Happy New Year Brother!

We are well into the new year now and even though every day in 2020 felt like the movie Groundhog Day we are halfway through our year already. I like to view it though as the year half full. I really believe the best is yet to come!

During our quarterly business meetings along with the mid-year meeting we have discussed a lot of great ideas on devoting more attention to education and ritual work. It appears the pause in some of that work has fanned the flame and energized members to make that work even better.

Some lodges are also looking to cautiously and carefully resume meeting in person as they are comfortable, and the brothers are excited about getting together again while of course observing all precautions and guidelines. This enthusiasm is encouraging to see.

I have heard of several new candidates recently that have petitioned various lodges and they have been really excited to become a part of our fraternity. I am always curious on how they came to find their path to Freemasonry. With the increased traffic electronically, as we endured the unchartered waters of 2020, our online presence has been a go-to place for those seeking light. Several lodges have their own Facebook pages, websites, social media, and of course every lodge’s Our Lodge Page (OLP). The website www.beafreesmason.org has also been a popular stop for those seeking more information and ways to join. All these tools have been a valuable way to connect to those candidates. These tools have also been valuable for a way to stay connected to our brothers across the state and their lodges. The more we utilize these resources the more we get out of them. Please encourage the use of these tools with other members. We are always looking for more content on any of these platforms. If you have a member of your lodge that has stories to share or a passion to spread positive messages please consider adding them as a Lodge Webmaster to help delivery content to your lodge’s Facebook and OLP pages along with sending content to the Grand Lodge website. The more we share the more engaged our members are with the craft!

Be well Brother!
-Aaron Zahn

Greetings From The Junior Grand Warden

Brother - This is your chance to make a difference. If you know of someone in your family or community who is planning on furthering their education in the Fall, please let them know about the Scholarships provided by the South Dakota Masons. The deadline for receipt of the Scholarship Applications is April 15, 2021 so please talk about it NOW.

The Grand Lodge A. F. & A. M. of South Dakota will award several scholarships of $2,000 each year to South Dakota residents who plan to attend a public or private college, university or technical school. Preference will be given to students attending a school in South Dakota. Successful candidates will demonstrate financial need, scholastic capability, and have a family connection, either by blood or marriage, to a member of the Masonic fraternity, either living or deceased. Scholarships will be granted for one year, but may be applied for each year for a maximum of five years.

The College Scholarship Application Forms can be downloaded from mygrandlodge.org

A complete application must arrange to have the following received by April 15, 2021:
1. Two Scholarship Reference Forms filled out by two teachers who know the student well and are familiar with the student’s academic qualifications.
2. An official transcript of all high school (and post-graduate, if applicable) course-work.
3. Academic Certification Record sent by guidance counselor or other school official.
4. Scholarship Application To: Grand Lodge Scholarship Committee Grand Lodge A. F. & A. M. of South Dakota
Greetings From The Deputy Grand Master

What came ye here to do?

This is one of the first questions we are asked when we are learning our proficiency for our Entered Apprentice degree. The answer is very essential in today’s society. There are two parts to the answer.

The first, pertains to our current situation in the age of social media and the Internet. I am disheartened to see that many Masons, not just in this jurisdiction, but across the entire United States been caught up in the phenomenon of allowing their passions to get away from them as they hide behind a keyboard and screen of their computer and make personal attacks (More especially against a Brother Mason). I implore you that if you have any regard for the fraternity, and if you choose to engage in this type of unsocial and uncivil discourse, that you would take any reference to being a Mason off of your biographical information.

I do not disagree with those that post facts or opinions to the current situation but, when you go beyond the issue/idea and attack the other person personally (to include the character of an elected official), then you are crossing the line: ideas are free game but, the individual person is someone to be respected and courtesy should be extended at all times.

The second part of the answer to the question is how masonry makes a good man better. Masonry in itself cannot change the heart of man but, gives him the working tools to be able to change himself. As King Solomon erected the Temple, We use the working tools on ourselves to build ourselves as a temple to God.

In our 1st degree, we obtain a working tool that shows us how to apportion our time and prioritize our actions. Although the metaphor of a day is used, we can also think of that metaphor as the entire timeline of our life. We must act in balance. There are times in our lives where other things take precedence and the balance shifts towards that precedence but, over the aggregate of our entire life we should strive to reach balance. Remember, the three areas of our life that we should focus our time is 1) The service to God and the Relief of distressed worthy Brother, 2) our usual Advocation and 3) Rest and Refreshment.

The second working tool that we receive is a remembrance that we ourselves are not perfect. We constantly must work at smoothing the rough parts of our character in order to make ourselves useful for Gods work.

So, my brother, if you are going to engage in personal attacks on the Internet and not use our working tools to look inward at yourself to make yourself a better person, my question to you is:

What came ye here to do?

