diapers, clothing, and newborn packages.

Ms. Kermit Elliott and her staff were delighted to receive the \$1,000.00 donation and to be able to use it as they see fit. Worshipful Master Taurean Dawkins assured her that MSL No. 50 would return with the support of their programs. MSL No. 50 continues to support the twelve past recipients of our charitable donations.



The lodge has a scholarship dedicated just to family members of the lodge properly named after their Past Master/Past District Deputy, Leonard A. Jackson. On May 16, 2023, Brother Brandon Wesley (Senior Deacon) presented Ms. Briana Smith from James Clemons High School with the Leonard A. Jackson Scholarship. The presentation was made at her high school with her parents. She will be attending Lurleen B. Wallace Community College this fall.



On May 18, 2023, Brother Taurean Dawkins (Worshipful Master) presented Mr. Eric Robinson from Westminster Christian Academy with the Morning Star Lodge Scholarship. The presentation was made at his high school during the Awards Day Ceremony. Mr. Robinson is related to Brother Keynon Jones (Treasurer), and he will be attending Birmingham Southern College this fall.

The brothers of Morning Star Lodge No. 50 congratulate these two young people for their hard work and achievements.

Contributor – Bro Brandon Wesley (No. 50)

Temple Lodge No. 98 Continues Its Efforts

On May 19, 2023, Temple Lodge No. 98 participated in Brookshire Nursing Home's Nursing Week Celebration by purchasing and preparing lunch for 150 residents and staff. The brothers of No. 98 grilled hamburgers and hotdogs and served lunch to the facility staff and residents. Also, they brought entertainment by way of Ring Toss and Cornhole games. Their sister chapter Twilight No. 788, OES, assisted the lodge's efforts by providing gift bags and snacks.

Temple Lodge No. 98 also completed their quarterly church visits by attending morning worship service at Potter's Hand Church in Huntsville, AL. The Potter's Hand's Family and Friends Day was led by their very own Brother, Pastor Zachary Williams. The welcoming and stimulating service was featured in the *Speakin' Out* Newspaper. They were blessed to have their sisters from Twilight Chapter No. 788, OES, accompany them.

Although the name and leadership team changed, the community service remains the same for the brothers of Temple Lodge No. 98. The CASA (Care Assurance System for the Aging and Homebound) was restructured into Enable Madison County organization. Junior Warden Jayson Wilson and his son, Brother Jabari Wilson, picked up the mantle and charged forward with providing essential services to Madison County. On June 10, 2023, these community-minded brothers delivered pre-packaged bags of fresh vegetables to eight Madison County, AL homes.

Wilson and Wilson answered the next call from Enable Madison by carefully transporting over 125lbs of vegetables from the Madison County Farmers Market processing center to Enable's Vegetable Garden, which directly impacted aiding the assembly of food packages.

Contributor – WM Carl Cooney. (No. 98)



Goodway Lodge No. 222 Remains Beehive Busy

On June 16, 2023, the brothers of Goodway No. 222 held their 5th annual All-Black Party celebrating excellence in the Black Community. The brothers had another great turnout and were once again able to honor multiple individuals that have stood out in the local community for their charitable and philanthropic work. This year the lodge recognized Mrs. Rosalind White, who is the first Black female Sergeant in Huntsville Police Department (HPD) history and was appointed as the spokesperson for HPD as their Public Information Officer (PIO) until March 2023. Also, the lodge recognized Mrs. Brittany Staten, who has volunteered at Girls' Inc, Boys and Girls Club, Academy for Academics and Arts (AAA), Big Brother Big Sister, local recreational soccer teams, church outreach, and more. Mrs. Staten also started the Blessing Bags for the homeless, in which she works with a group of volunteers who donate items and time for the Blessing Bags. The brothers also honored brothers in their lodge that have been members of the Masonic Organization for 20 and 30-plus years.

The brothers of Goodway Lodge No. 222 continue to partner with the Huntsville Operation Green Team to support the Adopt-A-Mile Program once a month, assisting in keeping the community clean and beautiful. During this project, Goodway cleaned the area of Oakwood Avenue between the stretch of Jordan Lane to Pulaski Pike in the northern part of Huntsville, Alabama. Goodway was excited to be playing its part in assisting in keeping the community of north Huntsville clean.

Contributor – WM Brian Johnson (No. 222)



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). 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 October 2023.** These articles should include events from **July 2023 - September 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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