Jeff VanCuren
Deputy Grand Master

Greetings From The Senior Grand Warden

Are you open?

If not, do you have a plan to reopen? Are you waiting for a vaccine before getting back to work? Covid-19 has hit this country hard and has caused shut downs all over the country. Your leadership has left the option up to you whether or not get back to work. There are Lodges that are dark, and Lodges that have chosen to open back up with certain restrictions in place. Degree work has been resumed in some Lodges, with restrictions on masks and hand sanitizer for everyone.

Zoom meetings are an option, if you would like to schedule one with your Lodge and do not have access to Zoom, reach out to your Grand Lodge Officer Line for help and we could get one going for you. It's very important, as humans, to have interaction with other humans. And we as Masons should be interacting with our Brothers as much as we can and checking in on them as often as possible. A simple phone call, letter, or a Zoom meeting are great ways for us to stay in touch and show that the length of our individual cable taws can extend further than we think!

Membership is, and does struggle during these troubling times. Getting back to work as soon as possible, or what you are comfortable doing, is what masonry needs most.

Fraternally
Dan Nace
Senior Grand Warden
Grand Lodge of SD
Brothers All,

As I write this article, it amazes me how fast time goes serving in this position. It has been an honor that I will never take for granted. This year has had some unique challenges for all of us in one way or another. We have learned that we must constantly be willing find a way to get things done and show that our Members are leaders in their Communities. It is my hope that we can get back to a more regular schedule in the near future. We will need to be ready to roll up our sleeves and get to work! The challenges of this pandemic won’t magically go away immediately. It will take time to get caught up on all the things we have been unable to do in the last year. I can say with confidence your Grand Lodge officers and Office staff are going to be there to help wherever it is needed. Please don’t hesitate to reach out with any questions, concerns or needs you may have.

We are currently working on final plans for the 147th Annual Communication that will be held at the Ramada Inn & Conference Center in Mitchell on June 17th, 18th and 19th. I hope that all of you will consider attending since Mitchell is fairly centrally located for all of us. Please remember this is an event for all Masons in South Dakota, not just officers of the Lodge. This is an opportunity to get together for Masonic Fellowship and possibly make some connections with Brothers from across the State. Of course, it is not all play, we will have some work to do! Our group will basically have the whole hotel to ourselves and they have been great to work with. We have done our best to keep costs down in hopes of making the event more affordable for those wishing to attend. Please make plans now to help make our event a success.

I wanted to also let you know that MWB Donald Gray and WB Scot Mannschreck have given written notices of resignation from the Jurisprudence Committee. We are currently working to fill those positions until the Annual Communication. Therefore, there will be two positions up for election; one for a 1-year term (filling Scot’s term) and one for a 5-year term (Don’s term would have ended this year). Nominations for all elected positions must be in by March 20, 2021.

Thank you all for your dedication to our noble Fraternity! Please remember what we are taught in our degree work on how we should act as Masons (especially the Entered Apprentice Degree). Regardless of what is happening around us we must not let our passions cloud over what we have been taught. Please be kind and respectful to your Brothers, even if have you differences of opinion. Also, when you are advertising you are a Mason (shirt, car, Facebook etc.) please show everyone what that truly means! Show yourself and the Fraternity in a positive light. Show people how Masons act together.

Fraternally,
Jason D Swindler
Grand Master of Masons in South Dakota

2020 was an interesting year to say the least. Hopefully, 2021 will be a more active year for Masonry in South Dakota. The office team is doing our best to get the work done and continue to be safe. For the most part, we are working half days in the office and half from home, but always ready to help. Please continue to reach out to your Grand Lodge office, we are here to help you. Having issues with Mori / Groupable M2, call the office. We will work to get the answers or just do it for you if we can. We all need to work together and the office is ready to help. Need a Face Mask to help you remain safe? Don’t forget about the Grand Master Mask fund raiser for the South Dakota Masonic Charities.

Sometime soon we hope to send out Personal Information Request to all Master Masons in South Dakota. We need to insure we have accurate mailing addresses information, phone numbers, and emails for all our members. In this Digital Age, it becomes more and more important for us to have every email possible to contact Brothers and provide Information regarding Masonic Activities across our state. IF you don't have one please consider getting one if possible. The Grand Lodge of South Dakota will never share your contact information with outside groups. When you receive yours in the mail check the current information add or correct it and then return asap in the return envelope.

Plan to send your nominations for the 2021 -2022 elections to the Grand Lodge office. They need to be in by March 20th to be included in the April Messenger.

Thanks,
Right Worshipful
James J Burma Jr.
Grand Treasurer / Secretary
Grand Lodge of South Dakota
147th Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of South Dakota
Agenda

Wednesday, June 16, 2021
Set up Grand Lodge Room. Help is greatly appreciated!
6:30 P.M. to 8:00 P.M.
Opening and Closing Ceremony Practice
8:00 P.M. to

Thursday, June 17, 2021
Trustees Breakfast with Meeting to follow
7:30 A.M. to 12:00 P.M.
Registration and Credentials (Pre-function Space)
8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.
Jurisprudence – room TBA
9:00 A.M. to 11:00 A.M.
South Dakota Masonic Charities (Foundation) Meeting
11:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M.
Lunch on your own.
12:00 P.M. to 1:00 P.M.

Friday, June 18, 2021
Past Grand Masters Breakfast (GMs & PGMs only)
8:00 A.M.
Registration and Credentials (Pre-function Space)
7:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.
Dignitaries and Guests Assemble to be introduced; Attire: GL Officers – Green Coat, Tie, Jewels and Aprons; Others – Suit, tie, Jewel & Apron (as appropriate); Spouses- to compliment
7:30 A.M.
Public Opening
Introduction:
Welcome by Mayor of Mitchell Robert Everson
Response by DGM-GME Jeff VanCuren
Necrology Service – WB Larry Hornstra
Remarks – WB James Taylor, Grand Orator
Closing Remarks – MWGM Jason D. Swindler
9:00 A.M.
Break
9:30 A.M.
Tyler and assistants at Grand Lodge Door(s)
9:45 A.M
10:00 A.M.
Formal Opening of Grand Lodge (Tiled)
11:00 A.M.
Combined Masons’ & Spouses’ Luncheon (ticket required)
11:30 A.M.

Friday, June 18, 2021 (Continued)
1:00 P.M.
2:00 P.M.
3:30 P.M.
4:00 P.M.
6:00 P.M.
7:00 P.M.
Call from Refreshment to Labor
Election of Grand Lodge Officers and Committee Members
Presentation and Balloting on Proposals and Resolutions.
Call from Labor to Refreshment
Installation of 2021-2022 Grand Lodge Officers
Social – No Host Bar (Pre-function Space)
Grand Master’s Banquet; Formal (tux or black suit & tie, jewel)
Spouses Attire to compliment
Entertainment: Mitchell Sr. High Jazz Band
Keynote Address: WB William Hoskins
Benediction
2021-2022 Grand Lodge Officer Reception and Dessert
Shrine Hosted Hospitality Room (Room TBA)

Saturday, June 19, 2021
SD Masonic Veteran’s Breakfast
Registration and Credentials (Pre-function Space)
Lunch on your own.
12:00 Noon

Spouses’ Program
Lunch on your own.
Hospitatly Room Open (Room TBA)
Awards & Recognition Dinner & Social (tickets required)
Call from Refreshment to Labor
Closing of the 147th Annual Communication by the 2021-2022 incoming Grand Lodge Officers.

Grand Lodge Mission Statement
The Mission of the Grand Lodge of South Dakota is to assist its constituent Lodges by being an asset to their membership and communities and to promote and maintain the Ancient Tenets, the principles of Freemasonry, and to facilitate the charitable outreach of the Grand Lodge of South Dakota.
MESSAGE FROM GRAND TRUSTEES

As we are all quite aware, these are tough times during this pandemic crisis and that this ordeal could last much longer. No doubt there are many of us who are experiencing tremendous financial difficulties including lost jobs or wages, medical expenses from illnesses and even expenses from deaths. All of us have been connected to someone close who has suffered or died from COVID.

Our Grand Lodge forefathers had these issues in mind when drafting provisions in our Bylaws for a Grand Lodge Charity Fund. This is a separate and distinct fund from the South Dakota Masonic Charities, which has a separate Board of Directors. The Grand Lodge Charity Fund is strictly controlled by the Grand Trustees.

Our Grand Lodge Charity Fund has a little over $4,000,000 at hand. We take great pride in providing approved applicants with either one-time payments or monthly stipends. All applications are available from the Grand Lodge Office. You can reach the Office and request an application by email at office@mygrandlodge.org or you may call the Office at (605) 332-2051. When applications are received, they are distributed to the five members of the Trustees and are held in the strictest confidence. All discussions involving these applications are at Grand Trustees meetings, which are usually attended by our elected Grand Lodge Officers. Any others present are excused from the meeting prior to these discussions.

Furthermore, be assured that we do not file a lien against any property owned by those receiving assistance. We lifted that proviso approximately two years ago. This is assistance with absolutely no requirement that these monies be repaid. These expenditures are meant to be for the relief of fraternal Brothers and their families with no expectation for recompense.

We certainly understand that there are those among us who are not inclined to apply because of pride. However, we certainly do not wish to see our Brothers and families suffer undue hardships unnecessarily. We want to help!

Again, we have over $4,000,000 in the Grand Lodge Charity Fund. We do help those in need as much as we possibly can. The monies we spend have not adversely affected the monies we have available. All of your Trustees, both past and present, have anticipated times like these, have built up our fund over the years and have the ability to meet the financial needs of those during these trying times.

We strongly encourage those who are in need to apply. We also encourage all Brothers who are reading this to think of a fellow Brother or his family who would benefit from this assistance and reach out to them. The Grand Trustees not only want to assist, we have taken a solemn obligation to assist.

Fraternally from the Grand Trustees,
Doug Papendick Chairman
Steve Barns
Glendon Rice
Bob Tesch and
Larry Madsen

Save The Date

March 20, 2021 - Nominations and Proposed Legislation due 90 days prior to Annual Communication

April 23, 2021 – Deadline for submitting articles for Masonic Messenger

May 10, 2021 – Nominations and Legislation published in Masonic Messenger no less than 35 day prior to Annual Communication

June 17, 18, & 19, 2021 – Annual Communication
Printable Forms

The Grand Lodge is making your life easier. The following forms have been converted to fillable forms.

- Master Visitation report
- Special Dispensation for District Master Signature
- Special Dispensation for Grand Master Signature
- Petition for Affiliation
- Petition for Re-instatement
- Request for Courtesy Work

All you have to do is download the form from the Grand Lodge Webpage under Resources/downloads and then fill out the form on your computer and print out for signatures.

PICTURED: A letter received by the senior grand warden from a brother at Christmas.
# General Registration Form

**147th Annual Communication**  
**June 17, 18, & 19, 2021**

All events will be held at the Ramada Inn & Conference Center, Mitchell, SD.

For $79.99 regular room or $94.99 suite room reservations, call (605) 550-4805. Indicate you are with the Grand Lodge of Masons.

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Daytime Phone:        Email:        

Lodge Name:        Lodge No.:      Title:        

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<th>Event</th>
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| **GL Reception & SD Masonic Family Dinner - Thursday June 17**  
6:00 p.m. No host bar. 6:30 p.m. Dinner. Burger Bar with freshly baked bun. Topping choices include tomatoes, lettuce, onions and condiments. Served with French fries and Tossed Salad. Includes soda and cookie. | | $25.00 | = |
| **Breakfast Buffet (Open to Masons & Spouses) - Friday June 18**  
6:30 a.m.-8:00 a.m. Cheesy scrambled eggs, bacon or sausage, breakfast potatoes or hash browns, assorted juices and coffee. | | $14.00 | = |
| **Past Grand Masters’ Breakfast (PGMs & GMs Only)**  
Friday, June 18. 6:30 a.m. | | $14.00 | = |
| **Joint Lunch (Open to Masons & Spouses) – Friday June 18 Noon**  
Boxed Lunch Special - Choose at Noon from a selection of ham, turkey, or roast beef boxes. Each with lettuce, tomato & cheese. Includes apple, chips, and cookie. | | $17.00 | = |
| **Spouses’ Program Hosted by Nepstad Flowers & Gifts**  
Friday June 18 following the Masons’ & Spouses’ Joint Lunch. Leave the Spouse’s Program with a beautiful piece of art you have created yourself and enjoy a little wine while doing it. | | $20.00 | = |
| **Grand Master’s Banquet – Friday June 18**  
6:30 p.m. No host bar. 7:00 p.m. Dinner. 12 oz prime rib ($35) or stuffed raspberry chicken breast ($31). Vegetable & potato, roll, garden salad with house dressing, coffee & iced tea. | | $35.00 | = |
| **Breakfast Buffet (Open to Masons & Spouses) – Saturday June 19**  
6:30 a.m.-8:00 a.m. Cheesy scrambled eggs, bacon or sausage, breakfast potatoes or hash browns, assorted juices and coffee. | | $14.00 | = |
| **SD Masonic Veterans Association Breakfast**  
Saturday, June 19. 6:30 a.m. | | $14.00 | = |
| Total: | |  | |

Make checks payable to “The Grand Lodge of South Dakota” at the address below.  
Please, no later than May 28, 2021
Helping kids — The Delta Dental Mobile Van was in Hill City last week providing free dental care to students within the Hill City School District. The van’s visit is sponsored by Tin City Masonic Lodge #112. Pictured in front of the bus, from left, are Ronn Rossknecht, Tin City Lodge brother, Darleen Bothwell, hygienist, Patti Fuchs, hygienist assistant, Dr. Greg Hanson, dentist, Teresa Masteller, truck coordinator, Joryn Gehm, assistant. [PN Photo/GRAY HUGHES]